



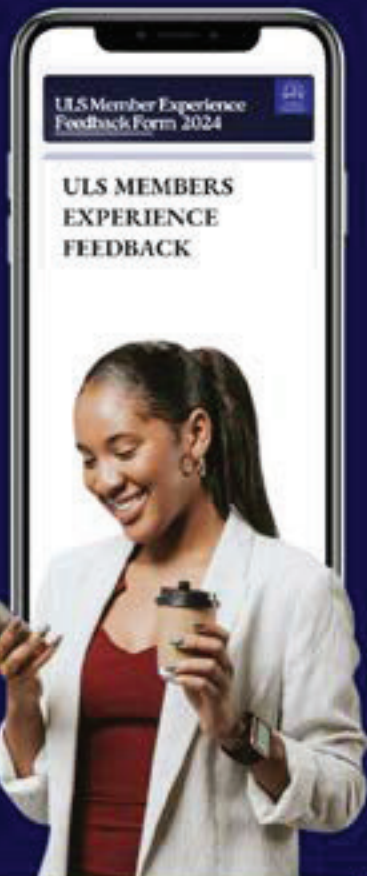
Members FIRST

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2024 | ISSUE 17

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TOP NEWS



- FEMALE LAWYERS COMMITTEE VISITS WAKISA MINISTRIES PREGNANCY CARE CENTRE
- ONE ON ONE WITH THE MANAGER PRO-BONO SERVICES
- EALS HOSTS MASTER CLASS ON DIGITAL FORENSICS AND ELECTRONIC EVIDENCE HANDLING
- ONE ON ONE WITH HER WORSHIP THE CHIEF REGISTRAR

Message From The Chair



Dear Readers,
You are most welcome to yet another edition of the Members First Newsletter. As we conclude Quarter One 2024 we believe that you have aligned your priorities for this year. I wish to reaffirm that both the ULS Council and Secretariat prioritise serving you in accordance with the Members' First Agenda. In this issue we have therefore dedicated our cover page to ensuring that you can reach out to us with feedback on how we can serve you better.

In this Issue we start off by celebrating our Female lawyers and thanking them for their contribution to the legal profession, our nation Uganda, the East African region and the world at large. We are mindful of the great strides taken by Female Lawyers to grow professionally and this serves as a mark of excellence which all the young Female lawyers and Female Law students can pursue.

We appreciate the Chief Registrar of Courts of Judicature, Her Worship Sarah Langa Siu for her special interview and we hope it will add value to your reading experience.

ULS works with the office of the Chief Registrar on a number of practice and Judiciary matters so sharing her story is a great opportunity we were happy to utilize.



In this issue, we emphasize two areas which we would like you to plan for early in the year; Your professional development and service to community through the Pro-bono desk.

Find time to learn and plan how you would contribute to the pro bono project by offering services to the indigent as individuals or law firms.

We also share with you various activities held during the Month of March ranging from professional development, council activities, Judiciary news, Statements from ULS President Bernard Oundo on matters pertaining rule of law. One such statement was about the intimidation of social media activists Dr Spire Ssentongo and Agather Atuhaire over their online exhibition, shining a torch on the accountability issues at Parliament. Dr Spire had in particular come out claiming his life was in danger as his movements and communication were being tracked in a bid to harm him.

The other was ULS stand on the "Service award" given to former Leader of Opposition in Parliament Mathias Mpuuga and four commissioners, totaling Shs1.7 billion as being illegally awarded to them. We congratulate the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs for yet another milestone of the launch of the High Court Of Uganda Bushenyi Circuit.

Finally we appreciate the Female Lawyers Committee for their role in touching lives at Wakisa Ministries Pregnancy Care Centre. May we be available to lend a helping hand to people in need.

Enjoy the read and have a fruitful Quarter Two.

Counsel Atukunda Isaac
Chairperson Members First Newsletter

Female Lawyers Committee visits Wakisa Ministries Pregnancy Care Centre

In commemoration of the Women's month, the ULS Female Lawyers Committee organized an outreach to Wakisa Ministries Pregnancy Care Centre. The pregnancy care home in Wakiso was established in 2005 with an aim to promote the dignity of young girls with crisis pregnancy to address their emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing. This is done through providing temporary shelter, counseling and care services, and equipping them with life and vocational skills.

The ULS Female Lawyers Committee led by ULS President, Bernard Oundo and the Committee Vice President, Anita Nantale together with ULS Female Staff from the secretariat visited Wakisa Ministries on 15th March 2024 with donations ranging from baby clothing, diapers, groceries, food stuffs and other items to give support to the young mothers. During the visit, the ULS pledged to provide pro-bono services to the center.



The Founder of Wakisa Ministries, Mrs. Vivian Kityo (centre) together with the ULS President Bernard Oundo and Vice President ULS Female Lawyers Committee, Ms. Anita Nantale pose for a photo with the donations for the ministry



Founder Wakisa Ministries, Mrs. Vivian Kityo and ULS President Mr. Bernard Oundo



Founder Wakisa Ministries, Mrs. Vivian Kityo and ULS President Mr. Bernard Oundo and a team of women from ULS Secretariat

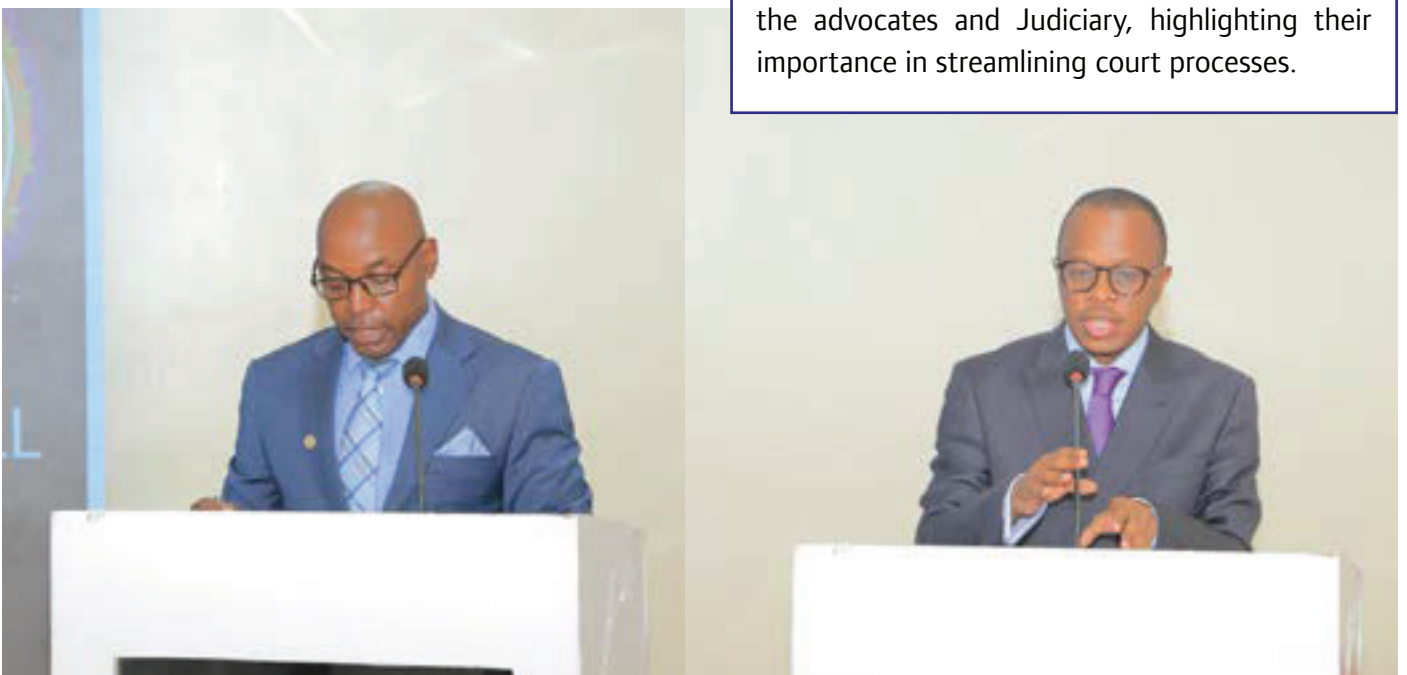
Consultative Meeting on Proposed Rules and Practice Directions

On 25th March 2024, the Chambers of the Chief Registrar of the High Court held a consultative meeting on proposed rules and practice directions. The hybrid event was attended by judicial officers and advocates, and the ULS President Bernard Oundo.

The consultative meeting discussed several issues including; the Judicature (Electronic Filing, Service and Virtual Recordings) Rule Of 2024, enhancement of pecuniary jurisdiction of Magistrates Courts, the Constitution (Operation of Mobile Courts) Practice Directions 2024, and the Judicature (Cases of Persons with Disabilities) Rules, 2019.

The consultative meeting was presided over by the Principal Judge Dr. Flavian Zeija who thanked the participants both online and in person for recognizing the importance of their insights in shaping the proposed rules and practice directions. He acknowledged the pivotal role of stakeholders in embracing these proposals, and emphasized the need for collective input to ensure they meet the aspirations of the people and court users.

The ULS President, while giving his remarks thanked the Judiciary for the continuous engagements between the bar and the bench. He appreciated the introduction and adoption of new technologies like ECMIS and mobile courts noting that these are instrumental in reducing case backlog. He also advocated for joint trainings on rules proposed and practice directions for both the advocates and Judiciary, highlighting their importance in streamlining court processes.



Left: Principal Judge Dr. Flavian Zeija presiding over the consultative meeting. Right: ULS President Bernard Oundo giving his remarks at the consultative meeting



Chief Registrar Her Worship Sarah Langa Siu, Principal Judge Dr. Flavian Zeija and the ULS President Bernard Oundo during the session.

ULS Presentation to Parliament on the Alcoholic Drinks Control Bill, 2023

The Uganda Law Society team led by the ULS President Mr. Bernard Oundo appeared before the Parliamentary Committee on Health, and the Parliamentary Committee on Trade, tourism and industry to present its views and comments on the Alcohol Control Bill of 2023. In their submissions, the President highlighted that it is important to ensure that a regulatory impact assessment is carried out to make a proper assessment of the following questions;

1. Is the problem correctly defined? The problem to be solved should be clear giving evidence of its nature and magnitude.
2. Is the object of the proposed Bill justified? The object of the proposed Bill should be assessed given the nature of the problem, and the likely benefits and costs of action.
3. Is the proposed regulation the best form of action in the circumstances?
4. Is there a legal basis for regulation? Regulators should ensure that all regulatory decisions respect the Rule of law.
5. Do the benefits of regulation justify the costs?

The submissions also stressed the need to assess what mischief the Bill is seeking to correct. If excessive alcohol consumption is the problem, would regulation of time of sale of alcohol be an effective remedy? There is need to carry out comprehensive research to assess whether legislation would be the most appropriate measure to address the problem. Given that this law is seeking to regulate behavior, it is also vital to make an analysis of other existing laws that have attempted to regulate behavior and whether they have been successful.



ULS President Bernard Oundo appearing before the Parliamentary Committee on Health, and the Committee on Trade, Tourism & Industry

Litigation Training

The ULS held a 2-day litigation training hosted by ULS President Bernard Oundo and convened by Senior Counsel James Sebugenyi Mukasa, a partner at S&L Advocates.

The training was attended physically by 25 advocates and 140 advocates online. Various topics were discussed including; interlocutory applications, civil appeals, public interest litigation, navigating challenges as a young lawyer, among others.

The training was opened with a presentation from Mr. Jude Byamukama who took the participants through interlocutory applications. He pointed out what Advocates ought to remember when filing interlocutory applications and these include;

1. Filing Applications in a timely manner after close of pleadings and before trial or scheduling save for extraordinary circumstances.

2. Not filing applications as a matter of course (common with unnecessary injunction application).
3. The procedure (Notice of motion or Chamber summons) should not be ignored even if this may be construed as a technicality.
4. The signing of the Motion or Chamber Summons and ensuring accompanying affidavits are duly signed and commissioned ditto for annexures to affidavits.
5. Deponents of affidavits should appear before the commissioner for oaths to take oaths prior to signing off their affidavits and it is good practice for them to know the name of the commissioner and his/her chambers or court; if proof is elicited through cross examination or other means the deponent didn't appear the affidavit is incompetent.
6. Applications should be drafted with sufficient clarity and legal basis to enable a reader or judicial officer appreciate whether the same ought to succeed without need for submissions or oral arguments.



Senior Counsel James Sebugenyi Mukasa and ULS President Bernard Oundo at the Litigation training

Mr. Joseph Kyazze of Magna Advocates discussed exhibits and trial bundles in civil litigation. He cautioned advocates against inadequate preparation and careless drafting of pleadings. On issues pertaining pre-litigation preparation, it is very important for counsel to peruse the documents and ascertain if the originals of such documents are in the possession of the client, whether there are the relevant documents in relation to their case because such core documents normally inform the cause of action and the material facts to be pleaded.

He noted that the filing of trial bundles does not per se, render the documents therein exhibits therefore at scheduling, those documents have to be marked as admitted by consent/ without objection whether in form or content and are marked as exhibits by court and assigned exhibit numbers. He emphasized that a good litigation strategy does not begin at the time of filing trial bundles but right away from the interview with the client, through preparation of pleadings, preparation of the scheduling memorandum and subsequently the trial bundle and witness statements. Any omissions of the types enumerated herein above may impact on the litigation and ultimately jeopardize the chances of success of the suit or defence.



Left: Mr. Joseph Luswata of S&L Advocates. Right: Joseph Kyazze of Magna Advocates

A panel discussion was held on Employment law with views from Mr. Alex Ntale of MMAKS Advocates and Mr. Kenneth Tumusiime, Partner at Greystone Advocates, moderated by Mr. Patrick Turinawe.

They shared about the need to properly determine which court has the jurisdiction to hear employment matters. The Employment Act is very clear about going to the labour office and later Industrial Court as S. 93 gives the Industrial Court inherent jurisdiction to handle labour matters. However, when there are claims such as human rights abuse and workers' compensation, these are brought to the Magistrates Court or High Court.

Mr. Ntale highlighted another challenge in litigating employment matters which is failure to collect evidence from a former employee because they are denied access to company documents yet they are required to prove the case. In most cases, after an employee is terminated, their emails are blocked and laptops are taken away from them yet they are required to support the employee's case. To solve this challenge, he encouraged lawyers to always file for discovery.

The second panel discussion was on navigating the challenges faced by young lawyers moderated by Jemimah Muyama an associate at J Byamukama Advocates with Paul Winyi, a senior associate at Ligomarc Advocates, Geraldine Nakazibwe, an associate at Kalikumutima & Co. Advocates as the panelists.

Ms. Geraldine encouraged young lawyers to be intentional about networking and getting opportunities. She urged the lawyers to enroll for further studies as there are so many online programs in accredited institutions where one can study while they are working. Mr. Winyi discussed the challenge of managing client expectations where clients don't trust the young lawyers with their cases. He encouraged the lawyers to always do their best and gradually, the clients will begin to trust them even more than their seniors.

Mr. Nicholas Opiyo, the Executive Director at Chapter Four discussed Public interest litigation in Uganda.

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

He noted that public interest litigation is intended to have wide impact, to bring change to the laws and challenge policies so as to promote social justice. He listed key strategies a public interest litigator needs to take into account;



Left: Nicholas Opiyo, Executive Director at Chapter Four Uganda.
Right: Jackline Natukunda, Associate Partner at Magna Advocates

1. Be clear on the procedure to follow and which court has jurisdiction to hear the case. If you're seeking enforcement, go to the High Court, if you're seeking interpretation go to the Court of Appeal.
2. Don't just allege violation; have clear evidence or a victim who has suffered the violation.
3. Pay specific attention to public policy because the courts will want to know what impact their decisions will have on public policy.
4. International law has better jurisprudence compared to national law. You need to do more research on international law.
5. Embrace regional courts such as the East African Court of Justice and the African Court of Human and People's Rights.

Ms. Jackline Natukunda of Magna Advocates made a presentation on costing and billing strategies. She stated that billing can be challenging and sometimes advocates bill according to client's capacity to pay, the nature of work done, the urgency of the work and the law firm's reputation. She highlighted the Advocates (Remuneration and Taxation of Costs) Regulations which provides that advocates are entitled to charge a client according to the sixth schedule.

She advised advocates to consider the following when billing;

- (i) Sign letters of engagement.
- (ii) Be open and engaging with your client; involve the client in the court processes. From inception, inform them and be open about the court procedures and the uncertainties that come with it.
- (iii) Billing software; embrace technology. She advised that there is software that tracks work done, tasks to be carried out and hours spent on each case. This will be able to help you understand the amount of time and work spent on each case.
- (iv) Distinguish yourself in the market; make a name for yourself and know your worth.



Group photo of the Litigation training participants on day one

ULS President meets a team from the Cameroon Bar Association

ULS President Bernard Oundo, hosted a delegation from the Cameroon Bar Association to discuss partnership opportunities. The team included the Deputy Secretary and Littoral Region Representative- Mr. Serges Martin Zangue, Counsel Gladditch Djongo, a member of the Cameroon Bar. and Barrister Mbah Eric. The two bars discussed matters regarding enhancement of partnerships among African lawyers, diversification and specialization in the legal practice, and addressing shared challenges faced by Bar associations.



Mr. Serges Martin Zanguehands over publications from the Cameroon Bar Association to ULS President, Mr. Bernard Oundo

Opening of the High Court of Uganda Bushenyi Circuit

On 19th March 2024 , the Judiciary launched the High Court of Uganda Bushenyi Circuit. The event was presided over by the Principal Judge, Justice Dr. Flavian Zeija. The event was held under the theme; **Enhancing Judicial Accountability and Access to Justice**. The event was attended by Judicial Officers from Bushenyi and Mbarara High Court Circuits, advocates, local leaders from Bushenyi district, and the Uganda Law Society Council was represented by Mr. Allan Musasire, the ULS Council member- Western Region.

Mr. Musasire thanked the Judiciary for opening the Bushenyi High Court circuit which will promote access to justice through making judicial services more accessible to the people of Bushenyi and neighbouring districts.



L-R: Mr. Serges Martin Zangue -Deputy Secretary and Littoral Region Representative, Mr. Bernard Oundo- ULS President and Counsel Gladditch Djongo

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

He also noted that the Mbarara High Court was facing challenges of case backlog and the creation of the Bushenyi Court will greatly reduce the backlog.



ULS Council Member- Western Region, Mr. Allan Musasiire giving his remarks at the launch of the Bushenyi High Court.



The Resident Judge Bushenyi, Justice Amos Kwizera giving his remarks



Front row: Justice Allan Nshimye, Lady Justice Joyce Kavuma, Justice Dr. Flavian Zeija, Justice Amos Kwizera and Her Worship Sarah Langa Siu

Nkumba University Law Society Dinner

The Nkumba University Law Society held its Annual Law dinner at Protea Hotel, Entebbe under the theme; **“The Fundamental Prerequisites a Future Lawyer Must Possess to Excel.”** At this event the ULS President, Bernard Oundo who was the Guest of Honor at this event shared his journey of legal practice spanning over 15 years since graduating from law school.

Mr. Oundo noted that the legal landscape is ever evolving with new concepts and for one to be relevant, they must be open to learning, embrace technological advancements and evolving jurisprudence. He encouraged the students to prepare themselves to serve the world, to stand out and find their niche since there is so much competition with over 1500 students being admitted to LDC every year. This means that competition nationally and globally.

He further advised the students to work hard stating; “There is no shortcut for hard work. The path to the good life may unfold more slowly than anticipated, yet it is the journey of growth that holds true significance. There is a lot of temptation in the market to make quick money but you have to make a choice between engaging in dubious deals and having a clear conscience. Take each day at a time, be ethical and work hard, and you will be successful.”

He concluded by urging each student to have community service at heart and use their law degrees to positively be agents of change in their communities.



The ULS President giving his remarks at the Nkumba University Law Society dinner



Nkumba University Law students at the annual dinner



UGANDA LAW SOCIETY

STATEMENT ON "SERVICE AWARD" EMOLUMENTS PAID TO A SECTION OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND OTHER CONTROVERSIAL PARLIAMENTARY EMOLUMENTS

Press reports have revealed that on 6h May 2022, the Uganda Parliamentary Commission resolved to reward a former Leader of Opposition and backbencher Commissioners with one-time, personal-to-holder "Service Award" emoluments of UGX500m and UGX400m respectively.

General misgivings have been expressed by the public as to the morality and legality of the above "Service Award" emoluments in light of the high levels of misappropriation of public funds, large pay disparities, and conflicts of interest in the determination by Government officials of their emoluments.

In fulfillment of its statutory duty to protect and assist the public and Government in all matters relating to law and legislation in Uganda, the Uganda Law Society deems it imperative to guide on the legality of the above and similar emoluments, gratuities, allowances, or payments to Members of Parliament.

Who determines the emoluments (including gratuities, allowances, pensions, etc.) of MPs?

Article 85(1) of Uganda's 1995 Constitution empowers Parliament to determine the emoluments (including gratuity, pension, and allowances) of Members of Parliament.

However, in accordance with Article 93, the introduction of any new emoluments or upward alteration of existing ones must be by way of a Bill or motion introduced in parliament on behalf of the Government (that is to say, the Executive arm) upon which parliament becomes empowered to consider the same and determine such emoluments.

Therefore, to the extent that there was no Bill or motion presented on behalf of the Executive in relation to the impugned "Service Award" emoluments, they constitute an illegal charge on the Consolidated Fund of Uganda and ought to be thoroughly investigated.

The Supreme Court has confirmed the above position in Parliamentary Commission vs Mwesigye Wilson, Constitutional Appeal No. 8 of 2016, wherein it determined that the emoluments of Members of Parliament can only be altered (other than by reduction) upon a Bill or motion introduced on behalf of the Executive. The Court further held that the Parliamentary Commission is bound by this procedure of determination of emoluments of Members of Parliament.

ULS thus urges Parliament to abide by the Constitutional and statutory laws governing the determination of their emoluments (including salaries, gratuities, pension, and other benefits) and to lead by example in demonstrating proper and economical use of public funds.

To remedy the perennial problem of payment disparities and conflicts of interest in the determination of the emoluments of Members of Parliament, ULS urges the creation of an independent Salaries and Remuneration Commission to determine the remuneration of all Government employees and officials including Members of Parliament. This would necessitate constitutional as well as statutory amendments but is necessary to deal with the problem and provide an inclusive and lasting solution.

In the premises, ULS:

1. calls upon the Parliament of Uganda and the Parliamentary Commission to publicly address the above issues and demonstrate commitment to the binding laws governing the remuneration of Members of Parliament; and
2. calls upon the Government and all public servants to uphold the principles of accountability, transparency, and adherence to the rule of law in all matters related to the administration of public funds and the remuneration of public officials to create and maintain public trust and ensure the responsible use of taxpayers' money.

ULS remains committed to the execution of its mandate of enhancing the promotion of the Rule of Law, Human Rights, and Good Governance in Uganda.

Bernard Oundo
President, Uganda Law Society



UGANDA LAW SOCIETY

STATEMENT BY UGANDA LAW SOCIETY ON THE SAFETY OF DR. JIMMY SPIRE SSENTONGO, AGATHER ATUHAIRE, AND OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVISTS

The Uganda Law Society expresses grave concerns over the threats to the lives of Dr. Jimmy Spire Sentongo, Agather Atuhaire, Anthony Natif, and Godwin Toko, among other social media activists.

In any democracy, citizens are entitled to demand accountability of their leadership and Uganda is no exception to this. The team of Dr. Jimmy Spire Sentongo, Anthony Natif, Agather Atuhaire, and Godwin Toko are social media activists who have been demanding accountability from our leaders in Parliament through #UgandaParliamentExhibition on their social media platforms especially X (formerly Twitter).

We, therefore, condemn the threats and intimidation to silence citizens' urge for accountability of the holders of public offices. We call for a swift investigation of the threats made and the bringing to book of the perpetrators.

The Uganda Law Society once again calls upon leaders to always be open to criticism and accountability and to respond to citizens concerns where legitimate as this is one of the tenets of democracy.

Bernard Oundo
President, Uganda Law Society

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Secretariat News

ULS Staff Celebrate Women's Day

On 7th March 2024, the ULS Secretariat held a hybrid Women's Day celebration for all staff at the office headquarters in Ntinda. The event was attended by all staff including the ULS Legal Aid clinic staff countrywide.

The Ag. CEO Ms Mable Nimwesiga in her remarks at the Women's Day celebration underscored the role women play in development and appreciated all staff for adhering to the dress code set by the Human Resources team that brought out the African theme. As she shared her message she asked staff to share who their female role models were.

The list of role models shared by the staff ranged from mothers, to grandmothers, management team members with some mentioning international and local role models. These models had a lot in common including hard work, consistency, persistence which are virtues all staff need to emulate. She then invited the day's guest speaker who is also a Double book author of two books (The Scent of a Mother and Smiling in the Mirror) whose key message targets women. Mrs Charity M Byarugaba, a leadership coach, mentor, marketer and a person whose focus is building personal and corporate brands.

The guest speaker in her remarks on the theme **"Prepare for Life"** highlighted the crucial role women play in society as pillars of strength and guidance, especially for children who look up to them. Ms.

Byarugaba emphasized the importance of supporting and empowering women, encouraging everyone to contribute to creating environments where women are valued and their voices heard.

She also spoke about the significance of hard work and personal growth, urging individuals to strive for improvement in both their careers and personal lives. It was a call to action encouraging staff to embark on a journey of self-discovery and growth, and the dedication to evolve into better versions of ourselves every day.

She appreciated all staff for their role in serving ULS members and encouraged them to keep learning, unlearning and relearning. As she concluded she reminded staff to realize that ULS presents them a good platform for growth since it enables them to serve the members who work in different sectors of the country. She ended by celebrating the women that work at ULS and asked the male colleagues to continue supporting them to become better versions of themselves.

The event was concluded with cake-cutting to join the world in celebrating International Women's Day.



The Guest speaker; Charity M Byarugaba making her remarks



ULS staff cut cake in celebration of International Women's Day



Group photo of ULS female staff and the Guest speaker in their day's theme; African wear

Professional Development and Member Affairs

EALS Master Class Training on Digital Forensics and Electronic Evidence Handling and Presentation for Lawyers

The ULS President, Bernard Oundo hosted a 2-day Master Class training on Digital Forensics and Electronic Evidence Handling and Presentation for Lawyers organised by the East Africa Law Society (EALS) at Skyz Hotel Naguru-Kampala.

The training was opened by the ULS Honorary Secretary, Mr. Isaac Atukunda who welcomed participants and expressed gratitude to the EALS for organizing such a timely event in light of the numerous cybercrimes today. He noted that the knowledge acquired from this training will not only bolster lawyers' professional capabilities but also improve the ability to combat modern crimes effectively. The Hon. Secretary also highlighted the ULS Executive's commitment to digitization, stating that all ULS services have been successfully digitized, underscoring



the importance of staying abreast with the ever changing technological advancements. Mr. Atukunda called upon ULS members that attended the training to use the knowledge acquired to promote the Rule of Law and protect human rights in Uganda.



ULS Hon. Secretary, Mr. Isaac Atukunda opening the EALS Master Class training on Digital Forensics and Electronic Evidence Handling

Mr. Lawrence Dinga, a seasoned Cyber Security and Digital Forensic Expert at Managecom System discussed the various types of cybercrimes and their ramifications.

He emphasized the ever-evolving nature of technology and the imperative for continuous vigilance. He categorizes cybercrimes into two main types; dependent crimes, which exclusively occur in cyberspace and target systems, networks, and data, placing the burden of proof squarely on legal professionals. Cyber-enabled crimes which involve traditional criminal activities facilitated by digital technologies, often motivated by financial gain or the intent to cause harm.

He also discussed the symbiotic relationship between technological advancements and the ingenuity of criminal minds, emphasizing the critical need for awareness and proactive measures to combat cyber threats effectively. He further discussed the key legislations governing cybercrimes such as the Budapest Convention and the Computer Misuse Act (2011), which address a wide array of offenses including unauthorized access, illegal interception, data interference, system interference, and misuse of devices. These laws also encompass computer-related offenses like electronic fraud, cyber harassment, and stalking.

He noted that to ensure successful prosecution of cyber criminals, it is important for prosecutors and investigators to work hand in hand. Any disconnect between these crucial stakeholders could undermine the integrity of the case and impede justice.



Naomi Byabazaire, Treasurer of EALS giving her remarks.



Mr. Lawrence Dinga, a Cyber Security and Digital Forensic Expert at Managecom System trains the participants.

Retirement Benefits Training in the Western Region

Uganda Law Society in conjunction with Uganda Retirement Benefits Regulatory Authority (URBRA) hosted a regional CLE training on Retirement Benefits in Mbarara and Fort Portal. The training focused on retirement benefits including topics like; Opportunities for lawyers in the retirement benefits sector, as well as the rights, obligations, and retirement planning specifically tailored for legal professionals.

Mrs. Rita Nansasi Wasswa, the Director Legal Services & Board Secretary of URBRA presented on URBRA's Mandate and the Legal Framework Governing the Retirement Benefits Sector. On the legal framework governing the retirement benefits sector, she highlighted Objective XIV of the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy of the Constitution which provides that; **“The State shall endeavour to fulfill the fundamental rights of all Ugandans to social justice and economic development and shall, in particular, ensure that....all Ugandans enjoy rights and opportunities and access to education, health services, clean and safe water, work, decent shelter, adequate clothing, food security and pension and retirement benefits.”**

Other laws governing the retirement benefits sector include; the Pensions Act Cap 286, the Armed Forces Pension Act Cap 295, the NSSF Act Cap 222 (as amended), Parliamentary Pensions Act (as amended), the Uganda Retirement Benefits Act No. 15 of 2011 and the Regulations & Guidelines made under the URBRA Act 2011. She also discussed the Trustee Certification & Training Program (TCTP) which was launched in April 2021 with an intention to enhance

the capacity of trustees and service providers to appreciate their fiduciary responsibilities imposed by the URBRA Act 2021.

Ms. Comfort Aturinda of URBRA led a discussion on Opportunities for Lawyers in the Retirement Benefits Sector. She noted that lawyers have the following opportunities;

(a) Drafting Legal Documents of Schemes

- Assist in drafting legal documents; Trust Deed & Rules, Deeds of adherence and other legal documents required for the operation of the scheme.
- Lawyers ensure that these documents are legally sound and comply with regulatory requirements.
- Lawyers can offer consultancy services such as undertake regulatory impact assessments.
- Drafting, review and application of the various laws and regulations that govern the Retirement Benefits Sector.

(b) Serve on the Board of Trustees

- URBRA has a Trustee Training program run by the Insurance Training College that Advocates are eligible to attend.
- Lawyers can serve as members of the Board of Trustees in a licensed scheme.
- Lawyers can bring valuable expertise to the board, particularly in areas such as legal compliance, governance, and fiduciary duties.

(c) Legal Advisory Services

- Give advisory services on setting up and managing retirement benefits schemes, termination, mergers, acquisitions and winding up of schemes.
- Certifying policy developments developed by Trustees
- Advising on legality of communications and communication materials

(d) Taxation

- Lawyers lobby for amendments of tax legislation or tax exemptions on behalf of clients, tax compliance reviews, tax training, advise on tax implications in the context of schemes and corporate organizations.
- Lawyers who are registered agents with URA can be contracted to file income tax returns on behalf of licensed entities such as schemes, administrators, custodians etc.



ULS Council Member- Western Region, Allan Musasire making his remarks at the CLE retirement benefits training in Mbarara



Group photo of the participants

Enhancing Legal Excellence: Uganda Law Society's Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Program

Matsiko Godwin Muhwezi

Head of Professional Development and Litigation



As with any professional services provider, foundational training is never sufficient. While legal training has a rich historical context and demands years of theoretical and clinical education through programs like the LLB and the Post Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice, the practice of law is a dynamic and ongoing journey. Continuous training is essential to bridge the gap between academic learning and practical application, as well as to stay informed about evolving laws and emerging legal domains. Additionally, skills such as technology proficiency, business acumen, client relations, project management, and consulting practices may not be explicitly covered in the initial curriculum and pedagogy.

As a leading provider of Continuing Legal Education (CLE) training, the Uganda Law Society (ULS) plays a pivotal role in enhancing the professional standards and competence of advocates. CLE is a mandatory requirement established under **Section 6A of the Advocates (Continuing Legal Education) Regulations, 2004**, and advocates are required to undertake a minimum of twenty (20) hours of training annually to maintain their practicing certificates. Under Regulation 3, CLE programs are designed

to cover various aspects of legal practice, including professional ethics and standards, to ensure advocates remain abreast of legal developments and maintain the highest levels of competence.

However, certain individuals are exempted from CLE requirements, including retired advocates, judicial officers, and newly enrolled advocates (for a period of 12 months post enrollment), among others, as outlined in Regulation 4(1). Obtaining a certificate of compliance is essential for the renewal of an advocate's annual practising certificate. Advocates who fail to meet the required CLE hours can apply to the Law Council for remedies, which may include a grace period to fulfil the outstanding hours.

At ULS, we are committed to providing accessible and high-quality CLE training to our members over and above compliance requirements. We are keen on ensuring our members get better opportunities and are globally competitive in the legal space. Through consultations and feedback mechanisms, we identify emerging needs and tailor our programs to address them effectively. Innovations such as online and self-paced training modules, as well as regional-based programs, aim to improve accessibility for all advocates,

regardless of their location or mobility constraints. Additionally, our ULS portal and School pay options streamline registration and payment processes, minimising delays and ensuring a seamless experience for participants.

We also foster sector-specific discussions and knowledge-sharing through expert clusters and committees, offering webinars and seminars on emerging legal issues and opportunities. To ensure members stay informed and compliant, we encourage regular use of the ULS portal to track CLE hours and plan for upcoming trainings. In-house legal departments and large practice teams are encouraged to proactively schedule CLE activities for their members, and we welcome suggestions for future training topics and collaborations.

By prioritizing professional development and leveraging technology, ULS remains dedicated to empowering advocates and advancing the legal profession in Uganda.

Legal Aid and Pro-bono

ULS Legal Aid Clinic Awarded

The Uganda Law Society was awarded a Certificate of Recognition by Kitgum District Local Government for their commitment to ending violence against women and girls in the region. The award was received by the legal officer at Kitgum Legal aid clinic. The ULS thanked the Kitgum Local Government for this award and also appreciated the support from UN Women whose funding helped the project in 9 legal aid clinics including the Kitgum legal aid clinic.



Hon. Aber Lillian, Kitgum Woman MP and State Minister for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Refugees (center) gives a certificate of recognition to the Legal Officer of the Kitgum Legal Aid

Capacity Building training for the LAP Advocates/ Staff working in Karamoja Sub- region on Trial Advocacy and Mediation

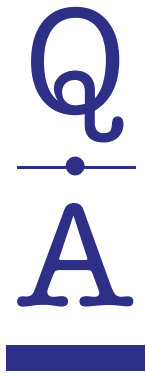
The ULS Legal Aid Project organized a capacity-building training for its advocates working in Moroto, Kotido, and Nakapiripirit Legal aid clinics. The training aimed at enhancing their trial advocacy skills in legal practice and ensuring quality service delivery to the indigent, vulnerable, and marginalized persons in Karamoja sub region. The training was facilitated by Counsel Mooli Albert Sibuta, Lecturer at LDC.



Counsel Mooli Albert Sibuta facilitating the training on Trial Advocacy



Mr. Anthony Asimwe, Manager ULS Pro Bono guiding the participants in a group session



Interview with Anthony Asiimwe

Manager Pro-bono Services, ULS



1. Please provide an overview of the Pro-bono Project and its objectives.

The Pro bono Scheme is a complementary legal aid scheme that utilizes its membership to provide pro bono services to people with limited funds. It was established in 2009 with a goal of ensuring the indigent, Vulnerable and Marginalized persons access quality justice.

The main objectives of the Pro Bono scheme are;

- a) To promote equality in access to justice.
- b) To improve delivery and standards of legal services through Pro Bono.
- c) To interest Advocates into appreciating the provision of Pro Bono services through offering legal protection to clients where necessary, legal awareness and legal advice without violating the ethical code of conduct and upholding the highest standards of professionalism.

2. What is the current reach of the Pro-Bono Project in terms of geographical coverage and the number of individuals served?

Over the past 14 years, the Uganda Law Society’s Pro Bono Project, through members of the legal profession, has provided free legal services to hundreds of needy men, women and children in Uganda. The project is implemented nationwide and coordinated through Legal Aid field offices in Kampala, Jinja, Soroti, Gulu, Arua, Masindi, Kabarole, Mbarara, and Kabale.

3. How does the Pro-bono Project contribute to the promotion of the rule of law, good governance, and respect for human rights in Uganda?

The pro-bono project contributes to promotion of rule of law, good governance and respect for Human Rights through provision of free legal services like Human rights awareness campaigns, legal representation and legal counseling and guidance among others to the indigent persons.

4. What are the key outcomes or achievements of the Pro-Bono Project in the past year?

In the past year, a total of 1,261 clients were followed up among whom 757 (60%) were male and 504 (40%) female and of these, 59 clients had their cases concluded both at court and through ADR.

The project also registered 47 advocates under the duty counsel scheme who visited the duty counsel stations of (Kasangati, Nabweru, and KCCA) courts and (Kira Road, and Wandegeya) police stations where they offered legal assistance to a total of 367 persons.

We were also able to conduct a successful pro bono week across the country under the theme **“Understanding Succession processes as a means to protect property rights and end family conflicts.”**

The Week commenced with legal clinics established in various regions, volunteer lawyers and legal professionals offering their expertise to address a wide range of legal issues, such as family law, land disputes, and criminal defense. Teams of legal experts conducted outreach programs in local communities, providing legal education, awareness, and counseling on various legal matters. These sessions aimed at empowering individuals with knowledge about their rights and the legal avenues available to them. ULS organized workshops and seminars on pertinent legal topics, facilitating a platform for discussions between legal experts, community members, and representatives from civil society organizations. These sessions encouraged dialogue on legal issues and solutions. ULS also collaborated with non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and other stakeholders to maximize the impact of the Pro Bono Week. This collaboration led to a more extensive reach and enabled a holistic approach towards addressing legal needs.

5. 5. What challenges does the Pro-Bono Project face in its mission?

The Pro-bono project is currently faced with a number of challenges which are highlighted below;

- a) Very high demand of pro bono services as compared to the available members offering pro bono services.
- b) The pro bono scheme strictly relies on donor funds to run its activities like disbursements, filing fees and transport costs .Unfortunately with no donor funds these activities are halted.

- c) Some pro bono clients are so demanding while others are too indigent that they cannot even afford their own transport to court and for their witnesses.
- d) Court cases take very long to be completed due to case backlog in most courts which makes it costly and tiring to the advocates some of whom abandon the files before completion.

6. Would you like to share any more information with our members about the ULS Pro-bono Project?

I would like to thank the members who have always participated in our Pro-bono activities and urge more members to join the cause to support the needy by speaking for the voiceless.

Justice Hugo Black, a United States Supreme Court Justice once said;

“There can be no equal justice where the kind of trial a man gets depends on the amount of money he has.”

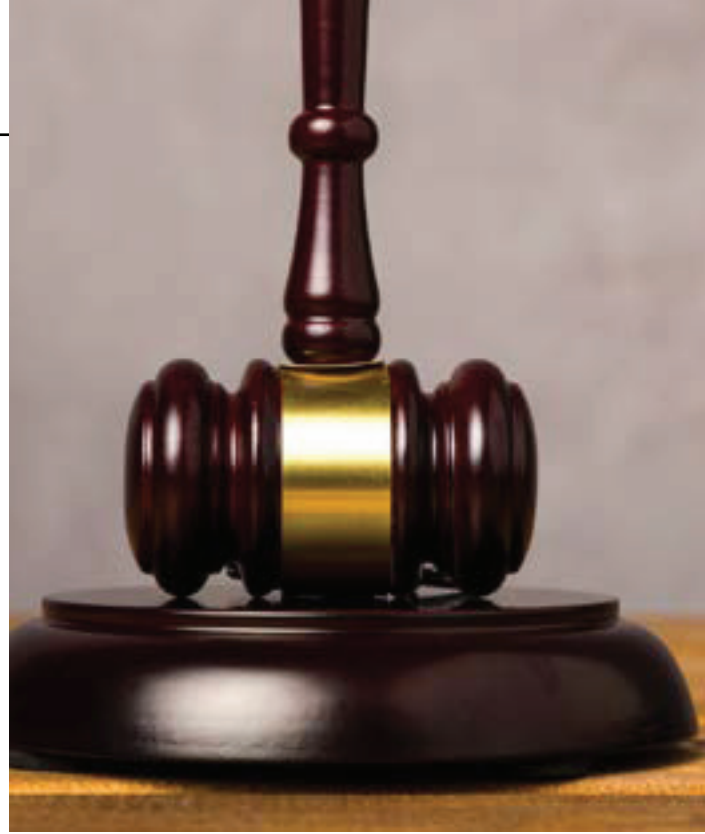
Haile Selassie, the Ethiopian political leader while Opening a special session of the UN General Assembly said; “Throughout history, it has been the inaction of those who could have acted, the indifference of those who should have known better, the silence of the voice of justice when it mattered most, that has made it possible for evil to triumph..’

I therefore call upon the membership and all the advocates to embrace pro-bono as a way of giving back to society.

Rule of Law Department

Inter-campus Moot Court Competition at Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU)

The Uganda Law Society department in conjunction with Penal Reform International supported the IUIU 2nd Constitutional Law Moot Court Competition under the theme 'Contending Corruption for the Utmost Attainable Standard of Health'. The moot competition was adjudicated by 3 judges who are advocates of the High Court and members of Uganda Law Society. The students were able to improve their skills in legal research and trial advocacy, and they also got a chance to network with lawyers who shared tips and guidance on how to become good and successful lawyers.



Students making submissions during the moot court competition at IUIU



The IUIU Moot's coordinator receives an award on behalf of the University for the successful completion of the 2nd Constitutional law moot court competition

Women’s Day Panel Discussion at Gayaza High School

On March 8, 2024, the Uganda Law Society Rule of Law Department organized a panel discussion for Gayaza High School through the Rule of Law Club, focusing on the theme;

Rights of Women, and the Challenges faced by Women in the 21st Century.

The panelists included Dr. Atim Patricia from Makerere University School of Law, Ms. Olivia Kyarimpa Matovu, a partner at Ligomarc Advocates, and Mr. Turyasingura Gaudius from the Uganda Law Society Secretariat.

Additionally, students from Makerere University participated in the discussion to offer mentorship to the students on how to select their future careers.



The Panelists posing for a group photo with the Rule of Law Committee of Gayaza High School and other participants



Gayaza High school students listening attentively during the panel discussion

During the event, students were encouraged to prioritize self-love, adhere to school rules and regulations, and respect national laws to foster successful lives in the present and future as a woman's power like that of a man is not given by the dictates of the world but it flows naturally from her individuality and feminine mandate. They were also inspired to become impactful girls and women in their communities and the country by being a voice for the voiceless as this is what brings about positive change.

Dr. Patricia Atim thanked the Uganda Law Society for the initiative of Rule of Law Clubs in schools. She said these clubs serve as vehicles to promote Rule of Law among young people.

Bishop Stuart University Rule of Law Club Handover Ceremony

On 22nd March 2024, the Bishop Stuart University (BSU) Rule of Law Club in Mbarara with support from the Uganda Law Society Rule of Law Department held their hand-over ceremony. The ceremony took place at Las Vegas Hotel in Mbarara. The event was organized under the theme; **“Ethics and Integrity in the Legal Profession.”**



The Outgoing Rule of Law Committee posing for a photo with the Chief Guest after the event



Left: The outgoing president of the Rule of Law Club, Ms. Shallot Amany receives her certificate of recognition; Right: The In-coming President, Ms. Sheena Nimusiima receives tools of power.

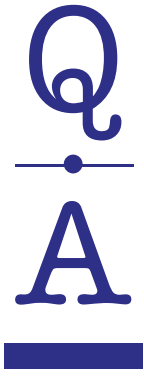
The Chief Guest, Justice Amos Kwizera the Resident Judge, Bushenyi High Court circuit thanked the outgoing committee for their service and for promoting rule of law. He further called upon the students to promote professionalism, continuous learning, competence, integrity, unity and discipline as this is what can safeguard the legal profession.

He also highlighted the fact that lawyers must always act in the best interest of our clients within the bounds of the law however this duty does not absolve our broader ethical obligations.

He concluded by reminding students that ethics refers to the moral principles that govern the behavior of lawyers. Integrity, on the other hand, embodies the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. He implored the in-coming committee to serve beyond self in spreading the gospel of rule of law amongst themselves and those around them.



The In-Coming Rule of Law Committee taking their oaths of office



Meet Her Worship Sarah Langa Siu

The youngest ever
Chief Registrar of the
Courts of Judicature



1. Who is Chief Registrar Her Worship Sarah Langa Siu? Could you also share with our members the genesis of the name Siu because many people think you are married to a Chinese husband.

Sarah Langa Siu is an accomplished lawyer and public officer whose 19-year career has recorded pioneering feats in the history of the Ugandan Judiciary thus, earning her the title of ‘young pace-setter’. I was born on 26th March 1980 and had my early education in a countryside town in Uganda before moving to Kampala for University education. I am married to Dr. Godfrey Siu. Dr. Siu is Ugandan and together we have four children. It’s not a surprise that you think he is Chinese but he is pure Ugandan.

I pursued a Bachelor of Laws degree at Makerere University and obtained a postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice from the Law Development Centre in Kampala. I went on to enroll for and obtained a Master of Laws degree from Makerere University as well as a Postgraduate Diploma in Public Administration from Uganda Management Institute (UMI).

I started my career as a Magistrate in Grade I in 2005. In 2009, I was appointed as one of the pioneer Magistrates of the then newly established Anti-Corruption Division of the High Court of Uganda, a Court where I worked for seven years at different ranks.

On the 14th of August 2020, I was appointed by the President of Uganda as the Chief Registrar of the Judiciary, becoming the youngest and third female to occupy this position in the history of the Ugandan Judiciary at the age of 40 years. The office of Chief Registrar is a prestigious rank in the Uganda Judiciary, ranking fourth in the administrative hierarchy. The Chief Registrar is the technical head of judicial matters, supervises all Registrars and Magistrates, and is the official spokesperson of the Judiciary. The Chief Registrar also enrolls and licenses advocates as well as license and discipline court bailiffs. “I’m driven by four things- passion for God, love for my family, hard work and excellence, and building winning teams”

2. What or Who motivated you to join the legal profession and why?

I was motivated to study law by one of my older sisters, Ms. Catherine Amal. She believed in my ability and had my best interest at heart, without me perceiving it. By then she was the one paying my tuition. I had applied for an entirely different course at the University before my sister’s timely intervention. This influenced me to reconsider my decision which led to formally commencing my Law degree in 1999 at Makerere University, a decision I consider as one of the best decisions ever.

I think my sister's experience as a senior public servant gave her a different outlook and insight. Growing up as a daughter of the first female priest in my town, also benefitted me as I recall the mentorship of my mother, who was my role model, and promoted justice and service above self. After law school, joining the judiciary was my main dream, and when I had to choose between joining the bench and joining the ODPP as a State Attorney, having been successful in both interviews, the decision was so easy – I knew where I wanted to be.

3. In your own opinion, do you think women have been emancipated enough in Uganda?

I think there is great progress on this strategy, and the achievements are there for everyone to see. There is now a lot of notable evidence of great strides in a number of sectors including the education sector, business sector, etc. However, we still have a long way to go. Numbers alone are not enough, in fact, the numbers aren't enough because I know that for every one empowered Sarah 99 other women are not. We also now need to think about the quality of empowerment beyond numbers. In my view, the question of emancipation will probably continue for long. As we fight for women, we must not lose sight of the boy child and how men might be marginalized. We need to constantly check our progress, and have strategies to minimize unintended consequences of our policies.

4. Talking of women's emancipation, what is the ratio of male judicial officers and those of their female counterparts in the Judiciary?

The number of female judicial Officers currently stands at 327 out of 657 accounting for 49.77%, while the male Judicial Officers are 330 accounting for 50.2%.

5. As a judicial officer, do you sometimes decide cases in favor of women just because they are female like you?

Absolutely, not, I am (and I know all other female judicial officers are) guided by the Constitution, the judicial oath, and the code of Judicial Conduct in the administration of justice. Fortunately, the law does not determine a sentence based on the gender of the accused persons. If any statistics suggest that women judicial officers might be lenient to females, those statistics need to be subjected to scrutiny alongside the law.

6. Which retired or still serving female judicial officer/s inspires you and why?

I get inspired by many people differently. I find good qualities in many people, and for me, this is my principle – being able to notice good things about others, even peers and subordinates. However, some inspire me a lot more, and for various reasons. Since you have asked for names, I will share a few.

I am inspired by the Deputy Chief Justice- Emeritus Lady Justice Leaticia Kikoyongo (RIP). I joined the judiciary when she was the highest female judicial officer, and I naturally looked up to her. She was smart, firm, and very courageous and I admired her for that. Professionally I was captivated by her judgment writing skill and style.

Others currently serving are: Hon Lady Justice Faith Mwondah, Hon Lady Justice Monica Mugenyi, and Hon Lady Justice Olive Kazarwe Mukwaya.

- **Hon Lady Justice Faith Mwondah ;**

I was inspired to join the bench by Lady Justice Faith Mwondah. This was in 2004 while I was doing my internship in Tororo. She came to handle a criminal session and right from the moment she disembarked from her car, inspected the guard of honor, and conducted the court session which I attended from beginning to end, I made up my mind to join the Judiciary as soon as I got done with the bar course. Indeed, by God's grace, I joined the Judiciary the following year 2005. She was and is a no-nonsense judge and a very principled judge. She commands a lot of respect

and is feared too. During that session in 1994, while the court was in session even bicycles would not hoot on the road. Silence had to be maintained in and around the Court.

- Hon. Lady Justice Monica Mugenyi
I am inspired by Hon. Lady Justice Mugenyi because she is very knowledgeable, and firm and has held key positions at a young age including being Principal Judge of the East African Court of Justice. She excelled in the role confirming that competence has nothing to do with age. I'm equally inspired by her humility.
- Hon. Lady Justice Olive Kazaarwe Mukwaya- I admire her passion for justice and she models impeccable integrity.

7. Uganda has never had a female Chief Justice, do you think it is time to have one and why?

Yes, and why not? It would be amazing to get a female CJ. We have many very competent and experienced female judicial officers who are capable of serving as Chief Justice. We have already had several female Deputy Chief Justices in the late Her Lord Justice Laetitia Kikonyogo, Late Justice Constance Byamugisha and Justice Elizabeth Mpagi Bahigeine and am sure many will confess they did well. It would therefore be good to have a female Chief Justice given that several countries now have and the last time I checked they were performing.

8. Do you have any prominent Old Girls from Tororo Girls School that have made a mark in the justice system?

Although not from my class at Tororo Girls School, several old girls have made a mark in the justice system like Hon. Lady Justice Susan Okalany of the International Crimes Division; Hon. Lady Justice Margaret Mutonyi of the Criminal Division, and Hon. Lady Justice Esta Nambayo of the Civil Division who also served as Chief Registrar. Of the three female Chief Registrars, Tororo Girls School

has produced two. We also have Ms. Lucy Ladira who was very instrumental in the Justice Law and Sector Secretariat among others.

9. Do you subscribe to the school of thought that work primarily done by men can equally be done by women and even much better?

I am a traditional woman yet at the same time modern. There are things I believe ladies must not jump into for the sake of it. However, I also know that there are more similarities between women and men than there are differences. Yet unfortunately in our society, all of us tend to over-emphasize the differences.

10. What advice do you leave for young women, especially in the legal profession?

My advice to women especially but limited to only the young women is that they need to build their personal brands. It's important that they work at 'being the go-to person' for something. As a female lawyer ask yourself "Do other people notice my presence?" What do they say about yourself when you are not there? This means one has to begin to intentionally identify their strengths and build them, also be aware of your weaknesses and work to improve. Building a brand also means your purpose is to excel and reject mediocrity.

You need to know at least one thing more than others, and find a way to convey your strengths. Identify a mentor and be teachable. I strongly advise young women not to despise the days of humble beginnings. They should not ignore the little foxes in their lives – things and habits that make others cheapen them. Don't compromise your values. Stand for something and be known for it. Above all, trust God – this means you do your part and leave the rest to God, as He alone knows and has the best plans for each one of us.

African Chief Justices meet in Kampala as President Museveni vows to support Judiciary expand use of ADR

President Museveni has assured the Judiciary leadership of his support to ensure that the courts use Alternative Dispute Resolutions (ADR) to resolve cases quickly.

The Head of State made the plea on March 5 at Mestil Hotel in Kampala where over 15 Chief Justices from all over Africa had gathered for a summit on Alternative Dispute Resolution.

“Government will support the Judiciary to expand the use of alternative dispute resolution. This will help to rejuvenate the traditional systems of dispute resolution,” President Museveni said in his remarks read out by Vice President, Jessica Alupo.

President Museveni clarified that the concept of ADR is not new in Africa and that it was here before the Europeans brought their adversarial justice system. He said in the European justice system, truth is covered just because someone can hire a lawyer just to do that.

“It existed in Africa before the coming of the European colonizers. The African Jurisprudence and philosophy of law followed the methods of ADR i.e. mediation, arbitration, conciliation, negotiation, etc. I am happy that our Judiciaries are re-aligning themselves to their African roots. The pre-colonial methods of handling disputes must be studied. They have some positive elements, within them, that the present legal systems must emulate,” he said.

Adding: “One of the core principles of African jurisprudence was truth-finding. This differs from the current legal system which we inherited from the British. In the current system, one hires an advocate to cover his or her mistakes in a courtroom. The lawyer’s job is to minimize his client’s mistake and maximize his innocence. He is paid to obscure the truth. All attempts to arrive at the truth are thwarted entirely.” Mr Museveni went ahead to give an example of how Banyakole used to handle disputes during their times before the adversarial justice system was introduced. “The Banyankore, for instance, had an elaborate process of handling matrimonial issues. If a woman had a misunderstanding with her husband and decided to go back to her parents or brothers (Okwangana), there was a process to follow. First of all, her relatives would inquire from her why she had left her husband’s home. After a few days, the husband would come to okugarura – to bring her back,” he said.

Adding: “His wife’s family would tell the man to return with four or five people from his family. The two sides, the one of the man and the one of the woman, would then sit down and listen to both sides. The goal of the two sides was to find out the truth. In this Banyankore system, even your own side would turn against you, upon discovering that you are a wrong doer. For instance, if the woman was in the wrong, her own family would turn against her and order her to apologize to her husband. That was one of our principles. It was based on truth, rather than just legal battles. We did not cover up the truth,”

Chief Justice Alfonse Owiny-Dollo while speaking at the same event, listed down the reasons why African judiciaries need to embrace ADR.

He said studies by Mr Ernest Uwazie established that many African citizens have lost faith in the ability of their nations’ Courts to provide timely or just closure to their grievances.

The Chief Justice said a 2009 survey in Liberia established that only 3% of criminal and civil disputes were taken to a formal Court and that over 40 percent

sought resolution through informal mechanisms, while the remaining 55% went to no forum at all. This, he said, included cases where claimants felt the need to take justice into their own hands, often with violent consequences.

“In Uganda, a justice Needs and Satisfaction Report of 2020, revealed that there were 12.8 million legal problems in a year, and, while many were resolved, majority remained unresolved or the resolution was seen as unfair,” Chief Justice Dollo said.

“It was further reported that, in each year, 4.7 million legal problems were abandoned without fair resolution, 1.9 million were under hearing and 2.13 million were considered to be unfairly resolved. This is quite a significant justice gap, that deserves specific attention.” he added.

He further quoted Mr. Uwazie’s studies of how many Judges and Magistrates have over 100 cases on their dockets, a number impossible to adjudicate.

“It can take many years to get to trial and months to have a motion heard. Disputants often express frustrations at the “come today, come tomorrow” syndrome and mounting legal fees for professional representation with each futile court appearance,” he averred.

He continued: “It is not uncommon in African countries for a dispute to take a decade or more to reach resolution. As a foreign diplomat in East Africa once joked, ‘it is easier for one to pass through the mouth of a lion than to go through the.’”

Justice Dollo boasted of how the Judiciary that he leads has successfully applied ADR in resolution of mainly: commercial disputes, labour disputes, tax disputes, land disputes, family, property and administration causes; and construction and infrastructure disputes.

The two-day summit ran on the theme: **“Re-engineering the Administration of Justice on the African Continent.”**



Left: Vice President of Uganda, H.E. Jessica Alupo giving the President’s remarks at the African Chief Justices’ Summit.



Right: Chief Justice of Uganda, Hon. Justice Owiny-Dollo opens the event



Former Chief Justices; Hon. Justice David Maraga of Kenya (Rtd), Hon. Justice Benjamin Odoki(Rtd) Hon. Justice Bart Katureebe (Rtd), and the Former Principal Judge, Justice Yorokamu Bamwine (Rtd) attending the Summit

The 17 Resolutions at the African Chief Justices summit held in Kampala between March 5th and 6th 2024

1. Encourage Chief Justices to lead the reform initiatives to promote Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and Alternative Justice Systems (AJS) as part of promoting SDG 16.
2. Call upon Judiciaries in Africa to support the regular convening of the Africa Chief Justices' Summit on ADR and AJS.
3. Encourage Chief Justices to appoint ADR Focal persons in their respective countries to act as lead focal contact persons for ADR who will be tasked to facilitate the implementation of resolutions arising from the Africa Chief Justices' Summit on ADR.
4. Advocate for African Governments to budget and allocate sufficient funds to support the promotion of Alternative Dispute Resolution.
5. Call upon Judiciaries and encourage their partnership with research institutions and practitioners to map out the conceptual foundations of the ADR and AJS and how they intersect with each other and differentiate what formal and informal ADR process and recommend how such ADR Mechanisms should be recognized and incorporated in the main formal legal mechanism for settling disputes.
6. Call upon Judiciaries to study Alternative Justice Systems (AJS) to assess their overall impact and suitability to promote access to justice.
7. Call upon each jurisdiction to adopt an "ADR/AJS WEEK" as a means for building awareness of ADR processes, and promoting collaboration and synergies of different actors in ADR, enhancing the capacity of ADR stakeholders, as well as a means of building public trust in ADR.
8. Advocate for revision of legal education including the review of legal school syllabuses in a bid to reengineer the legal education to facilitate the development and application of ADR and AJS.

-
9. Recommend the collaboration and continued engagement between ADR Centers/Institutes across the Continent to facilitate the harmonious development of ADR practice in Africa.
 10. Advocate for the revision or enactment of ADR laws and guidelines that promote the use, adoption, recognition, and enforcement of ADR processes and outcomes. It is expected that such enabling legal frameworks will lead to improved standardization of ADR practices and codes of conduct.
 11. Recommend the establishment of recognition systems where ADR practitioners are awarded for their accomplishments.
 12. Advocate for enhanced training and capacity building for ADR Practitioners. Countries that have effectively embraced alternative dispute resolution should be contacted to support other countries to exchange knowledge and encourage peer-to-peer learning.
 13. Put into place supportive infrastructure within the Judiciaries to support ADR such as creating an ADR Registry with ADR Judges and Registrars
 14. Establishing an African ADR Institute to support the growth and application of ADR in African countries.
 15. Recommend that online dispute resolution mechanisms should be embraced.
 16. Advocate the acknowledgment and respect of African cultures be respected in dispute resolution.
 17. Recommend that the Chief Justices establish a Chief Justices' Forum on ADR/AJS and task the Judiciary of Uganda to develop a preparatory document on the Forum that shall be circulated to other African Judiciaries.
-

Upcoming CLE EVENTS

April 2024



CLE EVENT	CLE POINTS	DATE	FEE
Criminal Law Webinar		5th April 2024	Free of Charge
ICT training for Lawyers	5	11th April 2024	Ugx 100,000 (Other Lawyers) Ugx 70,000 (Young Lawyers)
Tech skills Development	10	15th April-15th May 2024	Ugx 300,000 (Other Lawyers) Ugx 250,000 (Young Lawyers)
Employment Law Conference	10	25th-26th April 2024	Ugx 500,000 (Physical) Ugx 250,000 (Online)

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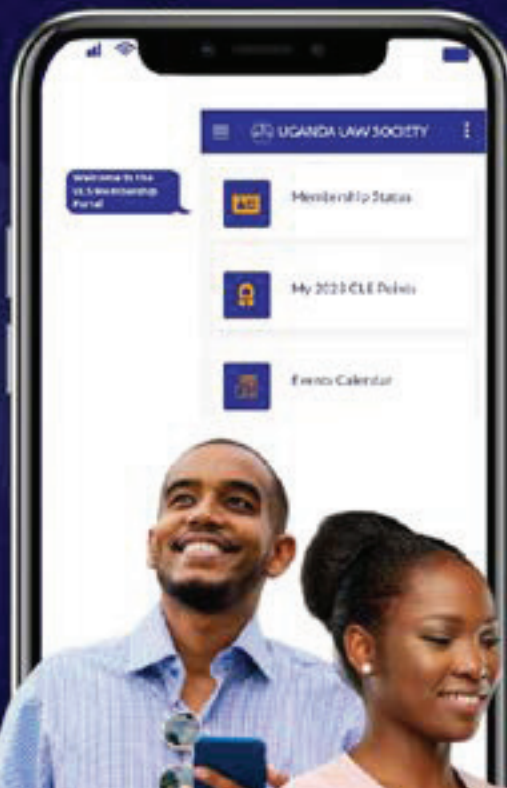
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