NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION

BODY OF CHAIRMEN RIVERS STATE

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PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE CHAIRMEN OF THE EIGHT BRANCHES OF NIGERIA BAR ASSOCIATION IN RIVERS STATE ON THE RIVERS STATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS SCHEDULE FOR SATURDAY 5TH OCTOBER, 2024

In view of the forthcoming elections in Rivers State, on behalf of the 8 Branches of the Nigeria Bar Association in the State, we wish to state as follows:

Local Government elections are part of the democratic process of our country as provided inthe Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended), and therefore sanctioned by Law, and the Local Government election in Rivers State is not an exception. As we all know, there are several Court Judgments on the Rivers State Local Government electoral issue which are already widely circulated in the social media.

Sadly, most of these Judgments are from Courts of coordinate jurisdiction and have been subject to diverse interpretations. While we do not want to over flog the issues on ground, or stoke the embers already burning, we must reiterate that the Constitution of Nigeria is the *grundnorm* from which all Government agencies and institutions derive their validity and are bound to obey same.

We also emphasize that any Law or Judgment that is inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution is null and void, to the extent of its inconsistency.

Security Agencies have the constitutional duty of maintaining law and order in the Country, but if they choose to abdicate their Constitutional role, then it ridicules our democracy and our Constitution.

As far as we can see, there is no legal impediment to the conduct of the Local Government elections in Rivers State and the NBA Branches in the State are participating in the process as Observers. It is trite that statutory bodies cannot be stopped from performing their Constitutional duties.

We therefore encourage all residents of Rivers State who are registered voters to go out on the election day and exercise their franchise. We further advise Rivers indigenes and residents in the State to be peaceful and law abiding in the course of the election process. Thank you!

Cordelia U. Eke Chairman Port Harcourt Branch _____ 4/10/2024

Hilda Desmond-Ihekaire (Ph.D), Chairman Ahoada Branch _____ 4/10/2024

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