

**WELCOME ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE HONOURABLE ADMINISTRATOR, NATIONAL JUDICIAL INSTITUTE, HON. MR. JUSTICE R. P. I. BOZIMO, OFR, AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 2019 REFRESHER COURSE FOR JUDGES AND KADIS HELD AT THE ANDREWS OTUTU OBASEKI AUDITORIUM, NATIONAL JUDICIAL INSTITUTE ON 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2019**

**PROTOCOL:**

I am very pleased to welcome you all to the opening ceremony of the 2019 Refresher Course for Judges and Kadis.

Given the constitutional role of the Judiciary as an arbiter between government and the people *inter se*, it is very important, my Lords that citizens should enjoy easy access to the courts, as that will enable them to have their grievances, not only ventilated but also adjudicated upon. A sound, vibrant and independent Judiciary manned by upright Judicial Officers is therefore critical to a nation's economic vitality and democratic growth.

This Refresher Course aims at keeping you abreast with global best practices in adjudication and court administration.

Notably, over the years there has been progress, as the participants who have attended this course in the past must be commended on the effective discharge of their duties.

My Lords, this Refresher Course provides us with an invaluable opportunity to re-invigorate our commitment to and enthusiasm for our noble calling to serve on the Bench. This forum also affords Judges and Kadis the opportunity to dialogue on salient issues related to the challenges bedevilling the Judiciary.

Consequently, the importance of this Refresher Course to the Judiciary as evidenced by its regular inclusion on the annual calendar of training programmes of the Institute cannot be over-emphasised. In this light, it is pertinent to ensure that the continuous success of this effort to feature same must be sustained.

My Lords, the theme of this year's Refresher Course: **“Repositioning the Judiciary for Better Justice Delivery”**, is apt and topical, as judicial integrity and the Rule of Law are the underlying principles of justice and the bedrock of democracy. Therefore, much energy, skill and experience must be devoted to strengthening the principles of impartiality, diligence, competence, propriety, qualitative justice, strict adherence to the Rule of Law, speedy dispensation of justice and fair conduct of cases with a view to ensuring that justice is not only done but must be seen to be done. It is only when these factors are present that judicial functions can validly and effectively be exercised.

My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am sure you will all agree with me that the only constant thing in life is change. As society evolves, we must also continue to be dynamic in order to adequately address the conflicts that will inevitably arise.

Consequently, participants are encouraged to take this Refresher course with a view to repositioning the Judiciary as the theme stipulates. I must not hesitate to mention however that the development of the Judiciary today cannot be possible without the input and industry of our dedicated Judicial Officers.

My Lords, the topics slated for discussion are strictly geared towards repositioning the Judiciary with regard to performance evaluation standards, application of information and communication technology in the administration of justice and time management, as well as transparency and accountability amongst the staff. I humbly urge your Lordships to endeavour to participate actively at this Refresher Course as you exchange ideas with your colleagues from other jurisdictions.

My Lords, distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, permit me at this juncture to place on record the profound gratitude of the Management and staff of the National Judicial Institute to the Honourable, the Ag. Chief

Justice of Nigeria, Hon. Dr. Justice Ibrahim Tanko Muhammad, CFR, FNJI, for his support for the programmes of the Institute.

I also wish to acknowledge and appreciate the presence of Heads of Courts from various jurisdictions for always honouring our invitation and for working hand-in-hand with the Institute to make our programmes resounding successes.

I would also want to show my appreciation to our Resource Persons and Chairmen of Sessions for graciously accepting the roles assigned to them during this Refresher Course.

I must not forget to acknowledge members of the Press for finding time to grace this occasion. Gentlemen, you are highly welcome.

Finally, it is now my singular honour and privilege to invite His Lordship, the Honourable, the Ag. Chief Justice of Nigeria and Chairman, Board of Governors of

the National Judicial Institute, Hon. Dr. Justice Ibrahim Tanko Muhammad, CFR, FNJI, to deliver his Keynote Address and to declare the 2019 Refresher Course for Judges and Kadis open.

I wish you fruitful deliberations throughout the entire course and God bless you all.

**Hon. Mr. Justice R. P. I. Bozimo, OFR**  
*Administrator,*  
*National Judicial Institute, Abuja.*