



Members FIRST

NEWSLETTER



OPENING OF THE NEW LAW YEAR

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Message From Members First Newsletter Editor



Dear Members,
Welcome to yet another edition of our newsletter. I take this opportunity to appreciate you for the feedback you give us and commit to continue improving to serve you better.

In this edition, we share reports from the opening ceremony of the New Law Year, 2024, the Bar-Bench forum, Annual Judges Conference among many key events held last month. The three events highlighted the need for judicial independence and accountability. They also highlighted the need for improvement in advocating for professional ethics and accountability. The events made calls for close collaboration between the Bar and the Bench to promote the Rule of Law and Access to Justice.

We would like to thank all our stakeholders most especially the development partners that enable collaboration between the government, Judiciary, and the Bar to enhance access to justice, especially for the less privileged Ugandans which is one of the core mandates of Uganda Law Society.

Still in this issue, we share a one-on-one interview with the head of the Legal Aid project, Ms Christine Awori, while highlighting the success stories from the engagements. We also thank the head of in-house counsel Ms. Anne Abeja for her insights on the ethos of legal practice from the in-house counsel perspective.

Last but not least, we bring you a perspective on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its bearing on the legal profession. The fusion of AI and legal practice offers a transformative change in the way legal services are delivered, optimizing efficiency, accuracy, and accessibility. We encourage members of Uganda Law Society to interest themselves in Artificial Intelligence and Information Technology.

I hope you find this newsletter both informative and engaging.

Enjoy the Read!

Warm regards,

Counsel Atukunda Isaac - Chairperson Members First Newsletter

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

OPENING OF THE NEW LAW YEAR 2024

On February 9, 2024, the Judiciary organized the Opening of the New Law Year 2024. The event was graced by the Vice President of Uganda, H.E Maj. (Rtd) Jessica Alupo representing the President of the Republic of Uganda, H.E Yoweri K. Museveni. Other dignitaries included; the Chief Justice of Uganda, Hon. Justice Alfonse Owiny-Dollo, the Chief Justice of South Sudan, Hon. Justice Chan Reec Madut, the Minister of Justice & Constitutional Affairs, Hon. Norbert Mao, the learned Attorney General, Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka, the Deputy Chief Justice, Hon. Justice Richard Buteera, the Director of Public Prosecutions, Hon. Lady Justice Jane Frances Abodo, the president of Uganda Law Society, Mr. Bernard Oundo, Justices and Judges of Courts of Judicature, Senior Counsels and distinguished members of the Bar, among others. The event was also attended by former Chief Justices of Uganda; Hon. Justice Waako Wambuzi and Hon. Justice Bart Katureebe.



The Honourable Chief Justice Alfonse Owiny-Dollo welcoming the Chief Guest, the Vice President of the Republic of Uganda H.E Jessica Alupo

In his address, the president of the Uganda Law Society, Mr. Bernard Oundo congratulated the judiciary on the completion of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal buildings, highlighting their transformative impact on the administration of justice. The ULS president commended the judiciary's successful commemoration of the New Law Year, noting its role in bringing together all arms of government to discuss crucial issues related to justice in the country. Further, the ULS president congratulated newly appointed Justices, both to the Supreme Court and the High Court, as this is a major step in solving the persistent issue of case backlog in the judicial system.

He also recognized the positive step undertaken by the government of Uganda in enacting the Judicature (Amendment) Bill of 2023 which aim at increasing the number of judicial officers at the Court of Appeal and Supreme Court. Efforts to address prison congestion were praised, with a plea for increased collaboration among stakeholders. He also raised concerns about rule of law violations within the country, emphasizing the importance of accountability. Issues such as interference with judicial independence, civilian trials in military courts, and disobedience of court orders were highlighted. The ULS president called for a concerted effort from all stakeholders to eliminate such violations and uphold constitutional guarantees. "My Lord, we cannot have people-centered justice if court orders are not respected when they are issued. We cannot have a people-centered approach to justice if Resident District Commissioners (RDCs) and other entities outside the court system have become appellate courts and have now taken it upon themselves to audit court judgments. These acts compromise the integrity of the court system and the administration of justice as a whole," Mr. Oundo said.

Adding: "Your Excellency, today, for my members, it is very difficult to execute court judgments, we ask that there is a commitment that court orders will be respected and all entities outside the court system should ensure that when they receive a court, they respect it. Mr. Oundo also condemned President Museveni's interference with judicial independence when he wrote a letter to the Chief Justice directing him to intervene in a court matter. "Your Excellency, (Vice President Jessica Alupo), in the recent letter dated 7th December 2023, the President (H.E Yoweri Museveni) wrote to the Chief Justice, instructing him about a case in a Court of Appeal, while your Excellency, we agree that the President is within his power to disagree with court decisions, we feel that for the independence of the Judiciary, there shouldn't be any sort of direction from the fountain of honor," he said.

"These letters erode public confidence in the Judiciary and therefore, we call on all actors and arms of the government and citizens to respect judicial independence."

Mr. Oundo also called upon the various justice players as they start the new law year, 2024, to put to an end the cries about the "missing" and "illegally abducted people" and that those responsible be held accountable.



ULS President, Mr. Bernard Oundo at the New Law Year 2024



ULS President, Mr. Bernard Oundo making his remarks at the New Law Year



Members of the Uganda Law Society who attended the New Law Year pose for a photo with the ULS President (centre)

In his remarks read out by Vice President H.E Jessica Alupo, President of Uganda, H.E. Yoweri K. Museveni asked judicial officers and other players in the justice system to work harder if they are to tackle the emerging sophisticated crimes caused by technological advancement and human activities. “I want to encourage Judicial Officers, the State Attorneys, Police, Prison staff, advocates among other stakeholders to build capacity and acquire knowledge and skills in emerging sophisticated crimes

arising from technological advancement and globalization of human activities.” President Museveni said in his speech read out by Vice President H.E Jessica Alupo during the opening of the New Law year in Kampala on Friday afternoon. Adding: “Lastly, once again Your Lordship, the Chief Justice and the entire Judiciary, I congratulate you on the opening of the New Law Year 2024. I look forward to continue working with the Judiciary and the Legislature to serve our people for better livelihood and prosperity.”



The Vice President of Uganda, H.E Jessica Alupo delivering the President’s remarks at the event

President Museveni also reminded the judges in attendance to provide cheap justice to the litigants, reasoning that the same contributes to a peaceful country and co-existence.

“It is important that more people continue to access justice easily and cheaply. Justice and peace create conditions of peace and stability. It gives our investors the confidence in our Courts to handle all cases involving direct foreign investment, here in Uganda, rather than going outside Uganda for arbitrations,” he said.

The Learned Attorney General, Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka in his remarks congratulated all participants in the justice sector for successfully concluding the previous year and welcomed them into the new law year. He acknowledged the roles given to individuals in the judiciary and emphasized that the event now involves all three arms of government.

According to the Attorney General, the collaboration between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches is crucial for the proper functioning of the government. He highlighted the importance of each branch performing its role without prejudice to ensure effective governance. He emphasized that an ineffective justice system can negatively impact the population and erode the rule of law.

In acknowledging the role of lawyers as the guardians of the law, the Attorney General called for mutual respect between the Bar and the Bench. He noted that there is a symbiotic relationship between these two entities therefore there is need for a harmonious and respectful interaction between lawyers and the judiciary for the smooth administration of justice. He encouraged all court users to embrace post-judicial remedies in cases of dissatisfaction, emphasizing the importance of utilizing legal avenues for appeals or other remedies available after a court decision as this not only ensures the fair and just resolution of disputes but also contributes to the overall credibility and effectiveness of the legal system.



The Learned Attorney General, Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka and the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs giving their remarks at the New Law Year day



The Learned Attorney General, Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka and the Hon. Chief Justice Alfonse Owiny-Dollo arrive at the New Law Year Day

The Chief Justice of Uganda, Justice Alfonse Owiny-Dollo, welcomed and thanked all stakeholders for being present at the event. He listed the achievements and challenges that the judiciary faced in the year 2023.

Among the notable achievements made, the Chief Justice stated the completion of the construction of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal twin buildings and the acquisition of reliable staff transport including the donation of the Kayoolola electric bus by the President of Uganda. Other significant achievements included; fighting case backlog, installing information and communication technology gadgets in the courts, and promoting alternative dispute resolution like plea bargaining, small claims procedure, and mediation.

He named the challenges as limited budgetary provision, a progressively growing caseload, and low salaries for administrative and support staff.

He cautioned lawyers against intimidating judicial officers and he re-assured them that no amount of intimidation will make the judiciary render justice out of fear.

“The Judiciary of Uganda which I have the privilege to head, will always render justice in accordance with the oath we took. We will not be intimidated, in other words, we will never render justice out of fear. No amount of insults or ridicule will make us render justice out of fear. We will also not favor anyone in our decisions. If your evidence falls within what the law provides, we will pronounce so,” he said.



Members of the Bench and members of the Bar attending the New Law Year event

BAR-BENCH FORUM

On the 21st of February 2024, the Uganda Law Society held the Bar Bench Forum. The forum, hosted at the Sheraton Hotel Kampala, brought together members of the bar and bench in a collective effort to address the key concerns, challenges, and opportunities in today's legal landscape. The event had an attendance of close to 150 judicial officers and over 1000 lawyers attended virtually.

The ULS President in his remarks, stated that this Bar Bench forum is a follow-up from last year's forum where the Principal Judge and Judges of the High Court were hosted by the Uganda Law Society. He further noted that the aim of these forums is to harmonize the Bar Bench relationship and offer a platform where members of the Bench and members of the Bar can table their issues candidly and find plausible solutions. The President noted that ULS had designed a monitoring matrix listing all the challenges and concerns raised by the members in the last Bar-Bench forum. He added that this forum would therefore serve as a follow-up to assess the progress made in solving the challenges and concerns raised last year.

He ended, inter alia, recognizing the strides government has made in solving the issue of case backlog which has been a recurring major challenge cited by both advocates and the public at large. He therefore called upon advocates to embrace alternative dispute resolution as a means to reducing the surge of newly filed cases in court and thereby reduce case backlog.



Mr. Bernard Oundo, President Uganda Law Society giving his welcome remarks

During his remarks, the learned Attorney General, Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka emphasized the importance of involving all relevant stakeholders in the discussions, stating, “In the spirit of inclusivity and collaboration, I wish to emphasize the importance of involving all relevant stakeholders in these discussions. It is imperative that the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Judicial Service Commission, and other key entities are actively engaged in such a forum. It is through a comprehensive, round-table approach that we effectively address the challenges facing our justice system and devise strategies for improvement.”

He commended the Uganda Law Society, the government of Uganda and the Judiciary for their efforts in addressing the issues raised during the last Bar-Bench Forum held in May 2023. He applauded the judiciary and the government for making an effort to solve the challenges that were raised in the last Bar-Bench forum. He noted that the challenge of understaffing within the judiciary was prevalent across many court divisions, and it was constantly raised as a major cause of case backlog. Tremendous efforts were made including the enactment of the Judicature (Amendment) Bill, 2023 which has resulted in a move to increase the number of Justices of the Court of Appeal from 15 to 35. This is in addition to the recent deployments of new Magistrates and Registrars, and the Public Service Commission’s appointment of State Attorneys under the Office of the Directorate of Public Prosecutions and the Office of the Attorney General.

He urged all participants at the event, both physically and online, to candidly share any grievances or challenges they have encountered, assuring them that their voices will not fall on deaf ears as the government will endeavor to find practical solutions to these issues, to ensure a more robust and responsive justice system.

Addressing the advocates, he emphasized the issue of professional conduct, stating, “To the advocates present today, I would like to emphasize the issue of professional conduct. Reports of misconduct of lawyers and allegations of involvement in fraudulent activities continue to arise. It is high time we changed the narrative and diligently served our communities. I call upon every advocate to reflect on his/her fundamental responsibility as an officer of the court, the duty to serve the public, and the obligation to uphold the integrity of the legal profession. The legal profession is a noble one that requires the utmost integrity to maintain public trust in the justice system.”

Regarding the frequency of such engagements, he proposed that moving forward these engagements be convened as regularly as possible since such regular meetings will expedite the resolution of outstanding issues.



The Learned Attorney General, Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka speaking at the Bar-Bench Forum



L-R: The ULS President, Mr. Bernard Oundo, the Chief Justice, Hon, Alfonse Owiny- Dollo and the Attorney General, Hon. Kiryowa Kiwanuka

The Chief Justice of Uganda, Justice Alfonse Owiny-Dollo stated that he was so pleased that members of the Bar and the Bench converged to have a dialogue. He recognized the primary responsibility of an advocate as an officer of court, emphasizing that lawyers are not traders who deal in commodities but rather professionals who render a noble service to justice seekers.

He noted that during his time as an advocate in private practice, Judges were held in high regard and the lawyers always rendered them utmost respect. However, a bad vice is growing amongst legal professionals where they publicly attack judicial officers especially on social media. He emphasized that it is the role of lawyers to make the ULS admirable and respectable through intellectual engagements as officers of court instead of using social media the wrong way.

The Chief Justice thanked the President of the Uganda Law Society for organizing such an engagement which gives the judiciary a chance to get feedback from the lawyers on areas that need improvement. He called for the forum to be held at least annually or twice a year.

He discussed the issue of delayed judgments

stating that the judiciary is working tirelessly to ensure that this challenge is resolved. Given that this challenge is usually as a result of one court presiding over an overwhelming number of cases, he stated that the judiciary is working towards ensuring that every county or constituency should have a Grade 1 Magistrate's Court, every district should have Chief Magistrate's Court and a cluster of districts in each region should have a High Court.

He appreciated the commendable work done by the Judiciary and the government at large in increasing the courts. He stated that there used to be 20 High Court circuits countrywide but currently there's a total of 38 High Court circuits. There has also been a great increase in the number of Chief Magistrates Courts that were previously around 40 but currently, the country has a total of 92 Chief Magistrates Courts.

Still on addressing delayed judgments and case backlog, the Chief Justice noted that the High Court receives big numbers of newly filed cases per year. Despite the efforts to appoint more judicial officers, the increasing number of cases filed every year still poses a threat to solving case backlog. Judges have to

apportion time for hearing cases and also write judgments. He therefore called upon lawyers to prioritize alternative dispute resolution mechanisms such as arbitration to promote amicable settlements without having to litigate before the courts of law.



The Hon. Justice Alfonse Owiny-Dollo, the Chief Justice giving his remarks



Former Attorney General, Hon. Fredrick Ruhindi sharing his views at the Bar- Bench Forum



Hon. Justice Geoffrey Kiryabwire of the Court of Appeal and Justice Tadeo Asiimwe of the High Court Land Division share their views



Members of the Bar; Mr. Maxim Mutabingwa and Ms. Anne Karungi raise their concerns at the Forum

ANNUAL JUDGES' CONFERENCE

This year's 25th Annual Judges' Conference was held from February 5, 2024, to February 8, 2024, at the Kampala Serena Hotel, under the theme; ***"A People-Centered Approach to Justice."*** The event was attended by several dignitaries including Vice President Jessica Rose Epel Alupo representing H.E.Y. K Museveni, the President of the Republic of Uganda, Justice Alfonse Owiny-Dollo, the Chief Justice of Uganda, Hon. Nobert Mao, the Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs, among many other officials from all the three arms of government, and CSO's.



A photo of some of the dignitaries who graced the occasion

The President of Uganda, H.E Yoweri K. Museveni in his message through the Vice President started by thanking the Chief Justice for inviting him to interact with the judges on the justice needs of the people and for maintaining this practice of meeting the judges at the beginning of every year to plan for the year together. He emphasized that this is the starting point of a people-centered approach to justice and that the theme resonates with the aspirations enshrined in the 1995 Constitution. He was pleased that the Constitution drafters included a provision that states that judicial power is derived from the people and that the courts should exercise this power in the name of the people.

He encouraged the judges to adjudicate cases considering the norms, values, traditions, and aspirations of the people as these are some of the reflections of meaningful justice to our people. He added that justice will be meaningful for the people of Uganda if in every case one handles,

the principle of non-discrimination is applied as stipulated in Article 126 (2) which provides that justice must be done to all irrespective of their social or economic status; justice must not be delayed; adequate compensation should be given to victims of wrongs; reconciliation between parties shall be promoted and substantive justice shall be administered without undue regard to technicalities.

He also called for adherence to the principles of the judicial code of conduct, integrity, independence, impartiality, propriety, equality, competence, and diligence. He ended by calling upon all judicial officers to stand by the judicial oath they took before assumption of the duty to administer justice without fear, favor, ill will, or affection.



The Vice President of Uganda, H.E. Jesicca Alupo delivering the President's remarks at the conference

In his remarks, Hon. Nobert Mao stated that it is now well known that Parliament has equipped the Judiciary with all the necessary tools including additional resources both financial and human to effect a smooth running of the institution. Therefore, the excuses for being ineffective should be matters of the past. He praised the event's theme noting that exercising justice in the name of the people, means, to defend the interests of the people as enshrined in the Constitution. He called for the independence of the Judiciary stating

that courts should also be criticized because it's only through criticism that courts will be professional and rigorous. Citizens should be allowed to ask questions about courts; citizens should even dare to ask whether a certain decision is correct or not since all arms of government operate for and on behalf of the people.



Hon. Nobert Mao speaking at the Annual Judges' Conference

Hon. Alfonse Owiny-Dollo, the Chief Justice of Uganda in his remarks stated that the judges' conference is an annual event where judges reflect on what transpired in the preceding year, and make a review of the calendar year. He added that this year's conference based on the theme sought to advance the performance of the superior courts through sharing experiences, and the best practices.



The Chief Justice, Hon. Alfonse Owiny-Dollo giving his remarks and the 5th Annual Judges' Conference

JOINT STAKEHOLDERS MEETING OF KEY PLAYERS IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

On February 22nd, 2024, a pivotal event unfolded at Mestil Hotel, where the President of Uganda Law Society (ULS) and ULS Ag. CEO, Ms. Mable Nimwesiga participated in a high-level stakeholder breakfast roundtable organized by the Austrian Development Cooperation Office in collaboration with the International Development Law Organization (IDLO). The primary objective of this gathering was to foster collaboration among the government, judiciary, legal professionals, and development partners to enhance access to justice and tackle pressing issues within Uganda's legal system.

The discussions during the roundtable were marked by a commitment to finding solutions to the challenges faced by courts, particularly the significant backlog of cases. Emphasis was placed on exploring alternative dispute resolution mechanisms as a means to expedite access to justice. The multifaceted agenda also addressed critical issues such as prison decongestion, the surging demand for legal aid services, and the imperative to navigate reduced legal funding.

Hon. Minister of Justice, Nobert Mao, who assumed office in July 2022, shared his dedication to promoting access to justice, upholding the rule of law, and ensuring judicial accountability. He acknowledged the pivotal role played by the President of ULS, Mr. Bernard Oundo in bridging the gap between the Judiciary and the Bar. Minister Mao advocated for alternative dispute resolution methods, underscoring their potential to save government funds. Notably, he observed a gradual shift among advocates towards embracing alternative dispute resolution over traditional litigation.

Chief Justice Alfonse Owiny-Dollo expressed gratitude to the development partners for their longstanding support to the Judiciary. He highlighted the importance of the alternative justice system in expediting the timely completion of cases and distributed handbooks on the Alternative Justice System (AJS) to participants. He also emphasized the need for quality justice services and called for capacity building of judicial officers through coaching and mentoring. He advocated for the adoption of technologies such as video conferencing, increased court open days, and continual engagements with the bar and stakeholders to ensure accountability.

The event, in summary, underscored a collaborative commitment to overcoming challenges within Uganda's legal system, with a focus on alternative dispute resolution, access to justice, and strategic partnerships among government bodies, the judiciary, legal professionals, and development partners.

Also present was Ms. Barbara Kilei, Country Manager IDLO, Dr. Katja Kerschbaumer, Head of Office, Austrian Embassy Development Cooperation, Mr. Robert Kasandr, PS of Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and H.E Maria Hakansson, Ambassador of Sweden.



Group photo taken at the event. Front row: DPP Hon. Justice Jane Frances Abodo, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Hon. Norbert Mao, Chief Justice Hon. Alfonse Owiny- Dollo, Head of Austrian Development Co-operation Office in Uganda, Dr. Katja Kerschbaumer, The Ambassador of Sweden to Uganda, H.E Maria Hakansson

EDITORS' GUILD DINNER

The President of the Uganda Law Society, Bernard Oundo attended the Editors' Guild Dinner on Friday 23rd February 2024 at Golden Tulip Hotel in Kampala. In a bid to promote media rights in the country, the ULS expressed its intentions to establish a pro bono fund for journalists across the country. The President noted that this is the only way the Law Society can promote press freedom that has in several circumstances been curtailed by some influential government officials and agencies.

He added that the media plays a crucial role in our society, serving as a watchdog to ensure accountability, transparency, and protection of the public interest therefore it's important for them to feel protected while executing this

mandate.

"We are living in interesting times where the legal aspect is evolving, our world is changing and as guardians of the rule of law, the Uganda Law Society is committed to fostering a legal environment that is just, fair, and accessible to all," Mr. Oundo said adding that all that can't be achieved without the media.

He hailed the organizers of the editors' guild dinner citing that it's in forums like these that we can deepen the knowledge on critical issues such as the rule of law, human rights, access to justice, independence of justice and not leaving other key aspects that concern our people and our country at large.

He added that more training will be conducted

by the Uganda Law Society in partnership with stakeholders like the Uganda Media Council so that they can walk on the same page.

“The next thing we want to do in collaboration with the media is to establish a pro bono for journalists. Apart from the training like this one held today led by Mr. Paul Ekochu, Chairman Media Council, we are going to discuss more with the Editors’ Guild so that our lawyers can represent journalists free of charge. We believe that way, we foster freedom of speech.” Mr. Oundo said calling upon the media to also promote legal literacy.

He highlighted that the more education we have on legal literacy, the better for all of us. Responsible Journalism.

The ULS President also emphasized the importance of responsible journalism, citing that while the media serves as a check on power, this power must be exercised with a

sense of responsibility and integrity.

To drive his point home, the President shared a quote by prominent BBC journalist Zain Verjee, “A commitment to truth, tenacity, and bold resolve in chasing the story is a must. Creativity and judgment are vital in crafting a narrative that is compelling, informative, and educational. It is about shedding light, not about generating heat.”

He echoed the need to work together to ensure that the stories the media publishes are not only compelling but also accurate and fair.

“Through open dialogue and collaboration, we can build a legal framework that truly serves the needs and aspirations of the people of Uganda.” He said.



ULS President makes his address at the Editors’ Guild dinner



Mr. Paul Ekochu, Chairman Media Council



ULS Public Relations and Events Coordinator (extreme right) on a panel discussion at the Editors’ Guild Dinner

INTER-UNIVERSITY LAW STUDENTS GAMES

The Uganda Law Students' Association (ULSA) with support from the Uganda Law Society organized the law inter-university games held at the International University of East Africa between the law schools at various universities including; Makerere University, Uganda Christian University, Nkumba University, Islamic University in Uganda, Uganda Pentecostal University (UPU), Uganda Christian University (UCU), Cavendish University, Kampala International University (KIU), King Ceasor University (KCU), among others.

The ULS President, Mr. Bernard Oundo who is also the patron of ULSA was the Chief Guest at the gala. During the event, he thanked the various law students' associations for organizing the event which brought together nine law schools country-wide. He emphasized the significance of sports, highlighting its role not only in physical fitness but also in promoting mental well-being. Mr. Oundo also he pledged continued support from ULS to ULSA noting that the coming together of ULS and ULSA will be a mentorship platform, to provide guidance and support to the Law Students and guide them in their career as future lawyers.



ULS President, Bernard Oundo speaking to the law students



Female law students battle it out during the netball game



The soccer team from International University for East Africa (IUEA) poses for a group photo

SECRETARIAT UPDATES

COURTESY VISIT TO THE EMBASSY OF IRELAND IN UGANDA

The Uganda Law Society led by Ms. Mable Nimwesiga, Ag. Chief Executive Officer, paid a courtesy visit to the Embassy of Ireland in Uganda to discuss the ongoing progress of the Legal Aid Project in Karamoja Sub-Region. During the visit, the Embassy of Ireland was represented by Ms. Columba, Head of Cooperation, Mr. Daniel Muwolobi, Governance Adviser, and Ms. Josephine Aloyo, Program Executive.

With the support of the Embassy, ULS is currently operating 3 legal aid clinics in the Karamoja region in the districts of Kotido, Moroto and Nakapiripiriti. This has enhanced access to justice for the vulnerable, marginalized and indigent persons in Karamoja.

As a gesture of gratitude, the ULS team presented a token of appreciation to H.E Kevin Colgan, the Ambassador of Ireland to Uganda. This was a symbolic acknowledgment of the invaluable support extended by the Embassy to the ULS Legal Aid Project.



ULS Ag. Chief Executive Officer, Ms. Mable Nimwesiga presenting a token of appreciation to the Ambassador of Ireland to Uganda, H.E Kevin Colgan



Group photo of ULS staff with the Ireland Embassy team during the courtesy visit

UGANDA LAW SOCIETY & 12 OTHERS VS ATTORNEY GENERAL

The Uganda Law Society and 12 other professional bodies including; Uganda Medical Association, Uganda Institution of Professional Engineers, Institution of Surveyors of Uganda, among others filed a constitutional petition against the Attorney General citing the unconstitutionality of Section 2(h) of the Stamp Duty (Amendment) Act, 2020 which introduced a new item in the 2nd Schedule levying stamp duty on every professional license or certificate to the amount of One Hundred Thousand Shillings per annum. The petitioners contended that the said provision was discriminatory, infringed upon economic rights and double taxation as follows;

(i) Double taxation:

Citing section 135(3) of the Income Tax which requires every local authority, government institution, regulatory body to require a TIN from any person applying for a license of conducting business in Uganda, the petitioners argued that the said provision is sufficient to ensure that all professionals are compliant with paying taxes. Therefore, the stamp amounts to a double taxation.

(ii) Discrimination:

Section 3(2) and (3) of the Stamp duty (Amendment) Act exempts professionals under public service and allied organization from paying the charge cited in Section 2(h). The petitioners submitted that the imposition of stamp duty on private practitioners while professionals in the same field in public service are exempted by the same law contravenes Article 21(3) which provides for equality before the law and renders all forms of discrimination unconstitutional.

(iii) Economic rights:

The petitioners submitted that Article 40(2) of the Constitution guarantees every person's right to practice their profession. Section 2(h) of the Stamp Duty (Amendment) Act prohibits this right because the failure to pay the tax is a total impediment to getting a license or certificate to practice. They further averred that while the Constitution empowers parliament to enact laws, such laws must be enacted in good faith, in public interest, and if they impose a restriction on a right, it must be reasonable.

Judgment:

On the 13th of February 2024, the Constitutional Court made its judgment where it found the petition successful and made the following declarations:

- a) To the extent that it does not fall within the ambit of the exceptions provided for by Article 21(4)(a) and (b) of the Constitution, Section 2(h) of the Stamp Duty (Amendment) Act, 2020 is discriminatory against professionals in private practice and is therefore inconsistent with and/or in contravention of Articles 21(1), (3) and Article 152(1) of the Constitution and therefore to that extent, void.
- b) To the extent that it places a disproportionate burden on professionals in private practice that hangs over their heads should they fail to pay the tax, the imposition of stamp duty of Shs 100,000 on them on top of other levies collected through their regulatory bodies for the same certificates is in contravention of and/or inconsistent with Article 40(1) of the Constitution, and to that extent, void.
- c) The inclusion of Section 2(h) in the Stamps (Amendment) Act, 2020 to facilitate the collection of stamp duty of UGX 100,000 as a tax from the petitioners on obtaining a license or certificate to practice is inconsistent with and/or in contravention of Article 92 of the Constitution, and therefore void.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SPORTS LAW TRAINING

The Professional Development department of ULS organized the Sports Law Training on 14th February 2024 with an award of 2 CLE points.

The training was moderated by Mr. Ivan Ojakol, Managing Partner at Matrix Advocates and Mr. Phillip Munaabi, Partner at Diadem Advocates and the Head of the ULS Sports Law Cluster. Mr. Munaabi kick started the training by welcoming participants and highlighting the surge in Sports Lawyers and the abundance of opportunities available.

Hon. Sam Odonga Otto, Managing Partner at Odonga Otto & Co. Advocates discussed the opportunities and challenges in sports law. He encouraged lawyers to educate themselves and seek knowledge in this growing sports law industry. He noted that there is still a very

small number of lawyers practicing sports law yet there are a lot of opportunities in the sector.

Mr. Donald Rukare, the President of the Uganda Olympic Committee and Former Chairperson National Council of Sports Uganda highlighted the importance of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in resolving sports disputes. He noted that the best recourse for resolving sports disputes lies in ADR mechanisms, not protracted litigation, and embracing ADR foster swifter and more amicable resolutions, preserving the integrity of the sports ecosystem and nurturing its growth.

Senior Counsel John Ohaga, Managing Partner at Triple OKLaw LLP in Kenya and Chairman Kenya Sports Disputes Tribunal focused on athletes and discusses the critical role of sports law in shaping the athletes' shelf-

life. He urged legal professionals to recognize the importance of sports law in safeguarding athletes' careers, rights and interests. He also implored lawyers to remain vigilant to the evolving legal landscape and emerging opportunities in sports law given that the industry is rapidly expanding.



Mr. Phillip Munaabi and Mr. Ivan Ojakol moderating the Sports Law training



Mr. Nasser Serunjogi Managing Partner Magna Advocates. President Federation of Uganda Basketball Associations (FUBA) during the Sports Law Training

LEGAL AID AND PRO BONO



INTERVIEW WITH HEAD LEGAL AID AND PRO BONO PROJECT UGANDA LAW SOCIETY

Ms Christine Awori

Q. Please provide an overview of the Legal Aid Project and its objectives.

The Legal Aid Project is a Non-Government Organization established by the Uganda Law Society in 1992 under the Trustee Incorporation Act and Non-Government Organization Act. The Project aspires to see a Ugandan society where all human rights are respected, promoted and defended to ensure that access to justice for all is a reality irrespective of gender, age, ethnicity, religion or social-economic status.

The Legal Aid Project implements its Project activities under ULS Strategic Objectives 3 and 4 of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan which are to Enhance the promotion of Rule of Law, good governance and the respect for human rights and to Increase access to justice for the vulnerable, indigent and marginalized persons as well as other stakeholders. The Legal Aid Project is the leading provider of comprehensive legal aid services in the country, providing services to the indigent, vulnerable and marginalized persons in the communities directly through legal representation, counselling, ADR, legal advice and referral to other

service providers. This has been possible with the support of different development partners including; Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD/NBA), Democratic Governance Facility (DGF), International Development Law Organization (IDLO), UN Women, GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), Canadian Bar Association (CBA), United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Netherlands Embassy in Uganda, and the Embassy of Ireland in Uganda.

Q. What is the current reach of the Legal Aid Project in terms of geographical coverage and the number of individuals served?

The Project has 22 offices located in Kampala, Jinja, Gulu, Masindi, Arua, Kabale, Kabarole, Mbarara, Moroto, Kotido, Luwero, Luzira, Soroti, Nakapiripirit, Nabilatuk, Kaberamaido, Pader, Kitgum, Abim, Amuria and Amudat. These clinics individually serve the district where the clinics are located as well as all their neighbouring districts.

In 2022, a total of 82,099 (54,557M, 27542F) persons benefited from the services of the Project. Among the beneficiaries, 46,187(30129M, 16058F) persons were assisted through Court representation, alternative dispute resolution (ADR), legal advice, counseling and referral services while 35,912(24428M, 11484F) participated and benefited from legal and human rights awareness campaigns. In the last five consecutive years, over 430,991 people have benefitted from the services of the Project. Below is the graph showing the number of beneficiaries in the respective years between 2018 and 2022.

Q. How does the Legal Aid Project contribute to the promotion of the rule of law, good governance, and respect for human rights in Uganda?

The Project contributes to the promotion of the rule of law, good governance, and respect for human rights in Uganda through i) collaboration with government and its relevant institutions while implementing its programmes in the different areas across the country through for example conducting trainings for and with these institutions to ensure holistic and quality service delivery, and ii) conducting public awareness on human rights by holding physical sensitization sessions in the communities, in detention facilities, in schools, and at health centers, as well as holding radio and Tv talk shows during which issues of human rights are addressed.

Q. What specific focus areas has the Legal Aid Project identified for the year 2024 in line with the ULS Strategic Plan 2023-2027?

The specific focus areas for the project for the year 2024 as per the Strategic Plan 2023-2027 are;

- Access to justice for the vulnerable, indigent and marginalized person
- Psychosocial support services for the vulnerable, indigent and marginalized persons
- Collaboration with government and its relevant institutions as well as other relevant stakeholders
- Public awareness on human rights
- Resource mobilization for sustainability.

Q. What are the key outcomes or achievements of the Legal Aid Project in the past year, and how do these align with its objectives?

A total of 82,099 (54,557M, 27542F) persons benefited from the services of the Project. 46,187(30129M, 16058F) of them benefitted through Court representation, alternative dispute resolution (ADR), legal advice, counseling and referral services while 35,912(24428M, 11484F) participated and benefited from legal and human rights awareness campaigns. These align with the project's objectives of enhancing access to justice for the indigent, vulnerable and marginalized persons, and promotion of respect for human rights and the rule of law in Uganda.

Q. What challenges does the Legal Aid Project face in its mission, and what steps are being taken to address these challenges?

The main challenge the project faces is in regard to funding to sustain its interventions. The project is majorly donor funded and in the event of withdraw of funding by the donors for example when the donor priorities change as was the case with NORAD/NBA, or when the donor fund closes as it was with the DGF, the project then suffers with continuing to provide services to the indigent, vulnerable and marginalised persons.

Q. How does the Legal Aid Project work towards increasing respect for human rights?

The project works towards increasing respect for human rights through conducting public awareness campaigns on human rights. These are done through physical gatherings in the communities, in detention facilities, in schools, at health centers as well as holding radio and Tv talk shows.

SUCCESS STORIES

The case of Uganda Vs Lokis

Mr. Lokis hails from Morir village in Kaabong Town council, Kaabongo District. He had been held at Kaabong government prison from January 6, 2023, until January 18, 2024. The case seemed endless, with no resolution in sight. The Magistrate Grade 1 at Kaabong Grade 1 Magistrates Court became involved when an officer at the ULS clinic presented the case's history.

The legal proceedings had been dragging on without any evidence or witnesses presented in court. The state Attorney, influenced by intimidation from the complainant, continually sought adjournments, exacerbating the case's delay. During a visit to Kaabong government prison, Lokis shared his lengthy incarceration story.

Upon investigating the case further, the ULS team discovered the plaintiff's threats when visiting the DPP's office in Kaabong. Motivated by a commitment to justice, the ULS decided to represent Mr. Lokis and secure his freedom. In court, the team highlighted the injustice of holding Mr. Lokis for a year on theft charges without evidence or the plaintiff's genuine interest in the case. The court listened and, under Section 119 of the Magistrates Court Act, dismissed the case for want of prosecution.

Now a free man, Mr. Lokis expressed gratitude

to the team for their support. Tearfully, he looked forward to reuniting with his baby that was born in July during his absence. He expressed determination to work hard, providing for his family and supporting his wife, who had been managing their four-member family single-handedly.

Unlawful dismissal of Omene without pay

Mr. Omene, using a pseudonym, served as the Manager for Nadugent Sub County Livestock & Produce Farmers Cooperative Society Limited from 2011 to 2020. Managing a substantial membership of over 6000 individuals, he successfully led the cooperative to thrive, achieving significant income returns and interests through the provision of equipment, fertilizers, seeds, and access to markets for cultivated crops at affordable fees.

Despite his unwavering dedication, it is disheartening to note that he went without a salary from 2011 to 2012. Despite this, Mr. Omene continued working with a belief that his dedication would eventually be rewarded. Unfortunately, his commitment was met with disappointment when he was unfairly dismissed in 2020.

In pursuit of justice, Mr. Omene reported the matter to the labour office, but effective assistance was not forthcoming. Undeterred, he sought legal redress from Legal Aid

Moroto. A follow-up with the Moroto labor officer revealed that the employer agreed to pay him UGX 4,990,000 out of an initial sum of UGX 12,000,000, citing deductions for losses that occurred under his watch.

However, Mr. Omene only received UGX 1,200,000, and the labour officer closed the case. Counsel Francesca Susan Orono from the Uganda Law Society delved into the matter, collaborating with the District Commercial Officer (DCO) Achia Lawrence. Together, they secured the balance owed to our client, amounting to UGX 3,790,400. Beyond compensation, the DCO assured the Uganda Law Society that Mr. Omene would be reinstated, as his employment background demonstrated his capability to revitalize the cooperative to its full capacity.



L-R Orono Susan Francesca of ULS Moroto Legal Aid Clinic, the DCO-Lawrence Achia, the Chairperson Nadugent Sub County Livestock & Produce Farmers' Cooperative Society Limited, Our client (O.E)



ULS MEMBERSHIP UPDATE ON;

- I. RECENT COURT RULINGS INJUNCTING ULS DELIBERATIONS ON THE STATE OF THE JUDICIARY AND BARRING THE ULS COUNCIL FROM DIRECTLY NOMINATING ULS REPRESENTATIVES TO STATUTORY BODIES
- II. DELAYED ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES OF APPROVAL OF CHAMBERS

February, 7, 2024

Dear Member,

Greetings from the Uganda Law Society.

These past few weeks have been particularly busy for the Council of the Uganda Law Society. Three court decisions were issued against the Society; two decisions granting injunctions against the holding of member-requisitioned extra-ordinary general Meetings and the third decision concerning the powers of the Council to nominate representatives to statutory bodies.

In addition to the above court decisions, members have also raised concerns about the late inspection of chambers and issuance of Continuing Legal Education (CLEs) certificates, which concerns we herein address.

The court decisions particularly have significant implications and it is imperative that we, as your leadership, address the issues arising and guide on the best way forward.

Convening member requisitioned extra-ordinary general meetings

In **Brian Kirima v Uganda Law Society**, Miscellaneous Application No. 94 of 2024, and **Attorney General v Uganda Law Society**, Miscellaneous Application No. 11 of 2024, the applicants sought orders injunctioning the Uganda Law Society from convening extra-ordinary general meetings on requisition of members to discuss matters that were alleged by the applicants to be unlawful and outside the mandate of the ULS. The subject of the petitions related to matters regarding attacks on the independence of the Judiciary and other related matters regarding the alleged misconduct of a Judge.

We continue to hold the view that the ULS Council has a statutory obligation under Section 16(1) of the Uganda Law Society Act, Cap. 276 to convene an extra ordinary general meeting once 15 (fifteen) members have requisitioned the Council for that purpose. As members, we hold different views on the interpretation of the section 16(1) of the ULS Act which explains the applications before the courts. There are sections of the membership that believe that council has the power to veto these meetings if the agenda of the meeting is illegal and there are those who believe that any preliminary concerns on whether the agenda of a petition is *ultra vires* the mandate of the ULS can and must be handled as a preliminary matter at the requisitioned meeting. The injunctions interfere with the member's mandate to requisition for a meeting and violates the right to free speech, assembly, and association.

While we respectfully disagree with the decision of the Court to stop the council from convening an extra ordinary meeting which decision we intend to appeal, as law-abiding citizens we shall adhere to and comply with the Court orders. We have also engaged the leadership of the Judiciary who have agreed to hold a high-level Bar-Bench Forum which will give members a platform to discuss matters affecting the administration of justice and the existing challenges in the current practice environment.

We believe that this Forum will enable members to air out and engage with the Judiciary on a wide array of matters, receive responsive responses and forge a way forward in which a harmonious cooperation between the Bar and the Bench may be restored and strengthened. Arrangements for the said Bar., Bench Forum are being finalised and the date and time will be communicated in due course.

Appointment of ULS representatives to statutory bodies

In relation to the third recent court decision/holding (**Kalali Steven v Uganda Law Society**, Miscellaneous Cause No. 129 of 2023) to the effect that ULS representatives to statutory bodies should be elected and not nominated by the ULS Council, we note that this has been a historic practice which the council has adopted on the basis that it was pragmatic and would save costs. This decision may have significant implications on the resources of the Society as follows-

- a) Each election will require substantial expenses to organize -and will additionally constrain the statutory bodies to which representatives are sent in terms of time spent on organizing and conducting the elections.
- b) Additionally, in order to curtail the above delays, Parliament may legislate the ULS out of future opportunities to nominate representatives to statutory bodies which will diminish our involvement and contribution to government agencies. We therefore must be cautious of the above implications.

Without prejudice to the legal available options, we are considering proposing amendments to the Uganda Law Society (Elections) Regulations, 2016 in order to resolve the challenges and ensure that we have a transparent process for the appointment of representatives.

Delayed Inspection and Approval of chambers

Lastly, regarding the delayed inspection and issuance of Approvals of Chambers, we have engaged the Law Council who have confirmed to us that inspections and issuance of approvals are being expedited and that CLE compliance certificates will be issued commencing on the 11th February 2024. The Law Council is presently printing over 3000 Continuing Legal Education (CLE) compliance certificates.

We urge calm as we work through the above matters and give you our assurance that we will continue to work tirelessly for the betterment of the Society.

Yours sincerely,

Bernard Oundo
President, Uganda Law Society.

RULE OF LAW DEPARTMENT

Planning Engagements with University Rule of Law Clubs & Partners

The Rule of Law Department has engaged in planning sessions with various University Rule of Law Club Committees. These meetings, conducted through both virtual and physical platforms, have been significant in developing more strategies promoting the principles of the rule of law among students and the youths. Some of the universities that

were involved in these discussions include the Islamic University in Uganda, Cavendish University, Makerere University, Bishop Stuart University, and Kampala International University, King Ceasor University.

Throughout these sessions, the focus of the ULS was on inspiring and empowering students to cultivate innovation in their approach to advancing the rule of law, the forthcoming moot organized by the Uganda Law Society, and the Rule of Law Boot camp.



Students from IUIU posing for a photo with the Rule of Law Department staff



Representatives of the Cavendish University Rule of Law Club during a photo moment with Staff of the Rule of Law Department of ULS

Speaker Series by Cavendish Rule of Law Club

On February 23, 2024, the Rule of Law Club of Cavendish University, in collaboration with the Uganda Law Society, successfully organized a speaker series. The event, held under the theme “Impact of Technology and AI on Legal Practice in Uganda,” featured distinguished speakers, namely Ms. Ivy N. Mapfaira from the Centre for Dispute Resolution (CTDR) and Mr. Raymond Amumpaire from the Centre for Artificial Intelligence Ethics and Governance in Africa (CAIEGA).



The Cavendish University Rule of Law Committee members posing for a photo with the guest speakers

During the speaker series, Ms. Mapfaira and Mr. Amumpaire emphasized the inevitable role of technology in advancing justice and upholding the Rule of Law.

They urged all students in attendance to embrace technology as the new norm in the legal profession.

The insightful discussions shed light on the profound impact of technological advancements and artificial intelligence on legal practices in Uganda, emphasizing the need for the legal community to adapt and integrate these tools for the betterment of the justice system.



INTERVIEW WITH THE CHAIRPERSON - INHOUSE COUNSEL COMMITTEE

Miss Anne Abeja

Q. Please tell us about yourself?

My name is Ms. Anne Abeja. I am an Advocate of the High Court of Uganda, and I have been a Legal Practitioner for over 20 years. I am also a Governance Professional and Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators, United Kingdom. I currently serve as the Company Secretary/Chief Legal Officer at Housing Finance Bank. I am privileged to serve as the Chairperson of the In-house Lawyers Committee of the Uganda Law Society.

Q. From your experience in the industry, what are the qualities and skills of a good In-house lawyer apart from the general knowledge of law?

The role of the In-house Lawyer has evolved over the years, impacted among other things by the Technological, Social, Political, Environmental, and Economic disruptions that have changed the business landscape. Therefore, beyond a sound understanding of the Law, a good In-house Lawyer should possess some critical qualities and skills such as effective communication, business acumen, creative thinking, technological/digital savvy and receptive to change, customer-centric understanding of risk appetite and tolerance, appreciate the Sustainability factor and be an enabler and strategic partner. These abilities enable one to understand company objectives, navigate complex business environments, and provide pragmatic legal solutions.

Q. As a seasoned in-house lawyer and practitioner, what do you think would make one stand out amongst the many in-house lawyers?

In my view, ethical conduct plays a key role. Given the current public sentiment, maintaining a high ethical standard is key. Patience and commitment to ethical conduct are essential for an In-house Lawyer to stand out. Ethical behavior not only shapes one's professional identity but also contributes to success in the field. Other factors include flexibility and adaptability, this is because the role of in-house lawyers is evolving with increased emphasis on proactive risk management, compliance, and strategic business advice. The future requires In-house Lawyers to be agile, tech-savvy, and integral partners in shaping organizational strategies.

Q. Any message for a young lawyer out there, wondering whether to join private practice or be an in-house lawyer?

Follow your passion and specialize in a particular area. Success is achievable in private practice, Government, and In-house roles if you are known for your expertise. Specialization helps to create a niche and establishes one as an authority in their chosen field. I encourage you to be confident, form/maintain relationships, embrace challenges, and seek mentorship/coaching. Do not hesitate to take on leadership roles, show up/volunteer, never take "No" for an answer or failure as the

end but instead persist or pick key lessons, and contribute your unique perspectives to the legal profession and elsewhere. Continuous learning and networking are key to success and a strong career path.

Q. What should the members expect from the In-house Lawyer Committee this year?

This year, the In-house Lawyers' Committee has a comprehensive calendar of activities and training sessions aimed at benefiting our members in alignment with the dynamic business environment that requires future-proofed resources. Our members should expect various initiatives that contribute to the professional growth and development of In-house Lawyers. These initiatives also aim to address current challenges and keep members updated on industry trends.



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EMBRACE THE FUTURE:

How AI is Dramatically Shaping the Legal World

Patricia Peace Ejang
Co-Founder & C.E.O
Lawbot Africa Ltd
<https://www.lawbot.africa/>

Man has historically continued to improve his life, from the use of stone tools, to fire which paved way for the iron age. We have moved from horses to the steam engine and to cars and electric trains. Similarly, we moved from feather quills to the pen, the latest move towards enhancing efficiency and the quality of man's life today is the Artificial Intelligence.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming industries across the board, and the legal sector is no exception. This groundbreaking technology is reshaping how professionals approach their work, offering unparalleled efficiency and a new level of service delivery within a short time span. This has created unique opportunities and challenges for the legal sector, considering the need to balance the extent to which we tap these benefits and the regulatory concerns.

What Does Artificial Intelligence Mean For The Legal Profession?

The fusion of AI and the legal sector offers a transformative change in the way legal services are delivered, optimizing efficiency, accuracy, and accessibility. These opportunities vary from legal research, documentation, and the overall democratization of legal services, eventually having a significant impact on access to justice.

First and foremost, AI presents an opportunity for legal researchers to enhance their efficiency. Legal research, a cornerstone of the profession, involves sifting through vast amounts of data. AI can process this information at a speed no human can match, instantly analysing countless case files,

precedents, and statutes. As a result, lawyers can now access the precise information they need in a fraction of the time, allowing them to work more efficiently and serve their clients more effectively.

Secondly, AI algorithms have the capability to predict outcomes based on historical data. For legal professionals, this means being able to forecast case results with a certain degree of confidence, thereby informing more strategic decision-making. While not foolproof, these predictive analytics tools offer a powerful way to assess risks and probabilities in legal proceedings.

Many legal tasks are repetitive and time-consuming, and whereas templates have often come in handy to better the situation, AI offers an increased level of transforming the legal sector in that regard. AI such as LawBot Africa has features that can automate document review, contract analysis, and due diligence processes, freeing up lawyers to concentrate on more complex, high-value aspects of their cases. This shift can lead to cost savings for clients, timely delivery of work for lawyers, and overall, a more stimulating work environment for legal staff.

Though AI is far from sitting on the bench, it's beginning to find its place within the courtroom. Some jurisdictions experiment with AI-assisted tools for evidence analysis and even for assessing the risk of recidivism among offenders, which can inform sentencing decisions. Today, AI tools that have a multilingual aspect such as LawBot Africa, one that specialise in the legal profession, can be used as interpreters in court rooms. This has the advantage of providing immediate and

accurate interpretation services in multiple languages, which will greatly improve communication and understanding during legal proceedings.

The Challenges And Ethical Considerations. Despite the numerous opportunities AI promises, its integration into law raises concerns, from the threat it poses to traditional legal roles to ethical issues surrounding bias and accountability in AI decision-making. The legal profession is known for its strict codes of conduct, and ensuring AI upholds these standards is paramount. Lawyers and developers are therefore working together to create AI that accents the profession's ethical landscape.

The Future of AI And The Legal Segal

AI will not replace the wisdom and judgment of experienced attorneys; rather, it is poised to become their most valuable tool. It holds the promise of wider access to legal services through platforms like LawBot Africa, where AI provides reliable legal information, especially to those who might otherwise have difficulties accessing professional legal advice.

The intersection of AI and the legal profession is rich with potential. As AI continues to mature, so too will the ways in which legal work is performed. Lawyers who embrace this change will find themselves at the forefront of a more efficient and accessible legal landscape. However, the legal community must keep pace with these transformations, ensuring that AI serves the cause of justice as effectively as it does the bottom line.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES 2024



S/N	CATEGORY					COMMENT
	FEESTYPE	10 YEARS & ABOVE	5-10 YEARS	BELOW 5 YEARS	DURATION	RESOLUTION
1	ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FEES	UGX 500,000	UGX 500,000	UGX 500,000	N/A	NO INCREMENT
2	ANNUAL ULS HOUSE CONTRIBUTION	UGX 500,000	UGX 250,000	UGX 100,000	2024-2026	<p>ULS House</p> <p>During the Annual General Meeting held on September 30, 2023, at Imperial Resort Beach Hotel, it was resolved that a three-tier system of contribution be adopted for the next three years 2024- 2026 where members will contribute to the ULS House as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 years of practice and above are to contribute UGX500,000 annually. 5-10 years of practice are to contribute UGX250,000 annually. Below 5 years of practice are to contribute UGX100,000 annually.
3	ANNUAL BENEVOLENT FUND	UGX 75,000	UGX 75,000	UGX 75,000	EFFECTIVE 2024	<p>Benevolent Fund</p> <p>The Benevolent Fund Extra Ordinary Meeting (EOGM) of the Uganda Law Society was held on August 18, 2023, and attended by over 365 members online. It was resolved that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An annual allocation of UGX 25,000 from every ULS member's annual subscription fees to Uganda Law Society be allocated to the ULS Healthcare and Benevolent Fund and that every member contributes a compulsory annual fee of UGX 75,000 (Seventy-Five thousand shillings only) to the Uganda Law Society Healthcare and Benevolent Fund.
4	EAST AFRICAN LAW SOCIETY	\$20 or UGX 80,000	\$20 or UGX 80,000	\$20 or UGX80,000	2024	

HOW TO PAY

<p>ULS SUBSCRIPTION</p> <p>Account Name: Uganda Law Society</p> <p>Account Number: 0102010622400</p> <p>Bank Name: Standard Chartered Bank</p> <p>Swift Code: SCBLUGKAXXX</p>	<p>ULS BENEVOLENT FUND</p> <p>Account Name: Uganda Law Society -Benevolent Fund</p> <p>Account Number: 0102010622402</p> <p>Bank Name: Standard Chartered Bank</p> <p>Swift Code: SCBLUGKAXXX</p>	<p>ULS HOUSE</p> <p>Account Name: Uganda Law Society - ULS House</p> <p>Account Number: 0102010622410</p> <p>Bank Name: Standard Chartered Bank</p> <p>Swift Code: SCBLUGKAXXX</p>	<p>EALS ACCOUNT</p> <p>Account Name: East Africa Law Society</p> <p>Account Number: 3390207384</p> <p>Bank Name: KCB BANK Tanzania Ltd</p> <p>Bank Branch: Arusha Branch</p> <p>Swift Code: KCBL TZTZ</p>
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Please provide ULS with proof of payment for swift reconciliation and for any information please contact membersaffairs@uls.or.ug

Upcoming CLE EVENTS

March 2024



CLE Event	CLE Points	Date	Fee
Retirement Benefits (Mbarara Fortportal)	5	13th-14th March 2024	Free of charge
Litigation Training	10	13th-14th March 2024	(Physical) UGX 400,000 (Other Lawyers) UGX 350,000 (Young Lawyers) Online UGX 200,000
EALS Latest in Law Series	2	14th-15th March 2024	Free of charge
Plea-bargain Webinar	0	15th March 2024	Free of charge
Senior Lawyers' Forum	5	21st March 2024	Physical Only UGX 180,000
ICT Training for Lawyers	5	27th March 2024	Online: UGX 100,000 (Other Lawyers) UGX 70,000 (Young Lawyers)

FOR BOOKING CONTACT : 0703253733/0774590680/0706317017/0754659981

EMAIL: cle@uls.or.ug/programofficer@uls.or.ug



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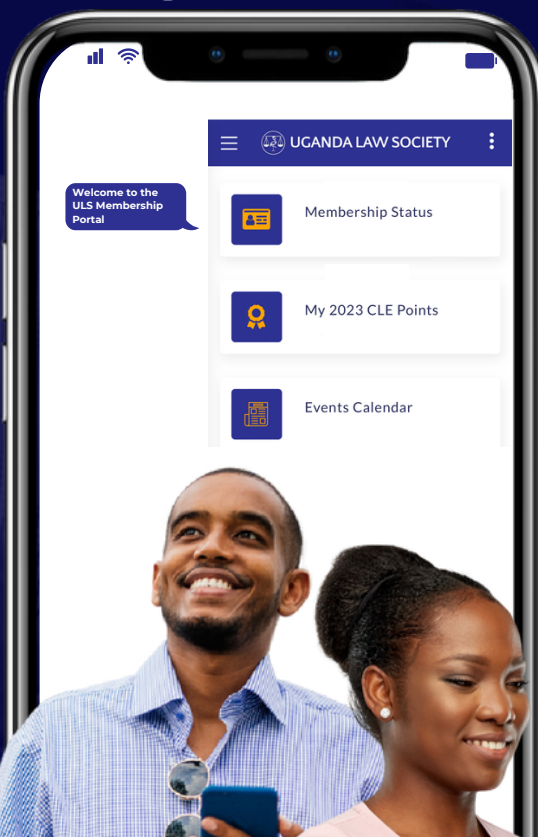
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