



# **ADDRESS TO THE BODY OF BENCHERS**

**BY:**

***PROF. ISA HAYATU CHIROMA, SAN, FCI Arb, FICMC***  
**DIRECTOR-GENERAL, NIGERIAN LAW SCHOOL**

**AT THE PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR  
CALL TO THE NIGERIAN BAR**

**AT THE MULTIPURPOSE HALL, NIGERIAN LAW  
SCHOOL HEADQUARTERS, BWARI, ABUJA**

**26, 27 & 28 NOVEMBER, 2019**

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**DIRECTOR-GENERAL, NIGERIAN LAW SCHOOL,**  
**AT THE PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CALL**  
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**NIGERIAN LAW SCHOOL HEADQUARTERS, BWARI, ABUJA**  
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The Chairman of the Body of Benchers, and The Chief Justice of Nigeria,  
Honourable Dr. Justice I. T. Muhammad, Life Bencher,

The Vice Chairman of the Body of Benchers, Mr. O.C.J. Okocha, MFR,  
SAN, Life Bencher,

The Immediate Past Chairman of the Body of Benchers, Alhaji Bashir  
Dalhatu, Life Bencher,

The Honourable The Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of  
Justice, Mr. Abubakar Malami, SAN,

Past Chairmen of the Body of Benchers,

The Chairman of the Council of Legal Education, Chief Emeka Ngige, SAN

Distinguished and Honourable Members of the Body of Benchers,

Honourable Justices and Grand Khadis here present,

The President of the Nigerian Bar Association, Mr. Paul Usoro, SAN,

Members of the Inner and Utter Bar,

Distinguished Senators,

Honourable Members of the Federal House of Representatives,

Executive Governors here present,

Our Royal Fathers,

Proud Parents, Guardians and Relations,

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Press,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you all to this memorable ceremony, for the admission to the Nigerian Bar of successful candidates at the August 2019 Bar Final Examinations, conducted by the Nigerian Law School under the supervision of the Council of Legal Education.

The knowledge acquired and expressed by candidates assembled here ready for Call to the Nigerian Bar brings great joy to the entire Nigerian Law School Community.

After your Call to the Bar, you will become new wigs of the Nigerian Bar and proud members of our noble profession. I rejoice and congratulate you all for your hard work, dedication and steadfastness. To all our proud parents, guardians and relations, I invite you all to share in the success and joy of these candidates we are celebrating today.

Let me also register with gladness the huge joy expressed by our host community, over the gracious approval of distinguished and honourable members of the Body of Benchers for bringing back Call to the Bar Ceremonies to Bwari, which hitherto was the only colourful events looked up to and experienced by all residents of the number one Area Council in the Federal Capital Territory. These Ceremonies will no doubt bring about commercial boom to the business group and as expected reawaken economic, social and cultural heritage potentials of the people.

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COUNCIL OF LEGAL EDUCATION AND NIGERIAN LAW SCHOOL**

The Council of Legal Education was established by the Legal Education Act 1962 to provide Vocational Training for law graduates aspiring for Call to the Nigerian Bar.

The Nigerian Law school which is the training arm of the Council of Legal Education is a multi-Campus institution; with headquarters in Abuja and Campuses in Lagos, Enugu, Kano, Yenagoa and Yola. From these locations, we train over six thousand (6,000) students annually.

## **PHENOMENAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NIGERIAN LAW SCHOOL**

Without sounding immodest in this auspicious event, you all will agree that the Nigerian Law School has had a phenomenal growth and development, suffice this to say that from inception, the Nigerian Law School has been solely responsible for the vocational and practical training of University law graduates for admission to the Nigerian Bar. From its humble beginning in 1963 with 8 students at its one block Campus at 213A, Igboere Road, Lagos, the Nigerian Law School has grown to a six-Campus Institution spread across the country with a yearly intake of well over 6,000 (six thousand) students as stated above.

This is a testimony to the healthy astronomical growth, not just of the institution, but also in legal profession. In about 56 years of its existence, the School has had uninterrupted session as there has never been any incident of a closure of the Institution on account of student unrest, strike action by staff or for any other reason.

This is a rare quality in academic institutions in Nigeria today and therefore deserves commendation and emulation by other institutions of learning.

For these years, there has never been, at the Nigerian Law School, any incident or report of secret cultism, a menace which has ravaged our higher institutions of learning, and the secret is the insistence of the Council of Legal Education on the good character of the students as a condition for both admission into the Law School and recommendation for Call to the Bar.

The Nigerian Law School has contributed to training of an entire arm of government - the judiciary. It is a tribute to the School that all Judges of the various Courts in Nigeria (including the Chief Justice of Nigeria) are products of the Nigerian Law School.

Likewise, the Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, all States' Attorneys-General and Commissioner for Justice and Law Officers serving in their Chambers are all products of the School. It is also significant that a large number of members of various tiers of legislative arm of government in the country are products of the School.

The School has also contributed to the training of the legal man-power for our sister African countries like the Republic of the Gambia, the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Republic of Cameroun. A number of countries from East and West Africa have visited the Law School to solicit information and assistance on the establishment and development of the Law School in their various countries. Just recently the Nigerian Law School received a high powered delegation from the Law Development Centre, Uganda, who were in Nigeria on bench marking and working visit to the Nigerian Law School.

The products of the School have commanding presence in other sphere of public and private sector such as the Military, Police, Customs, Immigration, the Oil and Gas sector, Banking and Finance, Insurance and the Corporate world in general, Professors/Lecturers in the Universities and other tertiary institutions.

Some of these products have achieved profound feat of getting to the top of their career nationally and internationally.

In fact, many serving Governors in Nigeria are products of the Nigerian Law School, and many more past governors and a Head of State, Chief Ernest Shonekan, GCFR.

## **VISIBLE AND CONSCIOUS REFORMS IN THE NIGERIAN LAW SCHOOL**

Mr. Chairman Sir, kindly permit me to use this medium to report on the activities in the Nigerian Law School especially on some of the visible reforms in the last one and half (1<sub>1/2</sub>) years under my watch as the Director-General.

Given the poor state of physical infrastructures in the Headquarters and Campuses, we embarked on massive renovations of all Students Hostels, Lecture Halls and Dining Hall.

Accommodation needs of students are being addressed on a continuous basis; for example, we have just taken delivery of a block of 40 rooms Hostel completed in our Yola Campus. Also this year's capital release is for the construction of a similar hostel in Yenagoa Campus.

The staff of the Council of Legal Education, Nigerian Law School have also benefited from these renovations, as most of their offices and houses, are now wearing new and improved looks.

To boost portable water supply in all the Students' Hostels and entire Law School community, we have just completed installation of three (3) new industrial boreholes at the Headquarters, Bwari. Also, additional boreholes have been procured for the dedicated sites in other Campuses. We just took delivery of an additional 1,000 KVA generator to improve electricity needs of the School and to prepare for this Call to the Bar Ceremonies.

Cooling systems in the students lecture halls, Library and other academic facilities which hitherto was in a bad state, have been attended to and now almost all our cooling systems are performing at full and near optimal capacity. Training and retraining of staff are being taken on a large scale

### **RENEWED CALL TO SUPPORT THE NIGERIAN LAW SCHOOL ADVANCEMENT OFFICE**

As reported in my November, 2018 address to the distinguished Body of Benchers, we have continued to experience robust attempts and positive linkages with the Alumni i.e. various classes/sets of the Nigerian Law School, other participating stake holders and the concerned public, all these are aimed at continuous development and sustenance of resources both human and physical to meet the ever increasing demand of the Nigerian Law School community.

Let me respectfully reiterate that all public academic institutions like ours cannot depend solely on Government alone, but will always seek interventions and assistance through structured and legitimate means.

This includes a network of "giving back" to our alma mater, contributions from public and private sectors initiatives as well as corporate social responsibility dynamics in form of donations, foundations, scholarships and grants, etc.

From the foregoing, May I humbly appeal for more understanding and co-operation from the Legal Community, Corporate Organizations, parents and guardian as well as public spirited individuals in this very important regard.

## **PRESENTATION OF THE AUGUST 2019 BAR FINAL EXAMINATIONS RESULT – OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE**

Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the Body of Benchers, I will be presenting at this Call to the Bar ceremonies a total of 4,456 candidates, who were successful at the August 2019 Bar Final examinations as well as 3 candidates from previous Bar Final Examinations.

I am also happy report on the outstanding performance recorded by the candidates as seen in the Executive Summary below:

### **1. General Performance**

- (a) Total number of students who participated at the Examinations: **5,689**.
- (b) Total number of successful candidates: **4,456**.

### **2. OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE**

**147 (2.58%) Candidates were graded in First Class.**

### **3. OTHERS**

Candidates graded in **Second Class Upper: 741 (13.03%)**.  
Candidates graded in **Second Class Lower: 2,247 (39.50%)**.  
Candidates in **Pass: 1,321 (23.22%)**.

I wish to assure all of you that we shall remain the gate keepers of our noble profession. Be rest assured as teachers, we will continue to uphold the standard and integrity of the Bar.

The general performance, which is well above average and very good, justifies the huge investment and sacrifice made by all concerned. We promise to sustain and even surpass the attained record with a zeal to continuously progress in all we do as long as our students are willing to excel, we shall avail them of the opportunity to achieve their goals.

## **TO THE NEW WIGS**

I sincerely congratulate our candidates for Call to the Bar today. I also felicitate with their parents, guardians and relations on being part of this memorable and auspicious occasion.

No doubt, today is a day of great joy for you all, having come this far in realizing your dreams of becoming members of the noble profession of law.

My prayer for you all is that the Almighty God will grant you all rewarding careers at the Bar. I enjoin you to make the best of the legal profession, since it is your free will to belong to it. You must also ensure strict adherence to its norms and ethics. We wish you the best for the future.

## **SINCERE APPRECIATION**

May I at this time respectfully seek the leave of Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Body of Benchers, to thank our supervisory Ministry - the Federal Ministry of Justice headed by the Honourable Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Mr. Abubakar Malami, SAN for the support always given to us as an institution.

I will also wish to thank the Chairman and Members of the Council of Legal Education, our parent body for their support and guidance at all times.

The same appreciation goes to the Chairman and members of the Body of Benchers for their constant support and encouragement. I must also mention the Secretariat of the distinguished body for its co-operation with us at all times.

Finally, with all sense of duty and responsibility, I wish to commend the excellent work ethics of the Academic and non-academic members of staff of the Nigerian Law School, who work tirelessly and most times beyond the call of duty to ensure that the task of producing the legal man-power needs of our country is sufficiently attained.



## **AFFIRMATION OF LEARNING AND CHARACTER**

The Distinguished Chairman of the Body of Benchers Sir, distinguished members of the Body, may I now present to you, the aspirants here assembled this morning/afternoon for Call to the Nigerian Bar. They wish to and are eligible to become members of the learned and noble profession of Law. They have successfully completed the vocational training at the Nigerian Law School as prescribed by the Legal Education Act.

They have all taken the prescribed examinations as well as the dining terms and met all other required conditions set by the Council of Legal Education. I am happy to affirm that they all exhibited good manners and decorum during their training. They have also been groomed in the best ethics and ethos of our noble profession.

Together with other academic and non-academic members of staff of the Nigerian Law School, I have closely monitored these aspirants during their training and I vouch for each and every one of them as men and women of learning and character as demanded by your august body.

The screening committee of your distinguished body has carefully perused the records of each of the aspirants and found them worthy to be presented for Call to the Nigerian Bar. I attest that they are fit and proper persons for Call and admission to the Nigerian Bar.

Mr. Chairman, may I respectfully and in my honour present to the Distinguished Body of Benchers, the following applicants 4,455 (from the total list of qualified applicants) and 3 from previous Call here present, for Call to the Bar at this ceremony.

Thank you for this privilege and God bless.

**PROF. ISA HAYATU CHIROMA, SAN, *FCIArb, FICMC***

**DIRECTOR-GENERAL, NIGERIAN LAW SCHOOL**

**BWARI, ABUJA.**

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