

TO MEMBERS OF THE BODY

Alhaji Abdullahi Ibrahim, OFR, CON.

The Trustee,

Body of Senior Advocates of Nigeria,

Julius Nyere Crescent,

Asokoro,

Abuja

Dear Sir,

NBA- LEADERSHIP

I forward herewith sir my memo to chief T.J.O Okpoko SAN, Past President of the Nigerian Bar Association for your perusal and necessary consideration.

I thank you sir for the honour to be.

Yours faithfully,


Asiwaju Adegboyega Awomolo, SAN

Cc. ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE BOSAN

Grateful, very urgent consideration and necessary steps to stem the tide.

CHIEF T.J.O OKPOKO SAN, LIFE BENCHER

NBA. HER FUTURE.

Good morning my Senior and High Chief. Peace of God be with you Sir. I am sure you are following the developments in the NBA concerning the forthcoming election of officers in July. Permit me to remind you of your often reference to the prime importance of the Legal Profession and its leadership.

You have never failed at all public speeches at formal functions to extol the virtue of leaders past and present of the NBA. Legal profession is one of the oldest, most respected and revered professions in this country. Lawyers by culture and ethics cherish rank and seniority. You will recall sir that Dr Mudiaga Odje, SAN (of blessed memory) Past President of the Nigeria Bar Association, at the Jos Plenary Conference in 1998 called and challenged the members of the Inner Bar, to take hold of the leadership of the Bar to avoid the occurrence of what happened in Port Harcourt in 1992 that paralyzed the Bar Association from 1992-1998. Since you became the President of the reformed NBA in 1998, and to avoid what happened in Port Harcourt in 1992, all successors to the office of the President have been Senior Advocates of Nigeria.

The gains are enormous both at national and international fora. NBA is not just a social club or ordinary society, it is a conservative professional body with strong ethical values of seniority, integrity, respectability and good name as core values to the profession for leadership position not wealth or other primordial sentiment.

Since the death of Chief Richard O Akinjide, SAN you are the most active Senior, Past President of the Bar and one of the surviving senior members of the Inner Bar who has good knowledge of the culture and values of the Bar. I believe you cannot afford to look away or be unconcerned about the future and the leadership of the NBA.

With respect, I believe you need to urgently call a meeting of the Past Presidents of the NBA and do all within your powers to preserve the integrity,

honour and respectability of the Office of the President of the NBA. In recent time, unfortunately the Government did a grave damage to the integrity of the office of the NBA President, by initiating criminal prosecution against the holder of the office of the President.

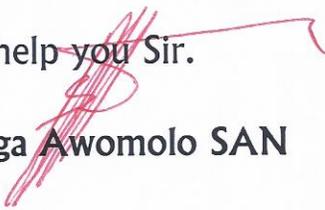
What I hear is unannounced but powerful and potent revolutionary move by our junior colleagues who are very much in larger numbers to wrestle the office of the NBA from the rank of SAN. That in my view will be unfortunate for the rank. To the members of the public a ridicule of the rank and office of the President of the NBA. We can see other professions who followed our precedent of putting their first eleven to lead their Associations. You may have noticed that the member of the inner Bar do not contest for the office of Chairmen of over 120 branches Nation Wide.

I very sincerely bless God, the most High and most able father, who gave me and other committed and dedicated members of the legal profession, from all the branches to revive and restore the Bar Association back to life after its "death" from 1992-1998 following the inconclusive Annual Bar conference in Port Harcourt.

Permit me the modesty of saying that: God in His infinite mercies gave you the opportunity to lead the Bar Association after my time as Chairman of all Chairmen and Secretaries of the then 44 branches. It is on record that you and your team performed excellently well as leaders of the foremost professional Organization in Nigeria. You, courageously as a SAN and President of the Bar, looked at the powers that be directly in the face. You asserted your rank and leadership of the Bar at NJC and other fora. You successfully conducted election of officers and handed over to another Senior Advocate of Nigeria. The Bar has since then been led by SAN.

Sir, I am of the strong belief that you must do your best to keep the tradition of the rank and seniority that helped you and all those who came after you. It will be a great failure of leadership for the Senior Advocate to surrender leadership to outer Bar when there are willing and able Senior Advocates.

May God help you Sir.


Adegboyega Awomolo SAN