

# Judge Chineh Calls for Upholding Judicial Integrity as a Way of Rebranding the Judiciary



From Left to Right: Judge Nelson B. Chineh, Judge Roosevelt Z. Willie, Chief Justice Sie-A-Nyene G. Yuoh, Judge Mameita Jabateh Sirleaf & Judge Scheaplor R. Dunbar

**Monrovia-** The Assigned Circuit Judge of the First Judicial Circuit Criminal Court “B” at the Temple of Justice, His Honor Nelson B. Chineh has called on justice actors to uphold the integrity of the Judiciary as a way of rebranding the Judiciary branch of government.

Judge Chineh delivering his charge at the opening of the November A.D. 2023 Term of Court, First Judicial Circuit, Montserrado County on Monday, November 13, 2023 asked how can we rebrand the image of the Judiciary without upholding the integrity of the Judiciary?

Judge Chineh said, rebranding the image of the Judiciary requires the collective efforts of all judicial actors, to include judges, prosecuting, defense and private

lawyers, clerical staff, ministerial officers, the press, and members of the general public, who serve as jurors.

He stated that the manner and form in which each of these justice actors act in discharging their respective task will impact positively or negatively the public perception of the court system in Liberia.

Judge Chineh speaking on the topic: *Upholding Judicial Integrity: A way of Rebranding the Image of the Judiciary* said Judges, who are expected to be men and women of integrity, as heads of the courts must learn to take full responsibility of the operation of the court.

He noted that the judicial canon speaks to who a judge is. “A Judge must be punctual in attending court; He must at all times exhibit the sense of neutrality; as Judges presiding over the criminal Assizes, it is expected of us to possess some basic qualities, to include but not limited to being knowledgeable in the law controlling criminal prosecution” Judge Chineh asserted.

Continuing further, he said, judges must always be cognizant of the fact that court staff and lawyers look up to them for leadership and guidance noting that “Judge must coordinate activities between the various judicial actors”.

Most importantly, a Judge must also refrain from passing judgment without Due Process he said. Due Process is that principle of law that requires an accused to be accorded an opportunity to be heard prior to being condemned.

Judge Chinaeh emphasized that the 1986 Constitution of Liberia guarantees this right to all persons regardless of their sex, color or status. Due Process protects the individual’s interest and at the same time improves the quality of the administration of justice.

The Judge explained that because laws are dynamic and evolving, all judges in the Liberian Judiciary must be afforded the opportunity for continuous judicial education.

Accordingly, he said, in recent past, Liberian Judges were privileged to attend quarterly Judges’ trainings. In the absence of external training, a periodic peers review form of training is necessary, most especially so for our newly appointed judges.

*“Let us remember that the court is the last place of hope for mankind on earth and as such should be kept sacred. Judges at all times must distinguish themselves as neutral persons by the manner and form in which they conduct judicial businesses,”* Judge Chineh asserted.

They must ensure that their judgments are fair and transparent. This will bring a positive change to the manner and form in which businesses are conducted in court, and by this, the public perception of the Judiciary will begin to shift positively. This is a way of rebranding the image of the Judiciary.