



NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION

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COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (NEC) OF THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION (NBA) HELD ON THURSDAY, 22ND DAY OF OCTOBER 2020

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An Emergency Meeting of the NBA NEC was called by the NBA President, **Mr. Olumide Akpata** and held on 22nd day of October 2020.
- 1.2 The sole agenda for deliberation was the *State of the Nation* following the nationwide protests by the #ENDSARS movement, the shooting of unarmed protesters at the Lekki Tollgate in Lagos, the vandalization and looting of public and private assets across the country, the general breakdown of law and order and matters ancillary thereto.

2.0 RESOLUTIONS

At the end of extended deliberations, the NBA NEC, among other things, resolved as follows:

- 2.1 That NEC ratifies and adopts all actions and steps so far taken by the NBA President in respect of the #ENDSARS protests including (i) the statements, interviews and press conferences that have been issued/granted by the NBA President; (ii) the *pro bono* scheme set up to provide legal support to peaceful protesters across the country; (iii) the on-going collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission regarding the activities of the Independent Investigative Panel set up to publicly inquire into human rights violations by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad and other units of the Nigerian Police; (iv) the commitment to providing free legal aid to, and representing victims of, human rights violations before the various Judicial Panels of Inquiry established by State Governments across the country; and (v) the partnership with the House of Representatives towards the urgent enactment of a law that will make the Nigerian Police more responsive and accountable to the citizenry.
- 2.2 That for the avoidance of doubt, the NBA unequivocally deplores and deprecates the assault, intimidation and killing of unarmed protesters at the Lekki Tollgate and across the country and reiterates that the right to peaceful protest is an inherent right of citizens in any democracy.
- 2.3 That the Federal Government of Nigeria and all relevant authorities, must as a matter of urgency, carry out a thorough, independent and transparent investigation to identify those who ordered, or are behind the shooting at the Lekki Toll Plaza and to definitively confirm the identity of those killed, missing or severely wounded during the incident.
- 2.4 That the NBA should conscientiously and actively follow up with aforesaid investigations and following the investigations, immediately commence/press for the commencement of criminal prosecution both in Nigeria and at the relevant international fora against all

NATIONAL OFFICERS

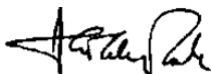
Olumide A. Akpata, **President**

Joyce Oduah, **General Secretary**; John Aikpokpo Martins, **1st Vice President**; Debo Adeyemo kazeem, **2nd Vice President**; Mercy Ijato Agada, **Treasurer**;
Olakunle Edun, **Welfare Secretary**; Raphael Nnamdi Anagor, **Financial Secretary**; Dr. Rapuluchukwu Nduka, **Publicity Secretary**; Uchenna Nwadialo, **Assistant Secretary**;
Ferdinand Naza, **Assistant Publicity Secretary**

agencies and persons involved, complicit or otherwise indicted in the Lekki Toll Plaza incident and similar occurrences across the country.

- 2.5 That all detained peaceful protesters should be released unconditionally forthwith. The NBA Branches in collaboration with the National Secretariat and the States' Attorneys-General should continue to push for and secure the immediate and unconditional release of peaceful protesters who have been detained by various State Police Commands across the country.
- 2.6 That the NBA condemns in strongest terms possible the action of the hoodlums who took advantage of the peaceful protests to wantonly destroy private and public properties and calls on the authorities to urgently investigate, arrest and prosecute those involved in such nefarious and reprehensible activities. The NBA further appeals to the peaceful protesters to call off the protests and be ready to dialogue with the government so that their demands can be appropriately addressed.
- 2.7 That President of Nigeria should unequivocally direct the military and other security agencies to immediately desist from attacking peacefully protesting citizens. He must formulate and immediately implement, with demonstrable bona fides, a clear course of action which would include dealing decisively with the demands of the #ENDSARS protesters.
- 2.8 That as a means of containing the volatile situation in the country, there must be actionable channels of communication between the government and the protesters and that the NBA President is mandated to proactively intervene, mediate between the #ENDSARS protesters and the government and work towards a resolution (with clear timelines and deliverables) that will be acceptable to all parties involved.
- 2.9 That there is need for a total overhaul of the Nigeria Police and all security and para-military organisations. More attention should be paid to the recruitment process of the Police and the qualification for enrollment into the various security agencies should be improved upon. The issue of the remuneration and welfare of the officers should also be holistically addressed.
- 2.10 That the NBA is worried and concerned about (i) the impact of the ongoing crisis on the administration of justice across the country following the destruction of different courts in various States by hoodlums; and (ii) the livelihood of its members who practice in, or around those courts. The NEC accordingly mandates the NBA President to actively engage with relevant authorities in the affected States with a view to ensuring that business resumes at those courts as quickly as possible.

DATED THIS 22ND DAY OF OCTOBER 2020



**OLUMIDE AKPATA
PRESIDENT**



**JOYCE ODUAH, FICMC
GENERAL SECRETARY**