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**MEDIA ADVISORY
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COST-CUTTING MEASURES

It has come to our attention that some of the cost-containment measures opted for by the Judiciary have generated interest in a segment of the media. As a result, it became necessary that this brief explanation of those measures be provided.

The state of our economy has had a very negative impact on the budgets of all Government Departments and State-funded institutions. The Judiciary is no exception.

Our collective sense of responsibility demanded of us to identify possible areas of cost-containment so as to ensure that our core business is not at any stage seriously compromised by budgetary constraints. Remember, nobody knows how long it will take for this economic climate to improve. Consequently, as early as February 2016, the Heads of Court at all levels reflected on what the Judiciary could do to contain costs.

Barring a few yet important dissenting voices, the consultative process that individual Heads of Court had with Colleagues in their respective Divisions or Courts, led to the identification of a few cost-cutting measures now in place. They, among others, relate to hotel accommodation, travelling, aspects of subsistence and travelling allowance (S&T), the extent of involvement of assessors, being accompanied by PA's on Circuit Court, the level at which vehicles to be purchased by Judges is pitched while the unfavourable economic climate persists, also vehicles to be rented whenever it becomes necessary for a Judicial Officer to rent a vehicle etc.

These measures are to be departed from only when circumstances so demand. Colleagues were made to appreciate that this is the sacrifice we all have to make for the good of the country, particularly because budgets, including ours, are being cut from time to time. This is a survival strategy. The reversal of these measures is anticipated as soon as our economy recovers from the battering it has hitherto been exposed to.

This is a difficult period for our country. The sacrifice Judicial Officers are willing to make for the good of the Judiciary and our country is highly appreciated by the collective leadership and membership of the Judiciary. We did this alive to the reality that the conditions of employment and benefits of Judicial Officers are constitutionally protected. If any Judicial Officer insists on his or her rights regardless, we will not stand in the way. It is primarily a matter of conscience and one's sense of responsibility.

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