

Professor Ernest Ojukwu
Senior Advocate of Nigeria

14th MAY 2018

PRESIDENT
NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION
OPNBA
ABUJA

Dear Sir,

ISSUES WITH OUR 2018 ANNUAL BAR CONFERENCE

I write to bring to your attention some issues relating to our proposed 2018 Annual Bar Conference that requires your urgent intervention. These issues are arising because of the numerous questions that are being asked by members since we returned from the Kano NEC meeting. Some of them are as follows:

1. What did NBA NEC Approve at Kano?

Please refer to the TCCP proposal/report submitted to NBA NEC on 10th May 2018. The highlights include:

- a. The theme of the Conference
- b. The conference registration fees
- c. The use of electronic tablets
- d. International speakers
- e. Payment of N15,000,000.00 to join a panel
- f. Procurement Rules
- g. Advance of N200,000,000.00 to TCCP to assist in the execution of the conference planning; and
- h. Request for approval of the creation of an expenditure account for the conference planning.

At the end of the discussions of the TCCP report, no motion(s) was moved to approve the report or any of the above listed items. NEC was also not invited to approve the report or any of the items by the President. My recollection is that the President made some remarks relating to the proposed invitation of international speakers especially former US President Obama; requested the TCCP not to increase the conference fees beyond the cost of 2017 conference; and that the TCCP should note all the comments made by members on the floor of NEC on the various items of their proposal. The President may need to clarify the issue of what was approved.

2. The Conference Fees

At the NBA NEC meeting Kano, all the speakers (including me) spoke in support of a reduction of the conference fees and Mr. President graciously directed the TCCP not to impose fees more than that of 2017.

Mr. President may need to guide the TCCP further on this especially on the amount to be paid by lawyers under 10 years for the early bird. There is need to review the rate of 2017 further down especially as members have rejected the use of tablets for the 2018 conference. While everything should be done to support a high standard conference, everything must also be done to reduce the burden on members. Our members are really seriously complaining.

Partner at OJUKWU FAOTU & YUSUF (ofy-lawyers.com)

ABUJA OFFICE

Eleuthera Chambers
Plot 313 Life Camp
Opposite Skye Bank, EFAB Estate Road
Life Camp Abuja
Tel +234 09-2918694
Email info.ofylawyers@ofy-lawyers.com

ABA OFFICE

Eleuthera Chambers
64 Hospital Road Aba
Tel +234 8036670991
Email eleutherachambers@
yahoo.com

LAGOS OFFICE

Plot 14 Block 109
Henry Ojogho Crescent
Off George Enenmoh Crescent
By 3rd Roundabout
Lekki Phase 1 Lagos
Tel +23419504466

3. Budget for the conference

Mr. President expressed surprise during his remarks at the NEC meeting that the TCCP did not submit a budget for the conference. It would be very necessary that this anomaly be rectified as an urgent action Sir to conform to Section 21(c) of our constitution and the principle of openness, transparency and accountability. In fact it is only by providing a budget shall we be able to assess the conference costs by determining what is necessary and reasonable cost we must incur at this time of members' serious economic difficulties.

4. Accounts for the 2017 Annual Bar Conference.

At the Uyo NEC meeting of November 2017, the TCCP Report of the Annual General Conference was deferred to the next NEC meeting. See the Para 9.1 of the NBA NEC minutes of 28th Feb-2nd March 2018 at Ilorin.

That 2017 account was not rendered at the Ilorin NEC or at the recent Kano NEC. It seems to me that this is a fundamental omission. I missed the matter earlier otherwise. I would have drawn your attention to it.

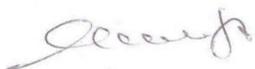
5. My suggestions

I humbly suggest the following:

- a. TCCP should immediately produce a comprehensive budget that covers all proposed heads of expenditure for the 2018 conference and presented to NBA Elected officers-in-meeting to consider and approve it in the interim. What the officers approve should then be presented at the next NEC meeting to approve/ratify. Before the officers meeting to consider the proposed budget, the budget should be published on our website and the version approved by the officers uploaded later on the website.
- b. The 2017 TCCP Conference Accounts should immediately be published on our website. The NBA officers in meeting should consider and approve the accounts and then present what they approve at the next NBA NEC meeting.
- c. The NBA officers-in-meeting should consider the TCCP proposals for the 2018 conference (together with the budget) and approve what is approvable since the NEC of Kano seems to have omitted this action.
- d. In going forward, please prevail on our officers to look at the whole picture and-
 - i. Remove tablets from this year's conference;
 - ii. Reduce drastically the cost of the conference especially for lawyers under 10 years;
 - iii. Prevail on the TCCP not to spend more than 70% of whatever income generated for the conference; and
 - iv. There is still confusion among members about who is the TCCP Chairman. It will be necessary to officially clarify the position.

I thank you.

Yours faithfully,



Prof Ernest Ojukwu, SAN

08034028676

ernestojukwu@ofy-lawyers.com