

From the Desk of:

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The General Secretary,
Nigerian Bar Association,
National Secretariat,
Plot 1102 Mohammed Buhari Way,
Cadastral Zone AOO,
CBD, Abuja

Madam,

**NOTICE OF OBJECTION TO NAMING OF A WING OF NBA BUILDING AT ORO AGO
CRESCENT GARKI 2, FCT, ABUJA AFTER H/E CHIEF OLUWAROTIMI AKEREDOLU, SAN;
AND MOTION TO RENAME THE WING AFTER A DESERVING HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST
AGREEABLE TO MAJORITY OF LAWYERS**

At the Annual General Meeting of the Nigerian Bar Association holding on 25 August, 2022, I will seek leave for a departure from the provisions of Section 10(11) of the NBA Constitution (the event in issue having occurred after the expiration of the period provided by the Constitution) to move the Annual General Meeting as follows:

WHEREAS by notice dated on or about 15 July, 2022 signed by the Publicity Secretary of the Nigerian Bar Association (herein called the "NBA" or "Association"), it was announced that the NBA Building located at Oro Ago Crescent Garki 2, Abuja-FCT was being dedicated to two Institutes of the Association, namely: the Institute of Continuing Legal Education which occupies one Wing of the Building now named after Chief Mrs. Folake Solanke, SAN (first female Senior Advocate of Nigeria), and the NBA-Human Rights Institute which occupies the other Wing of the Building is named after the Ondo State Governor, His Excellency, Arakunrin Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, SAN (Past President of NBA)

WHEREAS the reasons given for the choice or decision of naming the said after His Excellency Arakunrin Rotimi Akeredolu, SAN, Past President of the NBA, namely: "excellence in law practice and in public administration" has nothing whatsoever to do with human rights activism for which the Wing of the Building is dedicated;

WHEREAS, but for His Excellency Arakunrin Rotimi Akeredolu, SAN's status as Past President of the NBA during whose tenure the property was purchased, there is no record of any extraordinary feat, legacy, or heritage that he conferred on, or bequeathed to the Association, especially in the field of Human Rights Activism or Public Interest Litigation;

WHEREAS an attempt was made Mr. J. B. Daudu, SAN in 2012 as President of the Association in the twilight of his tenure to name the NBA House in the FCT Abuja after the same Past President whom he succeeded in office, but which attempt was promptly reversed by the National Executive Committee following petitions and objections by lawyers, and the present exercise has given no reason at all for reverting to the past;

WHEREAS in the naming of public institutions or Association's EDIFICE after a person, the choice of suitable persons ought to and should accord with noble contributions to a public course made by such individuals, lest it adorns the toga of pure political patronage;

WHEREAS the naming of the Wing of NBA Building housing the Association's Human Rights Institute ought to and should take due cognizance and give priority and pre-eminence to members of the Association, both past and present, or even NGOs who laid their lives on the line, single-handedly confronted autocratic governments, particularly military regimes, bore heavy brunts for their courage, bequeathed legacies to us, expanded the frontiers of our jurisprudence, conferred benefits to the image of the legal profession generally, and in some cases paid the ultimate price for their "folly", and deploying their own personal resources;

WHEREAS some Nigerian lawyers and NGOs have been acknowledged both locally and international as deserving of such honour, to name a few in order of seniority are late Mr Alao Aka-Bashorun (Past President) who ably led the NBA during the draconian rule of General Ibrahim Babangida, and after whom the NBA House in Victoria Island, Lagos is named; Mr. Olisa Agbakoba, SAN (Past President) whose human rights activism spanned the military regimes of both Generals Ibrahim Babangida and Sanni Abacha and who suffered incarceration and public beating in the struggle; late Chief Gani Fawehinmi, SAN, whose human rights and public interest and development law activism also spanned the military regimes of both Generals Ibrahim Babangida and Sanni Abacha, and who liberalized access to law through the Nigerian Weekly Law Reports publications; the ever fire-brand and effervescent Mr Femi Falana, SAN whose activism is also in the public domain; and Prof. Chidi Anslem Odinkalu, Past Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria who has continued to blaze trail in the human rights struggles and public interest litigation; NGOs like Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project which has continued to recover squandered commonwealth;

WHEREAS any property of the NBA is the collective patrimony of the members of the Association and a decision to use on any part of it permanently to honour any individual cannot be taken unilaterally whether by the NBA President, the National Executive Committee or any other authority without the consent of lawyers in an Annual General Meeting;

AND WHEREAS it is now necessary for this august body assembled in August in whom the supreme authority resides to undo the deed of the NBA President whether with or without the concurrence of the NBA-NEC which is not founded on merit, being wanting on any of the foregoing altruistic considerations and parameters, and to rename the said Wing of the NBA Building appropriate;

THE 62ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION IS NOW MOVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the naming of the Wing of the NBA Building situate at Ogo Aro Crescent, Area 2 Garki CBD, Abuja housing the NBA Human Rights Institute named after His Excellency Arakunrin Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, SAN (Past President of NBA and present Executive Governor of Ondo State) be set aside by this Annual General Meeting on the ground that this is not a name associated with human rights activism and public interest litigation in Nigeria.
2. That the Wing of the NBA Building situate at Ogo Aro Crescent, Area 2 Garki CBD, Abuja housing the NBA Human Rights Institute BE RENAMED AFTER ANY of the following icons of Human Rights Activism and Public Interest Litigation in Nigeria, namely:
 - a. Mr. Olisa Agbakoba, SAN (Past President) whose human rights activism spanned the military regimes of both Generals Ibrahim Babangida and Sanni Abacha and who suffered incarceration and public beating in the course of the struggle;
 - b. Late Chief Gani Fawehinmi, SAN whose human rights and public interest and development law activism also spanned the military regimes of both Generals Ibrahim Babangida and Sanni Abacha, and who liberalized access to law through the Nigerian Weekly Law Reports publications;
 - c. The ever fire brand and effervescent Mr Femi Falana, SAN whose activism and public interest litigations has won international recognitions and whose works are also in the public domain;
 - d. Prof. Chidi Anslem Odinkalu, Past Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria who has continued to blaze trail in the human rights struggles and public interest and development law;
 - e. Socio-Economic Rights & Accountability Project whose public interest litigations have enhanced the rights of Nigerians, checked some excesses of the Executive and overturned obnoxious laws and policies in Nigeria.

And I so move

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Seth O. S. Amaefule, Esq.

(Past Secretary, NBA Lagos Branch, Past Member NBA NEC)

This Motion is supported by:

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| 1. | Mr. Moshood Abiola | - | Past Secretary, NBA, Lagos Branch |
| 2. | Mr. Geff. Oputa | - | Legal Practitioner, NBA, Abuja Branch |
| 3. | Miss Amaka Aneke | - | Past Social Secretary, NBA, Lagos Branch |