

**OPENING REMARKS BY**

**HON. JUSTICE HENRY PERTER ADONYO,  
JUSTICE OF THE COMMERCIAL DIVISION OF THE HIGH COURT  
OF UGANDA**

**MADE DURING THE 2<sup>ND</sup> NATIONAL LEGAL AID CONFERENCE**

**26TH TO 27TH JUNE 2014**

**IMPERIAL ROYALE HOTEL**

The Honorable, the Chief Guest

The Honourable, The Ag. Chief Justice of Uganda

The Honourable the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs

The Attorney General

My Lord the Principal Judge

My Lord Justices of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal

My Lords Judges of the High Court

Honourable Ministers

Your Worship the Chief Registrar

Your Excellences, the Ambassadors

Distinguished Representatives of the JLOS Institutions

The Development Partners

Representatives from the region

Legal Aid Service Providers Present

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you to the second National Legal Aid Conference. The Conference is scheduled for two days, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> June 2014. It has been a long road in engaging all stakeholders in the discussions around legal aid provision in our beloved country Uganda.

I am glad to note that now there is an apparent focus of all our energies on the provision of such a service that will not only empower our people to access justice but lay the foundations of a just and equitable society we all cherish.

During the first legal aid conference held in 2012, discussions were made surrounding several expectations and the general consensus was that there was a need to expedite the process of the enactment of a National Legal Aid Policy and its empowering legislation with the aim of giving effect to state obligations provided for in the Constitution, regional and international instruments ratified by the country.

I would like to share a few thoughts about the important areas that the national legal aid policy and law intends to achieve once adopted:

- The overall aim of the Policy is to strengthen regulation of legal aid service provision in Uganda by both state and non state actors through the designation of a national legal aid regulator;
- It also aims to establish an independent legal aid body
- Establishment of a legal aid fund;
- Establishment of legal aid offices and entering into cooperation agreements.
- Streamlining duties and penalties in legal aid service delivery

I would however not like to preempt the discussions around the policy and law. I have no doubt this will be a fascinating and stimulating conference. The presentations raise fundamental questions for deliberation and I am delighted that so many of the best minds in the field of access to justice have assembled here today to discuss them. This fact alone is a striking testament to the interest around Legal aid.

The proceedings in the two days are meant to be as interactive as possible. Each issue will be introduced and moderated by an active policy maker, drawing on practical experience. Subsequent speakers will then debate the pros and cons of each issue. Finally, the plenary will join the debate, all under the leadership of the moderator. I invite you to share your views.

I wish you a most stimulating and productive discussion!