

**REPUBLIC OF RWANDA**



**MINISTRY OF JUSTICE  
P.O. BOX 160 KIGALI**

**ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE / ATTORNEY  
GENERAL AT THE OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP ON FORENSIC  
EVIDENCE, ELECTRONIC EVIDENCE, DATA PROTECTION  
AND CYBERCRIMES**

President of the East Africa Law Society,

President of the Rwanda Bar Association,

Representatives of the Conference of Western Attorney Generals,

Representatives of the Government of the Republic of Rwanda,

Learned Friends,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to welcome you to Rwanda. Thanks for inviting me to be with you at the opening of this workshop. The faces here from the East African Community and other parts of the world, serve to

show how determined we are to face the challenges we face in our respective countries.

I welcome you to enjoy our hospitality over the next few days as you go through this training.

Present among us today are public prosecutors, crime investigators, private practitioners, judicial officers as well as professionals from various fields. Over the next two days, you will be participating in shaping up how we utilize technology to address inadequacies in our law and justice systems, especially in investigations and prosecution of crimes and other matters before courts.

The rise of internet technology and digitization of vast sectors of human activity have brought to the fore unprecedented challenges; a rise in cybercrime with its attendant difficulties in identifying perpetrators; the ability of men to hide heinous crimes behind layers of the dark web and the use of computer technology to aid complex financial crimes are all challenges that we must all strive to find solutions to.

Every year, African governments and businesses lose substantial economic resources to digital fraud. These are done through flawed technologies in procurement, falsification of digital data, and deliberate concealment of pertinent information through technology.

Financial institutions have witnessed rising cases of bank accounts being hacked into and substantial resources transferred away into unknown addresses using internet technology.

Governments continue to suffer from sabotage and theft of crucial and highly-classified information by criminal elements intent on achieving a variety of criminal objectives.

Increased cyber-attacks on our security establishments and economic institutions pose a direct threat to our national security and to our collective existence. Use of social media to promote human development has, unfortunately, brought the challenge of cyber-bullies and identity thieves. These challenges pose some of the greatest threats to human enjoyment of the use of technology. 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.

We daily strive to build capacity of stakeholders in the sector of the administration of justice, yet new challenges emerge daily to investigators, prosecutors and judges. Increased reliance on electronic evidence and computer-stored data calls for more understanding of the role of technology in administration of justice.

Cellphones, laptops, iphones, cctv cameras and 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. Inattention to these sometimes leads to miscarriage of justice, with the possibility that criminals go scott-free for failure by investigators to secure unassailable evidence.

Gladly, we are now presented with an opportunity to address these shortcomings through capacity building to the officers manning these crucial positions.

The rise of the use of expert witnesses, both in criminal and civil cases, calls for better understanding of the field of forensic investigations. Digital forensics, that is involving the province of digital technology, is one area that investigators and all officers involved in administration of justice must strive to understand.

The European Union has taken a lead in enacting the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). The regulations have extended applications to our countries given the general trend of globalization of businesses. We also have our data protection and privacy regulations. It is important that practitioners, businesses and officers involved in administration of justice comprehensively appreciate the effects of these regulations in their activities.

The agenda of this workshop aptly captures our collective need to improve service delivery to the public and to our clients. In today's world, one can never go wrong by learning about extended application of technology at the workplace.

I am informed by the East Africa Law Society that this workshop is part of a deliberate campaign to empower legal professionals in the integrated East African Community to be more responsive to the needs of the public, corporations and individual clients. That can only mean that more capacity building initiatives are planned.

The Ministry of Justice will continue to partner with you where our interests intersect, as is the case today.

It is my belief that you will find value for your participation in this workshop. We look forward to seeing you apply the skills learnt to improve service delivery in the various processes of the administration of justice.

I now declare this workshop opened.

Thank you for your kind attention.