



**THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF ARBITRATORS NIGERIA BRANCH**  
**YOUNG MEMBERS GROUP**

*Press Release 16/04/08*

Recognising that the future of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators is ultimately determined by its young members, the Institute at its International Conference held in Amsterdam on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2003 founded the Young Members Group. The primary aim of the Group is to promote the interests of Young Members by giving them a voice in the Institute and fostering intellectual advancement amongst Young Members.

The Nigeria Branch established its Young Members Group at the Branch's Annual General Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2006 with a formal launch of the Group taking place on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2007. The Group is made up of members of the Institute aged 40 years and below and currently has a membership strength of about 100 members. The Group has a Steering Committee which is currently comprised of Seyilayo Ojo, Omoyemi Akangbe and myself as Chairperson.

The objectives of the Group include the creation of awareness of arbitration as an effective and timely dispute resolution mechanism, capacity building in Young Members and networking amongst Members. The Group hopes to achieve these objectives by organising dedicated Young Member events.

It is intended that the Group will hold an annual conference targeted at and intended for Young Members. In addition, the Group intends to hold, on a quarterly basis, other events such as workshops, round-table talks, social occasions, mock arbitration sessions, etc. Though the Branch already organises workshops and mock arbitration sessions, the events by the Group are intended to deal with the basic principles of and general issues affecting arbitration with a view to giving members a firm grounding in arbitration practice.

In view of the private nature of arbitration, it is no wonder that a greater number of Young Members may not have had the opportunity to experience live arbitration proceedings. As such, we are hopeful that the objective of the Group to build capacity in its members will not only be achieved with the aid of seminars and workshops but with the aid of practical experience to be gleaned from observing live arbitration proceedings. To this end, we are working closely with the Executive Committee of the Branch to put in place a mechanism whereby young members are invited, with the prior consent of the parties, to attend and observe arbitration proceedings as pupils or are appointed as Registrars to arbitral tribunals in arbitrations conducted in the Institute.

We are also aware of the Branch's effort to establish industry specific Small Scale Arbitration Schemes and hope that when it does, a panel of arbitrators to handle claims under these schemes will be made up of or include Young Members.

It is intended that the Group will also bridge the gap between the young and older members of the Institute with a view to retaining the tenets of arbitration practice.

With the ever increasing reliance on arbitration for the effective resolution of disputes, the need to ensure a readily available supply of qualified and experienced arbitrators has become more apparent. It is therefore important that there must always be a new generation of arbitrators in prospect, as failure to do so will only lead to a diminishing group of ever-more-elderly people suitable for appointment.

The Young Members Group will continue to act on and for the benefit of Young Members in the Institute.

*Mrs. Obosa Akpata*  
*Co-ordinator, Young Members Group*

16<sup>th</sup> April, 2008