Joyce Oduah, FICMC JOYCE ODUAH & Co.

Solicitors, Advocates, Arbitrators, Mediators & Notaries Public.

20th September, 2022

Yakubu Maikyau, SAN
The President,
Nigerian Bar Association
NBA House,
Plot 1101 Mohammadu Buhari Way, Central Business District
Abuja, FCT, Nigeria

Mr President,

RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ME BY THE FORMER NATIONAL OFFICERS OF THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION VIA AN INTERNAL MEMO DATED 14TH AUGUST, 2022

It is after deep contemplation that I am constrained to respond to the allegations issued against me by the National Officers of the Nigerian Bar Association via an Internal Memo of the Association made available to the public dated the 14th day of August, 2022 titled Need for Urgent Action to Forestall a Crisis in the Nigerian Bar Association. **The said allegation** came to my knowledge on the 15th day of August, 2022 as news was circulating on social media.

My hesitations towards responding to the barrage of unfounded allegations levelled against my person and office as the General Secretary (GS) of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) is because of my esteemed regards for the Association and all that it represents. Consequently, my considered thoughts were that the solution to such issues that may amount to disparaging the Association in public should be orchestrated in-house. Nonetheless, due to the general principle of law that silence may amount to admission and for the purpose of clarity, I am forced to respond to the allegations.

joyceoduahandco.com, joyceoduah@yahoo.com 08033067006

- 1. Without any ambiguities or contradictions, I state expressly that I have the highest respect for the NBA and all that it represents. My records of service to the NBA from my Youth Service (1992) as rapporteur and from 2002 in the Branch and National levels even before serving as the General Secretary are verifiable evidence of this. I would not have devoted years to serve in various capacities with landmark achievements, an association that I do not hold in high regards.
- 2. In my tenure, as the GS, I diligently and efficiently discharged my secretarial responsibilities. Also, I brought and facilitated innovative ideas including the recently launched NBA App. The USSD CODE which I introduced and was approved by NEC for immediate implementation which I also worked hard to bring to life was stalled. I pray that you and your Excos bring it to life as it is a tool capable of, among others, ensuring participation of our colleagues in rural areas with unstable internet connection. With the USSD code they can pay for their BPF, Stamps, Conference fees, Vote and get information from the NBA without internet connection. It behoves of the highest contradiction to state that a person with my track-record of service and dedication will turn around to be deviant to the tenets of the Association.
- 3. Before going further, it is pertinent to respond to each of the allegations;

3.1. LACK OF PROPER TEMPERAMENT EXPECTED OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT STAFF.

First, I saw and still see all the staff of the Secretariat as family, and I treated them as such. They can testify to this fact. I would not have consistently clamoured for their welfare and trainings to enhance their professional development if I did not care about their wellbeing. It is, thus, antithetical to suggest that I treated them discourteously.

Second, the allegation that I physically assaulted Mr. Ndifreke Aquaisua is false. I have never at any time assaulted or slapped him or any other staff. Mr. Aquaisua was not a secretariat staff; I brought him to Abuja all the way from Uyo to act as my executive assistant. I also saw him as family to the point of inviting him into my home. To ensure his welfare and make his working conditions very conducive, I made sure that I or my driver dropped him off every day after work at the bus-stop nearest to his house –

that was the daily routine. Also, I gave him daily stipend to cover his transportation fare. On the 10th of October, 2021, my driver was about to drive off after work when I noticed Mr. Aquaisua was not in the car. I enquired as to his whereabouts from the driver whom I asked to wait for him. After several minutes of calling his phone and waiting, I became worried as to his safety. Upon further inquiry from another member of staff, I was informed that he had left the office earlier. The next day in the car, I expressed my displeasure about his leaving without informing me. The only physical contact with Mr. Aquaisua was a tap on his left shoulder to get his attention. Hence, the allegations that I slapped him from the backseat of the car is most shocking. I believe that his animus is that he thought I had the capacity to unilaterally increase his salary above that of the Secretariat staff because he was the executive assistant to the GS. This was despite his salary being at par with those of other staff who were employed before him. Also, in December, he had requested that I include him on the list of staff entitled to be paid housing allowance for the year even though he was barely 3 months in office. I informed him that I could not unilaterally take these decisions. This was the reason he resigned in January 2021, not to mention his incompetence in handling the duties of the executive assistant.

It is worthy to state further that his incompetence which was part of the reason for his resignation could be seen in his inability to write an application letter. It was an embarrassing situation when the President sent me a message complaining about the application letter that Mr. Aquaisua sent to him. In my eagerness to assist Mr. Aquaisua to become successful, I suggested that he look up some templates on google to aid him in writing a proper application letter. Mr. Aquaisua apologized for his inability to write the said letter. Throughout the course of our work relationship, I continually urged him to develop his writing skills which was a prerequisite for his role. All the conversations relating to this incident is attached as AA1.

It is most surprising that the executives of the association did not bring these allegations to my notice until the events of the past days occurred. Instead, they chose to level them against me in the memo released to the public on the uncorroborated testimony of one person. To make matters worse, there are conflicting accounts of the incident. Paragraph 7 of the Internal Memo by the Excos states that I slapped him in the office while Mr. Aquaisua in his affidavit dated 18th August 2022, which I saw on social media, claims that it happened in the car.

3.2. LACK OF CAPACITY OR INABILITY TO DILIGENTLY DISCHARGE THE DUTY OF HER OFFICE:

The allegations that I do not produce the communiques of NEC meeting and that same is usually produced by the Publicity Secretary and the President is completely false and unfounded. For instance, in relation to the Ilorin meeting referenced in the Memo, the meeting was held on the 9th of June, 2022 and I sent the communique for the President's review and assent in the morning of the 10th June, 2022. However, the President did not revert to me despite several reminders, until the 22nd June, 2022, when it was already too late to issue same. I have the screenshots of our correspondence in respect of this attached as AA2.

3.3. REFUSAL TO WRITE TO THE TREASURER OF THE OKEHI BRANCH AS DIRECTED BY THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IN HER MEETING HELD ON THE 18TH DAY OF MARCH 2021:

The purported refusal to write the treasurer of the Okehi branch is another unfounded allegation. In fact, I wrote the letter and reported same to the 2021 Annual General Meeting. The screenshot of the email is attached herewith. The screenshot of the email and the relevant page of the AGM report are attached as AA3

3.4. REFUSAL TO WRITE TO THE FEDERAL HIGH COURT WARRI IN RE: ANDREW UBIDO, ESQ:

In relation to the matter above, Mr Kunle Edun sent me a draft letter to sign and forward to Honourable Justice Abang of the Federal High Court, Warri. I informed him that based on facts which I obtained from the Chairman of the Branch, there were no proceedings before the court, thus, there was no need to request for the certified true copies of non-existent proceedings. I eventually consulted with the President who agreed with my position and informed me that he told Aikpokpo and Kunle that my position was right. The screenshot of our correspondence on this issue is attached as AA4.

3.5. REFUSAL TO WRITE TO THE SUPREME COURT, THE FEDERAL HIGH COURT ABUJA AND INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE IN RE: THE MATTER OF AYODEJI ADELEKE AKINJOKUN:

The facts in this instance speak for themselves as I wrote this letter on the 24th May 2022. Attached herewith are screenshots as evidence. Attached herewith as AA5 are screenshots in respect of this issue.

3.6. ONDO STATE ELECTION:

First, I was not assigned by the President to lead the NBA team of observers to the Ondo State governorship election although that supposed to be the case as the GS. Instead, the President assigned this responsibility to one Mr. Aderemi Oguntoye.

Second, the idea of visiting the Governor's residence was initiated by members of the team that I was part of because it was reported that the wife of the Governor was shot. However, upon getting there, the Governor's wife addressed everyone present including the press and other observers that it was fake news. When the president inquired about this, I explained same to him. I wonder what anybody making the claim that the General Secretary chaired the team intends to achieve when in fact everybody knows that it was the President's friend one Mr Aderemi Oguntoye that led the team. His report is contained in the AGM statutory report 2021 and the relevant portion is attached as AA6.

3.7. FURTHER AND IMMEDIATE ACT OF DISOBEDIENCE TO LAWFUL DIRECTIVES OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, DERELICTION OF DUTY, INSURBODINATION, CRIMINAL REPRESENTATION AND WILFUL AND DELIBERATE ACT INTENDED TO INJURE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION:

Details of what transpired as regards the allegation in Paragraphs 18 to 23 of the Internal Memo, including the issuance and withdrawal of notices and all the efforts that I made to save the Association bad publicity are contained in my prior press release titled "Setting the Records Straight", also attached herewith as AA7. One would have expected a considered response to my claims that Section 25 of the NBA Constitution was breached by the Constitution Review Committee; surprisingly, it was tactically left unanswered.

For the avoidance of doubt, I never tampered with the documents sent by the Constitution Review Committee. The Committee did not comply with the provision of Section 25(1) of the Constitution which provides that the GS must receive any proposal for amendment of the Constitution within a minimum of 60 days before the AGM. While the Branch Chairmen met the

timeline, the Committee did not as their proposals were sent and received by the GS 30 days before the AGM. Having received that of the Branch Chairmen within time, I circulated same having met with the constitutionally stipulated timeline.

- 4. The animus for this attack on my person, I believe, is due to the President's erroneous belief that I was sponsored by his "political enemy". After the election, when I got wind of this and asked him about this, he did not deny it. The following events further confirmed my belief:
- 4.1. First, the president showed clearly that he had no intention of communicating with me directly. For example, after our swearing-in, the Assistant Secretary reached out to me requesting for my manifesto stating that the President had directed her to get same from me. I contacted the President to inform him that he could reach me directly instead of going through the Assistant Secretary. Subsequently, the President invited me to his Lagos office and informed me that I could only reach him through his assistants as he will not be communicating with me directly. Our conversation relating to this is attached as AA8.
- 4.2. Second, the president continually took steps to undermine the office of the General Secretary; for example, he informed me that I was to be at the secretariat only once in a week. That was most surprising considering the nature of the position as the head of the secretariat with lots of responsibilities. It is obvious that only 9-5 on a single day in a week would be insufficient, but the President was not interested in my explanations. Still, I carried on my duties diligently and made personal sacrifices including working virtually just to meet up with the requirements of the office. He also reduced the allowance which I was entitled to as GS to be at par with other exco members. I took the reduction graciously and without complaint as my purpose for serving the Association had never been monetary gain but the desire to serve.
- 4.3. Third, on our swearing-in, the first vice president raised the issue of protocol stating that his office came first before that of the General Secretary of the Association. I explained to him and the other excos that in the over 20 years of my service to the Association both at the Branch and National levels, that had never been the case. The office of the General

Secretary had always come after the President in correspondences because of the sensitive nature of the role of the General Secretary as head of the NBA Secretariat. To my surprise, the President took his side even after past presidents confirmed to him that that had always been the state of affairs. This issue was constantly brought up by the 1st Vice President in the Exco meetings. In one of the Exco Meetings, he suggested that they take a vote on the issue. I informed them that they lacked the power to take a vote on this issue, rather they should refer the matter to the National Executive Council. Knowing they would fail, they never raised the topic again. I was appalled by the continued and concerted oppressive actions towards me and sadly, I felt that their intention was to subdue me because of my gender. In this age, I would have thought that no duly elected officer of our esteemed Association should be intimidated and suppressed based on circumstances of birth.

4.4. From the forgoing, it is apparent that these incidents and allegations were all lies and calculated steps to undermine my person and office. The purported suspension which was illegal, wrongful and contrary to the provisions of the Constitution of the NBA was the apogee of the plan by the National Executive Committee to intimidate me into silence.

In line with my campaign promises to come what may, uphold the constitution and integrity of the Association, I can unequivocally state that I delivered as promised even though my stance on upholding the rule of law and following the constitutional procedures for amendment of the constitution gored some horses. I served the Association and upheld its constitution conscientiously and diligently to the best of my abilities even as I receive commendations from our members. Attached as AA9 are screenshots of some of the commendations I have received.

Finally, I restate categorically that I never had a course to derelict my secretarial duties, disobey the constituted authority, assault any member of the staff or do any act capable of bringing the Association to disrepute. I have dedicated many years of committed and passionate service to this Association – since 1992 during my NYSC years till date – and my verifiable track record is evidence to this. I, as the National Treasurer of our association, introduced the BAR CODE

which turned around the fortunes of the NBA Branches for good till date. For example, before the introduction of the BAR Code Lagos Branch got between N400,000 to N500,000 annually. After I introduced the Bar Code, Lagos Branch with Bar Code no. 058 got N6,500,000 in 2013 and N7,500,000 in 2014. Currently, Lagos gets approximately N14,000,000 to N15,000,000 annually. The same applies to other Branches across the Federation. Also, as promised in my manifesto, I pushed for and delivered on the digitisation of the NBA Secretariat to be an ICT Based Innovative Secretariat, thus, bringing it in tandem with global standards. After much pressure and persuasion, this culminated in the NBAApp recently launched. Hence, it is a fallacious contradiction to suggest that I would turn around to destroy what I have been working so hard to build. I have never and would never do anything that will bring the Nigerian Bar Association and indeed our noble legal profession into disrepute.

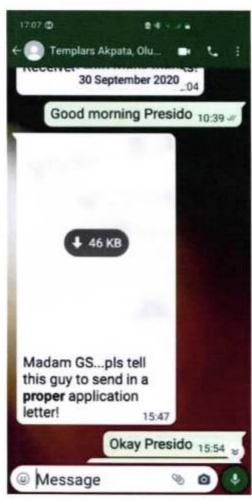
Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Joyce Oduah FICMC

General Secretary, NBA

2020 to 2022.













Dear faith,

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Find attached a letter from the General Secretary, NBA in respect of the above subject matter.

Letter of Notification

of NEC Resolution

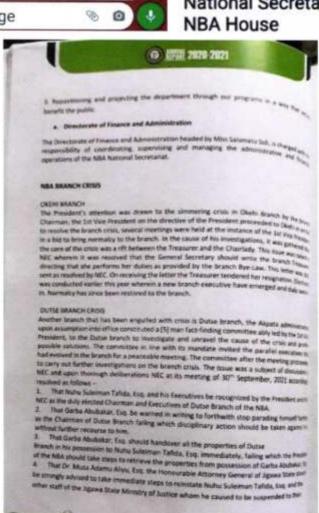
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Joyce Oduah 25/03/2021 6 :

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Thank you.

Joyce Oduah, FICMC **General Secretary** Nigerian Bar Association National Secretariat **NBA House**



← Re: Draft application for...

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

On Thu, 24 Feb 2022 at 19:28, Joyce Oduah <joyceoduah@yahoo.com> wrote:

Dear Kunle,

Please explain to me what record of proceeding you need because I will not ridicule the NBA.

Thank you.

Joyce Oduah, FICMC

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

On Thu, 24 Feb 2022 at 19:01, kunle edun <eduovo@yahoo.com> wrote:

Madam GS.

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← Re: Draft application for...

On Thu, Feb 24, 2022 at 16:32, Joyce Oduah <joyceoduah@yahoo.com> wrote:

Dear Kunle,

I have seen your draft letter.

I have spoken with the Chair Warri to get the facts.

From the facts Mr. Andrew Ubido was not before the Court, he was at the registry before he was brought to the Court and asked to face the wall.

From the above there will be no record of proceeding. The option available is to invite the lawyer that was before the Court and other lawyers

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← Re: Draft application for...

no record of proceeding. The option available is to invite the lawyer that was before the Court and other lawyers present to give an account of what transpired in court that day or to testify before any panel.

It will not be wise to write a letter requesting for proceedings when there was none.

Thank you.

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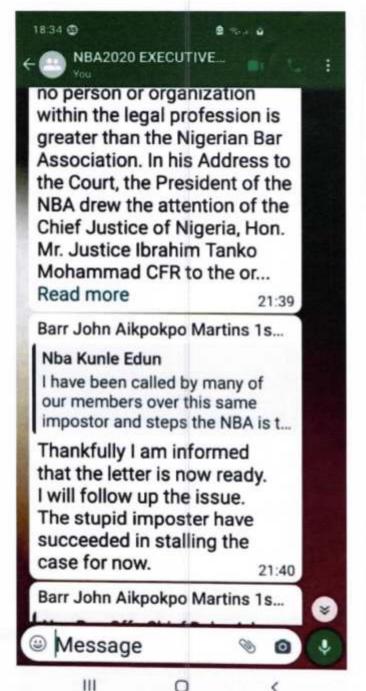
Joyce Oduah, FICMC General Secretary, NBA.

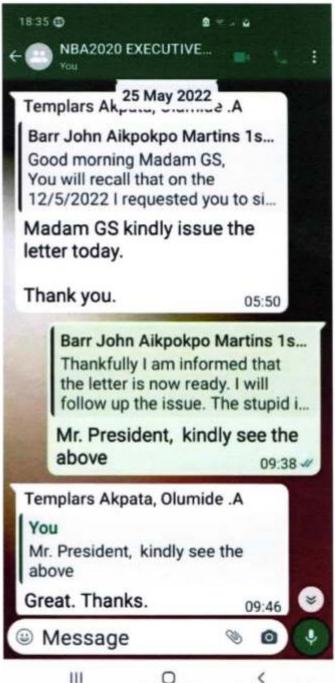
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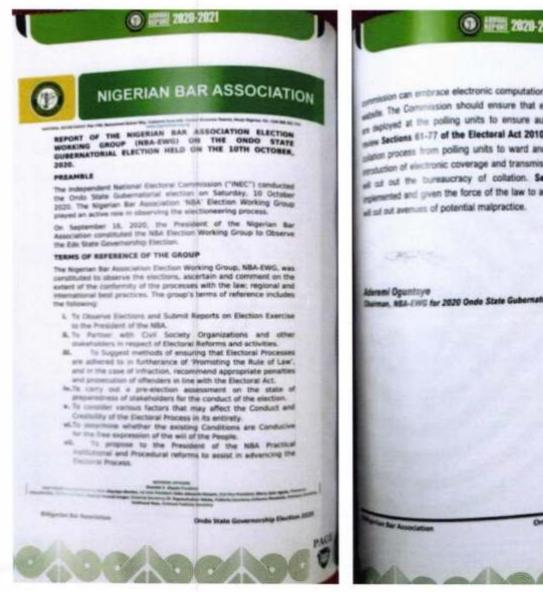
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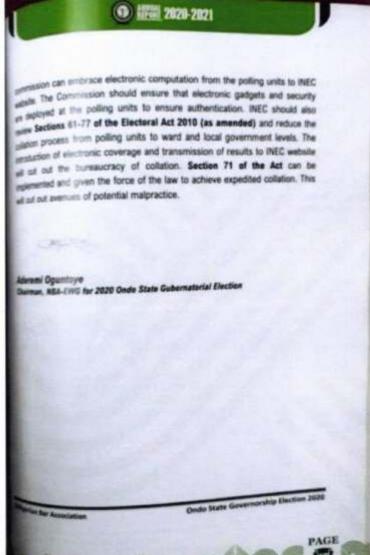
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NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Ordamics, I would not have responded to the Disclaimer issued by the President on the 13th of August, 2022, but I am contrained to do so. It is important that I set the record straight at I have recovered meantroam falls then concerned members and its meantream thresholds and in the set the recovered meantroam falls members or the great probability of the members of our great probassion; and so, in carrying our presponsibilities as the colorest Security (50g the Association, 1194) unplotd, dispatch my respinabilities in the colorest Security (50g the Association, 1194) unplotd, dispatch my respinabilities in the colorest Security (50g the Association, 1194) expenditure of the Colorest Colorest (110 to 110 t

- As the President stated in puragraph 1 of the Notice, the NBA National Executive Cruzzil (NBA-NEC) at the last meeting held in literiu on the 9^{th} of I trace, 2022 resolved that some amendments be made to the NBA Constitution. These amendments include the Theoremson's the about from the law Tracticing remitted to the Broaches from 10^{th} system, and does not contention to uses." The Constitution Review Committee and other interested pressure could, thus propose amendments to the constitution in time with the conditions stipulated in the NBA Constitution 2021 (as amended in 2021).
- Constitution 2015 (as memode in 2021).

 The condition for amendment of the constitution is stated in Section 25 (1) of the NIIA Constitution, thus: The constitution shall not be amended or repealed or re-macted except at the Annual General Meeting of the Association and two-third of the branches of the Association are processed and provided infert that at least sate (6) days winder of the prespond amendment shall have been given to the General Secretary who shall have circulated same dedigers at least third (9) did days before the proposed amendment is tabled for discussion at the Annual General Meeting.

- The Constitution Review Committee was also to cend in their proposed atmospheres but it was not furtherming, in the Stational Executive Committee (Esco) in secting held on the 20th day of the June, 2022. I informed the President and Execut the fact Constitution Review Committee was our of the constitutionally stipshed using the tender that the Constitution Review Committee was our of the Constitutionally stipshed using the Constitution Review Committee was that called the Chairman of the Committee on sevent occasions to sent in the Constitution proposed mendment as they were about our of time. Into also called the President to proposed amountment of the Constitution Review Committee to the office proposed amountment was creatingly used by the Constitution Review Committee to the office of the General Security on the 200 of 100 y 2014 count 70 obay behind the stipulated time required by the constitution, Revelop of the email is attached.
- Southern on the constitution. Receipt of the email is attached.

 5. The President instructed that a Notice of proposed Constitutional Annudrosen be sent to members for the AGM, and it was in congine with his directive and observance of the rule of the which guides the Nigerian But Ausoculiant that I sent out the said Notice on the 27th of July 2022 containing my the proposal by the Branch Chairmon which met the requirement of Section 25 (1) of the Constitution.
- Section 5.2 (v) of the Constitution.

 When this nature we surposing up at the National Executive Cummittee (Exce) morting on the same day, I informed the meeting that the amendment by the Constitution Review Committee was centiled because of their non-compliance with section 2(3) of the Constitution. The President and cross causemed that we cold conveniently beyons the requirement of the constitution, but I informed them that the requirement of Novice was not a more procedurate to an advanture view which could not be initiated without menningful consequences. The President and other excess recorded to using several section to bully me into contending with their position to overdock. It constitutional requirement, I informed them that I swore to uphold the Constitution of the NIAA and that I will do.
- The Prosition indicated that it was infectious whether I amounded the notice or not as be had been prove to require any emmber of the Extor to perform any datins indicating that of the General Secretary, To my surptice, the next day, 2.5% of July, 2.5% of July, 2022, the Austiant Secretary error of a second notice of proposed amountees to the constitution and attached the proposal sear by the Constitution Review Committee that did not need the old days requirement of Section 25(1). This was falled attempt to usurp the constitutional drains of the office of the General Secretary and consumement the notice touch by the office of the General Secretary and consumement the notice touch by the office of the General Secretary and consumement the notice touch by the office of the General Secretary and consumement the notice touch by the office of the General Secretary and the previous day, which was inflort resisted by the good members of the Ausciation.
- the previous day, which was infact resisted by the good members of the Association.

 On the 29th of July, the president and econ members left the executive group chat because of missinence employing them feel then. Societies, the New records on their or information of Econ meetings. Our artising at my office on the 18th of August 2022, I disconced that the President had mannefor my securitys wheth and these thins the 72 years white controlling, informing or giving not reason. This action by the President to move my personal Societary, at a critical mise of president about most of the Pre-Endersteen NCF. and AGM and commontates level and an observation of the secondary layer. Also, I was informed that the members of staff of the Secretaria had been directed by the President to the instruction from my office had intelly from him Secretaria which the discordal Secretary is in charge of. This action by the President clearly designates my person and effice, manning it impossible to be accountable to members of the Association, National Executive Courcil and AGM.
- On the 10th of August, 2022, on getting to the office of the Head, Admin and Finance Department, Is we be Treasure recommending means for the Assaul General Conference to the Product. This is a unaulty a responsibility research for the office of the conference of the resident selected Secretary who is the exceed signature to the concord, and causemary the officer to vet and recommend means to the president to the signature. It are failth with a sufference by the Freedom's in the land Assault General Meetings of 2022. This is a day which I have centred out incirc the inception of the distillutional to some that the emission of the Assaultions are published with the Conference of the Conference of the Assaultion are published with the Conference of the Assaultion are published with the Conference of the Confere
- It received betters from some members of our Association shaling for the notices to be withdrawn as we do not not better than the restrict of the source of the source of the notices that were forested that the Posisides We put had do not respond. I made several calls to the Posisides We notice the source of the notices when the notice of the notices were not the notices of the notice of the notices of the no
- Training on to time.

 In On the 11% of August, 2022, I went to see the President in his office and to my autosidament his secretary informed me that the President had given instruction that the should not let me in whenever I come to see him. When I found my way into his office, I saw and heard a vicious president secremally at the up of his vice that I should keen his local. I had no challen that to leave his office, I shad no challen to leave his office without being able to discuss the threat of a law soit and other issues.
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- 1. For the a rodatine of doube;
 3. I am unaware of my meeting where it was decided that the two notices; one issued by the General Secretary on the 27th of July, 2022 and the other issued by the Assistant Secretary on the 28th of July, 2022 would be presented to the Annual General Meeting for a resolution of which should be discussed at the meeting.

Copper . e Oduah, FICMC

We look forward to your cooperation to ensure that the Branches of the NBA are familiarisistic forward to the the state of the total familiarisistic forwards and empowered.

Undersigned for themselves and on behalf of all the Chairmen of Branches of the NBA are familiarised for themselves and on behalf of all the Chairmen of Branches of the NBA are familiarised for the State of t

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3. Ahmen Tutar Cop. NRA Grabe Charman. A.

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2024 B 2 1 From: Asamah Kadiri <asamah.kadiri@j ee.africa> Sent: Tuesday, 26 July 2022, 14:12 To: Joyce Oduah <Joyce.Oduah@ni gerianbar.org.ng>; Olumide A. Akpata <Olumide.Akpata @nigerianbar.org.n Cc: Afam Osigwe <osuigweaj@yaho o.com>; orjiagwuuka@gma



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- the face of it countered the enrice issued by year. The both halter issued by year of the one issued by the Asia fameual Socretary parsent is serve as nettice required by Article SI MAIA Contrivition emedical in 2021 insulating the General Socreta NIAA contrivition emedical in 2021 insulating the General Socreta NIAA to circuitise any proposed emendment or repeal and re-eventies NIAA Contrivition of the Contrivition
- On the clear reading of the notices aforesaid and the propose amendment to the NSA Constitution, our clients observed the following:
- makent fro the NAA Constitution, our cleants observed the retisents.

 The Natices and the purperted propelad amendment for the NAA Constitution were circulated in the Delegates to the Anneal General Meeting schoolded to held on 25th August, 20022 in cyth and on 28th days of July, 20022 in clean breach of Article 20(1) of the NAA Constitution emmedia in 20(2) os 25th days 20022 level to the NAA Constitution emmedia in 20(2) os 25th days 20022 level before the Annual General meeting control to the conviersary of this 30th days for anothis service and 75th 75 os 28th July, 2002 in 10 os 2005 days 2005



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responsil 5 November 2021

Like I have been saying Mr. President you can contact me directly. You don't need Toju to get to me. If you can call the PS you can call me. When you wanted me to send the Notice of meeting you sent a chat

You

AA8

Like I have been saying Mr. President you can contact me directly. You don't need Toju to ...

I cannot call you or anyone else on every matter. I can and will contact you through known proxies from time to time. That's the way it is gonna be. Toju dropped the ball on this occasion and she has been reprimanded.

Message













