

**Diane Okoko FCIArb, FICIArb**

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In a corporate legal landscape bogged by bureaucracy and conformity, Diane is exceptional; pushing the frontiers of the legal space and has exemplified her commitment to the profession to inspire emerging generation of young lawyers. She brings with her a passion and creativity that permeates each member of her team, empowering them to approach and appreciate each case and transaction being worked on uniquely. In addition to her being called to the bar, she holds a Masters' Degree in International Law and Diplomacy from the University of Jos and is an alumna of the Wharton Executive Education Program of the University of Pennsylvania, in Strategy and Management for Competitive Advantage.

Her main areas of practice are Arbitration, Corporate Commercial law, Legal and Regulatory Compliance mergers and Acquisitions and Capital Markets. She has advised corporations severally and so possesses significant experience in mergers and acquisitions, public offers, private placements and rights issues. She consults on corporate governance, managing board performance and expectations for a number of Microfinance and multinational Institutions across West and East Africa as well as Europe and America. She serves as Company Secretary/Legal Adviser to several Boards and Governing Councils and Multinational Companies.

She is a Fellow and an approved Faculty member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK) Nigeria Branch, as well as a Fellow of the Society of Construction Arbitration, a Corporate Governance Practitioner and facilitator and has vast expertise in Corporate and Company law and practice, a member of the Governing Council of Janada International Centre for Arbitration and Mediation (JICAM), a member of the Executive Committee of the Abuja Chapter of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK), Nigeria Branch. She is also on the Panel of Neutrals of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), the Dispute Resolution Centre of the Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI DRC), the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA), the Lagos Court of Arbitration as well as the Abuja Multi-Door Courthouse (AMDC).

She has significant experience in Mergers and Acquisitions and Managing Board Performance and Expectations. She has worked on several transactions in a number of countries across West and East Africa as well as Europe and America. She consults on corporate governance for a number of Microfinance and multinational Institutions. She serves as Company Secretary/Legal Adviser to several Boards and Governing Councils, Multinational Companies, Government Agencies and State Governments. She has advised corporations severally and so possesses significant experience in mergers and acquisitions, public offers, private placements and rights issues. She consults on corporate governance, managing board performance and expectations for a number of Microfinance and multinational Institutions across West, South and East Africa as well as Europe and America.

She is also a registered Capital Market Solicitor, a member of the National Prosecution Coordination Committee (NPCC), a member of the Nigeria Incentive-based Risk Sharing System for Agricultural Lending (NIRSAL) Experts Committee, a Zonal Coordinating Consultant to NIRSAL. Her experience has enabled her to serve on the National Prosecutions Coordination Committee amongst others.

Her professional pursuits extend beyond her work in the corporate legal landscape, as she avidly participates in a number of professional development initiatives that span several fields, one such is her contribution to women entrepreneurial empowerment through her commitment as a mentor to several young professionals via Women in Management, Business and Public Service (WimBiz); a non-profit organization founded in Lagos, Nigeria that advocates for and implements programs to further the representation of women in leadership roles in the public and private sectors, where she is an Executive Council Member. She also serves as President

of the A10 Stream of the CEM program, an initiative of the Enterprise Development Centre of the Pan Atlantic University, where she mentors young professionals as well.

## **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

- Company secretarial functions and corporate governance experience from serving as company secretary and legal adviser to several companies
- Arbitration & ADR experience from being appointed sole arbitrator or tribunal member
- Managed several mergers and acquisitions, due diligence & capital market transactions
- Provided several real estate venture structuring, negotiation, verification and advisory to clients
- Faculty member on arbitration law and practice, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (Nigeria Branch)

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

- Member, Conference Planning Committee, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) 4<sup>th</sup> African Conference on International Arbitration 2019
- Vice Chair, Conference Planning Committee, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (Nigeria Branch), 2018 Annual Conference 2018
- Arbitrator, LCA-YAN Moot Arbitration Finals 2018
- Member, Nigerian Team of Consultants  
For the set-up of Togo Incentive-Based  
Risk Sharing System for Agricultural Lending (MIFA) 2018
- Arbitrator, LCA-YAN Moot Arbitration Finals 2017

## **JUDGING THE WORK OF OTHERS**

- Presiding Arbitrator Real Estate dispute with consideration of over N160m 2018
- Co-Arbitrator LCA-YAN Moot Arbitration Contest 2018
- Tribunal Secretary In 2 International arbitrations; \$90M 2018
- Sole Arbitrator Organ of the government and a private company 2017
- Co-Arbitrator LCA-YAN Moot Arbitration Contest 2017
- Tribunal Secretary Two private companies in a commercial transaction of \$1.2M 2017

## **AWARDS AND COMMUNITY**

She has been recognised and awarded several awards including the following:

- Young Professional of the Year by the Woman on Fire Foundation
- Award of Excellence, Law Students Association of Nigeria (LAWSAN), University of Abuja
- Award of Excellence for contributions to development of the Youth by Government Secondary School, Karshi, Abuja, Old Students Association.
- She was recently recognized by CNBC/NBC Washington Rising Women Series as one of the 31 women creating positive impact in Africa.

## **LISTINGS – SCHOLARLY WORKS AND MEDIA MENTION**

- Federal Government Committee on corruption cases; <https://www.channelstv.com/2016/05/28/fg-sets-up-national-panel-for-prosecution-of-high-profile-corruption-cases/>
- Speaker at the ICC YAF event Rules of Evidence in International Arbitration; <https://iccwbo.org/event/icc-yaf-rules-evidence-international-arbitration/#1479467112259-d5b2b420-b616aba1-b1becc7e-5a0dece0-8b5e4357-bde48474-131031b9-af5c>

- Daily Trust Newspaper Interview; WB Women have always been players in real estate <https://www.pressreader.com/>
- Executive Committee members of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators UK (Nigeria Branch) Abuja Chapter <https://www.ciarbnigeria.org/about-ciarb>
- SOAS Arbitration in Africa Conference 2018; [http://kiac.org.rw/IMG/pdf/rwanda\\_hosts\\_global\\_arbitrators\\_for\\_the\\_2018\\_soas\\_arbitration\\_in\\_africa\\_conference.pdf](http://kiac.org.rw/IMG/pdf/rwanda_hosts_global_arbitrators_for_the_2018_soas_arbitration_in_africa_conference.pdf)
- African Arbitration Association <https://afaa.ngo/Sys/PublicProfile/47122070>
- The Guardian Nigeria article on Construction Industry Arbitrators: Arbitration Society Task Members on Professionalism <https://allafrica.com/stories/201812110492.html>
- Nigerian Lawyer & Entrepreneur <https://www.f6s.com/dianemarcusokoko>
- Global Entrepreneurship Network <https://www.genglobal.org/user/diane-marcus-okoko>
- Quintessential Business Women Association <https://www.facebook.com/QBWAfrica/posts/the-qwp-team-diane-okoko-mary-ukam-and-lilian-iroha-getting-busy/707434426029652/>
- CI Arb Abuja Committee <http://ciarbajuba.org/?reqp=1&reqr=nzcdYaEvLaE5pv5jLab=>
- Arbitration society task members on professionalism <https://guardian.ng/features/arbitration-society-tasks-members-on-professionalism/>
- LCA-YAN Moot Arbitration; Aelex, UNILAG shines at young Arbitration Contest <https://punchng.com/aelex-unilag-shine-at-young-arbitrators-contest/>

## TRAININGS AND CERTIFICATIONS

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| • ICC Institute Advanced Training on Drafting Enforceable Awards;   | Lagos, 2019        |
| • Workshop on FIDIC Contracts - A Practical Approach;   | Johannesburg, 2019 |
| • AILA Training on Investment Treaty Law and Arbitration;   | London, 2018       |
| • ICC Institute Advanced training on The Conduct of the Proceedings and Case Management: The Arbitrator's Perspective | Lagos, 2018        |
| • Society of Construction Industry Arbitrators Fellowship   | Abuja, 2018        |
| • RBM Monitoring and Evaluation Training;   | Manchester, 2017   |
| • Diploma in International Arbitration (FCI Arb)  | Abuja, 2017        |
| • Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK) Accelerated Fellowship Program Award Writing                                | Abuja, 2016        |
| • Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK) Accelerated Fellowship Program Written Assessment                           | Abuja, 2015        |
| • Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK) Accelerated Membership Program (MCI Arb)                                    | Abuja, 2014        |

- Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK) Abuja, 2010  
Entry Course (ACI Arb)
- Kaplan Training on International Technology Licensing Agreements London, 2008

## **PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING ENGAGEMENTS**

- Consultant to the Government of Togo, on the NIRSAL team, for the set up of Mécanisme Incitatif de Financement Agricole Fondé sur le Partage de Risques.
- Consulted on a project for the legal and corporate governance framework setup in Kigali, Rwanda.
- Consultant to ACDI/VOCA, Washington, DC on legal and corporate governance regimes in Sub-Saharan Africa.

## **ARBITRATION AND CAPITAL MARKET EXPERIENCE**

- Appointed Sole Arbitrator in a dispute between an organ of the Federal Capital Territory and a private company over breach and non-payment of contract fee.
- Sole Arbitrator appointed by the Abuja Multi-door Courthouse (AMDC) in a real estate dispute submitted to *ad hoc* arbitration, which was disposed of within three (3) months.
- Acted as Sole Arbitrator in a commercial dispute submitted to *ad hoc* arbitration over non-compliance with salient terms of a contract.
- Appointed as Presiding Arbitrator in an *ad hoc* arbitration over a real estate development contract;
- Appointed Tribunal Secretary in two ongoing international arbitrations
- Appointed Tribunal Secretary in a dispute between a state government and a private company in an infrastructure provision dispute for a claim of over N950m.
- Appointed Tribunal Secretary in an arbitration between two private companies in a commercial transaction for a claim of over N400m.
- Appointed Tribunal Secretary in an arbitration between an Agency of the Federal Government of Nigeria and a private company for a claim of over N3bn

## **CAPITAL MARKET PARTICIPATION**

- Solicitor to the Company in the Oceanic Bank International Plc Initial Public Offering of N3.2 billion shares of 50k each at N5.30k per share.
- Solicitor to the Company in the N2.5 Billion market capitalization of Jaiz International Plc.
- Co-Solicitors to Standard Trust Bank Plc during its merger with United Bank Africa Plc.
- Solicitors to Equitorial Trust Bank Limited during its merger with Devcom Bank Limited.
- Co-Solicitor to First Bank Plc in its acquisition of MBC International Bank Plc and FBN (Merchant Bankers) Limited.
- Co-Solicitor to Habib Nigeria Bank Limited in its merger with Platinum Bank Plc.
- Co-Solicitor to Dangote Sugar Refinery Plc in its Initial Public Offer of 3 Billion ordinary shares at N18.00 per share.
- Co-Solicitor to Aso Savings and Loans Plc in its private placement of 2 Billion Ordinary Shares.
- Co-Solicitor to the Offer of 3,357,993,375 ordinary shares of 50k each at N16.50k per share of Oceanic Bank Plc.
- Co-Solicitor to the Offer and Rights issue of N100 Billion Ordinary shares of First Bank of Nigeria Plc.

## **EDUCATION**

- University of South Wales; Masters of laws (LL.M) In view
- University of Jos, Plateau State:  
Masters in International Law & Diplomacy (M.A.L.D) 2006
- Nigerian Law School, Bwari, Abuja, Barrister-at-law (B.L) 2001

## **MEMBERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS**

- Member, National Prosecutions Coordination Committee (NPCC)
- Member, Governing Council, Janada International Centre for Arbitration and Mediation (JICAM)
- Member, Board of Trustees, Women Entrepreneur Incubator Initiative
- Member, Board of Directors, Successory Nigeria Limited
- Member, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators, UK
- Member, Executive Committee, Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (UK) Abuja Chapter, Nigeria Branch
- Member, Committee of Experts, Nigeria Incentive-Based Risk Sharing System for Agricultural Lending
- Member, Panel of Neutrals of Abuja Multi-door Courthouse (AMDC)
- Member, Panel of Neutrals of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC)
- Member, Panel of Neutrals of the Dispute Resolution Centre of the Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI DRC)
- Member, Panel of Neutrals of the Cairo Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration (CRCICA)
- Member, Nigerian Bar Association (NBA)
- Member, International Bar Association (IBA)
- Registered Capital Market Solicitor
- President, CEM A10 Alumni of Entrepreneurial Development Centre, Pan Atlantic University, Lagos, Nigeria

**March, 2021**