

ainablanks<sup>a</sup>on

*Member*



 **Aina**  
**Blankson**  
**Global.**  
*...the best, in one stop*

*“An innovative full service Law firm leveraging on the creative minds of its team of diverse specialists to meet clients’ interests and exceed expectations”*



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We provide expert practical advice that assist in solving our clients' challenges. AB staff are expected to be imaginative and unorthodox in proffering acceptable alternatives rather than merely pointing out legal objections.



## Aina Blankson & Aina Blankson Global: **ABOUT US**

**A**ina Blankson Global, a Swiss Verein, is a leading one-stop brand for best-in-class professional services in law, finance, tax including corporate services, energy and consulting. As the parent firm of Aina Blankson, it has afforded adequate global recognition by clients as a leading professional firm providing best-in-class services. Over the years, Aina Blankson has grown to become a leading global law firm renowned for professionalism and excellence in service delivery. We are consistently regarded as one of the foremost Nigerian law firms in the areas of arbitration, dispute resolution, litigation, corporate commercial law, oil & gas, transaction advisory amongst others.

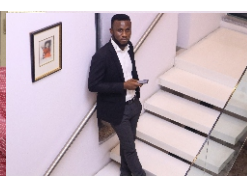
We have achieved our laudable feats through selective recruitment and engagement of only the best minds. This we believe is crucial to the quality and consistency of the AB brand. Our existing and prospective clients choose us not for our size, but for our ability and output, and the confidence that whatever jurisdiction, we will deliver high quality service with recognizable commercial and practical approach.

At Aina Blankson, our aim is to help clients achieve their objectives efficiently while minimizing the legal and regulatory risks, both within Nigeria and Internationally. Although first-class legal advice is always important, the ability to deliver that advice in a coherent and relevant way, combined with excellent transaction management and presentation skills, is essential to the supply of high-quality legal services. When your destination is clear but the path is unfamiliar, it helps to have an experienced guide. The combination of knowledge and foresight is fundamental for any meaningful guide. With the surge of interest in Africa, the need for high-quality legal

advice and appropriate guide at the local level and, in cross-border transaction management has never been more profound.

Aina Blankson has an experienced and well-recognized wealth of talented senior lawyers and associates with qualifications and work experience in Africa, Asia, Europe and the United States of America. Our lawyers work on domestic matters and transactions, and on international and cross-border advisory mandates for a wide range of clients.

OUR PEOPLE  
OUR CULTURE  
OUR PURPOSE



## Our Big Idea

Conventional wisdom dictates that corporate growth lies in marketing and chasing mandates. For us at Aina Blankson, our People remain our Number One Client and Mandate.

While we undoubtedly appreciate the importance of winning fresh mandates, our most important mandate of all is our people as they are the primary Clients, Owners and Leaders of the Firm.

We call them the People-First and they represent the heart of the Firm.

## Our Rationale

We are largely influenced by our culture, our etiquette and our credo. Aina Blankson Culture influences how people think, feel and act while they are on the job. It is our set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices that characterize our Firm. Our Etiquette provides a succinct guide that governs the socially acceptable behavior for staff towards promoting a conducive work environment, expectations on interactions with colleagues, personal conduct and the basic tenets of professionalism that enables productivity in the work place. Our Ethics embody moral principles that guide the behavior and conduct of everyone associated with the Aina Blankson Brand.

We remain committed to our People centric philosophy as the comfort, happiness and career growth of our staff underpins the success of the Aina Blankson Brand



## AB Culture

The Aina Blankson Culture is carefully designed to influence how people within Aina Blankson think, feel and act not only on the job, but in all they do.

The 5 prong Culture that defines the mode of operation within the Firm including approach of individuals and members of the Aina Blankson fold are as follows:

- Quality First
- Service & Speed
- Atmosphere & Cleanliness
- Accountability & Responsibility
- Class, Decorum & Influence

### Quality First:

High-quality professional services.  
Impeccable packages and documentation  
Creative problem solving and clients representation.

### Service & Speed :

Highly responsive and proactive.  
"Yes" attitude; Very personal, yet professional.  
In-depth product knowledge.  
Single-Client friendly;  
Exceed Clients Expectations

### Atmosphere & Cleanliness:

Very comfortable.  
High energy.  
Classical and serene music.  
Cleanliness of restrooms, meeting rooms, walls and everywhere

### Accountability & Responsibility:

"What else can I do?" "What can I do better?"  
Prompt and consistent communication to clients  
*Rejection of "average" & "Impossible"*  
Accountability to one another & to the Firm at all times

### Class, Decorum & Influence:

Attention to small details  
Poise, Carriage & Presentation  
Voice Control and no shout in the office  
Professional and presentable dress code  
Proper diction and communication skills









## Members Ethical Values

What makes Aina Blankson brand appealing and different from its peers is not just its global reach but the fundamental principles and ethical values upon which its operations and services are predicated. Having collectively endorsed the Aina Blankson Members Ethical Values; Aina Blankson LLP, Aina Blankson Corporate Services (ABCS), Aina Blankson Tax, AB Consulting and Thomas Macaulay Capital amongst others being Aina Blankson Global members, are committed to the following ideals;

- \* Professionalism & Excellence
- \* Professional Decorum
- \* Transparency
- \* Integrity
- \* Quality First Culture

The Membership Committee in concert with the Members Ethics Committee are jointly responsible for the Members Code of Conduct Guidelines which contains details of expectations, limitations and overall responsibilities of all members in full compliance with Members Ethical Values.

## AB Responsible CSR

Someone once famously said that the “business of business is business”. We think differently. As a socially responsible Firm, Aina Blankson through AB Responsible remains committed to justice sector reform and peacebuilding. In this regard, we continuously maintain a balance between economic growth of the Firm and the welfare of the society and the environment towards meaningful change.

Established in 1996 at the offices of Aina Blankson, LP, Negotiation and Conflict Management Group International (NCMG International) is responsible for remarkable justice sector reforms in Africa. In 2002, NCMG in collaboration with Aina Blankson established the first court connected ADR Centre in Africa; the Lagos Multi-Door Courthouse which has been replicated in almost twenty states in Nigeria including the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court of Nigeria.

While we associate with the August 19, 2019 Business Roundtable Statement in Washington DC which redefines the purpose of a corporation, Aina Blankson has never wavered and has no intention of wavering in its overall commitment to the larger good.

# TRANSACTIONS PRACTICE GROUP

**R**ecognized as a leading adviser on corporate and commercial transactions, the Transaction Advisory Practice Team of Aina Blankson combines exceptional transactional skills with specialist expertise. The team advises across the broad spectrum of transactional work including Mergers and Acquisitions, capital markets, banking and finance, complex joint ventures, corporate restructuring, as well as general commercial, regulatory and corporate governance issues.

Our Transaction Advisory Team spans all of our offices and works seamlessly with a global community of relationship law firms as well as Aina Blankson Africa, thereby providing our clients with the confidence that they will receive the highest quality advice in both their domestic and international markets.

## Mergers & Acquisitions

We are proud to have some of Nigeria's most experienced Mergers and Acquisitions (M&A) lawyers on our team, most of whom have proven track records dating from the mid-1990s. Having been involved in the majority of the merger transactions in the Nigerian banking industry in mid-2005, we have been recognized as the firm of reference for M & A transactions in the country. To date, we have advised on transactions that span the breadth of the economy, including banking and finance, manufacturing, telecommunications, transportation, hotels and tourism, and many others. Our M&A work includes:

- Acquisitions and Disposals
- Mergers and Demergers
- Schemes of Arrangement
- Strategic Investments
- Venture Capital and Private Equity Investment
- Leveraged Buy Outs and Management Buy-outs
- Acquisition Financing



## Corporate Finance

We assist our Clients to successfully navigate complex transactions towards realizing their financial objectives. Our financial services cut across:

- Recapitalization
- Privatization & Public Procurement
- Private Equity & Venture Capital
- Infrastructure and Project Finance
- Securitization and Capital Markets

## Capital Market Securities

Our lawyers have domestic and international expertise and experience in structuring, negotiating, documenting and advising on the full range of debt and equity securities and other hybrid and derivative products. Our clients include some of the leading banking and capital markets intermediaries, corporates and underwriters. Our track record includes several cross-border dual listings in South Africa, London and New York. In addition, Aina Blankson played a leading role in developing new capital market instruments for use by major banks and insurance companies. We provide transaction services for equity and debt issues on the Nigerian Stock Exchange, including:

- Public offers of securities
- Rights issues
- Structured products such as derivatives issues, trading requirements
- Advisory on continuing listing requirements.

## Private Equity

With a dynamic private equity practice, Aina Blankson has the market knowledge and exposure to help clients achieve their goals throughout their investment life cycle. Our practice is global, with a network of private equity lawyers across the Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe and the Middle East.

Because we are a global firm steeped in private equity, our clients benefit from the breadth and depth of our private equity experience and our key sector-based legal experience. We represent private equity institutions, management teams, debt providers and, very importantly, portfolio companies through all stages of the private equity life cycle.

With private equity becoming ever more international, our firm is well placed to offer a truly integrated service, with consistency of quality and responsiveness across all jurisdictions in which we operate across the world

## Business Re-Structuring & Receivership

Our specialist lawyers have experience in advising on and documenting corporate reorganisations for private and public listed companies. We also act for borrowers and lenders in dealing with the consequences of weak performance of businesses, including:

- Corporate restructuring and work-outs
- Analysis of validity of security documentation
- Security enforcement and recovery Liquidations
- Receiverships and statutory Management
- Directors' duties and liabilities.

*A leading global Law firm  
with distinctive world  
class standards*



# LITIGATION PRACTICE GROUP

The capabilities of the Litigation Practice Team of Aina Blankson extend across the world with dedicated and experienced litigators drawing on the integrated and specialist support of all the practice areas of the Firm. We provide cutting-edge representation to multinational corporations, banks, governments, professional bodies and private institutions across a wide range of business sectors. We provide a full and comprehensive service in most of the world's major countries and have dealt with many of the problems generated by changes in the financial marketplace meaning that our network is ideally placed to handle the growing number of cross-border disputes. It is this ability to manage disputes around the world and to coordinate cross-border proceedings that persuades many of our clients to instruct us.

We actively pursue all avenues of dispute resolution available and advise clients on choosing the method most appropriate to them and to a particular matter. Our main priority remains to resolve disputes quickly and effectively with as little disruption to business as possible. Our team also offers case management and legal audit services as well as conduct due diligence in respect of non-contentious corporate governance and compliance issues. We are supported by cutting edge technology and lead the field in innovation. Whatever the dispute; whatever the remedy, Aina Blankson litigators, arbitrators and mediators operate as effective dispute advisers.

## Criminal Litigation

We are at the cutting edge of criminal prosecution and defence cases, having been involved in many of the most significant cases over the past decade. Our experience in this field is second to none. Our criminal lawyers are highly sophisticated, astute and supportive. We are particularly well known for our skill in providing strategic advice and for our ability to keep high profile cases out of the public eye. We enjoy an excellent international reputation as our work increasingly involves investigations in multiple jurisdictions and mutual legal assistance. Such cases require a sophisticated understanding of foreign law and practice and its impact in the Nigeria. We have developed a network of lawyers around the world with whom we work.

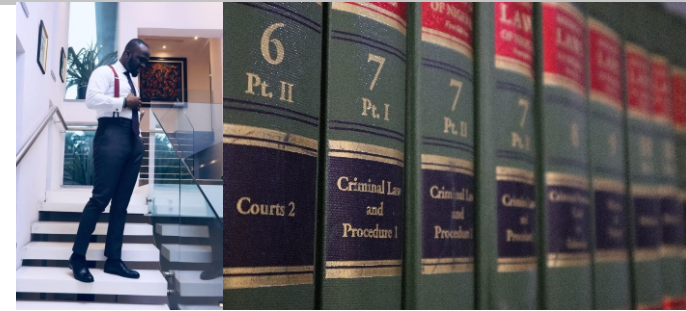
## Commercial Litigation

Our commercial litigation team is dedicated to advising on all contentious issues arising in the banking and capital market fields including on operational and reputational risks facing our finance clients. Within the group, specialist litigators work with our transactional experts on problems with derivatives, securitisations, equity and debt issues, asset and trade finance, fund management, and corporate and project finance.

Our specialist knowledge of the law on secured credit transactions stands us in a vantage position to advice and implement cutting edge solutions to debt management and recovery for Banks, other financial institutions and venture capitalist firms for whom we act as Attorneys. We have been engaged by leading commercial banks in the design and implementation of effective multilateral debt recovery schemes

## International Asset Tracing & Recovery

Leveraging on our membership of the International Asset Tracing and Recovery Group ("IATR"); a multi-jurisdictional network of Asset Tracers and recovery experts with a global spread including Asia, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Africa and the United Arab Emirates, we have been involved in multiple multi-billion dollar recoveries across jurisdictions. Our impressive track record of consistent, high volume tracing and recovery of obligors' debts and assets hidden outside jurisdiction by leveraging on cutting-edge technology, strong international affiliations undoubtedly stands us out.

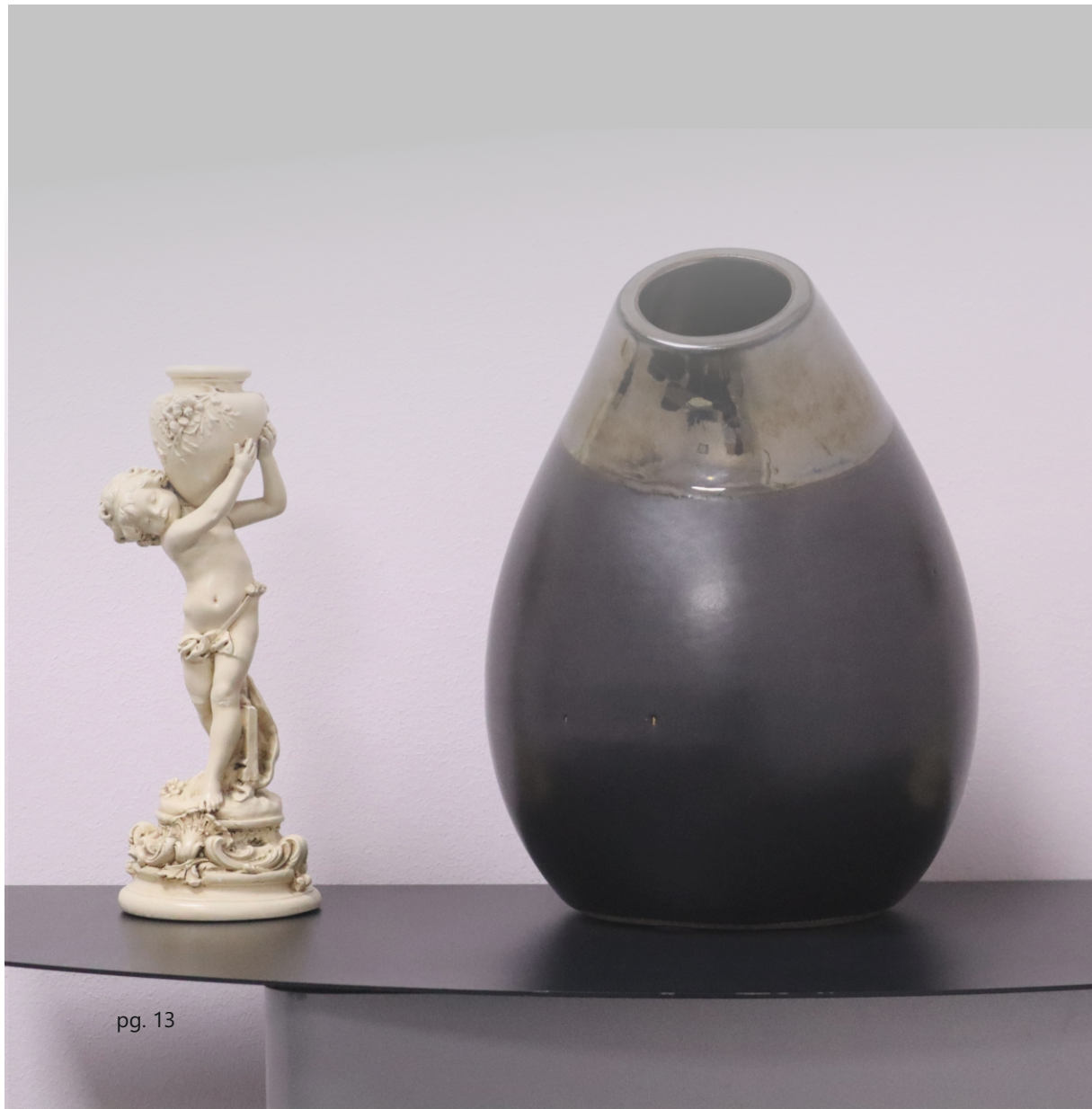


## Litigation Practice: Our Cutting Edge

- **INTERNATIONAL EXPERTISE:** As business becomes more global, so do the disputes spawned by it. Clients increasingly become involved in cross-border disputes and disputes in unfamiliar jurisdictions. Our global litigation practice offers unrivalled expertise in the management and coordination of international disputes. We provide excellent advice and service based on the quality and commitment of our lawyers. We have assembled a formidable team with considerable experience of managing and resolving disputes. We conduct cases at all levels of courts and tribunals.
- **UNDERSTANDING OUR CLIENTS' NEEDS:** We make it our practice to have a clear understanding of our clients' objectives and to chart with them a dispute resolution strategy which best meets their needs. Successful litigation and dispute resolution depends to a large extent on good judgment, skillful negotiation and tactical flair. We do not shirk from being tough if such an approach is needed. However, we do not engage in posturing and pointless sideshows for their own sake.
- **DISPUTE AVOIDANCE AND SPEED:** Everyone wants to avoid disputes if possible. We advise clients on how to structure dispute resolution procedures and how to minimize and manage the risk of disputes occurring. We are not defined by our problemsolving skills, but our ability to guide clients through disputes. Our resources and experience enable us to move quickly and decisively. We have particular expertise in applying our skills to help resolve disputes in complex or unusual cases for which special thinking and management are called.



*"We are known for our ability to provide support from project initiation to execution and throughout the lifespan of a project, anticipating pitfalls and regional nuances to ensure a project's success."*



## ENERGY & NATURAL RESOURCES PRACTICE GROUP

The development and financing of complex energy projects demand a forward thinking and multidisciplinary approach. Aina Blankson Energy & Natural Resources team builds on the Firm's strengths to fashion creative solutions that meet the clients' objectives. Our legal teams are built with a multidisciplinary skill set covering all the areas required to provide comprehensive and in-depth professional services for power and natural resource projects.

With clients in power and renewable energy, mining, petroleum and gas industries providing the Firm's energy practice with international recognition, we advise on project sponsors, institutional investors, developers, commercial financial institutions, governments and regulatory bodies towards optimizing their vested interests.

We are known for our ability to provide support from project initiation to execution and throughout the lifespan of a project, anticipating pitfalls and regional nuances to ensure a project's success. Our clients receive coordinated, across-the-board coverage for all their professional needs, including advice on corporate, regulatory, contractual, litigation and alternative dispute resolution and tax issue



## Oil & Gas

Our dedicated team of oil & gas lawyers have considerable experience advising clients on complex legal, financial and commercial issues across all areas of the oil and gas industry; from major international oil companies and burgeoning independents engaged in exploration and production to clients engaged in oilfield servicing, refining, trading, storage and distribution, we offer a depth of resource, local expertise and commitment to key oil and gas players.

We provide guidance on the contractual and fiscal aspects of the oil & gas industry including production sharing contracts (PSCs), joint venture agreements (JVAs), joint operating agreements (JOAs), asset sale and purchase, financings, farm-ins and farm-outs. We also have market leading project finance experience of the full range of oil and gas transactions.



## Power

Aina Blankson works closely with clients to navigate through legal and regulatory challenges in the complex and evolving power market whilst also offering legal advisory support in all aspects of the financing of power projects, engineering, procurement and construction and operation and maintenance.

Our detailed understanding of the different segments of the electricity industry allows us to provide comprehensive advice and identify risks pertinent to developers, off-takers and lenders and proven mitigating solutions. Thinking laterally and with rich industry knowledge, we address the myriad of complex issues facing any power project from conception to execution.

We provide a full spectrum of legal services to key power sector participants including project sponsors, investment funds, financial institutions, contractors, off-takers and fuel suppliers.

## Energy Dispute

Increased globalization of the energy sector has made dispute avoidance and resolution strategies increasingly important for mitigating risk. Our energy disputes Attorneys have acute insight into the energy sector's dynamics, challenges and risks and an unrivalled understanding of the commercial context in which energy disputes arise.

We have an outstanding record assisting our clients in primarily avoiding or resolving disputes and regulatory issues through negotiation, mediation, arbitration and other forms of alternative dispute resolution. We frequently advise clients on preemptive strategies to minimize risk and avoid expensive litigation.

## Environment

Aina Blankson's team of environment solicitors provide specialist legal advice on a wide range of transactional work where environmental issues are dominant. Our clients include land developers, academic and health care institutions, heavy manufacturers, energy companies, banks, and other financial institutions. We are in-tune with changing public sector pressures and increasing emphasis on becoming better environmental citizens whilst balancing commercial interests and demands. We have demonstrated an affinity for managing compliance issues and keeping abreast of regulatory changes without compromising business goals. Our ground-breaking work in environmental management systems has changed the way people think about infrastructure project management and strategic management of environmental health and safety systems, including ISO 14001, the international

## Mining

Aina Blankson's attorneys can boast of vast experience within this nascent sector advising pioneer enterprises and financial investors on a range of complex transactions in Nigeria's mining sector. Our clients benefit from our comprehensive mining sector expertise particularly in the fields of tax and environmental law, project development and finance, policy, trade and dispute resolution. The combination of our experience cuts across the full life cycle of a mining project – from acquisition and financing to expansion and disposal. We provide comprehensive understanding of the mining sector; remain at the forefront of policy reform and the likely issues and solutions that arise in a wide variety of mining transactions.

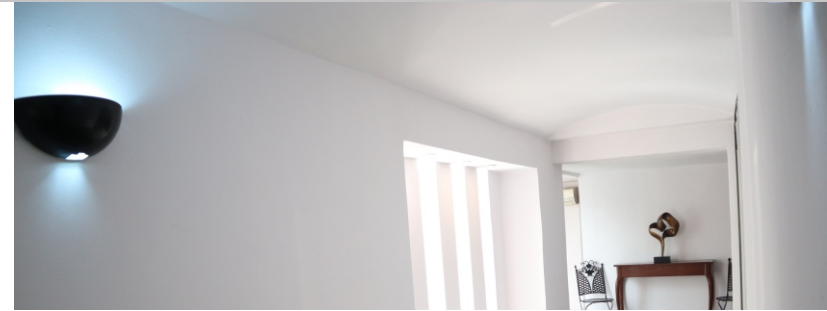
*Aina Blankson has an experienced and well-recognized wealth of talented senior lawyers and associates with qualifications and work experience in Africa, Asia, Europe and the United States of America*



# INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PRACTICE GROUP

The Intellectual Property Practice Team of Aina Blankson has extensive experience providing comprehensive, multidisciplinary IP services to clients across the globe. By identifying, protecting and exploiting intellectual property rights at each stage of the innovation lifecycle, our team of lawyers provides strategic advice spanning all aspects of IP law. Our IP team has substantial experience litigating all classes of IP in many different courts and tribunals worldwide. Our services also include international IP protection and portfolio management and advising on the commercialization of IP assets including commercial transactions relating to the acquisition and development of innovative products and services.

We have particular experience across our key industry sectors: financial institutions; energy; infrastructure, mining and commodities; transport; technology and innovation. Our IP lawyers and patent and trademark agents have advanced scientific degrees to complement their practical experience, combining deep industry and technical knowledge with broad legal understanding.



## Advertising & Marketing

Clients understand that advertising is crucial to brand success in the global marketplace and they need a legal team that can deliver seamless advice across a broad range of industries. The lawyers who comprise our advertising and marketing team are well-positioned to provide comprehensive legal advice to domestic and international clients seeking to protect some of the world's most important brands.

We provide strategic counsel to companies operating in highly-regulated industries, including pharmaceutical, food and beverage companies and financial institutions. Our lawyers also review product labels, company websites and social media accounts for compliance, contest advice, consumer survey design and interpretation, corrective advertising, comparative advertising and substantiation of advertising claims.

## Copyright Law

Our global intellectual property lawyers have considerable experience in all aspects of copyright law including protection, due diligence, licensing and enforcement. We assist clients in everything from litigating copyright issues and policing copyright portfolios to obtaining copyright registrations and developing and negotiating licensing and ownership agreements.

Clients depend on our experience within the full range of copyrightable works including software, data and database, audio recordings and music, art, motion pictures and television, technical and architectural designs, literature, and evolving media including telecommunications and the internet.

## Patent

Clients benefit from the legal experience of our team of patent professionals, who provide owners with a single, coherent patent management service across all stages of the innovation lifecycle and in multiple jurisdictions. We provide strategic legal advice across our key industry sectors: financial institutions; energy; infrastructure, mining and commodities; transport; technology and innovation; and life sciences and healthcare.

Our lawyers understand the importance of patents to the continued growth and success of our clients' business goals. In assisting our clients, we address not only how to protect valuable innovation, but also how to reduce recurring costs and maintenance fees through focused patent pruning and strategic patenting

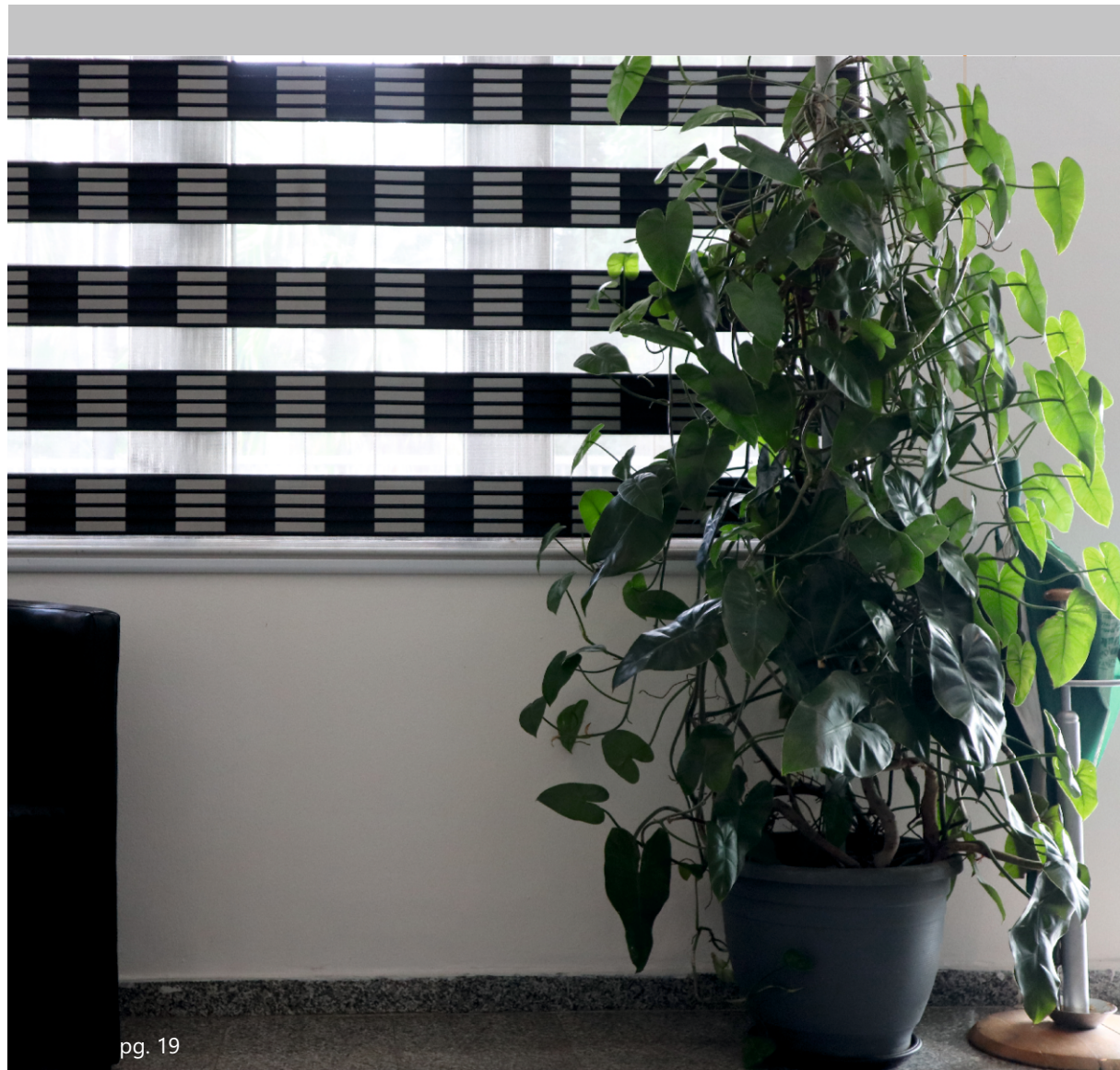
## Trademarks & Brands

Business brands are some of the most valuable intellectual property – and even assets – that a company may own. We handle all aspects of trademark law including clearing, registering, maintaining and licensing trademarks and associated rights such as design rights. We also have extensive experience in the enforcement of trademark rights against infringement, dilution and counterfeiting and related litigation.

Working as trusted strategic advisors to our clients, we protect, monetize and enforce some of the world's most recognizable brands, trademarks and trade dress, thereby helping clients minimize risks and maximize the value in their brands and strengthen their brand identity.



*In a world that is increasingly dominated by brands, the ability to register and protect the rights that clients obtain via their products, services and brands is an essential component in modern business. To this end, we have established a world-class intellectual property practice that advises on all aspects of intellectual property, both locally and internationally under the Madrid and ARIPO system of registration, as well as national protection in other countries worldwide through a network of associate agent law firms.*



## ARBITRATION & DISPUTE RESOLUTION PRACTICE GROUP

The delivery of innovative, creative and cost-effective solutions through ADR has for many years been a pivotal aspect of the pre-eminent Arbitration & Dispute Resolution Practice of Aina Blankson. Our unique dispute prevention approach is the first test for every brief referred to the Firm.

By this, we ensure that alternative dispute mechanisms are applied as may be relevant and practical; prompt resolution of commercial disputes are by this method assured regardless of any existing adjudicatory processes. Our team includes skilled accredited arbitrators, negotiators and mediators versed in the LCIA, ICC, NYC, LCA Arbitration rules. We have a reputation for always securing the best deals for clients irrespective of the complexities of the disputes.

The Arbitration Practice Team of Aina Blankson represents clients in high-stakes international commercial arbitrations around the world. Our members have extensive experience in investment treaty arbitration and a broad range of international arbitration rules, including the UNICITRAL Arbitration Rule, ICC Rule, Rule of the London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA), Arbitration Rules of the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), Rules of the Singapore International Arbitration Centre, and the AAA International Rules for the International Centre for Dispute Resolution (ICDR). Our Arbitration attorneys have widespread industry knowledge, are intimately familiar with numerous different legal systems and cultures; and many have practiced law in both common and civil law jurisdictions. The group's clients include multi-nationals and industry leaders across a wide variety of businesses, investors, financial institutions, state-owned enterprises and national governments.

We work imaginatively and constructively to ensure that our clients' commercial objectives are met and that our clients' interests and reputations are protected. Our partners and staff are committed to providing clients with the highest standards of services, professional excellence and value for money. We seek to establish and maintain a high level of personal contact with our clients, to anticipate developments and to stretch ourselves to perform above our clients' expectations.

Working out creative business oriented solutions to disputes involves more than the arbitration proceedings itself, we bring to our clients expansive knowledge and wide-ranging experience with both arbitration and ancillary proceedings such as mediation. Our attorneys are highly skilled at mediation and other means to reach a negotiated solution where appropriate, but they do not hesitate to vigorously pursue arbitration awards if no mutually agreeable result is reached.



*"An innovative full service Law firm leveraging on the creative minds of its team of diverse specialists to meet clients' interests and exceed expectations"*



- **GETTING OUT OF COURT**  
Companies may be sued, even in a foreign country, despite an applicable arbitration clause in the contract. Our attorneys have wide experience with removing cases from (foreign) courts and forcing plaintiffs to arbitrate instead. Even if there is no obvious applicable arbitration clause, we have successfully moved cases to arbitration through submission agreements or by applying arbitration clauses in ancillary agreements.
- **COST EFFICIENT**  
Arbitration is cost efficient: our attorneys resolve most arbitration matters within a year, and many in less, obtaining significant savings over what it would have cost to

litigate the matter. Nearly 50% of parties engaged in arbitration say it saves cost and feel it offers better value than litigation.

- **SEEKING AN EARLY RESOLUTION**  
Our attorneys have extensive mediation experience enabling them to reach a favourable negotiated solution if the client decides such to be in its best interest. The vast majority of companies that explore mediation in resolving disputes report additional cost saving as a result.
- **AN EFFICIENT ALTERNATIVE TO LITIGATION**  
Some cases need to be fought hard to the end, and we have successfully

done so many times. Even then, flexible arbitration procedures, privacy of the process, ability to choose arbitrators, absence of lengthy appeals, and virtual worldwide enforceability of arbitration awards has enabled us to make arbitration an efficient alternative to litigation.



# CORPORATE SERVICES & GOVERNANCE PRACTICE GROUP

**A**B Corporate Services (ABCS) is a subsidiary of Aina Blankson, LP. It was established to meet the business and tax advisory, incubation, corporate governance and company secretarial needs of corporate organizations and especially clients of the Firm. With the growth of Aina Blankson and its client portfolio, it became imperative to extricate the company secretarial and business advisory services from core legal service of AB.

Business priorities differ in relation to various factors which include the socio-economic environment and the developmental stage of the business. While a start-up may prioritize funding and market entry, a more established business will prioritize new market penetration, change management, innovation and corporate governance. Whatever the business stage, ABCS will provide strategic support for business success.



## Company Formation & Secretarial Services

In an increasingly globalized world, we deploy the latest technological tools in providing expert services on company formation and business incorporation. We provide company formation services across diverse jurisdictions and ensure your business aspirations are actualized. With a wide network covering Africa, Asia and other continents, we are in a position to provide services ranging from pre-incorporation matters to winding-up, dissolution, secretarial duties at meetings, maintenance of statutory records, corporate documentation, preparation and filing of statutory returns.

## Regulatory Compliance & Listings

Regulatory frameworks are constantly evolving across sectors and around the world. As transparency rises in importance and the costs of non-compliance with laws and regulations increase, businesses everywhere strive to adapt to the growing pressure from regulatory bodies.

With our extensive knowledge of local regulations and our multijurisdictional capabilities, we are well-positioned to help clients around the world deal effectively and creatively with regulatory and compliance issues. With business globalized and cross-border transactions more complex, the ability to provide appropriate counsel across jurisdictions becomes all the more important.

We provide sector specific advisory services on regulatory matters to mitigate risks from regulatory non-compliance and assist to procure relevant operational licenses. We also facilitate listings on the stock exchange market in Nigeria, South Africa, London and New York amongst others.





## Immigration

We provide services bordering on immigration matters in Nigeria and Internationally. Our services include procurement of relevant licenses and permits, expatriate quota, Strategic planning and compliance advice, Work and temporary permit applications, Citizenship and permanent residency applications, Immigration audits, Preparation of mobility policies, Advice on entry permission for inward investors, Discretionary applications and personalised immigration assistance for key individuals.

## Trusteeship & Wills

We act as trustees and intermediaries in ensuring the effective administration of estates, preservation of assets, protection of wealth and establishment of trusts. Our team is one of the strongest multi-disciplinary teams in Africa, covering the breadth of wills, estate administration and trust. We have considerable experience with high value estates and international wealth and understand the unique challenges this can present. Our team of experts also protect assets against future life changes, manage wealth and succession planning across multiple jurisdictions, and ensure tax-efficient estate structuring.

## Corporate Governance

To maintain the balance between the company's economic and social goals amongst relevant stakeholders, we offer advice on international best corporate governance practices to enable our clients achieve their business goals and objectives. Our corporate governance team advises on the full range of domestic and international governance issues, from best practices, salaries, indemnification and insurance to crisis management.

Our experience includes advising on board and committee composition including board diversity, leadership structures and oversight of risk management, as well as board functions and duties in line with global best practices. We also have extensive experience representing board committees on sensitive transactional and litigation-related matters ranging from related party transactions to matters involving potential conflicts of interest.

## MARITIME PRACTICE GROUP

The Maritime Practice Team of Aina Blankson represents clients engaged in domestic and international shipping and offshore drilling, transport, and production activities. We act as principal counsel for inland barge lines; towboat companies; ocean-going shipping lines; terminal operators; stevedores; major oil and gas exploration, production, transmission, and service companies; offshore construction companies; builders of inland and ocean vessels; offshore platforms; barges, rigs, and pipelines; and hull, cargo, P&I, and general liability insurers. Because our clients' issues may arise at any time, members of our group are always on call.

Our diverse experience with all aspects of the maritime industry enables us to represent clients in transactional matters and related business operations issues, as well as in regulatory or government relations issues and in complex, multi-district litigation, arbitration, and mediation, as described below.

## Marine Contracts

With respect to marine contracts, we have extensive experience in the negotiation and drafting of charter parties, contracts of affreightment, transportation agreements, terminal tariffs, berth applications, letters of credit, shipyard construction and repair contracts, naval architect contracts, and international sales contracts.

## Maritime Finance

In the maritime finance area, we are frequently called on to counsel clients in complex ocean and inland domestic and international vessel acquisitions, financings, and flagging of vessels. We are very experienced in maritime lien enforcement, foreclosures, ship seizures, and maritime bankruptcies. In addition, we have handled billions of dollars in financing and refinancing for maritime industry clients.

## Vessel Registration

There can be no maritime business for vessel owners (through vessels) without first ensuring that all registrations/permits with relevant regulatory authorities have been adequately catered for.

There is therefore need for proper guidance for prospective vessel owners on the import of every document required for registration; from condition survey report to tonnage measurement certificate as approved by the minister, etc.

At Aina Blankson, we have a team of experts that can help make these registration processes seamless; providing you with necessary advice and timeline breakdown for the entire registration process from start to finish.



## Protection & Indemnity (P&I) Insurance

We understand how essential it is to provide a cover for third party liability incurred by a vessel. Our expert can properly guide you on what documents are needed for protection and indemnity coverage during ship registration.

Our maritime team can be trusted to handle the legal drafting for all relevant documentations and to also offer bespoke legal advice best suited to each client's need with respect to P&I insurance.

## Vessel Arrests

With vessel arrests, there are several grounds on which a vessel can be arrested to secure a claim. It is important for stake holders to note that where the objective of an individual or corporate body is to secure a non-maritime claim, a vessel cannot be arrested. Only the government or port authorities can exercise the power to detain a vessel where it fails to adhere to relevant regulations and this falls outside the scope of what vessel arrest implies in admiralty law.

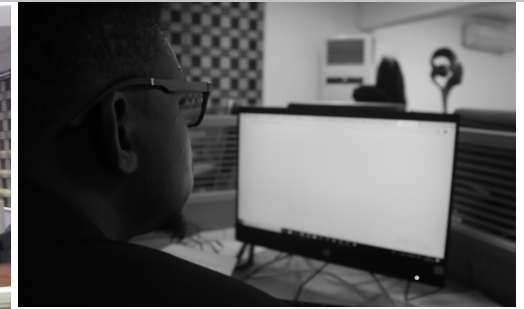
To ensure success in dealing with vessel arrest issues, our experts are well versed with the necessary procedures as well as documents required to properly handle this area of maritime practice. We are also well equipped to properly advice stakeholders on specific measures to take for the prevention of vessel arrests. It is our job to help stakeholders foresee potential claims that may be brought against the vessel or the owner.

## Due Diligence & PPP Advisory

It is highly recommended that stakeholders in the maritime industry carry out thorough investigations before embarking on business in order to prevent avoidable losses. These investigations should cover a broad scope of areas, e.g. regulation and litigation searches on vendors, contracts of employment, supply and procurement, licenses over vessels and properties, qualifications for legitimate operations, survey status of vessels, etc.

Our team of experts can assist stakeholders throughout the entire transaction timeframe. We provide strategic advice on market structure and trends, business planning, benchmarking, restructuring, traffic and demand modelling, tariff modelling, and developing a "go-to market" strategy. By combining financial, technical, and operational expertise, we assist with the commercial decision-making process while minimizing investment risk.

With respect to PPP Advisory, in many ports across the world, the public sector acts mainly as planner, facilitator, and regulator, while the private sector acts as service provider, operator, and developer. Our experts are experienced in assisting clients with applying for funding for a wide variety of port projects. This includes investment by contractors, equity investment from strategic investors, sovereign funds and insurance companies, subsidies from governments and operating revenues and bank loans from financial institutions.



## Dispute Resolution

In the maritime industry, disputes are bound to arise and conflicts between parties usually arise from some form of contract e.g. contract for services, misrepresentations associated with maritime contracts and breaches of these contracts, etc. Disputes may also arise from losses as a result of marine accidents, marine-based negligence, etc. These matters may sometime be simple to resolve through agreeable discussions or may be complex in nature; cutting across several subject matters and/or across different jurisdictions. Our team is experienced enough to analyse how best to handle these disputes and which dispute mechanism option is best suited for each issue and we have a strong track record in protecting our client's interests.

## Transaction & Regulation

We provide the full spectrum of transactional services required by clients in the maritime industry. We have expertise in:

- Capital raising
- Private equity transactions in the maritime industry
- Sales, mergers and acquisitions of shipping companies
- Charterparties
- Shipbuilding contracts
- Restructuring
- Sale and purchase of vessels, etc.

We equally provide expert advice on the regulations that govern the maritime industry both from a domestic and international perspective to help you understand the import of these regulations on maritime business.





## ENTERTAINMENT & CREATIVE PRACTICE GROUP

**T**he Entertainment & Creative Practice (ECP) of Aina Blankson is a diversified and dynamic full-service entertainment practice which represents a wide array of high-profile and upcoming clients in the Film and Television, Performing Arts, Animation, Music, Digital Media, Visual Arts, and Design industries. Our thriving Entertainment Law Practice offers innovative and diligent legal representation through our team of experienced and innovative attorneys. Through strategic partnerships with renowned talent management agencies, we also offer our clients financial and managerial services towards helping them navigate complex, regulatory terrain and proactively cultivate meaningful growth amongst talent.

Our unique approach towards client representation, disentangles our clients from legal challenges and administrative headache by allowing them to focus on their distinct narratives and creative pursuits.



## Representation & Talent Management

African talent is boundless; however, it can never truly take hold without the help of the experienced talent managers and agents posed to assertively advocate for their client's best interest. To that end, we provide representation and management to Actors, Musicians, Performing Artists, Producers, Writers, Photographers and entertainers in diverse areas of the creatives industries. By leveraging on our expertise and industry connections, our Team ensures that our clients receive top-notch representation and management in line with global best practices. Further, we understand the unique dynamics of entertainment contracts and deals and know how to negotiate favorable terms and conditions that give African creatives their fair share in international deals. Our approach allows creators simply to create while minimizing risk and maximizing impact.

## Access to Finance

The number one challenge plaguing the sustained growth and development of the African creative industry is the lack of meaningful financial backing. Many creatives are forced to prematurely abandon their innovative and impactful works due to the perceived lack of adequate funding channels. Given the importance of access to finance and financial management in the business of creativity, ECP maintains a working collaboration with notable and leading financial institutions locally and internationally who provide comprehensive financial, economic and strategic advice to clients with business problems ranging from lack of access to finance, film funding to investment decisions. The knowledge, depth and expertise of our partners will ensure our clients are well equipped to succeed in the creative sector. Our mission to source the funding so that creatives can focus on honing and enhancing their talents and skills.

## Dispute Management

The Entertainment industry is not immune to major disputes as they arise often in contractual and intellectual property matters. Prolonged disputes have the power to stall projects, drain financial resources, and demotivate participants of impactful projects. When disputes arise, our team is equipped to resolve them as efficiently and economically as possible towards relieving worry and freeing up time towards focusing on the creative vision of the project. Aside from litigation, we are well-suited to resolve disputes utilizing key Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) methods both domestically and internationally. Having been responsible for establishing the first court-connected ADR Centre in Africa and representing the World Bank in five different countries within the African continent, we are best positioned as the go-to experts with respect to dispute management.



## Negotiation & IP

The creative industry runs alongside the constant threat of intellectual property theft which can be very debilitating to a sector that thrives on innovation, novelty, unique vision and freshness of ideas. Registration of trademarks and copyrights is key for entertainers towards protecting their stock and sustaining the longevity of the industry as a whole. Our commercial law experts work together with our specialist intellectual property, regulatory and tax lawyers, to provide comprehensive advice on the structuring and documentation of strategic arrangements within the entertainment space. This involves advice on suitable business structures, including joint ventures, partnerships and strategic alliances. Entertainment outfits across the life cycle of IP assets, from development to commercialization and licensing through to maturity. Our dedicated team will help your entertainment business grow by protecting and leveraging your brand, ideas, inventions, innovations and your creative works.



## Global Marketing

Branding is vital to the creative industry; a memorable image or endorsement can thrust a creative into mega stardom and can bring in significant revenue to finance other projects. Our domestic, regional and international marketing partners connect, develop and promote brands through offerings in brand strategy and activation; sponsorships and endorsements; creative development and design; public relations; strategic placement, live events, media opportunities and branded impact. We understand the value of marketing and branding, but our experience also allows us to utilize strategies that allow our clients to identify the best and most reputable endorsements and sponsors as to not derail their reputation or messaging. At ECP, we help brands leverage the world around them to create targeted, relevant programs that deliver measurable value.

*Our ECP Team is experienced in the full spectrum of intellectual property and regulatory issues and maintains an extensive portfolio of services which include: corporate advisory, contract review and documentation, image and commercial rights, and dispute management, amongst others.*

# TRACK RECORD WORDS ON MARBLE KEY CONTACT PERSONS



Aina Blankson has been involved in many large and complex cross-border transactions and other matters for multinational clients.



#### Transaction Advisory

Our Transaction Advisory Practice ranges from mergers and acquisition, capital markets, corporate finance, restructuring to Maritime, Oil & Gas and Insurance amongst others. Some of our recent transactions include the following:

- Lead Advisor in a consortium of seven law firms on the drafting of ministerial regulations for the oil and gas industry
- Facilitation of development of local content and indigenous capacity in Guyana with respect to the oil and gas sector
- Engaged as Consultant and Compliance Advisor by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) on the \$200million Chad-Cameroun Pipeline Project involving ExxonMobil, Chevron, Petronas and Cameroon Government.
- Advised and represented a large Oil Company in a multimillion-dollar insurance claim, subject to arbitration, for the cost of rebuilding an oil refinery damaged by an explosion and fire.
- Provided advisory services to the financiers of ship owners concerning a multi-million arbitration with Korean ship builders about the delivery of two defective bulk carrier vessels.

#### International Commercial Arbitration

- Acted in numerous arbitrations conducted under the London Court of International Arbitration Rules, ICC and SIAC Rules ranging from a multi-million-dollar claim for the theft of trade secrets and breach of a collaboration agreement for the development of equipment for tactical fighter aircraft.
- Acted in multi-party arbitration proceedings and parallel litigation in England and Kenya concerning substantial claims and counterclaims between a European contractor and an Africa government entity.
- Acted as mediator and co-negotiator with Hogan Lovells in a £20 billion oil spillage dispute involving a multinational oil corporation and Niger-Delta community
- Acted as lead mediator in a \$33Million dispute in the oil & gas industry.
- Recovered fees for a UK bank from a Central European Government department by a UNCITRAL arbitration conducted in Vienna.
- Mediation of the multi-million dollar National Identity Management Commission dispute with a consortium of service providers



### Litigation Notable Engagements

- Successfully defended a number of Nigerian Banks in numerous bank/customer disputes; notably Stanbic IBTC Bank Plc, Ecobank, GTBank amongst others on and breach of contracts.
- Successful defended a One billion Naira Suit filed against Africa Reinsurance Corporation by the Industrial Trust Fund for payment of statutory contributions
- Represented Corporate Affairs Commission in a dispute with 23 Nigerian Banks which extended the frontiers of the mandatory disclosure principle in corporate law.
- Aina Blankson was the firm of choice when oil conglomerate Chevron engaged BNP Paribas in its attempt to divest interest in one of its major subsidiaries and a dispute arose over compliance with the regulatory framework on takeover bids in Nigeria.
- Led a team of Lawyers from other firms in successfully defending an incumbent State Governor in one of the Northern States in Nigeria on an impeachment proceeding before a judicial panel;
- Represented a South African bank when questions on the rights and obligations of Parties under a private placement arrangement resulted in litigation;
- Provided the initial opinion and eventual representation for the acquiring Bank in a very complex multi-billion dollar corporate structuring transaction which resulted in a court action on the validity of the merger and the plea bargain entered into by the erstwhile Chief Executive

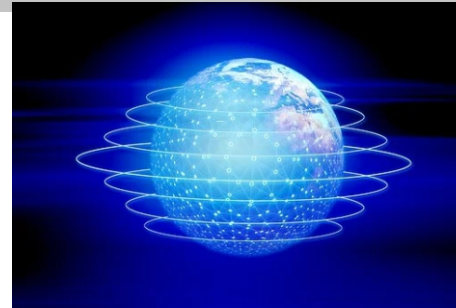
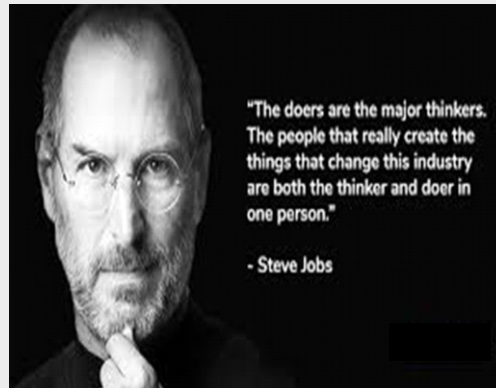
### Landmark Justice Sector Reforms

When it comes to reforms in the justice sector, no other law firm in Africa can be equated with Aina Blankson. In this regard, Aina Blankson has been responsible for a number of firsts including:

- Establishment of the first court connected ADR Centre in Africa (The Lagos Multi-Door Courthouse) in collaboration with NCMG International
- Initiated and established the Court of Appeal Mediation Centre, the first and foremost court connected appellate mediation centre in Africa
- Initiated the establishment of the Supreme Court Mediation Centre and drafted the Supreme Court Mediation Rules and Practice Direction.

## Our Credo

The success stories of greatest companies and brands ever built cannot be told without the place of imaginative thinking. At Aina Blankson, imaginative thinking is second to none on the requirements of business success. Our success thus far as a Firm is one that has been influenced by imaginative thinking which resonates in the way and manner Partners, Associates and Administrative Staff discharge their responsibilities. For us, Imaginative Thinking is the number one factor which influences every step we take and second only to the Aina Blankson Culture and Core Values.





Never in the history of our professional relationships have we worked with a firm with such an uncanny sense of professionalism and work ethics such as yours. We truly look forward to further collaboration in the years ahead.

*Robert Leaver*  
*President & CEO, New Commons Inc, USA*

*"About ten years ago, a young lawyer, with great vision, approached some of the topmost men in the country. That young lawyer was exceedingly restless in regard to what could be done to improve our justice system. He saw that the pace of administration of justice in the country was ridiculously too slow and damaging to the economy of the nation. The justice system to be meaningful, he claimed, must be revolutionalized. That young man is Kehinde Aina, a seasoned lawyer, imbued with the spirit of selfless service. He is an asset to the country".*

*Hon. Justice Kayode Eso, CFR*  
*(Former Justice, Supreme Court of Nigeria)*

*"Our interaction this year has added appreciable value to us. The depth of your understanding in the energy sector has made our work in Africa quite pleasurable".*

*Francis O'brien*  
*International Center for Energy, Washington DC*

## KEY CONTACT PERSONS



CHIEF NNORUKA UDECHUKWU, SAN



KEHINDE AINA, SAN, OFR



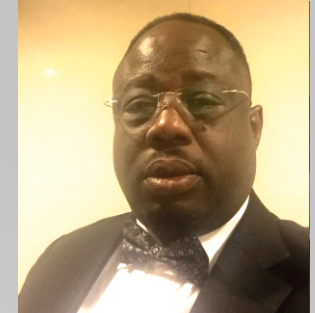
FAYO ADELEYE



FOLASHADE ADELOYE



ABIOLA MACAULAY



EDWARD ABRAHAM



JEREMY LACK



DR. TOLU TAIWO



CHRISTOPHER ENUMA



BUNMI ONI



GBOYE ADEBOWALE



PROF. EDUARDO PERERIA





5 /7 Ademola Street,  
off Awolowo Road  
South West Ikoyi, Lagos, Nigeria



(+234) 1 454 7772 - 3  
(+234) 1 454 8882 - 3  
(+234) 906 902 2222  
(+234) 906 903 3333  
(+1) 917 809 4981  
(+44) 203 807 9070



[www.ainablankson.com](http://www.ainablankson.com)



[ab@ainablankson.com](mailto:ab@ainablankson.com)

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