

## REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

P.O. BOX 160 KIGALI

### SPEECH OF THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY GENERAL

The Rector- ILPD,  
Prosecutor General,  
The President of the Rwanda Bar Association  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is my pleasure to be with you this morning and to participate in this worthy workshop that brings together our treasured ILPD trainers – both internal and external. The theme you have chosen **“The Practitioner we want”** is perfect in timing and relevance.

I wish to thank Dr. KAYIHURA Didas, the Rector of the Institute of Legal Practice and Development (ILPD), and the organizing committee for organizing the workshop. Self-evaluation is always a key to success.

Most of us saw the ILPD from its inception, and have watching its activities, whenever we could, to the present day. With more than ten years in operation, the ILPD rightly convened this workshop for the evaluation of its mainstream activity, i.e. delivering legal training. It is indeed apt that we reflect on the mission of this institution and the present state of the curriculum, mostly, of the Post-Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice, the training methodology employed by ILPD trainers, assessment methods, and the trainers’ ethical values because, this is what will help us to shape and achieve **“The practitioner we want”**.

The ILPD can be likened to a workshop in which an important product is manufactured in abundance. The environment created for every intake of ILPD participants constitutes the factory at work with the ultimate goal of producing practitioners with at least a minimum standard of practice skills corresponding to various professions of law.

The participants in the ILPD programs are ultimately the product we send to the market of legal services. There is a quote that goes like, *"If you cannot do great things, do small things in a great way"*. In the practice of law, the details make all the difference. Lawyers are traditionally the first persons that users of justice contact, and therefore they are a fundamental pillar for the creation of confidence in the Rwandan legal and judicial sector. Lawyers are trained to spot, and take care of, issues that might arise in various transactions. ILPD is designed to create, out of law graduates, proficient practitioners who would serve in different legal capacities and help in promoting the rule of law.

Having said this, I have to point out that however well one does what he or she does; there is always room for improvement. In practice we take nothing for granted. The slightest detail that is overlooked may be the cause of a practitioner's failure, whether he or she is a litigation lawyer or a transactional lawyer. Most litigation lawyers are aware that *"however thin you slice it, it always has two sides."* A lawyer will represent his or her client against another before a judge, but however good the case may look the lawyer for the other side will most certainly present his client's case in the best possible light. As you anticipate these eventualities, you prepare to be the best that you can possibly be.

The same equally applies to the training requirements for prosecutors and Judges. We train our yet to be Judges on how to listen to both sides of case and learn not to become biased but instead discern what would be the best way to render justice to those that are before you and also to the entire community that your judgment shall serve.

The responsibility of legal practice schools is to replicate the practice environment as closely as possible such that the participants get a more or less hands-on experience in the different tasks of judging, lawyering, prosecuting, human rights advocacy, or law enforcement, to mention just a few.

The ILPD is not only in charge of the initial post-graduate training of lawyers, but also periodic short courses that constitute what is known as Continuing Legal Education (CLEs) because continuous training is good for lawyers

Prosecutors and Judges to always keep themselves abreast with the developments in law and their surroundings that may impact or influence their judgments or the understanding of the law.

The main questions that this workshop should address are; therefore are we delivering our trainings to meet such demands? Is our curriculum responding to such expectations? Are the methodologies we use in our teachings prepare the yet to be practitioner to easily adapt to the field practice challenges?

I therefore call upon ILPD to be as more practical as possible in the delivery of its courses. The legal practice school can simulate the actual practice environment.

I invite you all participants to this workshop to spend your time reflecting on how you have been delivering your trainings, on whether you have been maximizing your potential and on whether or not the lawyer prosecutor is Judge you have been delivering to the market has been actually the practitioner that you would want if you were to be the consumer!

I wish you fruitful deliberations during this workshop and encourage you to come up with resolutions that will impact on the improvement of our programs and their delivery, and would like to thank you all, for your kind attention.

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