**Report on the Courtesy Visit by the Nigerian Bar Association Women Forum (NBAWF) Sokoto Branch to Female High Court Judges in Sokoto State**

**Date: 28th March 2025**

**Introduction:** On the 28th of March 2025, the Nigerian Bar Association Women Forum (NBAWF), Sokoto branch, in commemoration of the International Women’s Day celebrated on march 8th conducted a courtesy visit to the female High Court Judges in Sokoto State. This visit was part of NBAWF’s ongoing initiative to foster professional relationships, promote gender equality within the legal profession and support female judicial officers in their roles.

**Participants:**

* **NBAWF Delegation:**
	+ Aishatu Abdullahi Illo (Sokoto State Lead)
	+ Rashidat Muhammad Esq (Chairman NBA Sokoto Branch)
	+ Fatima Hassan Attahir Esq (State Facilitator)
	+ Safiyya Ahmad Usman Esq (Treasurer)
	+ Aisha Ahmad Muhammad Esq (member local planning committee)
	+ Margaret Ngyada Esq (member)
	+ C.B Sarkin Noma Esq (member)
* **Judges:**
	+ Hon. Justice Raliya uthman, (High Court 7)
	+ Hon. Justice Amina Modi Yabo, (High court 17)
	+ Hon. Justice Mariya Haruna Dogon Daji (High Court 18)
	+ Hon. Justice Fatima Saidu (High Court 23)
	+ Other current female Judges who were not in attendance include
	+ Hon Justice Maryam Sifawa (High Court 12)
	+ Hon. Justice Fatima Ahmadu Suka (High Court 14)
	+ Hon. Justice Hadiza Sahabi Jaredi (High Court 19)
	+ Hon. Justice Fatima Hassan (High Court 23)

**Objectives:**

1. To acknowledge and appreciate the contributions of female judges to the judiciary in Sokoto State.
2. To commend the Hon. Chief Judge of Sokoto State for the appointment of 8 female judges in the state
3. To discuss challenges faced by women in the legal profession who excel in their roles and explore ways to support them.
4. To discuss on how to mentor and guide female young lawyers in the profession
5. To strengthen the network between NBAWF and female judicial officers for mutual support and advocacy on gender issues in law.

**Highlights of the Visit:**

* **Welcome and Introduction:**
	+ The visit began with a warm welcome by Hon. Justice Raliya uthman, followed by introductions from both sides.
	+ The state lead in person of Aishatu Abdullahi Illo briefed the judges of the reason of the visit.
	+ The chairman NBA Sokoto branch in person of Rashidat Muhammed Esq also highlighted some key issues while commending the judges on their progress so far.
	+ The state facilitator in person of Fatima Hassan Attahir moderated the meeting.
	+ Other members of the branch also lend their voices to this cause.
* **Discussions:**
	+ **Professional Support:** The justices expressed their commitment to providing support through mentorship, Advocacy, Empowerment as well as diligent dispensation of cases that include gender-based violence
	+ **Decoration of the Justices with the official scarf of the NBAWF;**All the 8 female justices were decorated with the official scarf of the NBAWF and were initiated as members of the forum.
	+ **Challenges and Solutions:** Open discussions were held regarding the unique challenges faced by the NBAWF and the Hon. Justices promised to render their assistance whenever the need arises.
* **Appreciation and Recognition:**
	+ The NBAWF highlighted the exemplary service of the female judges, acknowledging their role in setting precedents and contributing to the legal framework in Sokoto State.
* **Commitments:**
	+ Both parties agreed to foster a closer working relationship, including regular meetings to address ongoing issues and to celebrate achievements of women in the law profession.
	+ To address issues of challenges faced by female lawyers as well as those faced by female judges.
	+ To address issues of women empowerment in the judiciary and
	+ Mentorship opportunities.
	+ Plans were made for the female judges to attend the NBAWF annual general conference and also sponsor some of the members of the NBAWF to the conference.

**Outcomes:**

* A stronger bond between NBAWF and the judiciary was established, focusing on the empowerment of women in the legal profession.
* Specific action items were outlined for future collaboration, including:
	+ Mentorship to young female lawyers of the branch.
	+ Sponsorship to the NBAWF AGC.
	+ Women empowerment.

**Conclusion:** The courtesy visit was a significant step towards recognizing and supporting women in the law profession in Sokoto State. It not only celebrated the achievements of these judges but also set a foundation for continued advocacy and support in promoting gender equity within the legal profession. The NBAWF looks forward to deepening this partnership for the betterment of justice administration and the welfare of all female lawyers in the state.

**State lead,**

**Aishatu Abdullahi Illo
Nigerian Bar Association Women Forum, Sokoto Branch**

**Gallery:**

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