



NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION
ELECTORAL COMMITTEE OF THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION (ECNBA)
NBA HOUSE, NO. 9 ORO-AGO STREET, GARKI, ABUJA, FCT

Dated: 12 June 2026

PRESS STATEMENT

RE: CLARIFICATION ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF SERVICE PROVIDERS, THE VOTER AUTHENTICATION FRAMEWORK, RESPECTIVELY, AND ADVISORY TO MEMBERS OF THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION ON RESPONSIBLE ELECTORAL COMMUNICATION

The Electoral Committee of the Nigerian Bar Association (ECNBA) issues this statement for the information of all members of the Nigerian Bar Association, all qualified candidates, all eligible voters, and all stakeholders, respectively, in the 2026 NBA National Elections.

1. Background

The ECNBA has noted with concern a number of publications currently circulating on social media and various online platforms that make representations about the procurement of service providers as well as the voter authentication framework adopted for the 2026 NBA National Elections. Several of these publications are premised on, or make reference to, correspondence from two of the three Presidential Candidates in the forthcoming elections. The two separate letters but materially the same in content, were supposedly meant exclusively for responses by the Electoral Committee, but turned out to have been deliberately handed over to sponsored bloggers well ahead of time to publish as news items. Concerns were about the appointed service providers and the proposal for the integration of the National Identification Number (NIN) into the voter authentication process. The Committee considers it necessary to address these matters directly and on the record.

2. THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS AND THE APPOINTED SERVICE PROVIDERS

The ECNBA issued its Request for Proposal (RFP/ECNBA/ESP/2026) on 21 April 2026. That document, which remains publicly available, set out in precise terms the eligibility criteria, scope of work, technical requirements, and the weighted evaluation framework. A total of nineteen (19) bids were received by the submission deadline of May 5, 2026, and were evaluated by the ECNBA Evaluation Panel strictly in line with the published criteria.

Following that evaluation, six (6) shortlisted entities were published on the ECNBA and NBA websites and were subjected to a public comment and objection period from 11th to 16th May 2026. All objections (there were no comments or objections by any of the Presidential candidates) received were considered before the shortlisted entities proceeded to a rigorous interview and live demonstration stage.

The assessment session on Monday, 25 May 2026 was attended by some candidates while others sent their nominated Information Technology consultants, who participated actively and whose technical contributions materially informed the final evaluation. The candidates who now wrote to the Committee were themselves represented at that session. Their own IT consultants participated in the assessment of the shortlisted entities, and, along with the IT consultants of other candidates, contributed to the process that identified Mikrodigital Connect and Thanelinc Nigeria Limited as the strongest-performing entities. The video recording of the event will attest to this assertion.

The selection of service providers was not a process conducted behind closed doors. The Committee was not persuaded by glossy brochures, well-packaged documentation, or written proposals alone. Its decision was persuaded in significant measure by what the entities demonstrated, live, in the presence of all stakeholders, including the candidates' own IT consultants. The weight of that direct, observed performance was the decisive factor in the final selection.

3. MIKRODIGITAL CONNECT — CORPORATE STATUS AND ANNUAL RETURNS

One of the letters drew the Committee's attention to findings at the Corporate Affairs Commission concerning Mikrodigital Connect. The Committee acknowledges the factual accuracy that Mikrodigital Connect is registered as a Business Name (Number 3022299) with Mr. Shamsuddeen Haruna as sole proprietor, and its annual returns were regularized in the period immediately preceding the contract award. Apart from Mr. Haruna, the company profile submitted with the bid which was fortified by the presence of some members of his team showed that the company has the requisite personnel expertise to assist the committee in delivering credible elections.

The Committee draws a clear distinction between legal form and demonstrated technical capability. The NBA Constitution and the published RFP do not prescribe limited liability incorporation as a condition of eligibility. The eligibility framework required demonstrated technical competence, relevant experience, independence, and the capacity to deliver; all of which were assessed through the live demonstration at which the candidates' technical representatives were present.

On the annual returns, the Committee was aware of the timing of the regularisation. The Committee took the view that the decisive question was not administrative good standing with the CAC alone, but whether the entity had the demonstrated technical capacity to perform the specific mandate. The assessment session answered that question directly, convincingly, and in the presence of all stakeholders. There is currently no statutory and/or regulatory impediment to Mikrodigital Connect.

The Service Agreement with Mikrodigital Connect (Contract Ref: SVC/ECNBA/EVSP/2026) contains robust contractual protections, including unlimited personal liability of the proprietor for breaches of confidentiality, data protection, and election integrity; comprehensive indemnity provisions; and strict performance obligations enforceable by the ECNBA. The absence of limited liability incorporation does not weaken these obligations, if anything, it reinforces the personal and direct accountability of the proprietor, who is bound under the contract.

4. THANELINC NIGERIA LIMITED — NDPC REGISTRATION AND TRACK RECORD

Concerns were also raised regarding the registration of Thanelinc Nigeria Limited with the Nigeria Data Protection Commission (NDPC) as a Data Protection Compliance Organisation (DPCO). The Committee confirms that it has required Thanelinc Nigeria Limited to provide evidence of compliance with applicable data protection regulations as a term of its engagement under the DPO Services Agreement (Contract Ref: SVC/ECNBA/DPO/2026), which expressly warrants NDPC registration or recognition where applicable. The Committee attests that Thanelinc Nigeria Limited has all the technical and statutory requirements to undertake its role as a DPO.

On track record, the Committee's assessment was based on the totality of the entity's presentation at the assessment session of 25th May, 2026; a session at which the candidates' technical representatives were present and actively participated. The Committee stands by its assessment that the demonstrated performance of both entities, as witnessed by all stakeholders, justified their selection.

5. THE AUTHENTICATION FRAMEWORK: POSITION OF THE ELECTORAL COMMITTEE

The current voter authentication framework for the 2026 NBA National Elections employs a two-factor authentication model comprising Supreme Court Number (SCN) verification and One-Time Password (OTP) delivery to the voter's registered contact details. This framework was adopted following a thorough technical review, is in conformity with established security standards, and has been integrated, tested, and certified for deployment.

1. The Final Qualified Voters Register was compiled, verified, and published on the basis of the Supreme Court Number (SCN) as the primary voter identifier. The Voter Verification Portal opened on May 19, 2026, and closed on May 27, 2026. By that time, the database architecture and the entire voter verification infrastructure were already configured around the SCN and OTP. The register was subsequently frozen on May 27, 2026, without NIN as a component. Any integration of NIN after that stage would have required rebuilding the entire voter authentication infrastructure against a separate identity database—a process that would have taken weeks and placed the July 2026 election date in direct jeopardy.
2. The NBA Constitution imposes binding timelines on the ECNBA. Those timelines do not permit the Committee to defer election activities indefinitely to accommodate technical additions that were not part of the original voter database architecture. The Committee's constitutional obligation is to conduct a free, fair, transparent, and credible all-inclusive election on July 20, 2026. That obligation takes precedence.
3. The Committee is constitutionally bound to ensure that the elections are accessible to all eligible members regardless of location, device type, or technological capacity. NIN integration presents a documented accessibility barrier. A significant number of NBA members carry NIN records containing discrepancies—in name, date of birth, or other identifiers—when compared with their records in the NBA's own database. Integrating NIN without first providing sufficient time for members to correct those discrepancies would have disenfranchised a substantial portion of the electorate. That outcome is constitutionally impermissible.
4. Members in remote areas and members living with disabilities present additional concerns. Facial recognition, in particular, raises documented practical difficulties—inadequate

connectivity for biometric capture, device limitations, and physical challenges with live recognition systems. The Committee's constitutional duty to ensure accessibility made it impermissible to introduce facial recognition at this stage.

6. PROPOSALS MADE BY TWO OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

The proposals by the two Presidential Candidates were made in the meeting the Committee scheduled with ALL QUALIFIED CANDIDATES (not only for the three Presidential candidates) on the 25th of May, 2026, wherein the two male presidential candidates proposed for the consideration by the ECNBA the incorporation of the NIN into the authentication process in the election. One of the male Presidential candidates also proposed that the ECNBA should procure the involvement of the EFCC, the DSS, and the ICPC in the elections. Some candidates who were present at this physical meeting stoutly opposed these proposals and gave reasons for their positions. There was no moment or time that ECNBA agreed to follow the proposals but all that the committee said was that they will be looked into to see their applicability and conformity with the NBA Constitution and the Schedules and Guidelines regarding the elections.

The video coverage of the meeting from beginning to end authenticates the facts as stated herein.

Without prejudice to the above, pursuant to a detailed technical assessment, the Electoral Committee determined that NIN integration is not feasible within the timeframe remaining before Election Day, 20 July 2026, for the following principal reasons:

- (i) **The Final Voters Register has been compiled, verified, and frozen as of the 27th day of May, 2026, to the knowledge of all stakeholders, including the candidates.** It does not contain the NIN of any registered voter. Collecting and integrating NIN data for over 80,000 registered voters before Election Day is not operationally achievable.
- (ii) **A significant number of female members of the Bar who have changed their surnames on the Supreme Court Roll following marriage have not updated their NIN records with the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) to reflect that change.** Under a NIN-based authentication model, these members whose eligibility to vote is not in question would fail authentication and be

effectively disenfranchised, through no fault of their own and with no available remedy before Election Day.

(iii) A further category of eligible voters that the NIN proposal has failed to account for is members of the Nigerian Bar Association currently resident or practising abroad. Nigerian lawyers in the diaspora who have maintained their financial standing at the Bar, fulfilled their constitutional dues, and are on the Final Voters Register are entitled to vote in the 2026 NBA National Elections. Many of these members face one or both of the following realities: they have been resident outside Nigeria for extended periods and have never enrolled for a NIN, as the NIN enrolment process has historically required physical presence at a NIMC enrolment centre in Nigeria; or they enrolled for a NIN before departing Nigeria but have had no occasion or opportunity to update their NIN records to reflect subsequent changes including name changes since taking up residence abroad.

Under a NIN-based authentication model, members in the diaspora who do not possess a NIN would be categorically excluded from voting, not on grounds of ineligibility but purely as a consequence of an administrative requirement that they have no practical means of satisfying from outside Nigeria before Election Day. This would constitute a direct and systemic suppression of the diaspora vote, a cohort of eligible voters who have done nothing to forfeit their right to participate in the election of their professional association's national leadership.

The Electoral Committee notes that the NBA's membership is spread across multiple continents and that the right of eligible members to participate in the democratic governance of their association must be protected regardless of their country of residence at the time of an election.

(iv) Integrating the NIMC API into the voting platform requires formal regulatory approval from NIMC, software development, security certification, and testing. None of these can be safely completed within the remaining days leading up to the election day of 20 July, 2026. Introducing an unfinished integration into a live election system creates risks that are entirely unacceptable.

(v) The OTP component of the existing authentication model already directly addresses the impersonation vulnerability that the NIN proposal seeks to solve. Even where a voter's SCN is known to a third party, authentication cannot be completed without access to that voter's registered email address or mobile device. The existing framework is technically sound.

The Electoral Committee's decision on this matter is final. The 2026 NBA National Elections will proceed on the current SCN + OTP authentication framework on July 20, 2026. The eligibility criteria for voters as prescribed by Paragraph 6, Part iii of the Second Schedule is clear and unambiguous on the right of all eligible legal practitioners to vote in the NBA Elections. The need for inclusivity, convenience, and ease for eligible voters to participate without compromising credibility and transparency is also emphasized by the provisions of Paragraph 10, Part I of the Second Schedule to the NBA Constitution, 2015 (as amended in 2025).

7. ON THE CONDUCT OF CANDIDATES AND THEIR SUPPORTERS

The Electoral Committee acknowledges the right of all candidates to raise concerns through legitimate channels. Correspondence addressed to the Committee and received through proper means will always be considered on its merits. However, the Electoral Committee observes that certain publications and online communications have gone beyond raising legitimate concerns. They have misrepresented the Electoral Committee's processes, made unfounded allegations about the integrity of the procurement exercise, and, in some instances, appear calculated to erode public confidence in the electoral process by presenting selective, incomplete, or factually incorrect information, including false information in respect of Court proceedings in the matters filed in courts relating to the elections, as though they were established facts. Letters written to the Committee are sent to sponsored online blogger even before delivery to publish slanted and jaundiced narratives that are clearly in furtherance of the determined efforts to intimidate members of the Committee and discredit its efforts. Utterances by some of the candidates and their supporters at different fora, including the Law Weeks of several branches, are all geared towards discrediting the ECNBA. This strategy has been in place since the appointment and inauguration of the Committee, but the Committee has maintained the expected candor as Legal Practitioners and focused on its mandate to deliver credible elections.. However, there is a need to advise that the strategy to diminish and discredit the committee should not be allowed to continue; hence, caution is hereby necessary.

The Electoral Committee calls on all candidates and their supporters to conduct themselves within the bounds established by ECNBA Notice No. 4 of 13th February 2026 and in a manner befitting the dignity of the legal profession.

8. REQUESTS FOR DISCLOSURE

The correspondence received also contained requests for disclosure of certain documents and information. The Committee responds to all candidates as follows:

1. The full technical and commercial proposals submitted by the service providers are commercially confidential, and their disclosure would breach the Committee's obligations to the vendors and undermine future procurement processes. The Committee, however, hereby gives a summary of the evaluation scores and criteria outcomes.
2. The evaluation criteria are fully set out in Section 5 of the published RFP (RFP/ECNBA/ESP/2026), publicly available since 21 April 2026, applying the weighted criteria of Response to Specifications (50%), Technical Expertise and Past Performance (30%), and Cost and Value for Money (20%).
3. Particulars of the entities' prior engagements were assessed as part of the evaluation, and a summary of the relevant past performance information is discreetly available.
4. Written confirmation of Thanelinc Nigeria Limited's NDPC registration or DPCO status is also discreetly available.
5. Contractual protections including warranties, unlimited liability provisions for core breaches, comprehensive indemnities, and performance obligations are in place in respect of all the service contracts. The details of the commercial terms are confidential, but the nature and scope of the contractual protection will be readily explained within the bounds of confidentiality.

9. ADVISORY TO MEMBERS OF THE BAR ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

The Electoral Committee has observed, with particular concern, that a number of legal practitioners who own and operate blogs, social media accounts, and other platforms of mass communication have been publishing articles and commentary that misrepresent the facts of the electoral process, sensationalize routine administrative decisions, and in some cases make allegations that are not supported by any credible evidence.

The Committee wishes to address those members directly.

Members of the Nigerian Bar Association who engage in public commentary are bound at all times by the Rules of Professional Conduct for Legal Practitioners. The publication of false, misleading, or inflammatory content whether on social media, online news platforms, WhatsApp groups, or any other channel does not cease to be a professional conduct matter by reason of the medium through which it is communicated. The professional obligations of a legal practitioner follow the person, not the platform. The Electoral Committee exists to protect the integrity of the 2026 NBA National Elections and the credibility of the Bar's democratic processes. It takes that mandate seriously.

10. Clarion Call to All Members

The Electoral Committee calls on all 80,000+ eligible voters and members of the Nigerian Bar Association including those in the diaspora to focus their energy on what matters: verifying that they are on the Final Voters List at www.ecnba.org.ng, ensuring their contact details are accurate and accessible, and preparing to exercise their franchise on Election Day, 20th July 2026.

The 2026 NBA National Elections will be free, fair, transparent, and credible. Every decision made by this Committee has been, and will continue to be, guided solely by the requirements of the NBA Constitution 2015 (as amended in 2025) and the imperative of delivering an election that every member of the Bar can be proud of.

The Committee remains open to all legitimate enquiries at info@ecnba.org.ng.

Dated this 12th day of June, 2026.



AHAM EJELAM, SAN

Chairman (ECNBA 2026)



IBRAHIM ALIYU NASSARAWA, ESQ

Secretary (ECNBA 2026)