



# CJEI Summer 2025 Newsletter

## A message from The Honourable Chief Judge Kashim Zannah, CJEI President

The Institute has not been resting on its oars this year. Our flagship Intensive Study Programme (ISP) June 1 – 21, 2025, proved to be a fully subscribed resounding success. More on the ISP in this newsletter. We have also navigated meetings with both the outgoing and incoming Commonwealth Secretaries-General alongside Accredited Organisations (AOs) on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February and the 15<sup>th</sup> of July, 2025, as well as a CJEI focused engagement with the Rule of Law Section on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2025.

Profoundly significant was berthing our Patron Chief Justices' Meeting at St. Julian's Bay, Malta, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April 2025. The discussion on the leadership role of modern judges still resonates with me. The question arose: are we leaders or judges? The increasing time



judges spend away from judicial work to undertake the duties related to the administration of justice now necessitates the acquisition of additional skills and also has implications for judicial wellbeing.

Accordingly, the Patrons warmly welcomed and commended the programme the Institute is developing for prospective Chief Justices, focusing on leadership and administration skills. They suggested that the programme should also be made available to other judges—not only those who may be in line for succession as Chief Justices. All judges are now frequently required to serve on committees and undertake responsibilities that demand more than just judicial expertise. Patrons did not favour the approach of employing professional administrators to completely manage the courts, observing that this can have negative implications for judicial independence in many countries. Hence, there is a real need to enhance judges' skills so they can perform these dual roles. We shall consider addressing the needs of other judges as a separate module

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or, even better, design a standalone programme, perhaps for inclusion in ISP programming, Biennial Meetings, and similar events.

Furthermore, another training need identified and unanimously endorsed by the Patrons was for the appreciation and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the justice process. This arose from the robust discussions on our ongoing initiative on the Use of AI in Commonwealth Judiciaries, pursuant to which we have been having discussions with the Commonwealth Secretariat. Our Founding President, Judge Sandra Oxner, and I met with the Rule of Law Section at Marlborough House on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Significantly, the leading expert on AI in the justice process, indeed on legal technology, and an adviser to the Secretary-General, Professor Richard Susskind, was in attendance, offering his invaluable insights. We shall certainly take full advantage of Professor Susskind's generous offer of assistance.

Our obviously ambitious goals are buoyed by the tremendous skills and commitment of our vast Fellowship base.

CJEI Fellows, we count on you. Expect our call.

Kashim Zannah, CJEI President.



The CJEI President, The Honourable Chief Judge Kashim Zannah, attended the Commonwealth Secretary-General's Luncheon Meeting for Accredited Organisations on Tuesday, 11 February 2025 at Marlborough House, London, United Kingdom.

## A message from The Honourable Mr. Justice Peter Jamadar, CJEI Vice President (Programming)



The CJEI, ISP 2025 has been completed and was a resounding success. On Friday 13 June the CJEI welcomed its newest Fellows at a special function. As always, it was a great privilege to be the course director and to work with so many wonderfully talented judicial officers from across the Commonwealth and elsewhere. This year we had judicial officers from Nigeria, Singapore, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago, among whom were some of the most senior judicial officers in their jurisdictions.

Participants all survived the two weeks in Halifax, including 5 written assignments, teaching tool presentations, energy interventions, and the production of a judicial education video, from script to performance, overcoming for some, intense initial jet lag, weariness, and even illness. Our overarching theme this year was ‘*Creating Caring Court Spaces for Persons with Disabilities*,’ and this informed the teaching tool videos that were produced for use in local jurisdictions on the return of participants to their home jurisdictions.

ISP 2025 was also a fun time, with some very special social events (visits to Province House and to Government House), some great adventures (a City Tour and trip to and dinner at Peggy’s Cove), and our warm and welcoming home visit with Dr. Joseph Sadek. As well, there were lots of new and meaningful relationships with networks spread throughout the Commonwealth. The last week was the usual and meaningful study tour to Ottawa and Toronto, where participants visited the Supreme Court and other courts, as well as the National Judicial Institute, with a trip in between to Niagara Falls.

As we read this 2025 CJEI Newsletter, it is difficult not to reflect on our current global circumstances. Already it has been a tumultuous year. One like we have not known for decades.

For each of us, positioned differently as we are across the world, our experiences are unique – as are our concerns and needs. But for all of us there may be some common questions. What will tomorrow bring? Is the idea of global conflicts, whether economic or military, just imaginative?

Surely, we must now accept that the idea of an agreed, predictable and enforceable international world order, in which some broad-based form of international rule of law prevails, has been exposed as a fragile idealistic framework. One that may be dissolving before our eyes. Which is not to say that international law *per se* is ineffective, as its purpose remains normative, but only that the impact of geo-politics on it can severely reduce its enforceable efficacy – and hence, in some quarters, its pragmatic usefulness.

Some may also say that we are living with an existential reality of the dismantling of the territorial democratic norms to which we have grown accustomed. And speaking of the dismantling of the democratic norms - dare we speak of liberal democracy at all; grounded as it is in the privileging of fundamental human rights? Liberal democracy - this courageous human experiment in governance, based on principles of dignity, equality, and fairness.

There are in fact many concerns across the Commonwealth about what may be happening to national commitments to liberal democratic values. Again, which is not to say that these values do not remain functionally purposive and effective. Yet we must also accept that we are facing serious challenges to hitherto assumed democratic principles.

Indeed, we are arguably being forced to face some very fundamental questions. For example, are post WWII human governance systems based on notions of equity, inclusivity, and mutual regard and respect for all, sustainable in the long term? Is this modern-day experiment in liberal democracy still sustainable across the entire Commonwealth?

Across the Commonwealth, our judicial systems presume certain pre-existing human and systemic conditions. The idea of an independent and impartial judiciary, as we know it, presumes three independent and autonomous branches of state, coexisting with mutual respect and certain institutional conventions. All encapsulated, say, in the Commonwealth Latimer House Principles.

But how much of any or all of this remains really true? And if true in form, how much of it is operationally functional as intended? What are our truths, spread as we are across the four corners of this fast-changing and evermore unpredictable world?

It somehow feels like we are watching the world we know unravel before our eyes. And somehow, it feels that this very world expects us, the judiciary arm of state, to keep calm and carry on doing what we have to do – deliver independent justice, and to do so impartially, efficiently, and effectively.

Yet, it simply can no longer be the ‘same-old, same-old’. Because that ‘same-old’ has passed, likely never to return, despite our most desperate nostalgic longing. The very fact that these kinds of questions are arising at this time invites us to re-consider the relevance of existing structures, systems, conventions, and assumed norms.

No doubt, uncertainty breeds fear, and change can be destabilizing. Judiciaries and judicial officers are not exempt. These are challenging times across the Commonwealth, and there is much to be ‘stressed-out’ about. Yet, it is exactly in these times that we hear the call for the courageous to take a stand. And to do so in responsively creative and constructive ways, ways that maybe respond to more pluriform understandings of our world.

This moment calls us, Fellows and supporters of the CJEI, to remember our core democratic values and norms, Commonwealth values, and to act to re-imagine and re-invigorate them in forms that

can withstand the tests and challenges that we currently face. And in doing so, to give renewed shape to a world order that we can imagine and believe in.

## CJEI Patron Chief Justices Meet in Malta

The CJEI Patron Chief Justices' Meeting took place on April 6, 2025 at the Hilton Hotel and Conference Centre in St. Julian's Bay, Malta. The meeting was attended by The Right Honourable the Baroness Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill, Lady Chief Justice, England and Wales; The Honourable Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Supreme Court, India; The Right Honourable Dame Siobhan Keegan, Lady Chief Justice, Northern Ireland; The Honourable Mr. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb, Supreme Court, Pakistan; The Honourable Chief Justice Sir Gibbs Salika, Papua New Guinea; The Honourable Associate Justice Mario V. Lopez, Supreme Court, Philippines; The Right Honourable Lord Pentland, Lord President, Scotland; The Honourable Judge David Esparon, Supreme Court, Seychelles; The Honourable Malcolm Bushop KC, Lord Chief Justice, Kingdom of Tonga; and The Honourable Chief Judge Kashim Zannah, President, CJEI.

The CJEI President, The Honourable Chief Judge Kashim Zannah, welcomed those attending and thanked them for their attendance as the Institute accords the utmost importance to the meeting for agenda setting, programming and relevance and impact assessment.

The Patrons then took turns introducing themselves, commending the Institute and commenting on the items on the agenda. This was worthwhile as it set the pace for the free-flowing discussions that followed.

After the introductions, Chief Judge Zannah reported on the CJEI's past two years' work and future work plans. The Patrons expressed their appreciation for the work done by the Institute.

The following topics were suggested by the Patrons for future programming: Therapeutic Jurisprudence; Compatibility and Enforcement and Commercial Laws in Commonwealth Countries; Transparency and Open Justice; Leadership Role of Modern Judges; and Training on AI Appreciation and Use in the Justice System.

This was followed by the facilitated discussion on "The Use of AI in the Justice Process in Commonwealth Countries." Discussions were robust and reflected all perspectives on the use of AI in the justice systems. The usual concerns were raised, e.g. the peculiarly human nature of adjudication skills, ossification of the law and the question whether there should be redlines in the deployment of AI in the justice process. The end result, the meeting appears to have reached the understanding that AI is ultimately a tool, and the beneficial result of its usage is dependent on how well it is utilized. That with the phenomenal effectiveness and efficiency now being archived in all sectors through the use of AI and the potential for much more, the justice system may not



have any option but to adopt its usage in order to live up to the expectations of societies experiencing high levels of effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery.

After a brief session of private discussions by the Chief Justices on issues of interest to Commonwealth judiciaries, the meeting ended with a luncheon.



Front Row Left to Right: The Right Honourable Dame Siobhan Keegan, Lady Chief Justice, Northern Ireland; The Honourable Chief Justice Sir Gibbs Salika, Papua New Guinea; The Right Honourable the Baroness Carr of Walton-on-the-Hill, Lady Chief Justice, England and Wales; The Honourable Chief Judge Kashim Zannah, President, CJEI; The Honourable Mr. Justice Surya Kant, Supreme Court, India; The Right Honourable Lord Pentland, Lord President, Scotland; and The Honourable Malcolm Bishop KC, Lord Chief Justice, Kingdom of Tonga. Back Row Left to Right: The Honourable Associate Justice Mario V. Lopez, Supreme Court, Philippines; The Honourable Judge David Esparon, Supreme Court, Seychelles; and The Honourable Mr. Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb, Supreme Court, Pakistan

## 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Intensive Study Programme for Judicial Educators (ISP)

The CJEI's 30<sup>th</sup> annual Intensive Study Programme took place in June of 2025. The programme was directed by The Honourable Mr. Justice Peter Jamadar, CJEI Vice President (Programming) and Co-Directed by The Honourable Brian Lennox with administrative support provided by Sandra Hutchings, CJEI Administrator, along with assistance from CJEI Student Assistants, Sophia McCurdy and Shana Jardine.

Twenty-one participants attended this year's ISP: Principal Magistrate Faith McGusty, Guyana; Magistrate Rhondel Chenera Weever, Guyana; Ms. Michelle SS Wong, Director, Judicial Institute, Hong Kong; The Honourable Mr. Justice David Fraser, Court of Appeal, Jamaica; Her Honour Ms. Jacqueline Wilcott, Senior Parish Judge, Jamaica; The Honourable Mrs. Justice Tara Carr, Supreme Court, Jamaica; The Honourable Justice Adedotun Onibokun, Nigeria; The Honourable Justice Dr. Hussaini Dadan-Garba, Federal High Court, Nigeria; The Honourable Justice (Prof) Elizabeth Ama Oji, National District Court, Nigeria; The Honourable Justice Halima Ibrahim

Abdulmalik, Chief Judge of Niger State, Nigeria; The Honourable Justice Haruna Y. Mshelia, High Court of Justice, Nigeria; he Honourable Justice Monica Dongban-Mensem, President, Court of Appeal, Nigeria; The Honourable Justice (Dr.) Mosunmola Arinola Dipeolu, Chief Judge of Ogun State, Nigeria; The Honourable Justice Muhammed Lawal Shuaibu, Court of Appeal, Nigeria; The Honourable Justice Onyekachi A. Otisi, Court of Appeal, Nigeria; Dr. Cheseldon George V. Carmona, Professor II, Philippine Judicial Academy, Philippines; The Honourable Judge Elisa R. Sarmiento-Flores, Presiding Judge, Metropolitan Trial Court, Philippines; The Honourable Judge Jackie C. Saguisag, Presiding Judge, Metropolitan Trial Court, Philippines; The Honourable Judge Paul Chan, Deputy The Honourable Prem Raj Prabakaran, Senior Director and Director (Crime), Judicial Competence, Institute of Judicial Excellence, Singapore Judicial College, Singapore; Executive Director, Singapore Judicial College, Singapore; The Honourable Madame Justice Nirala Bansee-Sookhai, Deputy Chair, Judicial Education Institute, Trinidad and Tobago.

The first two weeks of the ISP were held at the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Participants attended sessions and completed assignments on a variety of topics: Designing Teaching for Learning; Video Teaching Tools; Objective, Overview, and Scope of Judicial Education; Learning Outcomes; Curricula Development and Needs Assessment; Active Learning and Teaching; Public Trust and Confidence in the Judiciary Through Procedural Fairness; Legal and Organizational Structures of Judicial Education Bodies; Psychological Well-being; Judicial Arrogance, Judiciary Well-being; Session Plan and Organization; Developing an Orientation Programme; “Great” Judgments and “Great” Judges; Judicial Education and Art; Judgment Writing; Process Delay; Long Range Judicial Education Planning; Use of Great Literature in Judicial Education Programming; Self-Represented Litigants; Challenges of Judicial Education; Management Systems and Online Learning Environments; Developing and Delivering Training Tools on Judicial Ethics; Judicial Education Films; Restorative Justice; Animals as Legal Persons; Indigenous Bias and Gender Sensitization; The Judicial Role; and Artificial Intelligence and Judicial Education.

Participants enjoyed many social events in addition to their studies, including a bus tour of the city, a dinner hosted by Dr. Joseph Sadek, visits to the Government House and Province House, and a day trip to Peggy’s Cove.

Following the study portion, the final week of the programme was spent in Ottawa and Toronto.

In Ottawa, participants attended the Superior Court of Justice, the National Judicial Institute, the Office of the Commissioner for Federal Judicial Affairs, Parliament Hill, and Supreme Court of Canada.

After landing in Toronto, participants took a bus tour to Niagara Falls. The rest of their week was spent at the Ontario Court of Justice, Court of Appeal for Ontario at Osgoode Hall, observing an Appeal Hearing, and enjoying a final lunch before departing Canada.



Participants of CJEI's 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Intensive Study Programme at Province House in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

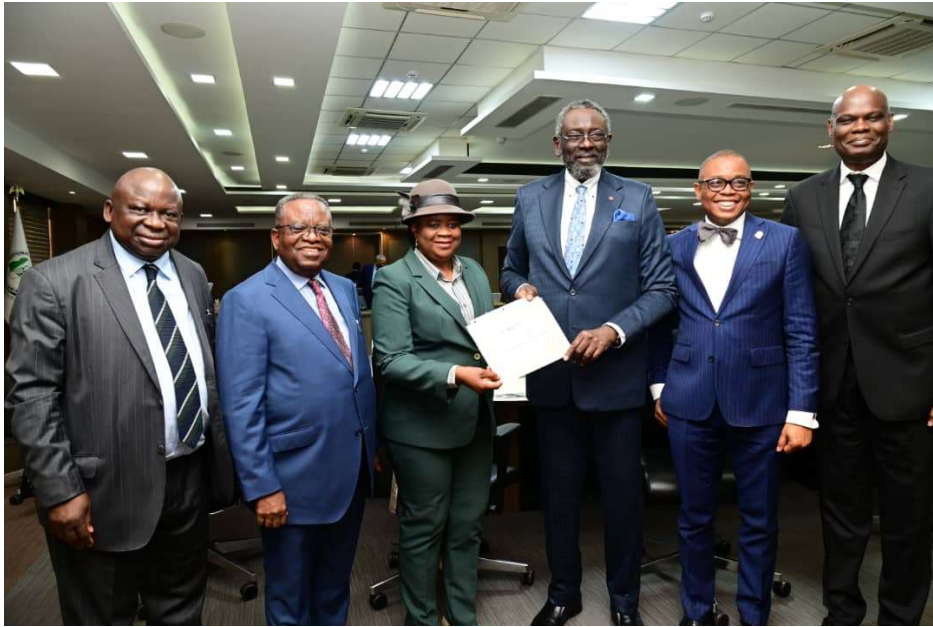
## SAVE THE DATE

Next Intensive Study Programme for  
Judicial Educators in Halifax, Ottawa,  
and Toronto, Canada

May 31 – June 19, 2026



CJEI President presents The Honourable Justice Monica Bolna'an Dongban Mensem, President of the Court of Appeal of Nigeria with her ISP certificate due to her absence from the final dinner.



Left to Right: The Honourable Justice Benjamin Kanyip, President of the National Industrial Court of Nigeria; The Honourable Justice Inyang Okoro, Deputy Chief Justice of Nigeria; The Honourable Justice Monica Bolna'an Dongban Mensem, President of the Court of Appeal of Nigeria; The Honourable Justice Kashim Zannah, Chief Judge of Borno State, Nigeria, President of CJEI; Mazi Afam Osigwe, SAN, President Nigeria Bar Association (NBA); Chief Wale Faphohunda, SAN, member of the National Judicial Council.

## News & Notes

### **Papua New Guinea Centre for Judicial Excellence**

#### **PNGCJE hosts two-day case management workshop - Judges enhance judicial efficiency through case management workshop**

Twenty-five judges from the Supreme and National Courts of Papua New Guinea have successfully completed a two-day Case Management Workshop held in Port Moresby from 21-22 May, 2025.

The workshop was organised by the Papua New Guinea Centre for Judicial Excellence (PNGJE) and facilitated by the Hon. Justice David Campbell, a senior judge from the United States District Court for the District of Arizona. Justice Campbell is internationally recognised for his expertise in judicial case management, with over 21 years of experience on the bench.

It was designed to enhance access to justice by strengthening judicial practices in case management. It will bring together judges from across the country to engage in in-depth sessions focused on best practices, technology integration, trial planning, judgment writing, and judicial integrity. Hon. Justice David Cannings, CBE in his opening remarks, emphasised the importance of effective case management within the judiciary. “We have many cases and we need to manage those cases,” he said.

“I have been a judge for 20 years, and this is the first time I have participated in a dedicated session on case management. It is essential to the way we carry out our work,” Justice Cannings said. Justice Cannings acknowledged that while all judges have their own methods of managing caseloads, they are not always the most efficient.

“Judge Campbell will share valuable insights, knowledge, and techniques he has developed throughout his distinguished career. We are all eager to learn from his experience,” Justice Cannings said. The case management workshop covered a range of critical topics aimed at enhancing judicial performance and strengthening the administration of justice. Sessions facilitated by Justice Campbell included:

- Case assignment and managing case progress;
- Trial planning and preparation;
- Group discussions on practical scenarios;
- Judicial independence and integrity;
- The use of technology in case management;
- Writing judgments clearly and promptly;
- Judicial performance targets and monitoring; and
- Accountability and performance improvement.

The workshop provided participating judges with practical tools and strategies to enhance case flow, reduce delays, and improve the overall delivery of justice in Papua New Guinea.



Front row, second from right: Lead Facilitator Hon. Justice David Campbell alongside his wife, Mrs. Stacey Campbell, pictured with participating judges of the two-day Case Management workshop.

## **PNGCJE hosts first Judicial Colloquium on Domestic and International Arbitration**

A total of 26 judges of the Supreme and National Courts of Papua New Guinea have successfully completed a milestone two-day Judicial Colloquium on International and Domestic Arbitration in PNG held from 21-22 May 2025, hosted by the Papua New Guinea Centre for Judicial Excellence (PNGCJE).

The event, held with the support of the Government of Australia through the Asian Development Bank's Pacific Private Sector Development Initiative (PSDI), marks a significant step in strengthening the judiciary's capacity to handle arbitration matters in PNG.

Speaking during the opening of the event Chief Justice Sir Gibuma Gibbs Salika welcomed the Judges saying; "The two-day colloquium provides an important platform for members of the judiciary to engage in in-depth discussions on the recently enacted Arbitration (International) Act 2024 and Arbitration (Domestic) Act 2024.

"This colloquium will deepen our understanding of how these laws can be practically applied to resolve commercial disputes in PNG.

"The new legislation modernizes PNG's dispute resolution framework aligning it with globally recognised standards and establishing a clear pathway for Arbitration in both Domestic and cross boarder commercial disputes.

Our courts play a critical role in ensuring arbitration is fair, efficient and trusted and that this dialogue will help lay the foundation for consistent high-quality implementation of the Arbitration Laws in this country.

Through expert-led sessions and interactive dialogue, the program enhanced judicial understanding of the practical application of these new laws in resolving commercial disputes, supporting the development of a more efficient and accessible arbitration framework in Papua New Guinea.

Speaking during the opening remarks ADB Country Director Mr. Said Zaidansyah said the colloquium was an important milestone in putting Papua New Guinea's new arbitration legislation into practice.

"This event represents a critical step in ensuring that Papua New Guinea's newly modernised arbitration framework is both well understood and effectively implemented.

International arbitration is a cornerstone of modern commerce and trade. It offers businesses the assurance of neutral, enforceable, and efficient dispute resolution mechanisms which are the key factors in fostering investor confidence.

Meanwhile, domestic arbitration presents a faster, more cost-efficient pathway for resolving disputes. It helps reduce the burden on the court system while enabling the judiciary to manage caseloads more effectively.

This colloquium will equip members of the judiciary with the practical tools and knowledge needed to apply the new legislative framework with clarity and consistency,” Mr. Zaidansyah stated.

Ms. Penny Morton, Minister Counsellor of the Australian High Commission Papua New Guinea whilst also giving her remarks during the opening said the new arbitration laws provide clear and predictable mechanisms for resolving commercial disputes, which is essential for building business confidence,” Ms. Morton mentioned.

Deputy Chief Justice, Justice Ambeng Kandakasi speaking also at the Judicial Colloquium, addressed Judges saying; “As judges, we need to understand the roles we are expected to play in the arbitration space.

“We must be familiar with the applicable rules, the relevant factors for consideration, and the implications of our involvement,”

Our country has now entered the international arbitration space, and that comes with globally accepted principles of law. We need to be mindful of these as we deliberate on arbitration-related matters to ensure our decisions are consistent at both the Supreme and National Court levels,” Justice Kandakasi stated.



Front Row Left to Right: Ms. Jo Delaney, Hon. Kevin Lindgren AM KC, Mr. Said Zaidansyah, Chief Justice Sir Gibuma Gibbs Salika, Deputy Chief Justice Justice Ambeng Kandakasi, Ms. Penny Morton, and Mr. Daniel Melts AM, pictured alongside Judges from the Supreme and National Courts of Papua New Guinea during the first Judicial Colloquium on Domestic and International Arbitration held in Port Moresby.



## **Hong Kong Judicial Institute from Antonio Da Roza, CJEI Fellow 2019**

### **Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-being**

The Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-being was adopted on 25 July 2024 at the Regional Judicial Conference on Integrity and Judicial Well-being organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The Declaration aims to raise awareness and promote strategies to support the well-being of judges.

The Declaration outlines key commitments and principles for promoting integrity and wellbeing within the judiciary:

1. Judicial wellbeing is essential and must be recognised and supported;
2. Judicial stress is not a weakness and must not be stigmatised;
3. Judicial wellbeing is a responsibility of individual judges and judicial institutions;
4. Judicial wellbeing is supported by an ethical and inclusive judicial culture;
5. Promoting judicial wellbeing requires a combination of awareness-raising, prevention and management activities;
6. Judicial wellbeing initiatives must suit the unique circumstances and requirements of national jurisdictions; and
7. Judicial wellbeing is enhanced by human rights.

### **Judicial Education Programmes**

#### **Talk by Mr. Justice Allsop NPJ**

In the evening of 24 February 2025, Mr. Justice Allsop NPJ gave a talk at the High Court of Hong Kong entitled “The International Character of Maritime Law and the Importance of the Jurisprudence of Asia.”

To provide some background, following the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 1997, though no longer part of the Commonwealth, Hong Kong continued its common law legal system under the ‘One Country, Two Systems’ principle. The Privy Council was replaced as the apex court by the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal. Final appeals are heard by the full Court consisting of 5 judges, comprising the Chief Justice of Hong Kong, 3 permanent judges, and a non-permanent judge. The Court of Final Appeal may as required invite non-permanent judges from other common law jurisdictions to sit on the court. A number of distinguished judges from England, Australia, Canada and New Zealand have sat and continue to sit as members of the court.



In March 2024, Mr. Justice Allsop, the former Chief Justice of the Federal Court of Australia, was appointed as a non-permanent judge from another common law jurisdiction of the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal. As is traditional, Mr. Justice Allsop kindly gave a talk to the Hong Kong Judiciary, as well as members of the Hong Kong bar, Law Society, and students from all three of Hong Kong's law schools. The talk was well attended and very well received.

## **Launch of the JI Reference Materials Page**

The Hong Kong Judicial Institute Reference Materials (JIRM) webpage was launched on 18 January 2025. JIRM will ultimately consolidate the materials contained in the Hong Kong Judiciary's Judge's Manuals, booklets and other materials created for reference and training purposes by the HKJI, Bulletins published by the HKJI for judges, presentations and speeches given by judges and other reference materials on to a single website. All these materials will also, modelled on Wikipedia, be broken down into individual, bite-sized articles or entries. Currently, the following materials are available on JIRM:

### Articles and Summaries:

- All the case summaries from Bulletin Issue 23 to Issue 52
- Research note on costs in criminal cases where a defendant is convicted of a statutory lesser offense
- A list of Multilateral Agreements in Force and Applicable to the HKSAR
- A list of Bilateral Agreements in Force and Applicable to the HKSAR

### Booklets

- Booklets on Riot and Unlawful Assembly
- Booklets on Dangerous Driving Causing GBH
- Booklets on Indecent Assault
- Booklets on Assault Occasioning Actual Bodily Harm
- 82 Booklets on various Species Impact Statements

### Bulletin PDF

- PDF versions of Bulletin Issue 23 to Issue 52

### Online Training

- Online training video course on Introduction to Mediation
- Online training video course on Mediation Offices in the Judiciary
- Online training video course on Endangered Wildlife and Sentencing Orders

Ordinances (JI annotations)

- Annotation on the Crimes (Amendment) Bill 2021: Voyeurism, Unlawful Recording or Observation of Intimate Parts, Related Image Publication Offences and Disposal Order
- Annotation of the Occupational Safety and Occupational Health Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Ordinance 2023

The JI continues to add to JIRM on an ongoing basis, and JJOs are encouraged to check the webpage from time to time.

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**Singapore Judicial College from Justin Yeo, CJEI Fellow 2024**

Two articles presented by the Singapore Judicial College for readers' consideration:

**Preparing Judges for Tomorrow's Challenges****Judicial Education in a Brave New World: The Singapore Perspective**

*Natalie Skead & Justin Yeo, "Judicial Education in a Brave New World: The Singapore Perspective" (2025) The Law Teacher (published online on 21 May 2025): [Click to Read](#)*

Abstract: Judiciaries are increasingly confronted with pervasive challenges unfolding and gaining momentum across the globe. In this article we examine the crucial role of judicial education in preparing judges for a rapidly changing world. Drawing from the experience of the SJC, we explore three global challenges facing judiciaries: escalating complexity, accelerating pace of change, and growing distrust in public institutions. Against this backdrop, we share five strategies adopted by the SJC to help equip the Singapore Judiciary to navigate these challenges: (a) structured programming based on a comprehensive Judicial Competency Framework, (b) expanded instructional approaches, (c) judge-led training, (d) continual review and revision of curricula, and (e) international collaboration. By nurturing and inspiring "Learning Judges", judicial education institutes can equip judges to surmount confounding challenges and lead the charge in a Brave New World.

**Judicial Education in Singapore: The Past, Present and Future**

*Kwek Mean Luck, Natalie Skead, Justin Yeo & Yeo Mui Lin, "Judicial Education in Singapore: The Past, Present and Future" (2025) Singapore Academy of Law Journal (published on e-First 6 May 2025): [Click to Read](#)*

Abstract: This article examines the evolution of judicial education in Singapore on the occasion of the SJC's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. It offers insight into Singapore's approach to judicial education and its potential implications for judiciaries worldwide. It begins by contextualizing Singapore's experience within the international judicial education landscape, including the global trend from a centralized approach to the current developments and milestones throughout the SJC's first decade, highlighting its transformative impact on judicial training in Singapore, the region and beyond. Against the backdrop of a rapidly changing world fraught with challenges for judiciaries worldwide, the article proposes nine strategic focus areas for the SJC's future development, thus contributing to the broader discourse on the advancement of judicial education in strengthening judiciaries.

Happy 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to the Singapore Judicial College!

## The Honourable Mr. Justice Peter Jamadar's 'Nine-Principles Framework'

As a continuation of his remarks on today's global circumstances, The Honourable Mr. Justice Peter Jamadar wishes to share nine principles for judicial officers to consider during these pressing times:

Maybe this is a liberal democratic and moral imperative. Maybe it is one that falls on us to pursue. Maybe this is the consequence of our intersections with this time in history. Who knows?

But what we can know is that if we do not act, the changes that may come to fruition may not be ones that we would like to live with or wish for future generations. To kick the proverbial 'can down the road' may just not be an option for us!

Indeed, this may yet be our greatest imaginative opportunity, and undertaking. The most salient of a generation. Let us recall that after WWII exactly such a collective global exercise was engaged. Its fruit, internationally and territorially, well intentioned and noble as it was, has nevertheless brought us to this point in history. However, those now decades old structures and systems seem no longer able to bear the weight of our present-day circumstances. And dare we say, may no longer even be completely apposite!

So what can we do? How can we be midwives for a new democratic world order, or less expansively to a Commonwealth of Nations, that retains the best of our experiences and

experiments in liberal democratic forms of governance, and yet somehow also assumes new forms, relevant to present day understandings, insights, and realities?

Here are some immediate and modest suggestions for our consideration. Consider them a 'nine-principles framework' for discovering and designing mutually agreeable broad-based democratic systems and structures for sustainable transformation.

1. Care for individual and institutional well-being, without which we will not be able to meet and overcome the challenges we face. The heart of the overall response to our current challenges may need to be a conscious focus on the central wellbeing of persons, institutions, and all creation.
2. Create spaciousness for authentic and original creativity. And intentionally invest time and resources in the imaginative exercise of discovering what we need to build on that we already have and value, and to birth what is required to be created for the sustainable futures we collectively seek to enjoy.
3. Identify and articulate the core values that we collectively wish to see embodied individually and systemically. This must be an inclusive and collaborative exercise, which involves, in meaningful ways, all stakeholders. A necessity, if what we discover and seek to implement, is to be sustainable.
4. Commit to cultivating, nurturing, protecting, and sharing these identified collective core values. And do so in manually sustainable ways, recognising that no single culture territory or individual has a better or privileged perspective.
5. Act with courage to promote these collective core values as applied principles and systems. Be prepared to stand steady under fire in defense of them when necessary. And choose dialogical approaches to conflict resolution as the first and foremost response.
6. Identify and articulate the systems and structures that we need in order to consolidate and create sustainable systems that will embody (individually and systemically) these collective core values. This may include critically examining and dismantling and dismantling existing systems that are no longer appropriate and constructing new and apt ones.
7. Use education, in innovative ways, as a vehicle to achieve all of the above. This may require a conscious iterative process of mutual unlearning and relearning. And as well,

engage cross-cultural, multidisciplinary, and multi-territorial forms of programming, that can lead to broad based co-creation of relevant knowledge based products supportive of relevant institutional, cultural, and individual behavioral change.

8. In the use and deployment of educational interventions, be mindful of the following. Take care to administer appropriate broad-based needs assessments, map existing realities, articulate desired objectives, and identify existing gaps and what is needed to narrow/close them.
9. Be aware that these values-based ideals are constantly evolving with changing circumstances. Therefore, educational interventions are a continuous process based on relevant needs analysis and gap-closing interventions, which are always responsive to change.

These suggestions are the fruit of the CJEI's approaches to judicial education, adapted to the stated purpose in this article, which focuses on democratic values and governance.

However, to be clear, liberal democracy is not the only pressing concern of these times. How we respond to other issues, such as environmental challenges and the sustainability of planet earth, as well as the protection of all life forms, calls out for our urgent attention. The nine-principles framework outlined above can be adapted and used for each of these, and many others.

It is our hope at the CJEI that we will all play our parts at this inflexion point in world history. Indeed, history itself will judge our efforts. May it find us worthy.

## Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities

CJEI wishes to share its most recent research project on access to justice for persons with disabilities:

Access to Justice for Persons with Disabilities in the Commonwealth  
Sophia McCurdy, Research and Communications Intern  
Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute

### Author Note

This research was conducted by Sophia McCurdy, Research and Communications Intern at the Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute (CJEI), with generous support by the University of King's College through the Fellowship in the Public Humanities program. The project was supervised by the CJEI's Founding President, the Honourable Sandra E. Oxner, retired judge with significant support from Sandra Hutchings, CJEI Administrator.



The author extends sincere gratitude to Professor William Lahey, President of the University of King's College; Michelle Mahoney, Accessibility Officer at the University of King's College; and Professor Archie Kaiser, Professor of Law and Psychiatry, for their valuable time, insights, and support throughout the course of this research.

### Abstract

This report explores the topic of access to justice for persons with disabilities in the Commonwealth with a particular focus on the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) across Commonwealth jurisdictions. It begins with a summary of the 2014 human rights complaints in Nova Scotia, Canada and goes on to discuss how legal systems continuously fail to meet the needs of individuals with mental, intellectual, psychosocial, and physical disabilities. Reports both to and by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities call attention to the difficulties implementing the CRPD in Canada, Malta, Zambia, and Trinidad and Tobago. Barriers to access to justice, such as physical inaccessibility, discriminatory attitudes, inadequate legal representation and insufficient judicial training, seem to arise consistently across the Commonwealth. This report reveals that although legal frameworks such as the CRPD offer a path toward equal access to justice, implementation remains uneven. The report further discusses intersectionality and its aggravating impact on access to justice for marginalized groups within the disabled population. Key reforms identified by the research include legal education, plain language communication, community engagement and representation—all of which are essential to realizing equal access to justice for all persons with disabilities.

### What is 'Access to Justice'?

'Access to Justice,' as defined by the Government of Canada's Department of Justice, is "timely access to a fair and effective justice system, as well as access to information, resources and informal service."<sup>1</sup> In the context of access to justice for persons with disabilities, this may include appropriate accommodations depending on individual needs, legal aid, ensuring physical accessibility, safety from discrimination, and so on.

### Disability Rights Coalition 2014 Complaint

In 2014, three complaints were filed with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. Beth MacLean, Sheila Livingstone, and Joseph Delaney had alleged that the province of Nova Scotia had discriminated against them due to their mental disabilities<sup>2</sup>. They alleged that their treatment by the province went against the *Human Rights Act (the "Act")*. [The case](#) brought to the surface several concerns regarding the province's treatment of disabled persons and eventually concluded

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Canada, Department of Justice, Electronic Communications, *Access to Justice*, September 1, 2021, retrieved from <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/access-acces/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> *Disability Rights Coalition v. Nova Scotia* (Attorney General), 2021 NSCA 70 (N.S. C.A., Oct 6 2021)

in the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal deciding that there was a continuous history of systemic discrimination against persons with disabilities by the Province of Nova Scotia<sup>3</sup>. In December of 2019, the complainants of the case were awarded significant damages, including \$40,000 each for legal costs.<sup>4</sup>

Following the 2014 case, the Government of Nova Scotia submitted its [“Human Right Review and Remedy for the Findings of Systemic Discrimination Against Nova Scotians with Disabilities.”](#) This final report outlines a five-year plan to end systemic discrimination against persons with disabilities in Nova Scotia by moving from institutional care to individualized, community-based supports. It proposes six reforms, including closing institutions, person-centered planning, providing more flexible services, and shifting funding.<sup>5</sup>

CBC News calls the government’s five-year plan a “landmark legal victory,”<sup>6</sup> and the general public’s reactions support this claim. As the Halifax Examiner reports, “advocacy groups [applauded] a ‘historic’ interim agreement...to end the discriminatory treatment of people with disabilities.”<sup>7</sup>

**Disability in the Commonwealth.** At the Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting on March 4, 2024, in Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania, the Commonwealth Disabled People’s Forum explained that more than 400 million Commonwealth citizens “live with long term physical, mental, or psychosocial impairments that impact their day-to-day living.”<sup>8</sup> The Commonwealth Disabled People’s Forum highlighted barriers that these citizens may experience in judicial

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<sup>3</sup> The Disability Rights Coalition of Nova Scotia, “Nova Scotia Human Rights Case – Disability Rights Coalition of Nova Scotia,” Disability Rights Coalition of Nova Scotia, June 13, 2025, <https://www.disabilityrightscalitionns.ca/nova-scotia-human-rights-case/#:~:text=The%20DRC%20Human%20Rights%20Complaint,its%20provision%20of%20social%20assistance>.

<sup>4</sup> Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. (2019, December 5). *MacLean, Livingstone, Delaney and Disability Rights Coalition of Nova Scotia v. Province of Nova Scotia – Remedy decision*. Government of Nova Scotia News Release. Retrieved from [https://news.novascotia.ca/en/2019/12/05/maclean-livingstone-delaney-and-disability-rights-coalition-nova-scotia-v-province?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://news.novascotia.ca/en/2019/12/05/maclean-livingstone-delaney-and-disability-rights-coalition-nova-scotia-v-province?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

<sup>5</sup> Bartnik, E., & Stainton, T. (2023, February 6; updated April 24). *Human Rights Review and Remedy for the Findings of Systemic Discrimination Against Nova Scotians with Disabilities: Technical Report of the Independent Experts on the Disability Rights Coalition and the Province of Nova Scotia*. Province of Nova Scotia. Retrieved from <https://novascotia.ca/coms/disabilities/human-rights-remedy-dsp-final-report.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Tutton, M. (2023, June 29). *Legal victory for N.S. disabilities rights converted into five-year plan for reforms*. The Canadian Press. CBC News. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/legal-five-year-plan-nova-scotia-disabilities-housing-1.6893884>

<sup>7</sup> D’Entremont, Y. (2023, April 27). *Disability rights groups sat historic agreement with Nova Scotia sends ‘powerful message’*. Halifax Examiner. Retrieved from <https://www.halifaxexaminer.ca/government/province-house/disability-rights-groups-say-historic-agreement-with-nova-scotia-sends-powerful-message/>

<sup>8</sup> Commonwealth Disabled People’s Forum, *Disability-Inclusive Access to Justice: CLMM Side Event Concept Note* (April 2024) Commonwealth Disabled People’s Forum. Retrieved from [https://commonwealthdpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Disability-inclusive-access-to-justice-CLMM-side-event-concept-note\\_FINAL.pdf](https://commonwealthdpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Disability-inclusive-access-to-justice-CLMM-side-event-concept-note_FINAL.pdf)

environments: physical inaccessibility; discriminatory behaviour and attitudes; difficulties accessing representation; and inadequate training of judicial officers on the issue of access to justice for persons with disabilities. This research report sees similar barriers in judiciaries across the Commonwealth.

**Promoting Equal Access to Justice.** Access to justice must include all aspects of the judicial process including understanding and eliminating the barriers noted by the CDPF above, as well as proper access to transportation, ensuring client understands their sentencing and rights, providing accommodations specific to the client, and protection against discrimination.

President of University of King's College and Professor of Law, William Lahey, and University of King's College Accessibility Officer, Michelle Mahoney provide possible solutions to many of the barriers in the Canadian Justice System: plain language; community outreach; sign language and interpreters; and direct communication between judges, lawyers and clients.<sup>9</sup> These reforms can be applied to any jurisdiction in the Commonwealth.

### **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was put into force on 3 May 2008. The Convention called for States Parties to protect persons with disabilities' right to equal access to justice. Article 13 of the CRPD, titled "Access to Justice" asserts that States Parties are responsible for ensuring equal access to justice through accommodations and adequate training of judicial officers:

1. States Parties shall ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others, including through the provision of procedural and age-appropriate accommodations, in order to facilitate their effective role as direct and indirect participants, including as witnesses, in all legal proceedings, including at investigative and other preliminary stages.
2. In order to help to ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities, States Parties shall promote appropriate training for those working in the field of administration of justice, including police and prison staff.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Michelle Mahoney, Accessibility Officer, University of King's College and William Lahey, President of University of King's College and Professor of Law, interview by author, July 21, 2025.

<sup>10</sup> United Nations, *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol* (New York: United Nations, 2006). <https://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>

All but one of the 56 Commonwealth countries have ratified the Convention.<sup>11</sup>

### **Implementation of the CRPD.**

Article 4 of the CPRD, “General Obligations,” places the responsibility of implementation onto the States Parties:

1. States Parties undertake to ensure and promote the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability.<sup>12</sup>

Within each jurisdiction, it is the responsibility of the Chief Justice to eliminate visible and invisible discrimination, and ensure the court is abiding by the Convention’s policies.

Article 35 of the CRPD requires regular reports on the State Parties progression:

1. Each State Party shall submit to the Committee, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, a comprehensive report on measures taken to give effect to its global obligations under the present Convention and on the progress made in that regard, within two years after the entry into force of the present Convention for the State Party concerned.
2. Thereafter, States Parties shall submit subsequent reports at least every four years and further whenever the Committee so requests.<sup>13</sup>

These reports will highlight areas in need of improvement.

In guidance with Article 35, Malta’s initial report outlines the difficulties within its jurisdictions as well as areas with successful implementation. The report shows great efforts made, including free and physically accessible transit for persons with disabilities, free health care, equal recognition before the law, physically accessible courthouses, and so on. The two largest barriers noted were physical accessibility, explained to be due to the historic age of several buildings, and employment rates, with only 71% of employers legally bound to employ persons with disabilities abiding by that mandate. There was also mention of ‘capacity to consent.’ At the time of the report

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<sup>11</sup> “Commonwealth Countries Encouraged to Prioritise Disability Inclusion in Policy Development,” The Commonwealth, June 11, 2024, accessed July 28, 2025, <https://thecommonwealth.org/news/commonwealth-countries-encouraged-prioritise-disability-inclusion-policy-development>.

<sup>12</sup> *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol*

<sup>13</sup> *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol*

there was no legislation that permitted people with learning disabilities capacity to consent. The report mentions an intention to introduce a ‘capacity consent functional assessment.’<sup>14</sup>

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities submitted its concluding observations regarding Canada’s two most recent reports<sup>15</sup>. The Committee displayed concern for Canada’s cooperation with the CRPD. Issues included the right to equal recognition before the law, disparities in the implementation of the CRPD across various jurisdictions, continuous discrimination against persons with disabilities, specifically those members of multiple marginalized communities with direct mention of Indigenous persons with disabilities, women with disabilities, black and racialized persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQI+ persons with disabilities, and children with disabilities. The Committee acknowledged Canada’s Accessible Canada Act, the Poverty Reduction Act, the National Autism Strategy, along with several other efforts made by the country.

The Committee suggested several changes be made in order to fulfill and successfully implement the obligations of the Convention: Canada should take all measures necessary to ensure the Convention is implemented fully at the federal and provincial level; implement legally binding mechanisms to guarantee that all provinces and territories comply with the Convention with consultation with persons with disabilities, including Indigenous, Black and other racialized persons with disabilities; ensure that all statutes and regulations are interpreted consistently with the Convention, including the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act; grow strong communication between the government and persons with disabilities.

The Committee observed 6 positive aspects from the initial report of Zambia: The enactment of the Persons with Disabilities Act; the National Disability Policy and National Implementation Plan on Disability; the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities; the Mental Health Act No. 6; the Social Protection Policy; and the Eighth National Development Plan.<sup>16</sup>

Section III, “Principal areas of concern and recommendations,” notes that there are issues with Zambia’s definition for persons with disabilities, as well as the assessment process for eligibility for accessing the necessary support. The report declares that the implementation of Zambia’s Persons with Disability Act of 2021 was unsuccessful. There was overall concern with the

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<sup>14</sup> Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, *Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 35 of the Convention: Initial Reports of States Parties due in 2014 – Malta*, CRPD/C/MLT/1 (Geneva: United Nations, November 10, 2014).

<sup>15</sup> Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, *Concluding Observations on the Combined 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Periodic Reports of Canada*, CRPD/C/CAN/CO/2-3, distributed 15 April 2025, United Nations

<sup>16</sup> Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, *Concluding Observations on the Initial Report of Zambia*, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, distributed 29 April 2024, United Nations.



derogatory terminology used to refer to persons with disabilities, and a general lack of understanding of the rights that are recognized under the CRPD.<sup>17</sup>

Submitted in June of 2025, Trinidad and Tobago's report on the compliance with the CRPD raises other significant concerns. The report concludes that Trinidad and Tobago has failed to successfully implement the Convention and comply with its obligations. The Committee pressed its concerns regarding Trinidad and Tobago's criminal code's mandatory death penalty for murder, with little to no accommodation for individuals with intellectual or psycho-social disabilities. The report states that "people with such disabilities may face the choice of facing a mandatory death penalty or being stripped of legal personhood. Detention conditions also fail to accommodate people with disabilities."<sup>18</sup>

- I. The criminal legal system does little to accommodate people with intellectual or psycho-social disabilities who come into conflict with the law and may undermine their legal personhood<sup>19</sup>

The report also discusses the inhumane conditions of detention centres, issues with women's hygiene, and again, a failure to accommodate. Trinidad and Tobago does not have any laws to prevent the discrimination of persons with disabilities, nor does their law require appropriate accommodations.

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities submitted its 'Concluding observations on the initial report of Singapore,' in October 2022.<sup>20</sup> There were four main concerns outlined by the Committee: Singapore's use of a medical model to approach the topic of disability as opposed to a human rights model of disability; the implementing of the Convention being limited and lacking coherence; there is no formal definition of disability in the national legislation; lack of direct communication with representative organizations, members of the disabled community, etc. in order to implement the Convention.

The Committee recommended four solutions to the concerns laid out above: rid of all remnants of a medical model of disability and focus on moving towards a human rights model of disability; enact proper legislation in order to protect the rights of persons with disabilities; ensure that both the legal definition of disability and the assessment mechanisms are in line with one another;

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<sup>17</sup> *Concluding Observations on the Initial Report of Zambia*, pg. 2

<sup>18</sup> The Advocates for Human Rights and World Coalition Against the Death Penalty. *Trinidad and Tobago's Compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Suggested List of Issues Relating to the Death Penalty*, Submission to the 21'st Pre-sessional Working Group of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 1—5 September 2025, submitted 20 June 2025, United Nations.

<sup>19</sup> *Trinidad and Tobago's Compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Suggested List of Issues Relating to the Death Penalty*, pg. 2

<sup>20</sup> UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, *Concluding observations on the initial report of Singapore (CRPD/C/SSGP/CO/1)* (Geneva: UN, 5 October 2022).

improve communication with the disabled community—speak directly with persons with disabilities.

These countries, Malta, Canada, Zambia, and Trinidad and Tobago, represent very different demographics and legal systems, and because of this, bring up a wide range of aspects to consider when discussing access to justice and disability rights.

**Disability and Intersectionality.** A study done in Namibia explores disability rights in 4 different regions with 8 subject to each region. This study worked directly with persons with disabilities in order to understand the impacts of the CRPD from the perspective of these individuals. Several issues seemed to arise (e.g. perceptions of disability rights, limited financial resources, etc.), however the most pressing concern was combination of disabilities with other areas of marginalization.

Section P. of the CRPD’s preamble brings up intersectionality and disability:

(p) Concerned about the difficult conditions faced by persons with disabilities who are Subject to multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, indigenous or social origin, property, birth, age or other status.<sup>21</sup>

A paper from the Office of Diversity & Human Rights at the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada, explores the topic of intersectionality and disability. The article provides 5 ways to apply an “intersectional lens”: understand diverse identities; stop and reflect; include accessibility in I-EDI conversations; meaningfully engage with communities; develop knowledge of Universal design (designing products, programmes, services, environments, etc. to be accessible to all).<sup>22</sup>

## Conclusion

This report has explored the barriers preventing persons with disabilities equal access to justice. A focus on the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) highlighted the uneven and insufficient efforts made across the Commonwealth, and pointed at specific areas in need of reform. The reports from Canada, Malta, Zambia, and Trinidad and Tobago demonstrate a wide range of issues arising from the implementation of the Convention. Physical inaccessibility, discriminatory attitudes, inadequate legal representation, and a lack of institutional understanding of disability rights continue to act as barriers for equal access to justice. Reform in these areas is necessary and urgent.

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<sup>21</sup> *Convention in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

<sup>22</sup> University of Guelph, Office of Diversity & Human Rights. Intersectionality and Disability Resource. Accessed July 30, 2025. Retrieved from <https://www.uoguelph.ca/diversity-human-rights/system/files/Intersectionality%20and%20Disability%20Resource.pdf>.

Disability is not a standalone topic and cannot be looked at in isolation. Individuals often face multiple forms of marginalization due to their gender, race, sexuality, socio-economic background, and so on. These overlapping identities add nuance to an already complex issue. It is important that this aspect is considered when assessing policies and practices.

Solutions such as plain language, adequate training for judges and lawyers, physically accessible court buildings, and community outreach have all been suggested, however these efforts need to be more consistent and efficiently implemented across the Commonwealth if real reform is going to be made. Judges and court staff must be trained to be knowledgeable of disability rights and sensitive to individuals' experiences.

If the Commonwealth wishes to fulfill its obligations under the CRPD and move toward equal access to justice, it must prioritize judicial education, destigmatization, and systemic change and reform, all with a commitment to the voices and experiences of persons with disabilities.

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