

**COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE 2026 LAW WEEK
EDUCATIVE SESSIONS OF THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION, GARKI
BRANCH**

HELD IN ABUJA, FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY

FROM MONDAY, 18TH MAY TO WEDNESDAY, 20TH MAY 2026

COMMUNIQUÉ DRAFTING/RAPPORTEUR TEAM:

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The 2026 Law Week of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Garki Branch, Abuja, convened distinguished members of the Bar, policymakers, academics, regulators, security personnel, industry stakeholders, and legal practitioners for robust intellectual engagement on contemporary issues affecting legal practice, governance, technology, professional ethics, national development, and the administration of justice in Nigeria.

The Law Week featured keynote addresses, goodwill messages, lecture sessions, and seven panel discussions spanning critical areas of law and public policy including legal ethics, mentorship, security and self-defence, remuneration of legal practitioners, taxation, energy transition, climate change, intellectual property, cyber regulation, mental health, wellbeing, and civil liberties.

At the conclusion of the sessions and deliberations, the following observations, resolutions, and recommendations were made:

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

1. The legal profession continues to undergo significant transformation driven by technological advancement, globalization, evolving regulatory frameworks, and changing societal realities.
2. Lawyers must continuously adapt to emerging developments in technology, artificial intelligence, digital governance, taxation, energy regulation, and intellectual property in



order to remain professionally relevant and institutionally effective.

3. Professional integrity, ethical conduct, intellectual competence, and institutional discipline remain indispensable foundations for the preservation of the dignity and credibility of the legal profession.

4. There is an increasing need for legal practitioners to embrace specialization, structured mentorship, continuous professional development, and institutional capacity building.

5. The administration of justice and protection of constitutional democracy require constructive collaboration among lawyers, security agencies, regulatory institutions, policymakers, and civil society stakeholders.

6. The mental wellbeing of legal practitioners is essential to sustainable professional performance, sound judgment, and effective legal service delivery.

7. Emerging digital realities, including artificial intelligence, social media regulation, cybercrime enforcement, and digital content creation, require responsive legal frameworks capable of balancing innovation with the protection of constitutional rights and civil liberties.

SESSION-SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

A. KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The keynote address emphasized the urgent need for legal practitioners to adapt to twenty-first century realities through the effective use of technology, electronic filing systems, digital legal resources, and contemporary research tools.

It was observed that while Artificial Intelligence and digital platforms have become increasingly relevant within legal practice, they cannot substitute for analytical reasoning, professional judgment, ethical responsibility, intellectual depth, and strategic legal thinking.

The keynote address further stressed the importance of building sustainable professional structures, cultivating integrity, prioritizing long-term reputation over



immediate financial gain, and developing mastery within specialized areas of practice.

The keynote speaker notably observed that: “You cannot solve a 2026 problem with 1996 knowledge.”

B. SECURITY, SELF-DEFENCE AND THE RULE OF LAW

The session examined the relationship between legal practitioners and security personnel within the broader framework of constitutional democracy and justice administration.

It was observed that institutional distrust, procedural misunderstandings, and ego-driven engagements frequently contribute to tensions between lawyers and security agencies.

The session emphasized that lawyers and law enforcement agencies are complementary stakeholders within the justice sector and should operate as institutional partners rather than adversaries.

Concerns were raised regarding the professional and ethical risks associated with lawyers standing as sureties for clients.

The doctrine of self-defence was examined within the framework of proportionality, necessity, and constitutional legality.

C. NEW TAX LAWS AND STAYING COMPLIANT

The lecture on taxation examined the evolving tax framework in Nigeria and the implications of recent tax reforms for individuals, businesses, and legal practitioners.

The lecture highlighted the strategic importance of tax literacy and regulatory compliance within contemporary legal practice.

Reference was made to the Tax Reform Statutes which came into effect in January 2026, including:

The Nigerian Tax Act;

The Nigeria Revenue Act;



The Nigeria Tax Administration Act; and

The Nigeria Revenue Service Establishment framework.

It was observed that legal practitioners have a growing responsibility to provide competent advisory services relating to taxation, regulatory compliance, and fiscal governance.

D. REMUNERATION ORDER: ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE

The session examined persistent concerns relating to underpricing of legal services, non-compliance with the Legal Practitioners' Remuneration Order, and the broader implications for professional dignity and institutional sustainability.

It was observed that compliance with the Remuneration Order is essential to preserving the economic viability, integrity, and value of legal practice.

The session emphasized that effective enforcement requires collective institutional commitment, stronger awareness mechanisms, and professional discipline among members of the Bar.

E. MENTORSHIP AND THE FIT & PROPER LAWYER

The panel session underscored the importance of mentorship, ethical conduct, discipline, and professionalism within legal practice.

It was observed that the "fit and proper" standard extends beyond formal qualification to encompass integrity, behavioural standards, professional responsibility, and moral character.

The session further emphasized that the Rules of Professional Conduct apply equally to online and offline conduct and that digital behaviour now forms part of professional accountability.

Mentorship was identified as a critical institutional framework involving mentorship, coaching, sponsorship, and practical professional guidance.

The panel also expressed concern over low participation by members of the Branch in Law Week activities and encouraged greater institutional ownership and participation in future Branch programmes.



F. ENERGY LAW, RENEWABLE TRANSITION AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN NIGERIA

The session examined the Nigerian electricity sector, renewable energy transition, and climate change governance within the context of national development and sustainability.

The panel identified major challenges affecting the energy sector, including:

Weak transmission infrastructure;

Distribution inefficiencies;

Regulatory fragmentation;

Licensing complexities; and

Policy inconsistency.

Reference was made to key legal frameworks including:

Section 20 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999;

The Climate Change Act, 2021; and

The Electricity Act, 2023.

The Electricity Act, 2023 was recognized as a significant reform capable of decentralizing electricity regulation, encouraging private sector participation, and facilitating renewable energy integration.

The session emphasized the urgent need for harmonized energy policies, streamlined licensing systems, clearer investment frameworks, and stronger institutional coordination.

G. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND THE MODERN ECONOMY

The panel session examined the growing importance of intellectual property within the modern digital economy.

The session explored legal issues relating to copyright, trademarks, patents, industrial



designs, trade secrets, artificial intelligence, digital content creation, and technology-driven innovation.

It was observed that existing intellectual property frameworks require modernization in order to adequately address emerging realities associated with artificial intelligence and digital innovation.

Concerns were also raised regarding weak enforcement mechanisms, limited institutional capacity, and low public awareness of intellectual property rights.

H. MENTAL HEALTH, WELLBEING AND NUTRITION

The session emphasized the importance of mental health, emotional wellbeing, and proper nutrition within legal practice.

It was observed that the demanding nature of legal practice frequently exposes lawyers to stress, burnout, emotional fatigue, and psychological pressure.

The panel stressed that sustainable professional excellence requires deliberate attention to mental wellness, emotional resilience, healthy nutrition, adequate rest, and work-life balance.

The session advocated for greater institutional support and the normalization of conversations surrounding mental health within the legal profession.

I. CYBERCRIMES, SOCIAL MEDIA LAW, ENFORCEMENT AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

The session examined the relationship between cybercrime enforcement, digital governance, social media regulation, and the protection of constitutional rights.

It was observed that while social media regulation and cybercrime enforcement are necessary for national security and public order, such regulation must remain consistent with constitutional safeguards, democratic principles, and internationally recognized human rights standards.

The session emphasized that democracy cannot thrive in the absence of respect for civil liberties and fundamental human rights.

The panel further highlighted the need for a comprehensive, coherent, and rights-based legal framework governing social media regulation and cyber governance in Nigeria.

RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following extensive deliberations, the NBA Garki Branch Law Week Committee resolves and recommends as follows:

1. Legal practitioners should prioritize continuous professional development, intellectual advancement, and technological competence in order to remain effective within contemporary legal practice.
2. The Nigerian Bar Association should continue to strengthen mentorship structures and institutional capacity-building initiatives for young lawyers.
3. Lawyers must uphold the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, discipline, and ethical conduct both offline and within digital spaces.
4. NBA branches should intensify awareness and enforcement mechanisms relating to compliance with the Legal Practitioners' Remuneration Order.
5. Government institutions and security agencies should strengthen collaboration with the legal profession while ensuring strict compliance with constitutional safeguards and the rule of law.
6. Regulatory agencies and policymakers should work towards harmonized and investment-friendly legal frameworks within the energy sector.
7. The Federal Government should strengthen implementation mechanisms under the Climate Change Act and Electricity Act to facilitate renewable energy transition and sustainable development.
8. Intellectual property laws and regulatory systems should be modernized to address emerging realities associated with artificial intelligence, digital innovation, and online content creation.
9. Greater institutional support should be provided for mental health and wellbeing initiatives within the legal profession.
10. Cybercrime enforcement and social media regulation must remain proportionate, transparent, rights-based, and consistent with constitutional democracy and civil liberties.
11. Lawyers should continue to play active roles in public policy development,



institutional reform, governance advocacy, and protection of constitutional democracy.

12. Members of the Garki Branch are encouraged to demonstrate greater participation, commitment, and institutional ownership in Branch activities, particularly Law Week programmes and continuing professional development initiatives, in view of concerns expressed regarding the relatively low turnout of members during the sessions.

13. The Branch should continue to strengthen awareness, engagement, and participation mechanisms capable of promoting broader member involvement in future professional and institutional activities.

CONCLUSION

The 2026 Law Week of the Nigerian Bar Association, Garki Branch provided a rich and impactful platform for intellectual engagement, policy reflection, institutional dialogue, and professional renewal.

The deliberations reinforced the urgent need for legal practitioners and institutions to remain adaptive, ethically grounded, technologically informed, and responsive to evolving societal realities.

The NBA Garki Branch reaffirmed its commitment to promoting professional excellence, institutional reform, rule of law, democratic governance, and the advancement of justice within Nigeria.

Issued this 20th day of May, 2026.

