

**IN RE: THE PETITIONS OF ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW FOR ADMISSION
TO THE SUPREME COURT BAR AS COUNSELLORS-AT-LAW**

PETITIONS OF ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW FOR ADMISSION TO SUPREME
COURT BAR AS COUNSELLORS-AT-LAW.

Heard: December 16, 2004. Decided: March 1.2005.

1. No person shall be admitted as a counsellor of the Supreme Court, unless he or she shall have been a practicing attorney for a period of at least three (3) years immediately previous to his or her application for admission, and shall be of good moral standing, the same to be evidenced by the certificate of at least two (2) members of the bar of the Supreme Court.

MADAM JUSTICE COLEMAN delivered the opinion of the Court.

The petitioners herein petitioned this Court praying for admission to the Supreme Court Bar as counsellors-at-law. The petitioners averred in their petitions that they are graduates of the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law, University of Liberia, that they were admitted to the Montserrado County Bar and actively practiced law in the lower courts of Liberia for at least three years, and that they are citizens of Liberia.

The Revised Rules of Court, Admission of Counsellors, Part I (1999), provides that: “Except as hereinafter provided, no person shall be admitted as a counsellor of this Court, unless he or she shall have been a practicing attorney for a period of at least three (3) years immediately previous to his or her application for admission, and shall be of good moral standing, the same to be evidenced by the certificate of at least two (2) members of the Bar of this Court.”

Pursuant to the customs and tradition hoary with age in this jurisdiction, this Court, along with the National Bar Association, met on December 16, 2004, to hear the reading of the petitions of seven attorneys-at-law. Of the seven petitioners that filed petitions, petitioner Viama J. Blama withdrew his petition because he had not practiced law as an attorney for the period of three (3) years, as required by law. The Court was informed that petitioner Paye Doateay Trokpao was not an attorney-at-law and was never admitted to any Bar to practice law as an attorney. His petition was therefore ordered tabled. The other five (5) petitions were accepted and their names forwarded to the Board of Examiners.

The Chief Justice, His Honour Henry Reed Cooper, appointed two committees to examine their moral and ethical conduct and professional qualifications for

membership to the Supreme Court Bar. The compositions of the two committees are as follows:

EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

1. Counsellor David A. B. Jallah - Chairman
2. “ Frederick Cherue Co- Chairman
3. “ J. Emmanuel Wureh Member
4. “ Cooper W. Kruah “
5. “ Snosio E. Nigba “
6. “ Beyan D. Howard “
7. “ Jamesetta Howard “

THE MORAL & ETHICS COMMITTEE

1. Counsellor Oswald Tweh Chairman
2. “ Krubo Kollie Member
3. “ J. Johnny Momoh “
4. “ Emmanuel S. Koroma “

The Examination Committee reported that all five of the candidates sat for the examination over a three day period and were examined in the following substantive area of law.

1. Constitutional Law
2. Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure Law
3. Property, Decedent Estate and Trust Law
4. Labor Law
5. Civil Procedure Law
6. Contracts, Commercial Law and Corporation Law

The Moral and Ethics Committee reported that each candidate was required to fill in an information form. The information form requested the following information from each petitioner: Personal, education, employment, bar admission, criminal records, if any, civil matters, default in financial obligations, etc. The information form also requested each candidate to confirm that the information provided is true and correct by swearing out an affidavit to that effect. The candidates were also examined by this Committee.

The Examination and the Moral & Ethics Committees reports show that all five candidates that took the examinations were successful, and are listed herein below in the order of the scores which they received on the examinations beginning with the highest.

1. Albert S. Sims
2. Edward D. Goba
3. Nelson T. Tokpa
4. J. Vinton Holder

5. William B. Sando, Jr.

This Court, having carefully perused the reports of the Committees and being convinced that the petitioners have duly met the requirements, as required by law, holds that the petitions of the above named candidates be and are hereby granted, and the petitioners are qualified for admission to the Supreme Court Bar as follows:

1. Albert A. Sims
2. J. Vinton Holder
3. Edward D. Goba
4. Nelson T. Tokpa
5. William B. Sando, Jr.

We express our thanks and appreciation to members of the Examination Committee and the Moral and Ethics Committee for the excellent services they have rendered to the Judiciary.

Wherefore and in view of the foregoing, it is our opinion that the petitions should be and the same are hereby granted. The Clerk of this Court is hereby ordered to issue to each petitioner named hereinabove a Counsellor's Certificate with the signature of each of the Chief Justice and Associate Justices affixed thereon, certifying that they are authorized to practice law before the Honourable Supreme Court of Liberia. The Chief Justice shall, on behalf of the Court, administer the oath of admission to the candidates. And it is hereby so ordered.

Petition granted.