



**NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION
2022 NATIONAL OFFICERS ELECTION**

OGAGA EMOGHWANRE, AICMC.
Manifesto

FOR THE POSITION OF NATIONAL PUBLICITY SECRETARY

**CREATING AN INNOVATIVE NBA BRAND,
THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION.** 

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NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION

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CREATING AN INNOVATIVE NBA BRAND,
THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION. 



INTRODUCTION:

Dearest Colleagues,
My name is Ogaga Emoghwanre. I hail from Ethiope East Local Government Area of Delta State. I was admitted to the bar on the 2nd of December, 2010, and I have been practising law since then.

I am a member of the Benin Bar and have worked with the Nigerian Bar Association in a variety of roles at both the branch and national levels. With every sense of modesty, I can be described as a quintessential “Bar man”, an attribute that has prepared me for this noble undertaking.

For context, I have served as a member of the National Executive Council of our great Association, particularly under the presidency of Paul Usoro, SAN and under the incumbent Olumide Akpata administration. At various

times during the presidency of Okey Wali, SAN; Augustine Alegeh, SAN and A.B. Mahmood, SAN, I served as an Observer at the National Executive Council meetings of the Nigerian Bar Association where I had the privilege to be involved in the making of some of the significant policies that have shaped, the legal profession in Nigeria and the Nigerian Bar Association at large.

I currently wear three hats as the Publicity Secretary, Nigerian Bar Association, Benin Branch, the Secretary of the NBA National Welfare Committee and The Special Assistant to the NBA President. In these capacities, I have had the privilege of serving our profession at the local and national levels and was instrumental in the



negotiation of some of the welfare programmes of the Olumide Akpata Administration.

Finally, in my capacity as the Special Assistant to the 30th NBA President, Mr. Olumide Akpata, I have had the privilege of coordinating the activities of the 128 Branches of the NBA, I have seen first-hand the workings of the Nigerian Bar Association, and properly appreciate the challenges bedevilling it, particularly as it relates to information management both at the local and national levels.

The experiences I have acquired while serving our great Association in the above capacities are the inspiration and conviction for seeking to serve as the National Publicity Secretary of the Nigerian Bar Association. The importance of public relations in today's sophisticated society cannot be overemphasized. In the context of the Nigerian Bar Association, it is probably more pertinent; coming at a time of great





scepticism and cynicism amongst the general public of the efforts of the NBA in fulfilling its mandate both to its members and the Nigerian people at large.

While I acknowledge the efforts of the current occupant of the office of the Publicity Secretary of our great Association in projecting the image of the Bar and constantly engaging critical segments of the Nigerian state on the various interventions of the Bar, it goes without saying that this tempo must be sustained and surpassed.

With my stints in the broadcast, entertainment and print media for over twenty years, wherein I have served in these capacities and at other levels of the Nigerian Bar Association, I am convinced that I have the wherewithal, material and otherwise to manage the image of our great Association.

With your support and cooperation, I do not doubt that we will make our great Association proud if elected as your National Publicity Secretary.

VISION/MISSION

To effectively and timeously communicate to our teeming members the activities of the national and sub-national organs of the Nigerian Bar Association; to project an image of the Bar that aligns with the visions of our Founding Fathers and the expectations of our members in particular and Nigerians at large.

MY PHILOSOPHICAL THRUST

CREATING AN INNOVATIVE NBA BRAND THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

THE STATUTORY MANDATE OF THE OFFICE OF THE PUBLICITY SECRETARY

The role of the Publicity Secretary of our great Association is as encapsulated in Clause 5(i) of the Nigerian Bar Association Constitution (as amended in 2021) as follows:

- i. To ensure adequate and prompt publicity of the activities of the Association;



- ii. To present a good and progressive image of the Association to the public;
- iii. To issue releases and statements on matters of general interest to the Association and the public after consultation with the President or the National Executive Council or the National Executive Committee; and
- iv. To perform all other duties as may be assigned to him/her by the President or the National Executive Council or the National Executive Committee or the Annual General Meeting.

In line with the above core functions of the Publicity Secretary, and guided by my Communication Agenda, I will be your information merchant, at a time when information has become a critical tool in our daily lives as professionals and members of a global professional community.



AGENDA/PROGRAMME OF ACTION

1. Information Communication Philosophy:

In its ordinary usage, "communication" refers to all the means that serve to bind human beings together, especially through the spread of information by mass media such as the internet, radio, television, press, motion pictures, etc. In a philosophical sense, it refers to the process of intellectual intercourse between individuals or groups, resulting in the transmission and interchange of information, experiences, affections, goods, and services. As the Publicity Secretary, the Publicity Team and I shall define, and operate on the bases of a communication and Information management Philosophy that best serves the corporate image of the Nigerian Bar Association. In the dissemination of information to our members, emphasis shall constantly be on **VALUE**; so that only Information that adds **VALUE** to the career and other social commitments of our members enjoy priority.



2. **Publicity and Communication Directorate:**

The mandate of the NBA continues to grow with the growing interest of not just Lawyers, but also Nigerians at large in the affairs of the NBA. While the NBA President is the official Spokesperson of the Association, the day to day official engagements of the NBA President and other members of the National Executives deserves authentic and timely communication to our members. Achieving this requires the effort of a dedicated team who will receive, process and communicate highlights of these engagements and undertakings to our members. Consequently, I will set up a campaign Directorate comprising the Assistant Publicity Secretary and the Publicity Teams across the 128 Branches who will together, work in harmonious synergy to effectively engage our members on issues affecting the profession, and our Association at large.



3. Putting the Bar in the Front Burner:

Until recently, the perception of the Bar both amongst lawyers and members of the general public left much to be desired. Lack of effective communication and Information management system led to an unfortunate state of inertia and disillusionment amongst members so much that the NBA lost every shred of relevance it once enjoyed. The recent success being recorded in the Olumide Akpata administration, no doubt, deserves consolidation. To be sure, we cannot afford to dampen the mood of our members who are beginning to rediscover a new sense of hope and promise in our great Association. To this end, I



will consistently ensure that a positive image of the Bar is projected at all times through incisive press releases, National Television interviews, newspaper features of the various strides of the NBA leadership; interview series with dedicated media platforms, etc, in a way that keeps the Association in the front burner. For more reach and traction, I will also partner with dedicated law blogs and other media outlets to ensure that the interventions of the Bar both to lawyers and members of the general public receive objective and timely media attention.

4. **A robust Branches-Information Synergy:**

Having worked in the past two years as Branch Coordinator in my capacity as Special Assistant to the



NBA President, Olumide Akpata, I can attest that the root and spine of our Association are in the Branches. They must be carried along by the National Organ of the Association to function as a coherent unit. Although individual Branch administrations have their respective Publicity Teams, so much of the engagements and activities at the Branch level have remained localized within the Branches. In the 21st century, I believe this should change to a considerable extent. Consequently, we shall work with the Publicity Teams of the 128 Branches to mainstream key activities and opportunities resident within the Branches for the benefit of members who do not ordinarily practice in such Branches, but who are eligible for such programs, activities or opportunities.



5. The Bar-Quarterly Newsletter:

We shall introduce a quarterly newsletter within the second quarter of being elected into office. This newsletter which would be published and disseminated in soft gloss copies will feature key engagements of the National Executives for the period under review, recent case laws from the Court of Appeal/Supreme Court and key engagements of branches in simple and straightforward language with photographs depicting highlights of these engagements. The Newsletter will also feature short opinion pieces on key developments within the Bar for the period under review, job opportunities, jokes and comedy and Bar-related advertorials. I expect that the newsletter would present in one suite, all that our members need to know respecting the Association for each quarter.



6. Efficient Feedback system:

To ensure a robust and sustainable feedback system, we shall ensure that all the various media channels of the Association are actively engaged 24/7 to provide members with guidance and clarifications on all Bar-related matters. Where these cannot be immediately resolved, we shall institutionalize a follow-up system that ensures that the queries of members are met, and their questions on all issues concerning the Bar are fully addressed as soon as practicable.

7. Website/Effective Use of Social Media:

Working closely with the General Secretary, we shall ensure that the NBA website remains engaged with information and that issues associated with interfacing with the website are immediately addressed. We will continue with the effective utilization of existing social media channels of the Association: Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to



engage our members; especially the millennials and those in the Diaspora in particular, and Nigerians at large. I will also ensure that I belong to WhatsApp groups of the 128 Branches of the Association to ensure seamless dissemination of information.

8. **Information management:**

The democratization of information has been a blessing but it has also led to a scourge of fake news. For some reason, harbingers of fake news see the legal profession as a soft target; perhaps due to the honour and prestige that is attached to the profession, and by extension, the Nigerian Bar Association. One of the few ways to effectively address the menace of fake news is to objectively state the facts in a way that unmasks the falsehood inherent in a contrived narrative. This, we shall constantly look out for, and immediately address to retain the good image of the Association, in the minds of unsuspecting members of the general public.



9. On Information Dissemination

Information dissemination is critical to the positive advancement of any organization. If given the opportunity to serve I will put in place an interactive digital system where members can and obtain real-time information on matters affecting the NBA.

10. On NBA-ICLE Publicity

I will work with the NBA-ICLE to create a modern Continuing Legal Education information management platform where members can take courses at their own time and have certificates automatically issued at the end of a session.

11. On Branding the NBA

If given the opportunity to serve as your National Publicity Secretary. I shall update the directory of members of the NBA and seek an integration of clean



membership data into the digital NBA infrastructure such that information on Nigerian lawyers is available to anyone who may need it.

12. On Efficient Complaint Mechanism

If given the opportunity to serve as your National Publicity Secretary, I will superintend the creation of a complaint mechanism platform in every court in Nigeria, through which lawyers and litigants can share real-time complaints about the attitude of court official(s) from court rooms directly to the NBA National Secretariat.

13. Speaking Truth to Power

If elected as the National Publicity Secretary, I will make common cause with the President of the Nigerian Bar Association to speak truth to power and ensure that the NBA remains the vanguard of the peoples's movement. I shall ensure that the NBA stand up for what is right and speak truth to



government, its agencies, business and religious institutions frontally, irrespective of who is involved. This, I am determined to do.

Truth is hard, propaganda is cheap. it can be indeed difficult to speak truth to power because of the circumstances in Nigeria, but not any more. we shall never be afraid to raise our voices for honesty, truth and compassion against injustice in Nigeria.

To say nothing is to say something. You either denounce whatever you are not in agreement with, or you are taken to support it.



CONCLUSION

Alvin Adams (1804-1877) an 18th century American Diplomat once retorted that 'public relations are a key component of any operation in this day of instant communications and rightly inquisitive citizens. If public communications were accorded such a premium over 200 years ago when human civilization was still in its early stages, one can only imagine what importance it holds in this era of information democratisation.

As the largest Bar Association in Africa, the Nigerian Bar Association is an international brand to be reckoned with. Accordingly, its publication communications structure must function optimally to meet the needs of a global community.



I have offered to serve our Association in this capacity with the full consciousness and awareness of what is required of the Office. Hence, if elected, we shall hit the ground running from day one. My over 20 years of being a member of the fourth estate of the realm, fully in active broadcasting and media consulting and my 10 years of active legal practice have been shared almost *pari passu*, with service to the Bar. Indeed, with the benefit of hindsight, my life has been about public service; a commitment which I consider a token of contribution towards impacting humanity and leaving our world better than we met it.

I am therefore asking for an opportunity to be at your service, to take our Noble profession to a new cradle; and our Association, to an Olympian height where its members are fully involved in its day-to-day activities; and her leaders, conscious of this eternal vigilance of her members.





MY PLEDGE

I pledge to execute my duties with exemplary discipline and dedication to duty. I commit to devoting every waking moment to completing the office's daily tasks to the best of my ability. At the end of my tenure, I will ensure that our Association's image, which the Office of the Publicity Secretary is charged with protecting and polishing, will be greatly improved.

In exchange for your support, I promise to bring a fresh approach to the Association's Publicity Secretariat. I commit to leading a revolution that will not only boost members' and the general public's faith in the NBA but will also improve the NBA's image.

I promise to do my best to serve you with all of my heart and abilities. I shall strive for perfection while remaining humble. I'll set an example for others to follow. Promises should be made with the intention of keeping them. This has been my life's mantra. As I work with all stakeholders for an Association that delivers on its commitments, I aim to stick to it.

**I believe that by working together with the Association's leadership, particularly the President, who also serves as the NBA's Chief Spokesperson, we can make this Association great.
So help me God!**

OGAGA EMOGHWANRE, AICMC.





***CREATING AN INNOVATIVE NBA BRAND,
THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION.***



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NATIONAL PUBLICITY SECRETARY**

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