



BAR HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMITTEE OF  
ENGLAND & WALES

**Memorandum of Understanding  
between the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and  
the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales (BHRC)**

**The Purpose of the Memorandum**

1. The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to set out a framework agreement for cooperation and communication between the NBA and BHRC. It is intended to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the organisations, particularly in relation to the development of future training programmes by BHRC in Nigeria.
2. This Memorandum underpins a partnership between the NBA and BHRC that has developed in recognition of the shared goal of using the law to secure and improve the lives of Nigeria's vulnerable persons.
3. This Memorandum has been prepared with a view to enhancing the skills of Nigerian lawyers in the practical application of human rights law in the domestic, regional and international context.

**The Remits of the NBA and BHRC**

4. The NBA is a professional, non-profit, umbrella association, comprised of all lawyers called to the Nigerian Bar. Their mission is to use the law as an instrument for social change in Nigeria. Its core objectives include to maintain and defend the integrity and independence of the Bar and the Judiciary; promote timely and affordable access to Justice; promote and support law reform initiatives; promote and protect the principles of the Rule of Law and respect for Human Rights; promote and advance quality and functional Legal Education, Continuing Legal Education, Advocacy and Progressive Jurisprudence; maintenance of the highest standards of professional conduct, etiquette and discipline among lawyers; promote the welfare, security, economic, and professional advancement of Legal Practitioners in Nigeria; create and maintain an Endowment fund for the proper observance and discharge of any of these aims.
5. The Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales (BHRC) is an unincorporated association, comprised of barristers from England and Wales who work pro bono on international human rights issues. It is the independent, international human rights arm of the Bar ([www.barhumanrights.org.uk](http://www.barhumanrights.org.uk)). BHRC's mission is to protect and promote international

human rights through the Rule of Law, by using the international human rights law expertise of the UK's most experienced and talented human rights barristers. BHRC works internationally to support and defend those under threat of human rights abuses, particularly lawyers, judges, and other legal professionals, as well as marginalised and vulnerable groups including children, women and refugees. BHRC provides training, legal resources and guidance to support the development of human rights protections in countries where legal systems are lacking; it raises awareness of human rights abuses through trial observations and fact-finding missions; and it intervenes in human rights cases by submitting amicus curia briefs in international courts and sending letters of concern to government officials in various jurisdictions.

### **The Working Relationship**

6. Each organisation is entitled to perform its mission independently of the other and without outside influence. This Memorandum does not prejudice that independence.
7. The organisations recognise that their respective roles can be enhanced by working effectively together. They are both committed to the development of a positive, constructive working relationship between the two organisations.
8. Where common areas of interest within their respective remits are identified, the organisations will liaise to establish whether it is possible to arrive at a common course of action. In the event that the organisations do take the same position, they pledge to cooperate insofar as possible to avoid unnecessary duplication of work.
9. When the organisations do not arrive at a common course of action, they will keep each other informed of their respective positions and, if appropriate, their reasoning. In particular, they will make best efforts to notify each other prior to making public any such actions or reasoning.
10. Where either organisation identifies an issue falling within the remit of both organisations, each organisation will discuss any proposed action with the other, and the organisations will endeavour to agree how best the work can be carried out in order to maximise resources and avoid unnecessary duplication of work.

### **Conducting training programmes in Nigeria**

11. The NBA and BHRC will work together to build the knowledge of Nigerian lawyers on regional and international human rights law and mechanisms available to address the human rights concerns of Nigeria.
12. Where either organisation recognises an area of human rights law of which Nigerian lawyers could benefit from additional training on regional and international standards and/or mechanisms, the organisations will work together to develop a training programme that will meet the needs of the Nigerian lawyers to be taught by BHRC members.
13. The organisations will work together to conduct the training programme and to make the materials available to all Nigerian lawyers, where appropriate.

## **Communications**

14. Each organisation undertakes to provide regular updates to the other on its work to advance human rights in Nigeria.
15. Each organisation undertakes to share with the other, as soon as possible, information which it considers may be of interest to the other, subject to any confidentiality requirements.
16. The organisations undertake to establish and maintain effective communication channels to assist each organisation in fulfilling its responsibilities as fully and efficiently as possible.
17. The President of the NBA, the Chair of BHRC, the Chair of the NBA Human Rights Institute, the BHRC Executive Officer and their appointed representatives or organs will maintain regular contact with each other.
18. The President of the NBA and the Chair of BHRC will meet together formally from time to time, as appropriate, in order to discuss matters of mutual concern.

## **Monitoring and Review**

19. While it is intended that the arrangements in the Memorandum should apply generally, it is recognised that some circumstances will require special handling. Nothing in this Memorandum prevents the making of arrangements to meet specific situations.
20. The NBA President and the Chair of BHRC will keep the Memorandum of Understanding under review. A bi-annual review on the operation of the Memorandum will be undertaken and a short report prepared on how and where the two organisations have collaborated.

**Dated 12 February 2018**



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**A.B. Mahmoud SAN**  
**President, Nigerian Bar Association**



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**Kirsty Brimelow QC**  
**Chairperson, Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales**