

Access to Justice and Technology and the Inaugural Commonwealth Legal Debate

Tuesday, 21 June 2022, 09:00 – 10:30 / 11:00 – 12:30, Park Inn Kigali

Closing Remarks by Minister of State in charge of Constitutional and Legal Affairs, Hon. Solina Nyirahabimana.

Excellencies,

Distinguished participants

1. As we near the close of these timely discussions on Access to Justice and Technology, and draw closer to the legal debate; I would like to thank first and foremost the **distinguished panelists** for these thought-provoking discussions. Let me also thank the moderator **Mr. Speer** for running this session so smoothly while sparking interesting commentary from all attending.
2. I would also like to thank especially all you **participants** for your input, ideas, questions and discussions.
3. **Technology has proven to be a crucial component** of the mitigation of the impact of Covid-19. Specifically, in the context of access to justice, it has been quite the boon for justice services. Of course this increased reliance on technology has also brought challenges and raised further questions ranging from the ethical to the philosophical variety. More pressingly, legal and practical considerations had to be closely scrutinized.
4. This panel has gathered experts from across sectors to **share their insights** on how to provide people-centered technologically-driven solutions to the various challenges.
5. The distinguished panelists highlighted the **successes and challenges of increased use of technology** in the administration of justice; especially in light of mitigation of Covid-19. Ethical and practical implications of the reliance on technology were also expanded upon providing a comprehensive picture of this new landscape of a technologically-driven justice administration.

Excellencies and Distinguished participants;

6. One of the fundamental and guiding principles in Rwanda, as enshrined in article 10 of the Rwandan **Constitution** is **“the constant quest for solution through dialogue and consensus”**. It is very encouraging to see this principle reflected in our shared values among nations of the Commonwealth. We set out here as the commonwealth family to share our experiences, gather best practices and impart knowledge on technology as a tool to strengthen inclusive access to justice.
7. Moving forward, the key points raised in this discussion will form the basis of our constant quest for solutions. We **welcome this opportune dialogue and the spirit of cooperation** exhibited that will see us collaborate further towards the achievement of our shared goals.
8. Finally, I very much look forward to the **Commonwealth Inaugural legal debate** from the brilliant minds of our students which is sure to plant the seed for a forward-looking approach to ensuring access to justice for all.
9. In closing, I wish to express my **gratitude to the Organizers** of this event who worked tirelessly to make this event a great success. I would like to thank the Commonwealth Lawyers Association supported by the Office of Civil and Criminal Justice Reform, the Commonwealth Secretariat and of course the CHOGM 2022 host team, who made this seamless operation possible.

Excellencies and Distinguished participants,

10. I look forward to meeting again when we reconvene to discuss another topical theme of importance to the rule of law and administration of Justice.

Thank you.