



# RWANDA BAR ASSOCIATION

## First Consultative Forum on Protection of Human Rights in criminal justice

On 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018 Rwanda Bridge to Justice and International Bridge to Justice in partnership with European Union in Rwanda organized the first consultative forum on the Protection of Human Rights within Rwanda's Criminal Justice System at Serena Hotel. In this forum brought together different partners from the criminal justice institutions, CSOs & dev'pt partners. As one of the most important actors in the Criminal Justice chain, the Rwanda Bar Association was among the key invitees to discuss how best stakeholders can reinforce the respect and promotion of the rule of law and human rights. Rwanda Bridges to Justice and International Bridge to Justice have a mission to guarantee the right to a fair trial by ensuring early access to competent legal counsels in criminal proceedings notably the Vulnerable groups.



Group photo During the consultative forum on Human Rights



## Rwanda Bar Association commemorated Genocide against Tutsi



Rwanda Bar Association commemorated Genocide against Tutsi

As Rwanda commemorate the victims of the Genocide against the Tutsi for the 24<sup>th</sup> time, the Rwanda Bar Association joined the entire Rwandan Society during one hundred days from 07<sup>th</sup> April 2018 to commemorate more than one million victims of the Genocide against Tutsi.

On 06<sup>th</sup> June 2018, the Rwanda Bar Association paid tribute to all those victims in general including 15 former legal counsels victims of the genocide against the Tutsi. This year 2018 the commemoration took place at the Campaign Against Genocide Museum located in the Parliamentary building. The same museum conserves historic political and political battles of the RPF and RPA with regards to the fight against the Genocide against the Tutsi. In his remarks, the President of the Rwanda Bar Association thanked the RPA for the sacrifices it offered to stop the Genocide and he also said that Advocates as the legal practitioners and human rights defenders, will always fight against genocide Ideology or any kind of injustice which can bring the country back to the genocide.

Every year Rwanda Bar Association organizes a one day commemoration activities to pay tribute to the victims of 1994 Genocide in general and take a special time to commemorate former legal counsels killed during the Genocide against Tutsi.

In 2013: the Commemoration took place at Petit Stade Remera

In 2014: RBA visited Nyamata Genocide Memorial site followed by the Commemoration evening that took place at at Petit Stade Remera

In 2015: RBA Visited Murambi Genocide memorial site

In 2016: RBA Visited Bisesero Genocide Memorial Site

In 2017: RBA Visited Nyarubuye Genocide Memorial Site

In 2018: RBA Visited Campaign Against Genocide Museum located in the Parliament building at Kimihurura/ Kigali.

Additional to the Commemoration activities, the Rwanda bar Association continues to contribute to the social support of the victims of the Genocide against the Tutsi. It is in that regard that RBA has rehabilitated a house pertaining to a Widow of the Genocide who resides in Gikondo Sector/ Kicukiro District.



Before and after the house rehabilitation



Group photo of newly admitted Advocates with High Court and RBA officials

### Swearing-in ceremony of newly admitted Advocates

In respect of the Bar Internal rules and regulations, this year 2018, the Rwanda Bar Association admitted 51 new Advocates. This admission ceremony was presided over by the High Court on 07<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

In his remarks, the Bar President, Mr. Kavaruganda Julien Gustave welcomed the new Bar members and commended them to uphold professionalism marked by integrity and honesty.

It is important to note that below are the key requirements to apply for admission to the Bar in accordance with article 6 of the Law establishing the Bar Association in Rwanda (law No 83/2013 of 11/09/2013 establishing the Bar Association and determining its organization and functioning):



Swearing-in of newly admitted Advocates

- To be a Rwandan national;
- To hold at least a bachelor's degree in Law or its equivalent;
- To have a recognized certificate from Institute of Legal Practice and Development or its equivalence;
- Not to have been definitively sentenced to a term of imprisonment equal to or exceeding six (6) months;
- To have passed the test conducted by the Rwanda Bar Association;
- Not to have been convicted for the crime of genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi;
- Not to have been convicted for the crime of genocide ideology and related offences.

Foreigners may also be allowed to practice the Advocates' profession on condition of reciprocity or in accordance with international agreements to which Rwanda is a party.

After passing the Admission Exams the applicants must provide a documents to certify that he/ she is not performing any activities declared by law incompatible with the practice of the profession of advocate that his or her activity never led him or her to do an act which, if it was known would prevent his or her enrollment

For more Information you can Visit the Rwanda Bar Association Website.



Taking the oath of newly admitted Advocates



Court skills Training session for young lawyers

### Court skills Training

Rwanda Bar Association in partnership with Lawyers Christian Fellowship from London/ United Kingdom organized a three days training session since 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018 on different topics. The Training was organized especially for Young lawyers on "**Law Firm Development, Strategic Planning and Sustainability**". It also included topics around ethics, risk management, client development and relationships, marketing, conflicts of interest, managing people and strategic planning).

The same training had a component dedicated to Women Advocates having a theme called "**Women in the Law**": **Professional Journey for Women Lawyers, Issues, Solutions and Sustainability**". The topic also included other sessions around ethics, risk management, client development and relationships, marketing, conflicts of interest, managing people and strategic planning.



Court skills Training session for women Advocates

## Forensic evidence, cybercrimes electronic evidence and data protection workshop with CWAG



Electronic evidence and data protection workshop

The East Africa Law Society (EALS) in partnership with Rwanda Bar Association organized the 2 days training on “A FORENSIC EVIDENCE, CYBERCRIMES, ELECTRONIC EVIDENCE AND DATA PROTECTION WORKSHOP” at Park Inn Hotel /Kigali from 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018. The Training was officially opened by Hon Minister of Justice and AG Johnston BUSINGYE, in his opening remarks he said “Drug trafficking, illegal arms trade and human trafficking are now comfortably operated by criminals by a mere click of a mouse. Computers have made identification, investigation, and prosecution of crimes a very difficult process.” and that “Cellphones, laptops, iphones, CCTV cameras & portable recorders have all become crucial tools in the administration of justice. Without understanding how best to make use of these tools, due process will continue to face hiccups.”

The increased use of cyberspace and technology have brought with them challenges to administration of justice. The increase in cybercrimes, as well as the challenges involved the consideration of electronic evidence, forensic evidence as well as complex technology are some of the issues that lawyers, prosecutors, investigators and other judicial officers face regularly.

The recent global data protection regulations, on the other hand, have triggered debate in the region on the obligations of corporates and governments as well as rights of persons as regards their privacy in the era of increased internet technology.

East African Community member states have individual regulations regarding cybercrimes and use of electronic evidence. Given the notable challenges, there is need to build capacity of the legal profession, prosecution offices and judicial sectors to enable effective administration of justice where these matters are involved



Members of Rwanda Bar attended the workshop

The states also have laws governing economic crimes. Sadly, limited capacity in investigation and prosecution have hindered recovery and tracing of resources lost through financial scams and illegal money transfers. The areas of public procurement and government payment systems have been severely hit, with the consequence that critical services have been delayed due to economic pilferages. Effective combating of corruption and economic crimes requires in-depth understanding of the concepts above. The role of data protection regulation in the use of electronic data in the due processes of administration of justice is relevant in the current context.

Increased incidences of economic crimes, aided by complex technology have led to massive financial losses to governments and corporations. In most cases, investigative and prosecuting agencies have limited capacity to mount effective investigation and prosecution. Defence lawyers and judicial officers, on the other hand, require better appreciation of these concepts as they are critical players in the due process. The training is part of the Conference of Western Attorneys General (CWAG) effort to exchange experiences, share knowledge and discuss solutions with attorneys and other members of the justice, law and order sectors in Africa through the Africa Alliance Partnership (CWAG-AAP). Since 2016, CWAG-AAP has had the opportunity to deliver a variety of workshops and participate in seminars/conferences with various state and non state actors in the fight against transnational crimes in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia.



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Hon. Minister /AG Johnston BUSINGYE



Barreau de KANANGA visited Rwanda Bar Association

### Rwanda Bar Association President welcomed the delegation from Barreau de KANANGA

On 13<sup>th</sup> August 2018 the RBA President, Mr. KAVARUGANDA Julien Gustave welcomed a delegation from *Barreau de KANANGA* of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in KASAI Province. The delegation was headed by Me KAMBALA Dominique, the President of the Barreau de Kananga. The Purpose of the visit was to Discuss how the two Bar Association can strengthen their partnership in different ways and to run from Rwanda Bar Association experience as far as health insurance, Legal Aid, Professional Development and the use of New Technology in information sharing are concerned.



The delegation from Barreau de KANANGA in a meeting with RBA President



Training on Company law at Musanze

### Bringing RBA activities nearer to their members

On 30<sup>th</sup>— 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018, the Rwanda Bar Association moved its training related activities in the Musanze District where two training sessions were organized and attended by a good number of advocates based in Musanze, Gakenke, Nyabihu, Bulera and Rubavu Districts.

Participants were trained on key features and implementation of the new Income Tax as well as the law governing companies in Rwanda.

Trainees were happy with the training topics but more importantly they were delighted by the fact that the training took place in their place of residence.

It is important to note that after the City of Kigali, the Northern part of the Country (Musanze-Rubavu) comes the second to have a big number of advocates.



Training on Income tax law at Musanze



RBA women Advocates pose with LSEW officials

In that regard, the President of the Law Society of England and Wales, Ms. Christina BLACK-LAWS (who is also a Woman lawyer) and Ms. Lizette Robleto de Howarth (the International Programmes Manager at The Law Society of England and Wales) came to Rwanda and met the President of Rwanda Bar Association and a group of women Rwandan Advocates on 03<sup>rd</sup> September 2018.

The RBA and the LSEW team discussed how best Women advocates can be sufficiently empowered to adequately overcome challenges they encounter in their professional career.

Given that empowering Women Advocates is one of the RBA priorities, the experience shared between the Law Society of England and Wales and RBA on the promotion of women lawyers/Advocates will be shared with the rest of Rwandan women advocates through different sessions that will follow (seminars, workshops, studies, etc...).

The Rwanda Bar Association and the Law Society of England and Wales have initiated a program called **“The Women in the Law”** which intends to Empower women advocates as to address and overcome challenges that affect their professional career.



RBA and LSEW Group photo

## Workshop on Strategic Litigation



Workshop on Strategic litigation

On 13th to 14th September The Rwanda Bar Association in partnership with Duteze Imbere Ubutabera Project funded by USAID organized a workshop for 30 Advocates on Strategic Litigation and mechanisms to increase access to Justice in Rwanda and comparative perspectives. This workshop was prepared in the interest of Legal Practitioners in order to promote access to justice and was conducted by a highly experienced trainer From USA Mr. Mark Williams assisted by Me Musore Gakunzi Valery. The President of the Rwanda Bar Association Me KAVARUGANDA Julien Presided over the opening of the workshop.



Workshop on Strategic litigation

## Training of Trainers on IECMS



DIU COP and The President of Rwanda Bar Association

In order to promote the use of ICT especially in Courts, in December 2015 the Ministry of Justice launched the Rwanda Integrated Electronic Case Management System (IECMS) to improve Judicial Service Delivery through the whole justice chain from the inception of a case to its final adjudication.

In this regards Rwanda Bar Association in partnership with Duteze Imbere Ubutabera Project funded by USAID trained 60 Advocates in two different sessions. The trainees came from all 30 district whereby each District was represented by 2 advocates.

The trainees will support in training other advocates at district level as well as supporting in filing pro bono cases for indigents as to smoothen access to justice for all.



Training of Trainers on IECMS

## Strengthening partnership with regional judicial institutions.



EACJ Officials and RBA President

On 04<sup>th</sup> October 2018, the Rwanda Bar Association President received a delegation from the East African Court of Justice (EACJ). The EACJ delegation was led by the Justice Geoffrey Kiryebwire, Judge of the Appellate Division and Chairman of the ICT Committee. Justice Dr. Faustin Nteziyayo and the Court Registrar, Mr. Yufnalis N. Okubo, Mr. Arnold Gahimbare in charge of ICT within the EACJ as well as Mr. Germain Rusingiza, the EAC representative in Rwanda.

The two institutions discussed the current partnership which is mainly characterized by continuing training jointly organized by the RBA and EACJ mainly on the Courts Rules of Procedures and other important training that are useful for the EAC Legal practitioners.

Additionally, they discussed how Rwandan lawyers can use the EACJ Electronic case management system and how the latter can be improved to better serve the lawyers and other courts users.



*Promoting the Rule of Law*



Official Launch of the Judicial Year 2018-2019

The Judicial year 2018/2019 was officially launched on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2018 by His Excellency Paul KAGAME President of the Republic of Rwanda,

Senior Officials from the Judiciary, the Prosecution, the Bar Association and other Justice Sector Institutions as well as other stakeholders gathered in the Parliament building to assist the official launch of the Judicial Year.

Key speakers including the Chief Justice of Rwanda, The Prosecutor General and the he President of the Rwanda Bar Association Me KAVARUGANDA Julien-Gustave, presented in brief key achievements of their respective institutions during the judicial year 2017/2018 as well as their plans fro 2018/2019. The above speakers were delighted by thir institutional achievements and other initiatives which were taken during the year 2017/2018 as to improve justice service delivery



Official Launch of the Judicial Year 2018-2019 (Group Photo)

## Rwanda Bar Association New Location



The Rwanda Bar Association has recently acquired its new premises in respect of the Kigali City Master plan requirements.

The newly acquired house is the former Sports View Hotel located in Remera, opposite Amahoro national Stadium. The Bar Association expects to move to new location in November 2018.

Address : KG 17 Ave, Kigali

### Important Links

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