

OPENING ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE HONOURABLE, THE CHIEF JUSTICE OF NIGERIA AND CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL INSTITUTE, HON. JUSTICE MAHMUD MOHAMMED, *GCON*, AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE SENSITISATION SEMINAR FOR JUDGES OF THE FCT AND STATE HIGH COURTS ON THE CHALLENGES OF DEPOSIT INSURANCE LAW AND PRACTICE IN NIGERIA, ORGANISED BY THE INSTITUTE IN COLLABORATION WITH THE NIGERIAN DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION, HELD AT THE SEMINAR HALL OF ALOYSIUS KATSINA-ALU BLOCK, NATIONAL JUDICIAL INSTITUTE, MOHAMMED BELLO CENTRE, ABUJA, ON 09 NOVEMBER 2015

PROTOCOL

I am delighted for this honour and privilege to welcome you all to this important event organized by the Nigerian Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) in collaboration with the National Judicial Institute (NJI). This programme titled "*Sensitization Seminar for FCT and State High Court Judges on the Challenges to Deposit Insurance Law and Practice in Nigeria*", is intended to keep the participants informed of the critical role played by the NDIC in the discharge of its statutory mandate and the expected role of the Judiciary in this regard.

My lords, ladies and gentlemen, a sound banking system is the hallmark of a vibrant and strong economy. This is because customers, depositors and investors must have confidence that their money is safe in the Bank and that the Bank itself is structurally sound. As experience has shown in other climes, the role of an underwriter to

deposits is indeed not expendable. In Nigeria the NDIC is charged with the responsibility of guaranteeing bank deposits, thereby promoting confidence in the banking sector, which contributes to ensuring financial system stability. The Corporation is a statutory risk minimizer with the specific mandate to supervise licensed banks, resolve problems in the banks and liquidate failed banks. It is therefore an indispensable part of the Banking Sector as the underwriter of the system. Suffice to say, the Corporation cannot do this alone. It acts in collaboration with other principal agencies such as the Central Bank of Nigeria, Corporate Affairs Commission, Pensions Commission and the Federal Ministry of Finance to maintain the financial system, acting under the auspices of the Financial Services Regulating Coordinating Committee (FSRCC).

As such, in the discharge of its statutory mandate, especially as it pertains to the resolution of banks in distress, legal issues bordering on the competing rights of creditors, shareholders and depositors of distressed banks may be presented before your lordships. It is therefore crucial to develop a proper understanding of the terminology and legal dynamics involved in the operation of such entities as bridge banks, as well as the execution of assets of failed banks, as this would enable your lordships to gain a better and informed appreciation of the legal issues arising therefrom, or connecting thereto.

Invariably, the Court's determinations on these issues often set legal precedent on bank insolvency laws and practice in Nigeria. It goes without saying that a better informed Judge, having attended this capacity building initiative, will be more likely to create a solid foundation for future jurisprudence to build on. This is the basis for a

stable and certain legal framework that is needed for the industry to thrive.

It is for this reason that I must commend the Management of the NDIC for recognising the need for capacity building in what is a traditionally nebulous area of law. Under the leadership of Ambassador (Dr.) Hassan Adamu, CON (Wakili of Adamawa), Chairman, and Alhaji Umaru Ibrahim, mni, Managing Director/CEO of the Corporation, it is little wonder that the Corporation has noticeably shown itself to be committed to the laudable objectives of transparency, ethics and professionalism in performing their duties. This collaboration is indeed evidence of this commitment and I make bold to state that in view of our decisive roles in the operation of the law and practice of Deposit Insurance as well as the overriding imperatives of financial system stability in Nigeria, the importance of this program cannot be over-emphasized.

Similarly, the unremitting resolve of the National Judicial Institute under the able leadership of the ever elegant and industrious Administrator, Hon. Justice R.P.I. Bozimo, *OFR*, to entrench and sustain intellectual excellence in our Judicial Officers must be recognised and duly applauded.

I have gone through the programme of this Seminar and I am satisfied that the topics selected for discussion are not only relevant but also academically stimulating. I am sure that after this discourse, our Judicial Officers will be better equipped to adjudicate over matters that pertain to the remit of this Seminar.

I therefore urge you to pay rapt attention to the Resource Persons and take active part in the discussions arising therefrom. It is also key to actively engage the Resource Persons. Indeed, where Deposit

Insurance Law and Practice in Nigeria is concerned, it is expected that your lordships will develop greater proficiency in what may currently seem to be arcane to you.

I thank all the Chairmen of Session, Resource Persons and Consultants for accepting to be here in order to share their wealth of knowledge and experience with us. Your presence has added value and essence to this Seminar.

I thank the members of the Press for being ever present with us. You have become an inseparable partner with the Judiciary in the enthronement of a modern, transparent and robust judicial system in Nigeria and we acknowledge your efforts in this regard.

I must also thank all our distinguished guests. The Seminar is all the more intellectually prosperous because of your presence and we thank you very much for coming.

My Lords, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, it is now my honour and privilege to declare the **SENSITISATION SEMINAR FOR JUDGES OF THE FCT AND STATE HIGH COURTS ON THE CHALLENGES OF DEPOSIT INSURANCE LAW AND PRACTICE IN NIGERIA, Open.**

I wish you all a very successful and fruitful Seminar.

May God bless all of us!

**Hon. Justice Mahmud Mohammed, *GCON*
Chief Justice of Nigeria and
*Chairman, Board of Governors of National Judicial Institute***