



# NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION

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## **REPORT (No. 2) FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION ON THE INDUSTRIAL ACTION BY THE JUDICIARY STAFF UNION OF NIGERIA (JUSUN)**

Dear Colleagues,

You will recall that in my update of 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2021 on the above subject, I had chronicled the circumstances that led to the unfortunate strike action by members of the Judiciary Staff Union of Nigeria (“JUSUN”); the efforts initially taken by my team and I to avert the said strike; and the mediatory efforts that the Nigerian Bar Association (“NBA”) has been playing towards bringing the strike action to a fruitful end so that our courts can re-open for business.

I had specifically referred to a negotiated agreement reached between JUSUN and the State Governors under the aegis of Nigerian Governors Forum (“NGF”) which outlined the modalities for the enforcement of the financial autonomy of the Judiciary for optimal performance. Last Friday - 4th June 2021, the State Governors after initial hesitation, signed their part of the agreement which, among other things, required the Governors to release funds to the Heads of Courts in their respective States before the industrial action can be called off.

However, following a multi-stakeholder meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 2021 at the instance of the National Judicial Council (“NJC”), with the leadership of JUSUN, the NBA and other stakeholders in attendance, JUSUN resolved to suspend the strike action in the interest of lawyers and members of the public who have particularly borne the brunt of the strike action. **Hence, the announcement made by JUSUN a few hours ago, suspending the strike action, at the end of an emergency meeting of its National Executive Council.**

In a bid to address concerns raised by JUSUN on the bona fides and commitment of the State Governors to meeting their part of the obligations under the negotiated agreement, the NJC has set up a Monitoring Committee which is to ensure that the Governors do not renege from their financial and ancillary commitments, which influenced JUSUN’s decision to suspend the strike. The Monitoring Committee is made up of (i) HRH Justice Sidi Bage (Chairman); (ii) the President of the National Industrial Court; (iii) the Chief Judge of Abia State; (iv) the NBA President; and (v) Dr. Muiz Banire, SAN.

There is no question that the last ten weeks have been particularly challenging for many of our members, as a result of the now suspended strike action. To this end, permit me to place on record my total appreciation to our members, the leadership of the various branches of the NBA and to all those who showed remarkable doggedness throughout the duration of this very unfortunate episode in our history as a profession and a nation. It is my hope that these sacrifices will contribute towards our quest for a more independent and efficient judiciary in Nigeria.

While we express optimism never to tread this path again, please be assured that, regardless of any misgivings or shortcomings in the process, the NBA will continue to engage with the State Governors and JUSUN, towards a holistic resolution of the issues that necessitated the industrial action in the first instance.

I thank you for your attention.

**OLUMIDE AKPATA**  
President  
9<sup>th</sup> June 2021

#### NATIONAL OFFICERS:

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