



**THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION PORT HARCOURT
BRANCH ELECTORAL COMMITTEE**

Email: eleconbaphbranch@gmail.com

27th April, 2026

The Secretary
NBA Election Appeal Committee, (East)

**RE: OHAKA EGBURUWHUO, ESQ. (APPELLANT) –
DISQUALIFICATION FROM PARTICIPATION AS A
CANDIDATE IN NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION, PORT
HARCOURT BRANCH ELECTIONS BY THE BRANCH
ELECTORAL COMMITTEE ON THE 16TH DAY OF APRIL, 2016**

We acknowledge receipt of the above petition/appeal to the Election Appeal Committee (East) and your request for our reaction thereof which was received on Saturday, 25th of April, 2026. In response thereto we respectfully respond as follows:

1. We concede that it is true that the petitioner picked and submitted a Nomination Form wherein he expressed his desire to contest for the Office of Secretary of the Branch in the forthcoming election to the Branch Offices of our branch. **A copy of his completed Nomination Form is respectfully enclosed herein as Annexure E1.** He was nevertheless disqualified for falling short of the requirements in Article 14 paragraph 2 of the Bye Law. For the avoidance of doubt, the said Article 14 paragraph 2 of the Bye Laws provide as follows:

2. To be eligible to stand for election into an office, a member shall :

(a) Be validly nominated in writing by two members who are eligible to vote herein and who must themselves be qualified for the particular office as provided for in these Byelaws

(b)Have attended a minimum of five (5) monthly of the branch within the twelve (12) months prior to the close of nominations for the election. For the purpose of determining attendance at meetings, the attendance register of the branch shall be used in reckoning the number of attendance by members of the Branch

2. Our Committee's conclusion/decision that the Petitioner had fallen short of the requirement of the above provision and his subsequent disqualification was based on failure of one of his nominators **Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru** to meet the mandatory threshold of attendance at five (5) meetings within one (1) year preceding the close of nominations. **Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru's** personal details as it relates to his membership of our Branch are clearly disclosed in the Nomination Form mentioned above.

3. It is pertinent to state that in accordance with Article 14 paragraph 2(a) above, each nominator must be qualified to contest for the post/office they are nominating a candidate to vie for and a candidate will be disqualified from the contest if he is not nominated by two qualified members or any of his nominators is unqualified to vie for that office. For the purpose of this instant election, the relevant period for calculating attendance to branch general meetings, for persons seeking to vie for office and their nominators, is from April 2025 to March 2026 which is one year prior to the close of nomination.

4. After receiving the Nomination Forms of contestants, the Committee in line with the provisions of Article 16 paragraph 2 of the Byelaw which provides thus: ***"The Branch Electoral Committee shall scrutinize all nominations to ensure that they comply with the provisions herein and shall notify candidates who fail to qualify of the reason(s) for their disqualification within seven(7) days of any decision to that effect:..."*** carefully scrutinized the documents submitted by the Aspirants including the petitioner and compared them to the records of the Branch which were made available to us. In this wise, we state that the Financial Records and Attendance Registers of the Branch were made available to us by the Branch Secretariat. Whilst the petitioner and his nominators did not have issues with their respective

financial standing with the Branch, we observed upon a careful examination of the handwritten Attendance Register that **Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru with Branch membership No. 2012/278** the petitioner's second Nominator recorded only three (3) attendance during the period under consideration. We confirmed from the said record that he attended the meetings held in January, February and March 2026, only. This attendance fell short of the attendance threshold of five (5) hence our decision not to clear him to contest.

5. Respectfully, we are of the firm view that attendance at Branch meetings is determined by proper endorsement of the Attendance Register, which includes the member's name, unique Branch Identification Number, signature, address, and phone number. It is important to emphasize that the Branch Identification Number is unique to each member and is of critical importance in verifying and reckoning attendance.

6. Our scrutiny of the Attendance Register revealed that **Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru** (Branch Identification No. 2012/278), recorded attendance only for the months of January, February, and March 2026 only, therefore we firmly deny the claim that he attended 6 branch meetings within the period. In this wise we respectfully invite the Appeals Committee to examine the Branch Attendance Register and to observe that:

- (a) Contrary to the claims of the petitioner, the Register shows that in April 2025, the name listed as No. 201 Attendance Register is Excel Leesi (Branch No. 2015/405) and not **Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru**. However, in the record of attendance for the Branch General Meeting of April 2025, there is an entry at No. 162 bearing the name "David Gbaimeza Uduru" with Branch Identification Number. 2010/091. Whilst this entry is consistent with the content of the document described by the petitioner as APPENDIX 2 and submitted to this Committee for as proof of attendance in April 2025, it differs materially from **Mr. David Gbaimeza's** correct Branch Identification Number (2012/278) which is contained in the Nomination Form



(Appendix 1 above). Additionally, the Year of Call for **Mr. David Gbaimeza** is 2012, not 2010 as shown on this entry. Accordingly, we could not in good faith reach the conclusion that this entry is evidence of attendance by the said **Mr. David Gbaimeza**.

(b) In May 2025, there is no entry numbered 82 due to an apparent numbering error. When corrected, No. 82 corresponds to the name Koko Catherine Karina (Branch No. 2015/135) and not **Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru**. We observed also that in the record of attendance for the branch general meeting of April 2025, there is an entry at No. 118 bearing the name “David Gbaimeza Uduru” with Branch Identification Number recorded simply as 2010. This branch identification number is incomplete and same is also different from the Branch Identification Number of **Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru** whose Year of Call is 2012 and not 2010 as shown in this entry. We also observe that this entry is the same as that contained in the document submitted to you as APPENDIX 3 by the petitioner as proof of attendance of his said nominator for the general meeting of May 2025. Our Committee could also not accept this as evidence of attendance and rejected it.

(b) In October 2025, entry No. 304 corresponds to Chioma Onyibe (Branch No. 2007/296, of 2b Evo Road, GRA) and not **Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru**. We observed there is also an entry at no 329 bearing the name David Gbaimeza Uduru” with Branch Identification Number recorded simply as 2012. This entry is also different from the Branch Identification Number of **Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru** which is 2012/278. We also observe that this entry is the same as that contained in the document submitted to you as APPENDIX 4 by the petitioner as proof of attendance of his said nominator for the general meeting of October 2025. Our committee could also not accept this as evidence of attendance and rejected it.

7. Clearly the above records in the Branch Attendance Register for the meetings of April, May and October 2025, certified copies of which are respectfully annexed as **Annexure E2** show that the claims of the petitioner are untenable and the allegations against our Committee misconceived. A closer examination of the register also shows that:

- (a) The signatures in the said documents are also inconsistent with the one in the Nomination Forms submitted to our Committee as well as the Specimen submitted to us by **Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru** himself, a copy of which respectfully annexed hereto as **Annexure E3**.

8. In response to allegations of the petitioner at paragraph 2.6 of his process, it is our respectful contention that our Committee was more inclined to relying on the primary document which is the actual handwritten Attendance Register of the Branch which clearly reveals the facts aforesaid in paragraph 7 above than uncertified printouts presented to this Committee as the Attendance Records of the Branch during the given period. We further submit with profound respect that the uncertified and computer printouts referred to as ANNEXURES 2, 3 and 4 relied and urged upon this August Committee cannot displace the contents of the handwritten Attendance Register of the Branch which is the primary evidence of the facts therein.

9. Even in the unlikely event that this Committee gives any credence to the said printouts relied upon by the petitioner, it is our firm view that the contents therein which show incomplete Branch Identification Numbers which are also different and inconsistent with that of **Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru** cannot and ought not be accepted as proof of his attendance to the said meetings.

10. In the same vein, we also deny the allegation that the Committee made its decision in a hurry or ought to have reached out to the petitioner or his nominator. Our Committee dealt with the documents as documentary evidence is always more reliable than oral evidence. In any case the matters dealt with were limited to records and there was no need to call oral evidence to resolve matters on record



11. It is also pertinent to point out that following the publication of list of cleared and uncleared candidates on the 16th of April 2026, the Petitioner submitted a complaint our committee on the 17th of April 2026, wherein he claimed that his nominator “Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru attended a total of six meeting”. The Petitioner and his nominator were invited to a meeting with our committee on Monday 20th April 2026, which meeting they attended. They presented documents which they allege to be the typed attendance of the Branch for the months of April, May and October 2025. Copies of the documents submitted our committee on the 20th of April, 2026 are annexed as **Annexure E4**. Our committee further scrutinized the Branch Attendance Register again to confirm the claim of the Petitioner and found as of fact that the documents submitted to us had incomplete and inconsistent Branch Membership Identification Numbers different from that of the nominator. We could not therefore accept them as evidence of attendance at meetings. This decision of our committee was duly communicated to the Petitioner on the 21st of April, 2026. A copy of our committee’s response to the Petitioner’s complaint is annexed as **Annexure E5**.

12. We have also observed that the Petitioner appears to be manufacturing/doctored documents he claims to be the attendance of the Branch. This observation above is based on the fact that the document submitted to our committee by the Petitioner on the 20th of April 2026 as the attendance register for the month of October 2025 has David Gbaimeza Uduru as entry 304 with Branch identification number as 2012/278, but in ANNEXURE 4 of the petitioner before your Committee, the register for the month of October 2025 the same has David Gbaimeza Uduru as entry 304 with Branch identification number as 2012. One is thus left to wonder where the documents bandied about by the Petitioner emanated from. Please our **Annexure E4** and the petitioner’s ANNEXURE 4.

13. In the light of the facts and circumstance above stated, we had no choice but to reach the conclusion that Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru with Branch number 2012/278, did not satisfy the mandatory requirement for attendance at a minimum of five (5) Branch meetings within the stipulated period. The entries relied upon by the petitioner



were carefully scrutinized and rightly rejected as they failed to meet the established criteria for verification, particularly with respect to the accuracy and consistency. Accordingly, our Committee reached the decision to disqualify the petitioner.

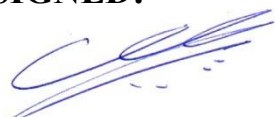
14. In reaction to the addendum written by the Petitioner to the Appeal, committee with specific reference to the Affidavit of facts deposed to by Mr. David Gbaimeza Uduru, we contend that the said affidavit is an afterthought and cannot be used to change the contents of the Branch attendance register. We further contend that the right time to correct any perceived error in the attendance register is on the floor of the house during the monthly branch meetings. We urge this esteemed panel to discountenance the said affidavit of facts and dismiss this appeal and affirm our decision.

15. CONCLUSION

Our committee properly scrutinized the attendance register and found as a fact that the petitioner's nominator did not meet the required number of attendance and accordingly disqualified the Petitioner. We urge this Appeal Committee to uphold the decision of our committee disqualifying the Petitioner and dismiss the Appeal as same is unmeritorious.

Accept the assurances of our highest regards.

SIGNED:



Mr. CHUKWUMA EKE
Chairman



N. NZEWI-AGBASI (Mrs.)
Secretary

