



# AFRICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

## ASSOCIATION DU BARREAU AFRICAIN

نقابة المحامين الأفارقة

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### **STATEMENT ON THE CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC, CHINA AND 5G TECHNOLOGY BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE AFRICAN BAR ASSOCIATION, HANNIBAL UWAIFO ESQ.**

Dearest Colleagues,

The sudden discovery and spread of the Corona Virus Pandemic otherwise also referred to as Covid-19 has brought untold disruptions and hardships to the lives of everyone living on planet earth including the Legal profession and especially members of the African Bar Association (AFBA). No doubt, Legal services and activities have been badly hit due to the very many and strict restrictions imposed by Nations across the globe in order to save lives and protect the future of national and global activities.

The reasons for the breakout and widespread of this flu varies as there are varied interests but the common denominator is that we all are affected. Some Nations have been badly hit than others, with many deaths and sufferings following.

Across the globe, many are in hospitals, health care facilities and isolation centers. Many lives have also been saved, others lost and some suffering from the disease. We see all these happenings everyday.

On behalf of the African Bar Association, I give special thanks to our Doctors, Nurses and all our Health Care Workers, the world over. They are in the front line and protect us daily, caring for the sick and doing all that is possible to minimize the damage of this disaster. We thank their families for this Great sacrifices which they continue to make. We are extremely proud of you all for your courage in the face of this life threatening disease.

The African Bar Association is also very immensely grateful to the Media and Journalists the world over. Despite the risks associated with their jobs, they remain with our Health Care workers in the frontline bringing to our homes, to our attention very important and useful news materials and information necessary for the safety of the world. We are also very grateful for Leaders of Governments the world over and their officials for their daily updates and prompt actions taken to protect our Health Workers and providing facilities to take this destructive scourge. The African Bar Association remains committed to being part of the Continental and Global Solutions to wiping out this Pandemic.

Using appropriate and available medium of communication, we have offered several suggestions and participated in international efforts to ease the

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effects of the lockdowns that have badly affected the means of livelihood of citizens across the African Continent especially Lawyers who are unable to offer Legal services maximally due to the restrictions imposed to safeguard public health.

Recently, we organized and offered to our members online international conferences and seminars. These have met with a lot of applause and we are poised to organize more in the coming days and months to aid our professional practice. In the meantime, we urge you all to continue to make use of safe means for carrying out your duties particularly to children, women, the aged, weak and defenceless citizens.

The African Bar Association has made its stand very clear **“The rule of Law and the Rights of Citizens are not suspended due to Covid-19 Pandemic”**. We have a crucial role to play in ensuring that the rule of Law and its fundamental principles remains relevant and fully observed during this period especially the rights of citizens and access to Justice and judicial review.

We must continue to hold our Governments and Security agencies across the Continent responsible for the safeguard of the rights and protection of her citizens. It is in this direction that the African Bar Association condemns in strong terms the racial and discriminatory practices of the Chinese authorities and some of her citizens against Africans and blacks who are unfortunate to be in China at this period. This irresponsible conduct of segregating Africans and blacks is not only unfortunate but is not in the best interest of China. The African Bar Association calls on China to accept responsibility for these bad judgments and immediately reverse the trend. Our Association is studying this situation and will respond to these situations and other matters arising out of Chinese trade and political activities in Africa. Our responses will definitely include but not limited to international Legal challenges if our assessments warrants same. However, the African Bar Association is considering the suggestion of an open dialogue with Chinese authorities over discriminatory practices and an unfair trade practices.

The controversy surrounding Covid-19 Pandemic, health hazards and 5G technology has also been brought to the attention of our noble Association. While AFBA welcomes the debate just like any other type of public discourse, AFBA however believes that the giant strides recorded in modern science and technology is too significant to be lost in controversy and unempirical arguments with no proved scientific basis.

Whenever it becomes a matter of Legal argument in our Law Courts or a matter of Legal thesis, we encourage all our members to participate and help enrich the Law of science and technology. However, as a policy, the African Bar Association welcomes the introduction of 5G technology and we are of the

conviction that there is no hazard involved not already associated with modern discoveries and science.

We also are convinced that 5G technology has nothing to do with the Covid-19 Pandemic and we look forward to 6G science to advance Law and social engineering.

Distinguished colleagues, as we continue to battle the Covid-19 experience, let us be very cautious of our environment and those around us by observing and practicing the strict sanitation rules laid down by Governments and authorities in our Continent and the world over. Some of these measures are;

(a) Wash our hands very frequently with soap under running water, ensure your finger nails are properly cleaned.

(b) Use disinfectants and hand sanitizers on your hands and rub properly very frequently and as often as you touch any thing.

(c) Wipe surfaces, door handles and frequently touched places with disinfectants frequently.

(d) Expose shoes, clothes and other objects especially purchased items under the sun.

(e) Drink warm water, eat fruits and vegetables and immune system boosting foods frequently.

(f) Drink water frequently and remain hydrated always.

(g) Avoid touching your face, nose and mouth.

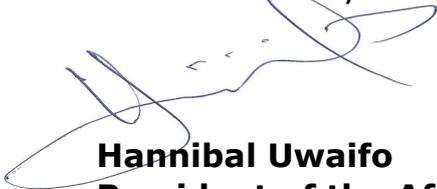
(h) Keep social distance and avoid crowded places or large gatherings.

(i) Stay indoors and only go out when absolutely necessary.

(j) Work from home except it is absolutely important to work from the office and use alternative means of mass communication particularly online and use more of online transactions for your financial needs.

Finally, I encourage all of us to persevere, be our neighbour's keeper and like all other human difficulties and situations, we shall soon overcome.

Best wishes to your families.



**Hannibal Uwaifo**  
**President of the African Bar Association**

**Dated 12<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2020**