

WELCOME ADDRESS BY HON. JUSTICE R.P.I. BOZIMO, OFR, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL INSTITUTE, AT THE WORKSHOP FOR DIRECTORS AND INSPECTORS OF AREA/SHARIA/CUSTOMARY COURTS HELD AT THE ANDREWS OTUTU OBASEKI AUDITORIUM OF THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL INSTITUTE, MOHAMMED BELLO CENTRE, ABUJA ON 25TH MARCH, 2019

Protocol

I am delighted to welcome you all to the opening ceremony of the National Workshop for Directors and Inspectors of Area /Sharia/Customary Courts.

This workshop is the first of its kind, as the Education Committee of the Board of Governors of the National Judicial Institute in their wisdom deemed it fit, to introduce a separate workshop for you as in the past it used to be one workshop for Area/Sharia/Customary Court Judges and Directors and

Inspectors of Area/Sharia/Customary Courts. The National Judicial Institute will ensure that this programme is sustained as it will enable you appreciate your duties and put you in a better position to discharge your duties towards improved justice delivery.

The theme of this workshop: **Improving the Quality of Justice Delivery in the Lower Courts** is in line with the desire of the Education Committee to ensure quality of justice delivery at all levels. This workshop will no doubt avail you the opportunity to exchange ideas and broaden your horizon on how best to discharge your responsibilities.

Distinguished Participants, for you to effectively and efficiently engage in court supervision, you are expected to

know your duties, powers, limits and how best to apply them. It is expected of you to be conversant with your Schedules of duties. This is the only way you will be able to advise complainants or properly guide the Courts.

No doubt, your duties as Directors and Inspectors is to guide against miscarriage of justice, therefore, on your intervention on the complaint of bias and miscarriage of justice, be careful as litigants may sometimes feel that the court is biased in favour of the other party in the proceedings. Where allegations of bias are made against the Judges of your courts, you should not be easily swayed or carried away to show sympathy to the party complaining without hearing from the Judge. It is advisable for you as Directors and Inspectors to handle such complaint carefully so as not to fall victim to the

same allegations of bias. I must also observe that your supervisory powers do not extend to reopening of cases after it has been heard and concluded.

I am of the belief that, apart from the renewed emphasis on transparency and integrity all employees of the Courts including the Directors and Inspectors of the Area/Sharia/Customary Courts are obliged to adhere to the highest standards of integrity and moral rectitude as contained in the the Code of Conduct for Court employees. I urge you to take advantage of this workshop by paying attention to the papers slated for presentation and contribute meaningfully.

My Lords, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, permit me at this point to express my appreciation to the

Honourable, the Acting Chief Justice of Nigeria, Hon. Dr. Justice Ibrahim Tanko Muhammad, CFR, FNJI, for his Lordship's support to the Institute and all its activities.

We are deeply honoured and profoundly grateful to various Heads of Court who are here to lend support to this workshop and all the programmes of the Institute.

Our appreciation also goes to all the Chairmen of Sessions and Resource Persons, who have magnanimously agreed to come and share their wealth of experience and knowledge with us.

My Lords, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is now my esteemed honour and privilege to invite the Honourable, the Acting Chief Justice of Nigeria, Hon. Dr.

Justice Ibrahim Tanko Muhammad, CFR, FNJI, to deliver his Keynote Address and declare the 2019 National Workshop for Directors and Inspectors of the Area/Sharia/Customary Courts open.

I wish you all very fruitful and rewarding deliberations. Thank you and God bless us all.

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