



NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION

UPDATE ON 2009 PROGRAMMES

The Nigerian Bar Association Programmes Department presents its justice sector reform programmes for the second quarter of 2009.

1. LAW REFORM AND LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

The NBA is interested in ensuring the passage of the following justice sector reform bills in the National Assembly.

- **Administrations of Criminal Justice Bill;** to harmonize and consolidate the criminal procedure laws, reduce delays and provide for more humane treatment of suspects.
- **Administration of Justice Commission Bill;** to ensure effective supervision and coordination of the administration of justice by all the relevant organs.
- **Community Service Bill,** to encourage the award of non-custodial sentences under the criminal justice system, particularly in minor offences and offences involving young persons.
- **Elimination of Violence in Society Bill** to control violence in society, especially violence directed at vulnerable groups like women and children.
- **Legal Aid Council Act [amendment] Bill,** to expand the powers of the Legal Aid Council to provide better legal assistance to indigent persons in coordination with other service providers.

- **National Human Rights Commission Act (Amendment) Bill**, to improve the autonomy of the National Human Rights Commission and give it more investigative powers.
- **Victims of Crime Remedies Bill**, to improve respect for the rights of victims of crime in the criminal justice system.
- **Legal Practitioners Act {Amendment} Bill**, to improve the standard of legal practice by, among other things, introducing continuing legal education requirements for practitioners.
- **Prison Act (Amendment) Bill**, to provide a more appropriate legal framework for prisons administration and the treatment of offenders, consistent with constitutional and international standard as well as to make the prisons more corrective institutions.
- **Police Act (Amendment) Bill**, to introduce fundamental changes in the mission and operations of the police and improve its effectiveness in providing security services to communities.
- **Evidence Act Amendment Bill**, to bring evidence law up to date with current developments in IT.
- **The Freedom of Information Bill**, to provide access to government information on government dealings, policy, programs and ensure transparency in governance

Detailed content of these bills can be found on the NBA website www.nigerianbar.org. Members are enjoined to visit this website. Comments on any of the bills should be sent to nba@nigerianbar.org or nigerianbarinfo@yahoo.com.

2. THE NBA PRO BONO INITIATIVE

In furtherance of the NBA objective to enhance widespread and effective access to legal services for persons and communities who lack such access, the President of the NBA is proposing a pro-bono declaration to which it is expected that all legal practitioners will sign up to. The declaration seeks to advocate and promote within the profession the recognition and promotion of pro bono legal services as part of lawyers ethical standards and obligations.

A full text of the declaration can be found on NBA website www.nigerianbar.org Please note that this is a draft only and will be formally presented for adoption at the NEC meeting in Sokoto holding

from—May 2009. Comments on the draft declaration should be sent to nba@nigerianbar.org or nigerianbarinfo@yahoo.com.

3. RULE OF LAW INITIATIVE

The NBA will during this quarter convene a Rule of Law Summit

The purpose of the summit is to achieve clarity on the meaning and relevance of rule of law and due process with respect to key justice sector reform issues including, access to justice, anti-corruption, independence of the judiciary and the legal profession. Most importantly the summit seeks to articulate the role of the NBA is sustaining a culture of rule of law in Nigeria.

Details of the summit including a detailed briefing on the NBA rule o law initiative can be found on the NBA website.

4. LEGAL INFORMATION SERVICE

In other to ensure that the legal profession in Nigeria is aware of current developments in the administration of justice in Nigeria, the programmes department in collaboration with the Legal Resources Consortium will during this quarter commence an E- bulletin service. This bulletin will include updates on law reform, land mark judgments of superior courts, and policy debates on justice sector reform.

This E-bulletin will be available free of charge to members of the NBA, judicial officers, legal academic and law students. To facilitate this, the programmes department is presently updating its data base on contact addresses of members of the NBA. Members are therefore enjoined to send their current addresses including email addresses and phone numbers to nba@nigerianbar.org or nigerianbarinfo@yahoo.com no latter than Friday 8th May 2009.

**All programmes of the NBA can be found on the NBA website –
www.nigerianbar.org.**

**For further enquiries contact the Programmes Department of the NBA on
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Signed:

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