

**NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION – LAGOS BRANCH  
SECRETARY’S COMPREHENSIVE REPORT ON THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION HELD  
ON THURSDAY, THE 10<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2018 AT THE  
CORONATION HALL, GOVERNMENT HOUSE, KANO STATE**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The National Executive Committee (“NEC”) of the Nigerian Bar Association (“NBA”) held its quarterly NEC Meeting between the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2018.
- 1.2 The Lagos Branch of the NBA was represented by Ikechukwu Uwanna (Secretary), Bolatumi Animashaun (Vice Chairman) and Martins Ogunleye (NEC Representative).
- 1.3 In view of the Law week of the Lagos Branch of the NBA which coincided with the NEC meeting the delegates to NEC Meeting arrived on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May, 2018 for the NEC meeting.

## **2.0 COMMENCEMENT**

The NEC meeting was called to order by the President at exactly 10:26 am with the NBA Prayer taken by Rabana, SAN. The President welcomed NEC members to the Kano NEC meeting and thanked everyone for taking the time to attend. Mallam Yusuf Ali, SAN moved for the adoption of the agenda for the meeting.

## **2.1 CORRECTION TO THE MINUTES**

The following important correction was discussed and made to the Minutes:

- i. Jim Abel, Secretary, Aguata branch referred Mr. president to paragraph 11.2 on page 30 of the minutes of the previous meeting on the NBA Constitution Review Committee. He stated that at the last NEC meeting in Ilorin it was agreed that the NBA constitution review committee was to be given a period of 30 days to make its proposed constitution report available to branch leaders to present same to their respective branches for discussion and deliberations before it is thrown up for discussions at the NEC Meeting. He observed that that fact was not reflected in the minute. Hon. Nimi Walson-Jack, Past General Secretary of the NBA agreed with Jim Abel. He noted that 30 days period given to the Constitution review committee to make the said report available was in order for branches to familiarize themselves with the suggested amendments before they are discussed and passed at the current NEC Meeting. He pointed out that he had indeed moved a motion to that effect at the last meeting, yet it was not reflected in report of the proceedings regarding the Constitutional amendment in the minutes, neither was the report sent to the branches.
- ii. Chief Emeka Obegolu, past General Secretary also noted that apart from sending the report to the branches within 30 days from the date of NEC, what was discussed was that the KPMG report be sent to the Constitution

Review committee which will merge its recommendations into the review process and submit same to the Secretariat in 6 weeks.

- iii. The General Secretary of the NBA, Aaare Isiaka Olagunju Bello noted that the report was not made available to members because the Constitution Review Committee were yet to conclude their report, hence he could not send out an uncompleted report to branch leaders. He promised to make the report available once the committee forwards same to the secretariat. The President noted the corrections made by all and promised that the report will be sent out to the branches.

## **2.2 ADOPTION OF THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

In the absence of further corrections to the minutes, Mallam Yusuf Ali, SAN moved for the adoption of the previous minutes and was seconded by J. S. Okutepa, SAN.

## **3.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

3.1 **Legal Practitioners Bill:** On the new Legal Practitioners Act Bill sent to the Senate, the President reminded the meeting that it was agreed that the Bill be put on hold and further harmonized to suit the exigencies of the present time. He stated that the decision had been communicated to the leadership of the National Assembly and the leadership had requested that the amendments to the Bill be speedily undertaken and sent back to them.

3.2 **Report of the Technical Committee on Conference Planning (TCCP):** The Present informed the meeting that pursuant to the resolution of the NBANEC that he appoint the members of the TCCP to pilot the affairs of the NBA 2018 Annual General Conference of the Association and report back to them, he had indeed constituted the committee headed by Prof. Koyinsola Ajayi, SAN and the Committee had sent in their report and same will be presented in the course of the Meeting.

3.3 On the setting up of the Technical Committee of Conference Planning (TCCP), the General Secretary presented the names of those appointed into the Committee by the President and sought for NEC's approval to ratify the appointment.

Mallam Yusuf Ali, SAN moved for the ratification of the appointment of the members so appointed and same was seconded by Aare Olumuyiwa Akinboro, SAN.

### **Benue herdsmen/farmers crisis**

3.4 Mr. Emmanuel Agbakor, Chairman, Makurdi branch drew the attention of the house to paragraph 13.3 on page 33 of the NEC bundle where the NBA resolved to set up a Committee on the Benue herdsmen/farmers crisis. He asked that the house be briefed on the progress of the Committee in that regard as their duty was also to monitor the activities of the military counter force code named 'operation cat race' to ascertain the degree of human right abuses. This is because the killings in Benue

State have continued unabated and it seemed the NBA was treating the matter with levity.

The General Secretary informed the meeting that the President had visited Benue State on a fact finding mission on the issue and reported among other issues that the herdsmen and the farmers had resolved to live together harmoniously. He also stated that letters had been written to both Benue and Nasarawa State Governments on the issue and in the coming week, the NBA would follow up to find out the progress of things.

However, Mr. Agbakor disagreed with the General Secretary and pointed out that the NEC resolution to investigate the killings going on daily in Benue and the activities of the military operations in the State (Operation cat race) was after the President's visit to Benue State.

In response, the President admitted that the resolution was taken after his visit to Benue State. He however stressed that the fact that the resolution was not done is not to say that the NBA is not monitoring the crisis or trying to engage with all involved. He assured the Chairman of Makurdi Branch that he will go on to set up the Committee on the Benue crisis to investigate the issue around it and the activities of the military in the region as resolved.

#### **4.0 PRESIDENT'S SPEECH**

The President welcomed all NEC members to Kano State for the 7<sup>th</sup> National Executive Committee meeting of his administration.

He expressed appreciation to his Excellency the Governor of Kano State, Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje for the immense support and encouragement he and the entire people of Kano State had extended to him, supporting not only the branches of the Association in Kano but at the national level. He also appreciated the Governor of his support towards the hosting of the NEC meeting; he further appreciated the NBA Kano Branch for their industry.

The President commended the leadership of Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje and the great strides the State continues to make in its quest for development. He stated that Kano State in the last few years, both under the Governor's leadership and that of his predecessors had made tremendous progress in upgrading its infrastructure in road developments, urban expansion and renewal programs. He stated that there have been huge strides in the educational sector, in health, water supply and energy. (the building of two hydro-electric power plants in Tiga and Challawa which when completed will provide at least 13 Megawatts to augment the energy supply to the State. The President went on to commend the Governor on the peaceful atmosphere in the State noting that the State is regaining its status as a regional hub for industry and commerce. He also commended his efforts at

promoting the ease of doing business in the state and promoting the investment climate.

The President pointed out that in spite of these impressive strides, there were areas of concern. The first relates to the rancorous political atmosphere in the state which he pointed out is threatening the peaceful atmosphere in the State. He noted that Kano cannot consolidate its giant strides and emerge as a leader in social and economic development unless its political and social elite close ranks and establish a new culture of politics that focuses on development and promoting the wellbeing of citizens. He advised that the political elite must devise a new culture of tolerance, mutual respect and politics focused on the welfare of the citizens. He urged the Governor to play the role of a father in gathering all members of the political class together and pledged his support and that of well-meaning members of the association to assist in whatever way consistent with the Association's constitutional imperatives of being non- partisan.

Secondly, the President still canvassed for additional support both for the Ministry of Justice and the State Judiciary. He appealed to the Governor to renovate the High Court Complex commissioned in 1979 as it was in dire need of transformation and to major new investments in judicial infrastructure is needed to re-establish the State's leadership in this sector.

He appreciated the Attorney General and Commissioner of Justice for bringing in new vigour in the Ministry of Justice as there is much improvement in the morale of the staff and there is qualitative improvement in infrastructure.

He concluded his address by once more thanking His Excellency the Governor of Kano State for his continued support and for graciously accepting to attend the opening ceremony and declare the meeting open. He also thanked the Hon. Acting Chief Judge of Kano Justice Nurudeen Sagir Umar for his generous hospitality and also for gracing the occasion.

**Other highlights of the President's speech include as follows:**

**4.1 On State of the nation**

4.1.1 **Public Safety and Security:** The President expressed great concern that Nigeria is drifting into some state of near anarchy in many parts as various forms of communal conflicts, banditry and activities of insurgent groups have continued to lead to violence and loss of lives in many parts of the country. He condemned these killings and called on the Federal and State governments to do all within their powers to bring this carnage to an end. He also called on the Federal Government of Nigeria to rise to the occasion to tackle the rising wave of crime and killings in Nigeria and to be more proactive in the prevention of these criminal killings rather than taking some reactive measures after the occurrence of the criminal Act of murder.

- 4.1.2 As in the past, he drew drawn attention to the poor quality of governance even at the Federal level; he frowned at the seeming dissonance amongst various institutions, pointing out that many critical institutions seem to be working at cross-purposes and the much-desired synergy within the administration is absent. He noted that many decisions are unnecessarily delayed to the detriment of national interest. He stated that of grave concern is the fact that almost six months into the financial year, the 2018 national budget is yet to be passed due to disagreement largely between National Assembly and the Executive. Similarly many critical departments and agencies of government remain without their statutory heads or boards either because government is slow or unable to act or because of disagreement between the executive and legislative branches of government. He cited the case of the Securities and Exchange Commission which has been without a board for most of the life of this administration and now without a substantive head for several months since the interdiction of the former Director General. He sadly noted that this state of affairs is eroding confidence in the Nigeria's capital market with huge negative consequence on the national economy. The situation is unacceptable.
- 4.1.3 The President also noted that the judicial branch of government has not been spared from this dissonance as more than 6 months after the recommendations by the National Judicial Council for appointment of 13 Justices of the Court of Appeal in November 2017, the President is yet to act on these recommendations. Similarly, several recommendations for appointments to the Bench of the Federal High Court and other Federal courts are still pending many months after these recommendations to the President. He maintained that acting on the recommendations of the NJC is not a matter of presidential discretion, to be exercised whenever the President deems fit, but is a constitutional duty. Whilst the President is not bound to accept the recommendations, failure to act is a breach of the Constitution. He therefore called on President Buhari to act without further delay pointing out that his failure to act is causing unnecessary delays and avoidable negative consequences on the administration of justice across the country. On this note, the President gave notice of the intention of the Nigerian Bar Association to take legal action should this constitutional dereliction continue.
- 4.1.4 The President also expressed words of caution concerning the next round of the National elections drawing closer. He stressed that every agency concerned with the elections has a duty to maintain strict professionalism and discharge their mandate within the bounds of the constitution. He stated strongly that the election management body that is the Independent National Electoral Commission, various security agencies, including the police, the military, the EFCC and the ICPC etc. must all discharge their respective duties in a professional manner and remain loyal to the Constitution. He warned that none of these agencies should become a tool for furthering any partisan political mission or goal. He further stated that the NBA will constitute a Task Force comprising very patriotic independent senior lawyers to monitor the conduct of all agencies with functions relating to the National Election

and to advise necessary action to ensure that the integrity of the electoral process is not undermined.

4.1.5 Finally, on the state of the nation, he stated that the NBA has of recent been inundated with complaints about incidents of police misconduct and brutality directed against lawyers in the exercise of their professional duties. He frowned at this and reiterated that lawyers are an integral part of the administration of justice, an independent legal profession, that is able to perform its duties without hindrance is a pillar of any democratic society. He therefore maintained that the NBA will therefore not allow this independence to be undermined. He called on the leadership of the Nigeria Police to accord due respect to members of the Bar and ensure that this recent spate of incidents is brought to an end. He assured all that his administration will continue to educate her members on the need to maintain proper decorum and protocols in the discharge of their duties and must also not attempt to obstruct the police from the exercise of their lawful duties.

#### 4.2 **Adoption of the President's Speech**

A motion for the adoption of the President's speech for discussion was moved by J. S. Okutepa, SAN and seconded by Mrs. Linda Bala.

4.3 Reacting to the President's speech, NEC observed and/or resolved as follows:

1.) NEC commended the NBA president for noting that the Nigerian President was breaching the Constitution by failing to act on the NJC's recommendation on appointment of judges, running the country at a rather slow pace with no sense of urgency and for suggesting that the NBA set up a committee to monitor the forth coming 2019 general elections. NEC sadly noted that people were being killed on a daily basis in Nigeria, yet the President and Governors do not care about the lives as they show no concern or respect for the dead by visiting the sites. NEC observed that this attitude is the major cause of the absence of patriotism in the Nation and citizens feel there is nothing to die for.

NEC warned that should the President of the nation fail to change his style of governance, the NBA would take active steps to compel him to do so. It was therefore resolved that the NBA set up a machinery to write to President Buhari to confirm the Court of Appeal justices as nominated by the NJC and a legal team be set up headed by J. B. Daudu, SAN to compel the President to act if by the end of the week nothing is being done in respect of the NJC's recommendation on appointment of Court of Appeal justices.

2.) NEC observed that the NBA National Secretariat's response to police brutality of lawyers left much to be desired. The President assured the meeting that the National Secretariat will take up the matters of police brutality to lawyers by speaking directly to the Inspector General of Police to have it resolved. He

promised to report back to the meeting on the progress made. He also advised the branches to always report these matters to the National Secretariat for proper documentation even if resolved.

NEC also advised members to step up litigation against the Police when they are harassed.

- 3.) NEC expressed approval of the President's open declaration that he had no favoured candidate for the NBA forthcoming elections. They however pointed out that some members of staff of the President at the NBA Secretariat were not non-partisan as they are openly campaigning for a Presidential candidate, they called for the discipline or outright removal of the concerned staff.

The President directed that all such complaints be brought to his attention/forwarded to him so he can take action. He stated that he had already addressed some of the issues and disciplined the affected staff. He further stated that he had set up an electoral committee made up of people with integrity and he was confident that they would conduct credible elections.

Pursuant to the President's speech and upon a motion moved by Lawal Rabana SAN and seconded by Mrs. Linda Bala, NEC resolved that a task force be set up made up of eminent lawyers who are not partisan or politically exposed, to monitor the elections, agencies and political outfits/politicians from now till the elections to act as a watch to ensure that Nigeria has a free and fair elections. NEC cautioned that in the selection of members for the committee as they maybe lawyers who are partisan in politics and may not handle the assigned task without bias.

## **5.0 NATIONAL SECRETARIAT REPORT**

The General Secretary presented the secretariat report on behalf of other National Officers.

- 8.0.1 The General Secretary apologized for the error in omission in the NEC bundle of the announcement of the appointment of Mrs. Ramatu Umar Bako as the Executive Director of the Secretariat following the resignation of the previous Director. He assured NEC that the process for her appointment was very thorough and in line with the established requirements and that her appointment took effect from the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of April, 2018. He read her profile to the house and presented her to members.

## **8.1 Adoption of the Secretariat Report**

D. O. C. Ezeigwe moved the motion for the adoption of the Secretariat Report and was seconded by Hassan, Esq of Ikeja Branch.

- 8.1.1 Commenting on the Secretariat Report:

- i. Nimi Walson-Jackson from Port-Harcourt branch pointed out that the nomenclature for the office of the Executive director first be rectified before being approved as the name Executive Director is not known to the NBA Constitution. In response, the President informed him that while that may be so, international/local partners were more conversant with the title as that is used with most law societies worldwide.
- ii. Mr. Nimi Walson-Jack also asked that the NBA formally apologise to the Chairman of Benin branch who had been wrongfully dragged before the disciplinary committee concerning her issue with a former president of the NBA. He stated that since the matter had been investigated and she was found to be innocent, the NBA should apologize to her.
- iii. On the issue of the Aba Branch crisis as recommended by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, members frowned at the impunity and lawlessness exhibited by some members and stated that they should be arraigned before the LPDC to face disciplinary actions. It was advised that the procedure as stipulated be followed. That is, the 3<sup>rd</sup> vice president who went to the problematic bar to write his report to the secretariat and the secretariat should then write to the warring bar and give them time frame to appear before a panel and after which they can be arraigned before the ICPC.
- iv. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President reported that the Aba branch situation was getting out of hand and the attitude of some members of the Bar there was shocking. He informed the meeting that his committee will go back to Aba within 2 weeks and elections will be conducted between the warring parties. In response, the President directed the 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President to conclude the matter as soon as possible. He advised that the committee should invite the Attorney General and the Chief Judge of the State to the reconciliatory meeting.
- v. Jim Abel Ofuoma, the Secretary Aguata branch raised an issue that was not contained in the NBA report. He stated that although several members of the Branch paid for their conference material from Aguata Branch, they are yet to receive them despite series of complaints about it. The president promised to look into the matter and have their materials sent to them as soon as possible, he directed him to the Secretariat to sort out the issue.

## **6.0 REPORTS FROM SECTIONS**

### **6.1 Section on Business Law (SBL)**

The Section Chairman, Olumide Akpata presented his report as contained on pages 92-97 of the NEC bundle. He briefed the meeting on the upcoming activities of the Section and stated that of all the activities of the SBL, the one closest to his heart was the establishment of SBL clubs in Nigerian Universities which had been successfully done at the University of Lagos and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. He



informed the meeting that then Section was proceeding to the University of Benin to set up the club next.

He announced to the NEC that the 2018 NBA-SBL Annual Conference has been fixed for the 27th to 29th of June, 2018 at Transcorp Hilton, Abuja with the theme: "Training across the African continent" and that the Conference fee was not on the high side. He urged members to register and attend the Conference.

## **6.2 Section on Legal Practice (SLP)**

The report of the Section on Legal Practice as contained on pages 49-51 of the NEC Bundle was presented by Prof. Agom on behalf of Mrs. Miannaya Essien, SAN who informed NEC that the SLP Conference which held in Port Harcourt, Rivers State was very successful. He stated that the Chief Justice of Nigeria was ably represented by the Presiding Justice of the Court of Appeal, Port Harcourt Division. They were also Chief Judges, 38 Judges of High Courts, 24 Magistrates and eminent members of the Bar in attendance. The Governor of Rivers State, Nyesom Ezenwo Wike was also in attendance. He further stated that the Conference was highly impactful.

He informed the house that the SLP website is up and running and the SLP journal is out and on sale. He encouraged members to purchase a copy. He pointed out that the journal contains a lot of essential articles. He also reported that based on an agreement with the Nigerian Law school, the SLP will engage the law school students and they will be taught certain issues on mock trials and other such crucial areas of law.

6.3 The President thanked them for their reports and congratulated the SLP for a successful Conference. He called on NEC members to register for and attend the SBL Conference in Abuja.

## **7.0 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

7.1 **REPORT OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM COMMITTEE (CJRC):** The Chairman of the Criminal Justice Reform Committee Chief Arthur Obi Okafor, SAN presented the Committee's report as contained on pages 98-100 of the NEC Bundle. He stated that the Conference held on the 24th to 27th April, 2018 as planned. The Chief Justice of Nigeria was ably represented by Hon. Justice Roseline Bozimo, Administrator of the NJI, several judges and State Attorneys General were in attendance as were high ranking Military officers, eminent jurists and members of the Bar. The Governor of Delta State Senator (Dr.) Ifeanyi Okowa was in attendance too. He gave a summary of the finances received and expended at the Conference and stated that the report was a preliminary report. He stated that a substantive report will be prepared and submitted to the Secretariat in due course. He concluded by saying the conference was a huge success.

The report was well received as members gave a rousing ovation to the Chairman of the Committee Chief Arthur Obi Okafor, SAN.

## **7.2 REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL COMMITTEE OF THE NBA (ECNBA)**

The Election Committee report as contained in pages 37 to 47b of the NEC Bundle was presented by the Committee Chairman Prof. Auwalu Yadudu.

7.2.1 He gave the house vital information of the ELECO's activities in preparation for the NBA elections.

7.2.2 Some highlights of the report include:

- a.) The election will be by electronic voting but the committee was yet to decide on the service provider to use and how the voting platform will be configured.
- b.) He stated that once a platform has been agreed on, and prior to the main election, there will be verification and test run of the application to be used for the online voting to ensure smooth running of the app.
- c.) He also said that after contestants of the elections have been identified by the committee, the Committee intends to interact with the contestants so they can understand the process and buy into it.
- d.) He informed the NEC that an extra grace of one week has been granted to branch chairmen to compile and submit the list of their branch members who have paid their practicing fees and branch dues as these are the ones qualified to cast their votes when the time comes. Upon the application of members, after consultations, the committee once again extended the deadline for submission by another week. He urged Chairmen to comply with the next extended deadline for submission of receipts of member.

Responding to the Report, members of the NEC prayed for another extension of the deadline for submission of the receipts of the members as some branches had very many members and the time line given was not enough. This application was granted after consultation with members of the committee and the deadline for submission was further extended for an additional week.

There were also requests that an interim list of voters be published before the elections so that errors can be corrected.

There were also complaints that the supporters of certain candidates are writing articles mudslinging other candidates. The Committee was urged to be alive to her responsibility to make an example of these persons. The candidates were also called upon to come out and denounce their supporters who write those articles. The NEC also advised that since members all paid the practicing fees into the Bank, the bank statement could be retrieved so the list of eligible members will be retrieved from there.

The President stated that while the Secretariat has the list of members who had paid their Bar Practicing fees and would avail same to the electoral committee but the details of the branch dues were not available to them so the branches still need to supply that information.

The Chairman of the Committee, Prof. Yadudu called on candidates to rein in their supporters. He stated that the Committee was monitoring some of the comments and once the candidate is identified, the committee will do the needful.

He stated that the Committee will verify the list received from the Branches with the list from the Secretariat which is retrieved from the Bank.

On the voting process, he stated that the committee will learn from the past and will use the most simplified process. He stated that several service providers were already making presentations and the best user friendly application will be used.

### **7.3 REPORT OF THE NORTH EAST COMMITTEE**

The President reported that the Committee is working hard. He pointed out that since Nigeria has the longest list of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), the world is looking to help Nigeria and the Committee is doing excellent work with the IDPs. He thanked the Committee and stated that their full report is on the NBA website.

### **7.4 REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCE PLANNING (TCCP)**

The TCCP report was presented by Chief Emeka Obegolu. Highlights of his presentation were as follows:

Nimi Wilson-Jack moved the motion for the adoption of the TCCP Report and same was seconded by J. S. Okutepe, SAN.

#### **Arising from the report of the TCCP, NEC resolved as follows:**

- 1.) That the choice of Abuja chosen as the venue for the NBA AGC to be held in August 2018 remains.
- 2.) That the Conference fee as proposed by the TCCP was too exorbitant and ought to be reviewed downwards.
- 3.) That the recommendation of the TCCP that speaking rights be assigned to sponsors according to how much they pay should be done away with.
- 4.) That the proposal to present tablets/computers to conferees should be optional to conferees who indicate interest and not mandatory to all, especially as members had been given tablets at last year's Conference.

- 5.) That the TCCP report as presented has no budget and as such a budget must be presented to enable NEC know the cost of each item budgeted to be able to make informed choices.
- 6.) That the proposed theme of the 2018 NBA Annual General Conference be properly amended simply to: BUILDING STRONG INSTITUTIONS".
- 7.) That the choice of Barrack Obama, former president of the United States of America as the Keynote speaker for the Conference was too costly and a security risk. To this end, some other personality be chosen to present the key note address.

Consequently, the TCCP report was not adopted.

In response, the President urged members to embrace the report as it sought to bring in cutting edge knowledge to participants and not the ordinary mundane issues. The President urged members not to underestimate the gains of the proposal. He however directed the TCCP to take note of the comments of members especially on the rejection of tablets. He also directed the Committee to maintain last year's Conference fees.

Chief Emeka Obegolu thanked the President and members and stated that all the proposals will be taken to the committee and shall reflect the concerns of NEC.

#### **7.5 REPORT OF THE CONSITUTION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

The Chairman of the Constitution Review Committee, Mallam Yusuf Ali, SAN informed NEC that his committee had finished its work and produced its report as presented at pages 52 to 54 of the NEC Bundle. He informed members that his committee had recommended certain novel changes to the NBA Constitution in order to bring the Association to greater heights like other Bar Associations world over. He stressed that the NBA cannot continue to do things the same way and expect different results.

He proceeded to invite all members of the Committee to join him and with them, he presented the proposed amended Constitution as well as the Memorandum to the President. The President received the proposed Constitution and thanked the Committee for their hardwork and excellent service to the Bar.

The President then said the Proposed amendment will be sent to branches before the Annual General Meeting will consider it.

#### **7.6 REPORT OF THE YOUNG LAWYERS FORUM (YLF)**

The President of the YLF, Wada I. Wada presented the report of the YLF as contained in the NEC Bundle. He further added that the YLF Summit in Lagos, certain members from the Lagos and Ikeja Branches had insisted that elections be held and after the meeting broke for recess, they reconvened and purported to pass a vote of no confidence on him and his executives in their absence. In response, the President stated that any

member who had any grievance should write to the Secretariat and follow the due process to present his grievance.

## **8.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB)**

Prof. Ernest Ojukwu SAN drew the attention of the NEC to the practice in some States where State Attorneys General have imposed policies that all prosecutors must oppose bail applications. He stated that this is unjust and he called on the NBA to look into the matter.

In response, the President agreed that the said policy is strange and indeed against the tenets of justice. He requested Prof. Ojukwu SAN to communicate evidence of this directive to the Secretariat so that steps will be taken to address the issue.

## **9.0 STATE OF THE NATION**

On the State of the Nation, NEC adopted the President's speech as having addressed major issues of national concern, and indeed gave him a rousing applause for the speech. In addition, NEC added the following:

### **9.1 On Police brutality/harassment of lawyers:**

NEC frowned at the continuous molestation of lawyers by men of the Police and resolved that the matter should not be dealt with, with kid gloves or by merely making statements. NEC resolved that the Bar must come out clearly to state that any Policeman who deters a lawyer from doing his job will contend with the Bar. NEC stated that there was no excuse for harassment of lawyers in the course of their duties by the Police and called on the Police to desist from this dastardly act. President however informed NEC that he has received the report from Ikeja and Abuja Branches of the NBA on the related issues.

### **9.2 On the breach of the rule of law by the EFCC and other investigative agencies**

NEC frowned at the illegal means of procuring evidence by the EFCC and other investigative agencies wherein they seize the phones of suspects and download information from it to accuse the suspect of crimes. NEC pointed out that when an agency fails to comply with due process in carrying out her duties, the rule of law is trampled on and that in itself is corruption.

NEC also noted that the EFCC is running afoul of the law in that the agency has been without a Board since the commencement of the President Buhari administration and an individual is solely exercising the functions of the Board

### **9.3 On the issue of the impasse between the National Assembly and the IGP**

NEC resolved that the NBA must speak up in defence of institutions who uphold the rule of law, even if they do for selfish purposes. NEC maintained that the in defence of the legislature and her powers of oversight must be respected.

## **10.0 ADJOURNMENT**

Lawal Rabana, SAN moved the motion for the adjournment of the NEC meeting and was seconded by Mercy Agada Ijato.