

**“INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON THE AFRICAN LAWYER, POLITICS AND
ECONOMIC PROGRAMS BY 2030”**

BY

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**AT THE 10TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE PAN AFRICAN LAWYERS UNION
(PALU), LOME, TOGO, 18TH JULY, 2019.**

**THEME: THE AFRICAN LAWYER OF TOMORROW, EMERGING AND
DEVELOPMENT ACTOR**

PROTOCOL

Mr. President, Chairman, Guest of Honour, Fellow Presenters, ladies and gentlemen.

I welcome you once again to this august 2019 PALU Conference. The theme of this Conference is apt and timely given the giant strides and developments being made in various areas of law. This congruently portends that African lawyers and legal practitioners must fall in line and conform with these contemporary changes and the new vistas for the future.

It is in the light of the foregoing that I will briefly introduce the subtheme: *“The African Lawyer and the Politic and economic programs by 2030”*.

Without taking much of your time, I would briefly identify and introduce 6 critical areas that the governments in Africa, policy makers, and legal practitioners in Africa must pay critical, urgent attention to from now till 2030.

By way of introduction, it is a fact that the role of law in politics and socio-economic development cannot be overemphasised. The law in most African countries is inadequate to meet the day to day needs of the rapidly growing populations.

As custodians of law and justice, African Lawyers have played significant role in developing laws in changing the narrative in the political scene and influenced economic policies across the continent to conform with global best standard.

Africa can still be seen to be growing at a very slow pace because not until recently, African Lawyers have not concerned themselves with the problems of politics and developmental activities within the continent, rather they are preoccupied with litigation and legal protection of the status quo.

Also, the subject of law and development has just begun to evolve, making developmental law a very new phenomenon in the African legal community. It is therefore imperative that research relating to law, socio-economic and political development be introduced and encouraged in African legal education.

African Lawyers are therefore encouraged to deploy their expertise in developmental law to ensure that law becomes responsive to the needs of the common African, because in reality there is usually a disparity in legal theory and practice, this perception must be corrected for Africans to have more faith in the rule of law.

For Africa to achieve the potential benefits of legal development, legal specialists in the various fields of politics and economy (or rather developmental Lawyers) will be required. It is on this note that I introduce the following areas of legal development that must be considered for the African Lawyer to be upgraded in order to meet up with the global best practices in our ever-changing world.

1. SPECIALIZATION:

***Specialization in legal practice entails the acquisition of detailed knowledge of, and proficiency in, a particular area of law.**

***Due to the increasing subject areas of law that are mostly complex in nature, it is important that African lawyers narrow their practice to a limited field or fields. African Lawyers usually engage in general law practice this ought not be the case as several areas of law that have been developed require special attention and expertise.**

***Oil & gas, Environmental, Law of the Sea, Economic, Trade & Investment law, ICT and Tech laws, Copyright etc...so many areas of law where the future successful African lawyer can specialize, hone his trade, make a name and be successful by 2030.**

2. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

***it is the latest innovation in technology deployable to assist lawyers in enhancing their law practice and efficiency with the speed of light in their legal practice in America and the western world. Africa must embrace it, learn it and deploy it to be at par with fellow practitioners in other climes. And to conform to being the lawyers of the future.**

***It is the trend and latest technology deployed in all areas of life and Law must also embrace it and use for advantage of the future of African lawyers.**

*** can be deployed in law research,**

***Drafting Forms & Precedents**

*** Search for Precedents, Laws, latest decisions/locus classicus on any area of law.**

*** Could also be deployed in drafting of documents by just a command. Such documents could then be edited by the lawyer to suit his needs.**

NOTE: PALU, the Governments, and National Bar Associations must do extensive sensitization, advocacy and encourage lawyers to embrace and apply this innovation. Or else legal practice without this in 2030 will be like legal practice before the advent of computer.

3. TRANSBOUNDARY/ INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE:

***Certification of Chartered Arbitration (ADR)**

*** Passage of AFTRA means legal services could now be provided by lawyers from a foreign jurisdiction in any country in Africa especially on advisory services, negotiation and international commercial law.**

4. CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

***Acquisition of Masters/PhD degrees**

***Strategic Research**

***Attending Conferences, Seminars Symposium to discuss and grasp contemporary legal innovations, new principles of law and developments.**

***Implementation of compulsory minimum CLE points for Legal Practitioners as it is done in Nigeria to enhance their capacity.**

***PALU, National Bars, NGOs and Governments must continue to hold conferences and seminars for lawyers to bring abreast of latest developments in legal practice and emerging areas and principles of law.**

5. VIRTUAL OFFICE & USE OF THE INTERNET & INFOTECH

***It is a new means of establishing, running and managing law firms as drastic departure from the walls & mortars office: conventional four walled offices.**

***Contemporary lawyers in Africa and over the world work from any part of the world, even while in transit. Facebook, Skype, WhatsApp, Yahoo, Microsoft have made this possible through technology. Future African lawyers must be tech compliant and deploy same in their practice, else their practice will be rendered obsolete and obliterated by their counterparts who deploy such cutting-edge technology in their own legal practice.**

***Lawyers do not need to rent official offices anymore. All they require to work now as office from anywhere in the world is a functional laptop and efficient internet. Most lawyers now work from home and save lots of money in the process without much difference in operations and success as to when they kept conventional four wall offices.**

CONCLUSION

Legal practice in Africa must embrace, learn, and deploy this 5 Point Agenda to be relevant in nearest future and by 2030. This will engender immense development for the Continent because Law is the greatest instrument and catalyst for development, peace and security. Africa deserves this from all of us here, the least we can do is to embrace, learn and deploy these 5-point in our practice starting from now so that we can see the Africa we would leave and bequeath unto our children.

On this note, I congratulate the EXCO of PALU and the President for this important Conference and wish us all fruitful deliberations.

My name is Dr. Sijuade Kayode.

Thank you.