

WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL INSTITUTE, HON. JUSTICE R.P.I BOZIMO, OFR AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP FOR AREA/SHARIA/CUSTOMARY COURT JUDGES/DIRECTORS AND INSPECTORS OF AREA/SHARIA AND CUSTOMARY COURTS HELD AT THE ANDREWS OTUTU OBASEKI AUDITORIUM OF THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL INSTITUTE, ABUJA ON 3rd APRIL, 2017

PROTOCOL

It is my privilege and honour to welcome you all to the National Workshop for Area/Sharia and Customary Court Judges, Directors and Inspectors of Area, Sharia and Customary Courts, organised by the National Judicial Institute in fulfilment of its primary mandate of promoting efficiency, uniformity and improvement in the quality of judicial services in Nigeria.

The world is constantly changing and as it changes, the Nigerian legal system tries to meet up with the issues that such changes bring. It is therefore our duty at the National Judicial Institute to ensure that all court personnel are in tune with current developments.

The theme of this Workshop “**Enhancing Administration of Justice in the Area/ Sharia and Customary Courts**” is apt considering the

role of the lower courts in our legal system. It is pertinent to state that the lower courts entertain a higher percentage of cases filed in various jurisdictions across the Federation. In recognition of this enormous responsibility, the Education Committee of the Board of Governors of the National Judicial Institute saw the need to strengthen the capacity of Judges, Directors, and Inspectors of these courts by organising this Workshop.

This Workshop therefore serves as a reminder to Judges and court staff in the lower courts of their sacred responsibility in the administration of justice. It is also a forum that gives participants the opportunity to develop professional competence and fresh perspectives on their schedule of duties.

It has been said that, justice is an attribute of the Almighty God which He assigns on His anointed servants who are called upon to administer in the temple of justice. This underpins the fact that an occupier of any judicial office must continuously strive to live above board at all times.

As officers in the temple of justice, you are being watched by the larger society and your actions and inactions must conform to the societal expectations to be of good character and imbibe moral principles.

I have gone through the programme and I am convinced that all the topics that have been selected for discussion are very salient and germane. The choice of Chairmen of Sessions and Resource Persons are impeccable. The participants are therefore enjoined to pay rapt attention to the presentations and engage in meaningful discussions.

My Lords, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen, permit me to express my sincere gratitude to the Honourable, the Chief Justice of Nigeria and Chairman, Board of Governors of the National Judicial Institute, Hon. Justice Samuel Walter Nkanu Onnoghen, *GCON, FNJI* for his continuing support to the Institute.

Let me also use this opportunity to thank the Chairman, Education Committee of the Board of Governors of NJI Hon. Justice I.T. Mohammed, *CFR, FNJI* for his relentless effort in ensuring that the Institute comes up with good and qualitative programmes for Judges

and their support staff; I also wish to extend our appreciation to members of the Board of Governors, for supporting us in the delivery of our statutory mandate.

It is now my honour and privilege to invite My Lord the Honourable the Chief Justice of Nigeria and Chairman, Board of Governors of the National Judicial Institute, Hon. Justice Walter S. N. Onnoghen, *GCON, FNJI* to deliver the Keynote address and declare the Workshop for Area/Sharia and Customary Court Judges, Directors and Inspectors of Area, Sharia and Customary Courts in Nigeria open.

Thank you and God bless us all.

Hon. Justice R.P.I Bozimo, *OFR*
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