



***Law Reform Commission (LRC)***

# **LAW REFORM COMMISSION**

**(LRC)**

**BLOCK 8**

**SPECIAL COURT COMPLEX**

**NEW ENGLAND VILLE**

**FREETOWN**



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## **NEWS ITEM**

### **LAW REFORM COMMISSION (LRC) HOLDS NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS' VALIDATION WORKSHOP ON THE EXPECTED LAW ON MEDIATION**

**By David Yusuf Kabia, Legal Research Officer, LRC**

On the 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2024, the Law Reform Commission (LRC) in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Sierra Leone held a one day validation workshop on the expected law on mediation post nationwide consultative meetings on the benefits of same. The meeting was called to order by the Commission's Legal Counsel, Idrissa Kargbo (ESQ) who as well introduced subsequent speakers including the Chairperson, Yada Hashim Williams (ESQ) and the Executive Secretary, Lucy Mae-Seiwoh (Mrs.).

In her welcome address, Ms. Seiwoh thanked the participants for their commitment to ensuring their presence in this all important programme. She reminded them about their efforts during the nationwide consultative meetings during which she registered her gratitude to the various participants for having contributed to the development of such a law that will help in the everyday maintenance of justice.

Having been introduced earlier, the Chairperson of the Law Reform Commission (LRC) Yada Hashim Williams (ESQ) started off by briefly explaining to the participants the project's

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background, which among other things he thanked the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for, without whose financial provision he said the project may not have come to fruition. Mr. Williams went on to describe the intervention of the UNDP under their **“Strengthening Rule of Law, Access to Justice, Human Rights and Security”** project that seeks to work with countries in ensuring indiscriminate justice. He encouraged the participants to hold the validation workshop and of course the entirety of the law on mediation to the highest esteem because as he said, ***“The formal justice delivery mechanism is inundated and bugged with, seemingly, endless problems that it can’t overcome. This project will bring joy, happiness and justice to the people of sierra Leone”***.

Given that the LRC, supported by the UNDP, had collated ideas nationwide on the content of the expected law, a report containing such ideas was delivered by Mr. Abass V. O. Kamara. During his presentation, Mr. Kamara briefly and concisely explained the Commission’s mandate which includes to keep under review the laws of Sierra Leone both statutory and otherwise, with a view to their reform, development, consolidation or codification and also to take other initiatives and propose the enactment of new laws in appropriate circumstances pursuant to the Law Reform Commission Act No.17 of 1994. The Commission’s Asst. Draftsman went on to state the contribution of the sub-committee on the law of mediation including their mandate leading to these findings through its rich composition. He talked about the work plan set up by the sub-committee and the reviews on the law as against other jurisdictions, which were conducted by members of the sub-committee. While the sub-committee may have faced challenges relating to the different types of mediation, Mr. Kamara pointed out that it was agreed that the need to have a law on mediation was of high significance. The enactment of such a law would in an enormous way improve access to justice. He concluded by stating the various findings and recommendations already proffered by the sub-committee.

The second segment of the workshop commenced with explanation of the zero draft Bill on mediation, bringing out the sub-committee’s recommendations together with the views of citizens nationwide. This was followed by a breaking of the participants into five (5) groups of ten (10 people) each for the purpose of reviewing the several provisions of the Bill and the Report of the consultative meetings held countrywide.

The workshop was climaxed by appreciation from the participants and group photos of the LRC and the participants.

Joseph Grynbaum once said, ***“An ounce of mediation is worth a pound of arbitration and a ton of litigation!”***