



NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION

LAGOS BRANCH

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PRESS RELEASE

MIGRATING TO A NEW CHAT PLATFORM – TELEGRAM!

The NBA Lagos Branch is estimated to have over **10,000** members as at the date of this press release. As at March 31, 2021, over **9,000** members were financially active and up to date with their Branch dues.

Moving on from WhatsApp

We currently use WhatsApp as the main messaging platform to disseminate information and receive feedback from members; and for members to interact and share professionally impactful information.

88% of members isolated: We have 5 WhatsApp groups with capacity to accommodate 256 members each. That is 1,280 participants or an estimated 12% of active members of our Branch, while the remaining 88% remain isolated from the robust interaction and information sharing on our Branch's 5 WhatsApp groups. This is not tidy.

Division: Apart from uniform official communication from the leadership of our Branch circulated on all WhatsApp groups, members of each WhatsApp group are shut out of very important, career impacting information, ideas and discussions going on in the other 4 WhatsApp groups. This is some sort of division, which defeats the purpose of providing a chat platform for members to interact.

Proliferation of groups: We will need over 40 WhatsApp groups to accommodate at least an estimated 10,000 active members of our Branch. This could be clumsy, ridiculous and counter-productive from all perspectives of information sharing, information management and feedback mechanisms between members and the leadership of our Branch.

Why Telegram?

Telegram is a chat and messaging platform similar to WhatsApp, but with some unique features that make Telegram better suited to the peculiar circumstances of our Branch.

Single group for all members: We can solve all the challenges posed by the proliferation of WhatsApp groups, with a single Telegram group. A single Telegram group has a limit of 200,000 participants, whereas a WhatsApp group has a limit of 256 participants. At a growing number of over 10,000 active members, a single Telegram gives us enough space for both current and future members of our Branch.

Better control mechanisms: Telegram has features that allow the administrators to:

- Automatically prevent an errant member from posting irrelevant or offensive messages.

On WhatsApp, we have had to suspend or expel members from the group for violating rules as there was no other way to prevent the violation of the rules of communication in the WhatsApp groups. We want to avoid suspending members from our chat platforms, while preventing abuse of the platforms.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Ikechukwu Uwanna(Chairman)

Nta Ekpiken(Secretary); Abiye Tam-George(Vice Chairman); Caroline Obi(Treasurer);

Anthonia Eke(Financial Secretary); Agba Eimunjeze(Legal Adviser); Elo Adhekpukoli(Publicity Secretary); Eno Umoren Mbanugo(Social Secretary); Chinwendu Ugochukwu(Welfare Secretary); Rita Uloko(Provost); Jude Chukwuka Iwelumo(Assistant Secretary);

Ex-officio: Lateef Omoyemi Akangbe; Moshood Abiola

Co-opted: Olumayowa Owolabi; Oluwatosin Iyayi; Adefowoke Ayo-Ponle; Orji Uka

- Automatically prevent the use of distracting or offensive stickers, GIFs, videos and photographs.

We are unable to do these on WhatsApp, giving room for abuse of our WhatsApp groups by some members who share such materials distracting and offensive materials.

New members can see chat history: On Telegram, the group chat history can be viewed by new members irrespective of when they joined the group. This feature is not available on WhatsApp. New members do not miss out on very important information shared before their admission into the group.

Lighter storage: Telegram utilizes cloud storage, which ensures that device storage space and memory are not clogged or filled up easily. Members do not have to worry so much about memory space on their devices.

Feedback and consultation mechanism: Telegram group has a feature that allows the leadership of the Branch to organize polls within the group to consult and receive feedback from members on important issues. Telegram is good for democratic principles and consensus building, which lawyers are jealous about.

The great migration

The current leadership of the Branch set up a new official private Telegram group for the Branch on August 4, 2021. As at the time of releasing this press statement, **730** members of our Branch have joined the Telegram group from our various WhatsApp groups. This number represents an estimated migration rate of **60%**. It is the utmost desire of the leadership of our Branch that the remaining estimated **40%** of members in our WhatsApp groups will join the single Telegram group as soon as possible.

The leadership of our Branch will like to notify members that all official WhatsApp groups of the Branch will be frozen at **11:59pm WAT** on **September 30, 2021**. Telegram will become the sole messaging platform of the NBA Lagos Branch from **00:01am WAT** on **October 1, 2021**. There will be no extension of this deadline.

Members who have joined Telegram but are yet to join the Branch's Telegram group should contact the **Publicity Secretary** on **07025007928**, to be added to the group. Members who are not on Telegram are encouraged to join as soon as possible.

Thank you.

Signed:

Elo Adhekpukoli
Publicity Secretary

