



1.

TEXT OF THE
VALEDICTORY SPEECH OF
HON. JUSTICE SULEIMAN GALADIMA OFR, CFR

HELD ON MONDAY 10TH OCTOBER, 2016
SUPREME COURT COMPLEX, ABUJA

2.

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**Held On Monday 10th October, 2016
Supreme Court Complex, Abuja**

PROTOCOL:

My Lord, the Honourable the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Hon. Justice Mahmud Mohammed GCON, My Lords, Retired Chief Justices of Nigeria here present, My Brother Justices of the Supreme Court of Nigeria both serving and retired, My Lord, the President of Court of Appeal, Hon. Justice Zainab Adamu Bulkachuwa, CFR and the Justices of the Court of Appeal both serving and retired, here present. My Lords, Heads of Courts and Judges of various jurisdictions here present, Hon. Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Learned Senior Advocates of Nigeria, Members of NBA, Our Esteemed Royal Fathers here present, Distinguished invited Guests, Gentlemen of the Press, Ladies and Gentlemen.

PRAYER

'Bismillahir RahmanirRaheem'

All Praise is due to Almighty Allah, the Everlasting and Immutable Master and Originator of the Heavens and the Earth. Truly the Majestic and Benevolent Lord. Cherisher and Sustainer of everything known and unknown. You have blessed me beyond measure and to You I am reverently thankful. **'Alhamdulillah Rabbil Aalameen'**

PHILOSOPHY:

"What very mysterious things days were?
Sometimes they fly by, and other times they
seem to last forever, yet they are all exactly
twenty-four hours. There's quite
a lot we don't know about them."

With these thought-engaging words of Melante Benjamin, I would like to remind us that, all that really belongs to us in life is time. Even he who has nothing else has that. So by the virtue of this event marking my 70th birthday anniversary on this 10th day of October, 2016, the much valued time has come for me to cease from functioning as a Judicial Officer. My retirement is not accidental, but well planned and orchestrated by the provisions of Section 291 (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended). It was within my discretionary power and volition to tender my retirement letter before now, but I so decided to offer more services to my Fatherland through sustained and impactful adjudication until today when the long and short arrows of the clock conveniently strike a balance on 12:00am, 10/10/2016, thus signifying my 70th birthday. About the only thing that comes to us without effort is old age. I didn't really mind getting old when I was young. It's the being old now that is getting to me; although, I feel much physically stronger than when I was elevated to this Apex Court in September, 2010, six years ago.

Immediately after this court session, a new page will be opened in my life, which myself and a different set of people that I may encounter on that second phase of life, will begin to write on. Like the words of Paul Klee, a single day is enough to make us a little larger. So there is no doubt that I am going to leave this courtroom larger than I came, after today's event. Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind. To the fearful, it is threatening because it means that things may get worse. To the hopeful, it is encouraging because things may get better. To the confident, it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better. I think I belong to the latter group because it is my belief that success in life is not a result of spontaneous combustion. You must set yourself on fire. It is something you experience when you act accordingly. I have laid out my plans and am on the move to face the future just the same way the future faces me from this moment on, because life itself is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving, moving and moving.

I sincerely commend all the previous speakers who have painstakingly delved into ancient and contemporary history to mould and portray me before the esteemed audience here present. You have packaged me in the best form possible and it is now my turn to further your good work by presenting my humble self to you the way I am.

BIOGRAPHY:

Before flipping through my eventful biography, I would like to engage us in short jigsaw puzzle, by streaming our minds through the figures signifying my date of birth and date of retirement. To start with, my date of birth is 10/10/1946; and my date of retirement is 10/10/2016. We have 8 figures in both dates.

When you add the 8 figures in the two dates together, you get 16 figures which represent the year of my retirement, 2016. In the same vein, when you add the last figure of my date of birth to the last of my date of retirement, being $6+6$, you get 12; and when you subtract second to the last figure of my date of birth (being '4') from the last two digits of the date of my retirement (being '16'), you will also arrive at the same '12' that we earlier got. When you finally subtract that same '4' from '16', you get 8 figures representing my dates of birth and retirement. Could this be short of coincidence of nature and life? It makes the occasions of my birth and retirement rather more fascinating and conspiratorially intriguing, to say the least. This mathematical coordinates are unique to me and nobody in this world has been so favoured or gifted!!! Try it!!

I was born in a typically agrarian village called Sofiyo or Shafa Abakpa in the present day Nasarawa State. There were series of life-snatching childhood infectious diseases at the time I was born. Fortunately, the Almighty Allah had compassion on me and made me to escape all those childhood diseases as I grew up hale and hearty into a healthy, able-bodied adult even in the midst of exceptionally high child mortality statistics in my community and beyond. The first child of my mother, Aminat was a girl, but she had died so early after birth that my immediate elder sister, Salamatu Ababo is often referred to as the first child of my mother.

In all sincerity, my childhood days were not eventful but very enterprising as my entire disposition was constructed on fantastic dreams, hopes and insuperable aspirations for greatness in life. I was not only dreaming the dream but working the dream at the same time. This was ostensibly hinged on the fact that I was

born the first male child of my mother who was a lowly-placed third wife of a peasant farmer. In fact, I had a very bleak prospect as I was literally born into poverty and misery, nurture in struggles and pains but now proudly harvested in comfort and contentment.

I became the fifth child of my father and his fourth male child after my three elder brothers - Musa, Audu and Mamman. As it were, for several years, I remained the last son of the family because the other four children born to my father after me were all females. The birth of Mohammed being the fifth and last child of my mother now made me feel proud among my peers. But as it was later, with the marriage of Hajiya Adisatu Afisa, more children were born.

Precisely six generations before I was born, around 1750, my oldest identifiable ancestor, a man named Ezeje Ohimi became the first Ohimegye of Igu, which is the present day Koton-Karfi, located in Kogi State. Ezeje Ohimi was the grandfather of my own great grandfather, Okpanachi (Kwanaki). Okpaanachi, in a move that now seems like a conspiracy of destiny, left Koton-Karfi on what was supposed to have been a short trip in search of medication for an ailment he was afflicted with at the time. Things were really terribly tough at Koton-Karfi at the time. Apart from constant tribal skirmishes that resulted in untimely deaths, injuries, and loss of property, there was this endemic menace of slavery resulting from the activities of the rampaging marauding Nupe and Benin Slave Traders, who were making life unbearable for people living around that axis, particularly River Niger valley, in those days. On leaving Koton-Karfi, Okpanachi found his way to the Ohinoyi of Ohimozo, Ohagenyi Atekpa Keke, who was his bosom friend. It was Atekpa Keke that persuaded him to travel to Shafa Abakpa, where he believed Okpanachi would get a better therapy for his sickness. He heeded the advice and immediately left for Shafa Abakpa. His relationship with Ohinoyi Atekpa was so cordial that the latter gave him his sister, Oseku as wife. However, this was on the condition that Okpanachi would not return to Koton-Karfi again, for reasons that were quite obvious to both friends. Through Atekpa's persuasion, Okpanachi, who was initially anxious to return to Koton-Karfi eventually agreed to stay back at Shafa Abakpa, where he acquired a large expanse of land, and began to farm.

He later became a proud father of seven children, the second of who was my grandfather, Aguye Okpanachi. My paternal grandmother was the daughter of Hajara Abdullahi of the family of Liman Shaba, who were indigenes of ancient city of Kano. Her name was Hadiza Izuwa Isaji. For the purpose of clarity, I would add that the reason why my grandfather was known as Aguye Galadima was

because, at some point in his life, he became the Galadima of my town. A Galadima is not only kingmaker but an official of the palace responsible for arbitration of disputes, and serves as a sort of prefect for the common people in the community.

Certainly I could see the hand of destiny in my becoming a judge even so much to my dislike. I learnt so early in life from my courtier- father the art of arbitration, adjudication and mediation among the family and village disputants.

My grandfather was a very good farmer who also engaged in dying of clothes (rini), hunting (farauta) and traditional dancing which earned him a lot of popularity from far and near. My grandmother on her own was both a singer and dancer. Shortly after tying the nuptial knot, the highly compatible young couple had their first child, in the person of my father, Azukutenyi Sada Abdulrahman Madaki, sometime between the 1st of January, 1889 and the 31st of December, 1889. Since he had no birth certificate, it was difficult to say the exact day or month of his birth, but certainly the year was known through the medieval arithmetic permutations of the elders.

My father had eight wives altogether, having four at a time in compliance with Islamic injunction. He also had 20 children, among whom I am proudly one. His third wife, Rakiya Nnema, is the mother of my elder sister, Hajiya Salamatu Galadima, my humble self, Ladi Galadima, Mairemu Galadima and Mohammed Galadima. It is noteworthy that our grandfather's title, Galadima, is what has now been retained as the family name. His name was Aguye, and my own father's name was Sada, but ironically, none of these two names now feature in the family, as a means of identification of any of their descendants. Like my grandfather, my father became Madaki at some point in his life and had the title added to his name.

Some of the saddest days of my life were when my mother died, precisely on 18th May, 1971 at the age of 66 years; and when my father died on 26th September, 1999. Although he lived to the golden age of 110 years, we were very sad and pained by his demise as we were always savouring his warm company whenever we visited home. My life today is a manifestation of the upbringing of my father, who often admonished us to bring honour and glory home, and not ill- gotten wealth, which always attracts humiliation and disparagement. He lived an honourable and honest life and died without any

scandal, and it has always been my earnest desire to do same and to live to the expectations of all of you, my good people, here present today.

CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL:

I could still remember vividly that childhood life in Sofiyo (also known as Shafa-Abakpa) was simple, predictable, secured, and full of fun. Then came the time for me to start primary school, the one and only school in Sofiyo at that time, being Qua Iboe Mission Primary School, founded by the Qua Iboe Mission (QIM), a Christian denomination headquartered in the South of Nigeria. As I was later told, this school started in Ibuno, in today's Cross River State, and the one in Sofiyo was established in 1930.

As it was with every child resident in Nigeria then, I went through the ritual of trying to touch my left ear with my right hand passing over my head. I did not succeed until after the third trial. When I eventually did, I was overwhelmed with joy. Getting into school was emotionally equivalent to winning an Olympic Gold Medal. For, me, the first taste of school was in 1953, at the age of seven. Honestly speaking, at the time I found myself in school, I hadn't the slightest idea of what school meant to me or its implication for my life. I just went to school the same way I would eat or drink without any special excitement attached. I simply saw it as something I was required to do, and so, I had to do it. Nevertheless, I liked the idea because it meant I did not have to go to farm every day, which was the lot of those who were not in school.

I was now going to farm once every week, and even that was part of schooling because it was the school farm. The idea of a school farm might have been a clever move by our headmaster because this school farm was actually his personal farm. The school farm day was Saturday, and the attendance was alternated between groups in our class and usually we went in the evenings. For me, this was very nice because the school farm, though a farm all the same, was a far cry from the energy-sapping work we had to do on our parent's farms. To make matters worse, our parents' closest farm was way beyond 4km from the village. That meant 8km of walking, let alone the energy that would be dissipated in working in the farm till dusk.

One fascinating aspect of my childhood days was that for quite a while, I considered both Christianity and Islam as part of the school curriculum; not different from Arithmetic and English. Although the teachers of both religions were claiming that we would go to heaven if we took their instructions seriously,

there was nothing odd about that in my childish mind. While the Christian teachers were more consistent in their lessons, Islamic teachers were coming as guest teachers to instruct us on Islamic religion. In school, we were required to sing Christian songs, which we assumed was part of our education.

We did not see it as religious instruction at all. To our juvenile minds, it was simply part of the total package of Western Education. The attendance of Wednesday and Friday evenings Islamic lessons with Imam Mallam Nuhu was optional. As evidence of our orientation at school, I remember that, when, for instance, our parents wanted us to go to their farms on Sundays, we often bluntly refused and told them that we had been instructed by our teachers not to go to farm on Sundays. While at QIM, we used to go for Sunday school on Sundays. It was not compulsory anyway, but the issue was that if we did not go to Sunday school; our parents would notice that we were free and expectedly pounce on us to go to their farms with them. As the naughty kids we were, we circumstantially became faithful Sunday school attendants, even acting holier than the Pastors, which of course, was an irresistible and sure way to escape going to farm.

We were very loyal to our teachers and naturally considered their words superior and final, especially in any battle of wits we had with our parents. Of all my primary school teachers, only Mr. J. J Abu, an quintessential Igalá man, is still alive today. He is now over 85 years and currently lives in Masaka, a suburb of Abuja. When growing up as children, we were taught the three cardinal virtues of humility, contentment and honesty. Envy was a very strange phenomenon and was never indulged in. Our parents were content with whatever they had and it was not the norm to desire something they did not have simply because someone else had it.

Their level of morality was so high that they did not even dare to ask God to give them what was the result of a desire driven by covetousness. With the benefit of hindsight, I make bold to say that the way our parents lived, it was evident they knew and practiced the Ten Commandments to the letter. Moral bankruptcy was almost non-existent in their time. Stealing robbery and kidnapping were unheard of. There was no hatred among neighbours, and there was little or no negative emotions in human interactions. Even with just the basics of life, people seemed to be full of gratitude and joy.

Surprisingly, that could not be directly attributed to religious conviction because even among the traditional religious worshippers (so-called pagans), one could see a proportionate level of righteousness. Living In small homogeneous community has a way of making you see virtually everyone as your sibling, far beyond the boundaries of blood relations. This belief has remained with me and must be the reason for my disposition to all and sundry. I love people. Perhaps that accounts for the reason that I have no single enemy in this world. **THAT IS A FACT!**

ESCAPADES/ ADVENTURES/EPIGRAMS:

My first serious self-inflicted injury was when I was four years. I was on a tree and attempted to jump down without clambering down as usual. That adventure of playing Spiderman on the tree did not end on a favourable note, as it left me with a deep cut that resulted in bitter tears of excruciating pains. This regime of unguarded adventures did not, however, stop after the first bitter experience. The second one happened when my elder brother, Ahmadu who had just returned from Maiduguri where he had gone for Qur'anic education returned home. We were so excited because he came back with a new Raleigh bicycle and some religious books. One day, he was riding the bicycle around the village while I admired his expertise with reckless abandon, only for me to suddenly jump on the back of the bicycle when he rode past me.

For the fact that he did not realize when I got to the carrier behind him, he momentarily lost his balance. On my part, I could not balance my legs on the stand, and one of my legs got entangled in-between the spokes of the rear wheel. This caused both of us to fall unprotected to the stony ground, and my brother ended up with a deep cut on his head while I was compensated for my unmitigated stubbornness with another deep cut on an already fractured leg. The condition of the bicycle was unimaginable, as irreparable damage was inflicted on it. I nursed my leg for several months while my brother lost his new bicycle. My father, however, beat me blue and black for incurring this huge loss despite the severe pains I was going through.

I do not know what was actually aiding the free-flow of this stream of dangerous adventure in my veins, as it seemed that the deep cut from the tree and the accompanying injury from the bicycle did not succeed in navigating me away from the path of danger. At some other time again, I nearly lost my life out of sheer stubbornness. A makeshift dam had just been constructed by the villagers

to help in collecting water for general use. As usual, we the little children in the village were attracted to the dam. In spite of the persistent warnings from the elders, we were still thronging there in torrent like a swarm of bees, even though we were aware of the earlier incident of two hapless kids who were trying to swim and have fun at the dam.

One day, under the cover of the evolving misty weather, I sneaked out and ran like an Olympic Gold Medalist to the dam to avoid being caught by the ever prying eyes of the village elders. Without much ado, I began to swim in earnest but before you could say, 'be careful', I was already drowning and making frantic effort to clutch at any available straw but none in sight. But for the gallant effort of a mysterious passer-by, I would have, undoubtedly, become the swollen corpse to have been taken out of that dam. Up till date, I cannot explain how I was saved but all I could remember is that I was alive thereafter. Honestly, I thought the dam was shallow - in defiant disbelief of what the elders had told us - but, when I got in, I quickly realized that it was more than four times my height. I had no hope of coming out alive on my own, but God chose to save me. I thank God.

It was after those unpalatable experiences and the intervening influence of age that I finally got 'cured' of the unknown 'demon' that seemed bent on terminating my life at a tender age. Since then, I have never deliberately gotten myself into any dangerous situation again, except when I was involved in a ghastly car crash of 26th June, 2006 along Enugu-Otukpo Road.

My then Presiding Justice Hon. Justice J. O Ogebe (as he then was) and myself escaped unhurt but his dear wife, Dr. Mrs. Mary Ogebe and the driver were not so lucky. They sustained multiple fractures!!

AT SENIOR PRIMARY SCHOOL, LAMINGA:

In 1957, having spent four years at QIM, my Junior Primary School came to a scheduled end, and it was time to advance to Senior Primary school, after writing and passing the prescribed examination. 36 of us, pupils in primary four sat for the exams, but it was only my elder stepbrother, Mamman Galadima and myself that passed it. In the whole of then Keffi Nasarawa Divisions, there was only one Senior Primary school, and it was at Laminga, somewhere between Keffi and Nasarawa. The journey from Sofiyo to Laminga to resume at the Boarding School marked the first time I would board a vehicle, being a lorry at that time, which was the only means of transportation. One recurring experience during the journey was that, any time we got to a hill, we had to disembark from the lorry popularly called mammy wagon, and trek to the top of the hill, so as to

lighten the load on the lorry and prevent the engine from going off during the climb.

If I was doing very well academically at Junior Primary school, I became exceptional at Laminga. I was always taking the first position in class and sustained the effort until the only time I was "given" second position in my final exams.

I accepted this overwhelmingly with joy, but I had my doubt! With deep sense of nostalgia I recall my good friend, Dr. Barrister Senator Abdullahi Adamu, former Governor of Nasarawa State and currently a serving Senator who was not only at Laminga with us, but was my good friend, classmate and even my seatmate. I believe he will pardon me for stating the ironic fact that, although he was extremely good in English Language, he was not so good in Arithmetic. On a more serious note, I can't end this speech without stating the calamity that befell him when we were in school. I choose to do this because I consider it a way of expressing gratitude to God, especially for managing the situation successfully, and for the fact that a friend in need is a friend indeed!! Abdullahi Adamu was so much in love with football at Laminga, just as I was. He was simply a wizard at the round leather game. During a particular football game, an imposingly huge student rammed into him and he ended up with a broken thigh. The pain he felt was so excruciating that tears rolled down freely from our teenage faces. While Abdullahi was being taken to Vom Christian Hospital in Jos, Plateau State, I opted to follow him just to keep him company. He was eventually treated at the Hospital. I decided to stay with him for a week, even though our headmaster would have preferred me to return to Laminga and continue with my studies, since Abdullahi had already received some first aid and was in a stable condition.

Due to the traumatic nature of his experience, Abdullahi became so emotionally attached to me that he wouldn't want me to leave him. That injury occurred in 1958. I was so amazed to see Abdullahi return back in full force to active footballing immediately he completed his treatment. He was such a determined, courageous and fearless young man at school, even so now as astute politician. My other classmates were late Dr Salihu Santali Karshi, Alhaji Umaru Maiasabari, Dr Bature Shuaibu and Alhaji Aruwa Musa. Others are Mamman Galadima, Adamu Toto, Abdullahi Adadu, Bala Musa, Umar Gangere, Usman Ozaki, Suleiman Ozaki, Dahiru Sambo, Kaffin Shanu, Alhaji Usman Salau, Dr. Yakubu Karu, Alhaji Umaru Ahmed Chu; Alhaji Musa India, Alhaji Salau Ramalan, etc, etc, etc, etc.

As I have earlier stated we never knew the value of education at the time we started school. We only saw it as a form of tradition, and also a way of escaping

from going to farm because many parents were really averse to Western education. The first person that actually broadened my horizon to begin to see a glimmer of light at the end of the curvaceous tunnel called Sofiyo village, was one Alhaji Ahmadu Tanko (CON) my Headmaster. He is now late. He certainly represented my first contact with the concept of Guidance and Counseling. He told us a lot of interesting benefits of education. And my infantile mine, constrained by years of living in Sofiyo without any mentor whatsoever, began to open up gradually. He became the mentor, I had looked for. He loved us. I do not know how to state this truthful but bitter fact without appearing funny, but when we reached the end of our time at Laminga and sat for the Exams that would allow us proceed to Secondary school, I was the only one that passed. I gained admission to Katsina Ala Provincial Secondary School in 1960, after a rigorous entrance examination. While there, I participated in various sporting activities. I was captain of College Volley Ball, Rugby and member of College Athletic Team. In my final year in 1964, I was honoured with the position of Deputy Head Boy. I passed out of the school with very impressive result which earned me admission to the famous Government College, Keffi where I studied for my Higher School Certificate (HSC) between 1965 and 1967; and was also elected Senior Prefect in 1966. In the same year, I got a wind of the then elitist Law Diploma programme in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria through friends and I immediately applied for it. In 1969, I became a proud and elated Diploma holder in Law. Not resting on my oars, I proceeded to the mainstream LLB degree programme in the same University, after a brief working stint with Customs and Excise.

AT AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA:

While in ABU and Law School, I came across very fascinating people from far and near who exhibited the strong passion to be my friends; and we tagged along very well. Worthy of mention with nostalgic feelings are Alhaji Abubakar Atiku, GCON, former Vice President of Nigeria; HRH Muhammadu Barkindo, Lamido Adamawa; Hon. Justice Alkali Barkindo, JCA; Hon. Justice Sabo Suleiman Darazo, former CJ Bauchi (of blessed memory) Hon. Justice S. S Idajili; Hon. Justice Amiru Sanusi JSC, CON; Hon. Justice Sadiq Abuja, Hon. Justice J. Tanko Husaini, (JCA); Hon. Justice James Atsi, former CJ Plateau State; Barrister A. Abdullahi Esq; Barrister Musa Danjuma, CON; Hon. CJ Hwande CJ Benue; Hon. Justice Maria Sanda Zukogi CJ Niger; Hon. Justice Waiter Samuel Nkanu Onnoghen, JSC, CON, CFR; Hon. Justice N. S Ngwuta JSC, CON, CFR; Hon. Justice Paul Galinje JCA; Hon. Justice O. Otta CJ. Etc.

Up till this moment, I am in contact with a good number of them especially those in legal practice.

CAREER IN THE JUDICIARY:

I became Acting Chief Magistrate (Administration and Dispensation of Justice), and State Vice Chairman of Magistrates' Association of Nigeria. I was seconded to Ajaokuta Steel Company in Kogi State as Deputy Company Secretary /Legal Adviser. I was there till November 1984. I was completely detached from my magisterial appointment. However, my mainstream judicial practice started again in March 1990, when I was appointed Attorney General/Commissioner for Justice in the old Plateau State during Military era, I was then practicing under the firm of Galadima-Husaini & Co. I served in that capacity until May, 1991 when I was elevated to the Plateau State High Court bench as a Judge. Following the creation of Nasarawa State in 1996, I was appointed the pioneer Chief Judge of the State and assumed that position in October. I served as Chief Judge of Nasarawa State until 8th December, 1998 when I was elevated to the Court of Appeal bench and sworn-in on 9th December, 1998. While at the Court of Appeal, I served in various Divisions in Lagos, Enugu, and Presiding Justice in Port Harcourt Division from September, 2006 to 2010 before my appointment to Supreme Court on 16th September, 2010. In all, I spent 47 years of my life in Public Service, starting from 1969 to 2016. Remarkable enough, I only spent 26 years in the mainstream judiciary services, six of which I spent at the Apex Court. This is indeed an uncommon progress and I thank God for giving me the incredible speed through the temple of justice to the pinnacle of my career. Like I said earlier, I love the job passionately but if I had a second chance in life, I wouldn't opt for any career as a Lawyer or Judicial Officer. My choice naturally would be either as a Farmer, Footballer, Athlete, or Humanitarian Service Provider.

MY GREATEST CHALLENGES IN THE JUDICIARY:

One of the greatest challenges in my career is the issue of honesty, Except you are honest, it will be impossible to discharge your duties well because part of it involves the use of personal discretion. In doing this, you must honestly and dispassionately weigh both sides of the pendulum before arriving at your decision. Judicial Appointments, as I have come to realize, detaches you from the society. Even the people closer to you are often kept at bay as a result of your judicial oath. Your general conduct and even private life are often wrongly dissected in the public domain. You are always very conscious of the company you keep, who you talk to, who you listen to, what market you shop and which occasion you attend. You can read my lips and observe what it feels like. To crown the ingratitude attracted by judicial job, your good efforts are always sacrificed on the altar of frivolous petitions and ceaseless allegations of bribery

and corruption which often don't stand the test of time. The harder you work to uplift the standard of justice, the harder detractors work to pull down the temple of justice. It is an irony too hard to countenance. In my 26 years sojourn in the Nigerian judiciary, I have experienced series of such petitions and allegations which all paled into insignificance on their own demerit. Needless to recount them here, but I have alluded to such petitions in my Biography. I salute the courage of my brothers in whom I believe will continue to abide by the oath of the office and never to be detracted by frivolous petitions.

Evidently, multiple anonymous frivolous petitions have become the order of the day across board in all the three tiers of government. I have always thrown my full weight behind the proposed Frivolous Petitions Bill, 2015, in short. Even though freedom of speech falls within the ambit of the Constitution, there must always be clearly constructed boundaries and limits to adhere to especially with the exuberant frivolous and unguarded stories being peddled in the print medial social media and other unconventional media occupying the public space. At various times, Justices of the Supreme Court have been ambushed and maligned on different platforms of the social media and sometimes on the pages of traditional print media. This is an ugly trend that must be checked quickly. Every good job deserves commendation and not condemnation as in the case of Judiciary. Too bad! I was, however, sad to learn that the Nigerian Senate has thrown out this very germane Frivolous Petitions Bill during their plenary session on Tuesday, 17 May, 2016. I will like to use this medium to appeal to them to have a rethink over the issue, and represent the bill.

The other aspect that often beats my imagination is the problem of judgment leakage. This is an ugly and embarrassing phenomenon in the judicial system. No Judge will ever handle this with kid gloves. One of such cases reared up its ugly head at the Supreme Court 2013. That was the leakage of an undelivered judgment in the appeal no SC/179/2012 involving Senator Adolphus Uba Igbeke and Lady Margery Okadigbo and Three Others. The decision of the then CJN Hon. Justice Mariam Aloma Mukhtar, GCON and the Federal Judicial Service Commission to dismiss the five Supreme Court staff and one Court of Appeal staff involved, was both apt and appropriate. The Commission also requested the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation to further investigate the motive behind the leakage with a view to further prosecution of the staff involved. I am not sure that has been done!

APPRECIATION AND ENCOMIA:

I am glad that I have passed this way. I am leaving with nostalgic memory of my good brothers, friends, sisters and staff. I must appreciate and thank my two wives and children and all the entire Galadima family whose patience, love and tremendous cooperation saw me through this onerous task of adjudication. Worthy of mention are all the past Chief Justices of Nigeria both living and dead, who painstakingly laid solid foundation for the Judiciary which each successive Chief Justice is building on. I must not forget my mentors whom I graphically appreciated in my Autobiography.

Our amiable current CJN, **Hon. Justice Mahmud Mohammed CJN, GCON**, is a Mentor, whose long relationship with me has influenced my being a Judge, Chief Judge; Justice of Court of Appeal and Supreme Court. This wonderful relationship has been carefully accounted for in my Autobiography. He is a devoted Muslim who practices his religion with passion and zeal. He is extremely warm, industrious, tolerable, strong and a firm leader with zero tolerance for corruption and nepotism. He leads and lives by example. He must remain around the Judiciary to continue to offer his experiences. A lot of things have changed during his time. The Supreme Court under his watch becomes the neatest and well organized institution, I have ever seen in the world!! I had a long standing relationship with **Hon. Justice Mohammed Lawal Uwais CJN, GCON**, before I become a Judge of the High Court. He is a wonderful good man who will ever stand by you at all times in good health, ill-health- for better and for worse. I have known **Hon. Justice S.M.A Belgore CJN, GCON (Rtd)**, since his days in Benue- Plateau State as the first indigenous Chief Judge. He is a humanitarian, Philanthropist; a Muslim scholar, a Historian. He is always there for you! **Hon. Justice Idris Ilegbo Kutigi, CJN, GCON**, is a Judicial Icon. He is strong and extremely warm. He is a father-figure to many. **Hon. Justice Aloysius I. Katisna- Alu CJN, GCON** is kind, calm and soft spoken. He was extremely a welfare CJN who had shared our joys and pains. **Hon. Justice Dahiru Musdapher CJN, GCON** is reputed for kindheartedness, warm, and a Tutor on the bench who is equally very considerate. He wants everybody to be a good Lawyer/Judge. He is a wonderful mentor to many of us. **Hon. Justice Aloma Mariam-Mukhtar CJN, GCON**-is Simple, Kind, Fair-Minded, considerate and easy-going Mother. I remain grateful to her. To my entire brother Justices of the Supreme Court **Hon. Justice W.S.N Onnoghen JSC, OFR, CON, CFR**; **Hon. Justice LF Muhammad JSC, OFR, CON, CFR** and others. Court of Appeal, High Courts serving and retired, you have been wonderful. The pieces of advice and words of wisdom I got from you have adequately

made up for my inadequacies. You have made yourselves easy road for me to ply repeatedly in the search for success in life; and today, I can humbly say I am a fulfilled man. It was in the Court of Appeal, which I refer to as family court, that I shared the best of my relationships with my brothers. For this reason, I have chosen three former Presidents and two Presiding Justices for a particular mention. **Hon. Justice Mamman Nasir, PJCA, GCON** - is an octogenarian, with tremendous wits, compassion and love. He is a humanitarian and an accomplished family man. **Hon. Justice M. M Akanbi, PJCA, GCON**, whom I met in 1985 in Jos as a Presiding Justice, while I was practicing, is a mentor a man of impeccable character, epitome of incorruptibility and strict disciplinarian. I thank him for moulding me with the best of intellectual tenderness. **Hon. Justice Umaru Abdullahi, PJCA, GCON**, is one of the most humble, honest, generous, intelligent and hardworking Justices of his time. I had watched him from a distance when he was in the Court of Appeal, Lagos and closely as my President of the Court of Appeal. He is forever a family friend. **Hon. Justice G. Oguntade JSC (CON)** my first Presiding Justice, whose style, intellect, speed and hard work, I could not easily grasp until well after two years. He is a mentor to six of us who eventually served and retired from Supreme Court. He is kind, generous, warm, and ever willing to help. **Hon. Justice O. Ogebe (CON)**. was my second Presiding Justice in the Court of Appeal at Lagos and Enugu. He is a true Christian, who loves, cherishes and reward hard work. He stood his ground and recommended all of us whom he groomed to be appointed to the Supreme Court. He is a friend to the hardworking, incorruptible Judge, but not so to the indolent.

Some of my primary schools' headmasters and teachers that I could still vividly remember are Mr. E.E Hogan my first Headmaster (1953 - 1954), Mr. J. U Nwosu my second Headmaster (1954 - 1956), Mr. J. J Abu my able teacher/father (1956 -1960) and Mallam Yusufu Inda Zono my dear father-in-law. Others are Alh Tanko Ahmadu, CON, Amb. Suleiman Keffi, and Alh. Adamu Shafa. My Principal at Katsina Ala Provincial Secondary School between 1960 and 1964 was Mr. E. P.T Crampton, while Mr. E. Patient was my Principal, Keffi Government College (HSC) 1965 to 1967. Among my esteemed friends are, H. E Atiku GCON, Turakin Adamawa and former Vice President. We were groomed in campus politics, but I fell by the way side. You are an ever dependable friend and ally. Others are H.R.H Ohimege Panda, Alhaji Usman Abdullahi - a friend in need and indeed; Alh. Haruna Adamu (rtd) DSSS - a boyhood friend who will never forsake you; Alh. Isa Bukar, Turakin Opanda former General Manger of Jos and Katsina Steel Rolling Mills; Barrister Mohammed D. Zubairu close brother and family friend.

I will also like to show appreciation to the following staff of the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court. They are the amiable, hardworking Chief Registrar and Deputy Chief Registrars; my Secretaries-- Hajiya O. Ajibara and Mrs. C. Ezeobi, in the Court of Appeal; and in the Supreme Court, Mr. Isaac Nworie; Asabe Adamu (JP); Mrs. Tonia C.U. Onyeije; Alh. Bashir Rabiou and my driver Alh. Yakubu Zakariya who has served me from the High Court to date, my faithful orderly Alh. Sunday Audu. Others are Alh. Garba Ahmed; Mr. Benjamin Tor; the Registrars and litigation staff.

My Lords, Distinguished invited Guests, in the past 70 years of my ascension through the ladder of life; I have met different people from all walks of life. Some I can still remember, some I can't remember again. But in all, I thank all those who have impacted my life positively, especially you who have on your own volition, decided to set aside your ever tight schedule to honour me with your esteemed presence. May Allah reward you mightily and grant you safe journey back home. Thank you very much.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Suleiman Galadima', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

HON. JUSTICE SULEIMAN GALADIMA JSC, OFR, CFR, FRARB

