

CONTEMPT OF COURT ACT, 2024

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An Act to regulate and punish contemptuous behavior and offenses against the authority, and proceedings of courts, and to safeguard the

integrity, fairness and public confidence in the administration of justice.

Enacted by the President and members of Parliament in this present Parliament assembled.

PRELIMINARY

1. Short title and commencement; This Act may be cited as the *Contempt of Court Act, 2023*.

2. Interpretation: In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires—
“*Civil contempt*” means wilful disobedience to any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other processes of a court or wilful breach of an undertaking given to a court;

“*Court*” means any court of law in Sierra Leone other than a court martial or a local court;

“*competent authority*” means the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General & Minister of Justice, the Master & Registrar, the Judicial & Legal Service Commission or any body or authority set up by it or by any law to deal with complaints against judges and magistrates;

“*Criminal contempt*” means the publication (whether by words, spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representations, or otherwise) of any matter or the doing of any other act whatsoever which—

(i) scandalises or tends to scandalise, or lowers or tends to lower the authority of any court; or

(ii) prejudices or interferes or tends to interfere with, the due course of any judicial proceeding; or

(iii) interferes or tends to interfere with, or obstructs or tends to obstruct, the administration of justice in any other manner;

“*Judge*” means a person appointed as a Judge of the superior court of judicature under the provisions of the Constitution and includes the Chief Justice;

“*judicial officer*” bears the same meaning as “*competent authority*” defined supra;

“*publish*” means to disseminate, distribute, exhibit, provide or communicate by oral, visual, written, electronic or other means (for example, by way of newspaper, radio, television or through the use of the internet, subscription TV or other online communications system) to the public at large or a member of the public, and includes cause to be published, and “publication” is to be construed accordingly;

“*Scandalise*” refer to publicly criticise, defame or make disparaging remarks about the court, its judges, or the administration of justice in a manner that undermines public confidence in the Judiciary.

PART I – STRICT LIABILITY

3. The strict liability rule

- (1) In this Act "the strict liability rule" means the rule of law whereby conduct may be treated as a contempt of court as tending to interfere with the course of justice in particular legal proceedings regardless of intent to do so.
- (2) The strict liability rule applies only in relation to publication, and for this purpose "publication" includes any speech, writing, broadcast or other communication in whatever form, which is addressed to the public at large or any section of the public.
- (3) A person shall be strictly liable for contempt of court in any case where the person does any act which interferes or tends to interfere with the course of justice in relation to any judicial proceedings.
- (4) For purposes of subsection (3), it shall be immaterial whether the interference was not intentional.

4. Limitation of the scope of strict liability rule

- (1) The strict liability rule applies only to publication;

- (a) which creates a substantial risk that the course of justice in the proceedings in question will be seriously impeded or prejudiced; and
 - (b) only if the proceedings in question are active within the meaning of this section at the time of the publication.
- (2) The Schedule applies in determining the times at which proceedings are to be treated as active within the meaning of this section.

5. Defense to strict liability rule

Nothing in this Act shall;

- (a) prejudice any defence available at common law to a charge of contempt of court under the strict liability rule;
- (b) imply that any publication is punishable as contempt of court under that rule which would not be so punishable apart from those provisions; or
- (c) restricts liability for contempt of court in respect of conduct intended to impede or prejudice the administration of justice.

PART II-TYPES OF CONTEMPT

6. Contempt by scandalising court, interfering with the administration of justice;

- (1) Any person who;
 - (a) scandalises the court by intentionally publishing any matter or doing any act that
 - (i) impute improper motives to or impugns the integrity, propriety or impartiality of any court; and
 - (ii) poses a risk that public confidence in the administration of justice would be undermined;
 - (b) intentionally publishes any matter that;
 - (i) prejudges an issue in a court proceeding that is pending and such prejudgment prejudices, interferes with or poses a real risk of prejudice to or interference with, the course of any court proceeding that is pending; or

- (ii) otherwise prejudices, interferes with, or poses a real risk of prejudice to or interference with, the course of any court proceeding that is pending;
- (c) intentionally interferes with (by intimidation or otherwise) or hinders another person's access to or ability to appear in court, knowing that this person is a party, witness, advocate or judge in ongoing court proceedings;
- (d) intentionally offers any insult or causes any interruption or obstruction to any judge of any court, while the judge is sitting in any stage of a court proceeding; or
- (e) intentionally does any other act that interferes with, obstructs or poses a real risk of interference with or obstruction of the administration of justice in any other manner, if the person knows or ought to have known that the act would interfere with, obstruct or pose a real risk of interference with or obstruction of the administration of justice;

commits a contempt of court.

(2) Where any person publishes any matter or does any act referred to in subsection (1)(a), that person is guilty of contempt of court even if he or she did not intend to scandalise the court.

(3) Where any person publishes any matter referred to in subsection (1)(b), that person is guilty of contempt of court even if he or she did not intend to cause the consequences referred to in subsection (1)(b)(i) or (ii).

(4) For the purposes of subsection (4), "necessary in the public interest" includes but is not limited to matters that are necessary in the interests of the security of Sierra Leone or any part of Sierra Leone, public order, public health or public finances.

(5) Where contempt of court is committed by the doing of any act mentioned in subsection (1)(c) or (d), a person is guilty of contempt of court if that person knows or ought to have known that the act would prejudice or interfere with or obstruct or pose a real risk of prejudice to or interference with or obstruction of the course of the court proceeding.

7. Contempt by disobedience of court orders or undertakings,

(1) Any person who;

- (a) intentionally disobeys or breaches any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other processes of a court; or
- (b) intentionally breaches any undertaking given to a court;

commits a contempt of court.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), intentional disposal by a person against whom an enforcement order for attachment of a debt has been made, otherwise than in accordance with law or with permission of the court, of any property subject to the order in his or her hands or under his or her control, is contempt of court.

(3) Without limiting subsection (1), a person commits a contempt of court if the person;

- (a) being legally bound to produce or deliver any document to the court, intentionally omits to so produce or deliver up the document;
- (b) being legally bound to bind himself or herself by oath or affirmation to state the truth, refuses to so bind himself or herself;
- (c) being legally bound to state the truth on any subject to the court, refuses to answer any question demanded of him or her touching that subject by the court in the exercise of the lawful powers of the court; or

(d) refuses to sign any statement made by him or her, when required to sign that statement by a court lawfully competent to require that he or she signs that statement.

(4) Subject to subsections (5), (6) and (7), any contempt of court referred to in subsection (1) or (2) may be waived by the aggrieved party and such waiver relieves from liability the person who commits the contempt.

(5) The court may, in its discretion, disallow the waiver of any contempt of court mentioned in subsection (1) or (2) in any of the following circumstances:

(a) the Attorney-General has authorised investigations pursuant to section 22 for the contempt of court;

(b) proceedings have been commenced in respect of the contempt of court;

(c) the contempt of court is of such a nature that it interferes with, obstructs or poses a real risk of interference with or obstruction of the administration of justice;

(d) it would be contrary to the public interest to allow the waiver.

(6) The court may, in granting any waiver of contempt of court under subsection (4), impose such conditions as it thinks fit.

(7) The contempt of court referred to in subsection (3) may not be waived.

(8) A person who is not a party to an action commits contempt if he or she causes or abets the breach of any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other process of a court, with the intention of causing such breach or knowing that it would cause such breach.

(9) In this section “aggrieved party” means a party to the relevant proceedings for whose benefit any judgment, decree, direction, order, writ or other process of a court is given, made or issued, or any undertaking to a court is given, in proceedings other than a proceeding against a person in respect of any offence; “undertaking given to a court” includes an implied undertaking given to a court.

8. Audio or visual recordings,

- (1) Subject to paragraph (a) and subsection (3) of this section, it shall not be contempt of court to;
 - (a) use in court any recording device or instrument for recording proceedings, a tape recorder or other instrument for recording sound;
 - (b) publish a recording of legal proceedings made by means of any such instrument, or any recording derived directly or indirectly from it, by playing it in the hearing of the public or any section of the public, or disposes of it or any recording so derived, with a view to such publication;
- (2) The powers given under subsection 1 shall not apply to video recording.
- (3) The unauthorised video recording of proceedings shall be contempt.
- (4) The Court may where it deems fit restrict or prohibit the recording of its proceedings by whatever means.
- (5) Without prejudice to any other power to deal with an act of contempt under subsections (2) and (3), the court may order the contents of the instrument or device to be deleted and the device returned to the owner.
- (6) This section shall not apply to the making or use of sound recordings for purposes of official transcripts of proceedings.
- (7) For purposes of this section "recording" includes any visual or audio recording.
- (8) Anybody who alters a recording of proceedings of the court shall be guilty of an offence and on conviction shall be liable to a fine of Le. 20,000.00 or six months imprisonment or to both such fine and imprisonment.

9. Common law rules on contempt

- (1) This Act prevails over any common law rule on contempt of court to the extent that the rule is inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act.

- (2) All defences at common law to contempt of court under this Act, not contained in this Act, are repealed.
- (3) To avoid doubt, the common law rules in this section refer to both the substantive and procedural common law rules on contempt.

PART III- JURISDICTION OF COURTS

10. Inherent power of the court;

The superior court of judicature shall have the power to;

- (a) punish for contempt of court in the face of the court;
- (b) punish for contempt of court other than in paragraph (a) of this section; and
- (c) uphold the dignity and authority of the inferior courts.

11. Power of Court to try offences committed or offenders found outside the jurisdiction;

1. The Magistrate court shall have the power to punish for contempt of court in the face of the court in any case where a person;
 - (a) assaults, threatens, intimidates, or willfully insults a judicial officer or a witness, during a sitting or attendance in a court, or in going to or returning from the court to whom any relevant proceedings relate;
 - (b) willfully interrupts or obstructs the proceedings of a magistrate court; or
 - (c) willfully disobeys an order or direction of a magistrate court.
2. That the powers contained in sub-section 1 shall not be applicable to a legal practitioner.
3. In the case of criminal contempt of a subordinate court involving a legal practitioner, the High Court may take action on a reference made to it by the magistrate or on a motion made by the Attorney-General & Minister of Justice.

4. An appeal shall lie from a decision of the Magistrate Court to the High Court within seven days of the date of the decision on points of law, points of fact or mixed law and fact.

12. Summary Proceedings

- (1) An offence of contempt of court shall be tried summarily and the court shall keep a record of the proceedings.
- (2) Without prejudice to subsection (1), the Rules of Court Committee may make rules of procedure to regulate proceedings and the process to try an offence of contempt of court, including
 - (a) transfer of proceedings from the magistrate court to the High court;
 - (b) proceedings in camera and prohibition of publication of proceedings; and
 - (c) appeals and limitations for appeals.
- (3) Notwithstanding subsection (1), any proceedings to try an offence of contempt of court provided for under any other written law shall not take away the right of any person to a fair trial in accordance with Section 23 of the 1991 Constitution Act No. 6 of 1991.

13. Institution of Proceedings

Proceedings for criminal contempt of court shall not be instituted except by or with the consent of the Attorney-General & Minister of Justice or pursuant to section 11(3).

PART IV – OFFENCES

14. The offence of Contempt of Court

A person shall be guilty of contempt if he -

- (a) assaults, threatens, intimidates, or willfully insults a judge or judicial officer or a witness, during a sitting or attendance in a court, or in going to or returning from the court;
- (b) willfully and without lawful excuse disobeys an order or directions of a court in the course of the hearing of a proceeding;

- (c) within the premises in which any judicial proceeding is being had or taken, or within the precincts of the same, shows disrespect, in speech or manner, to or with reference to such proceeding, or any person before whom such proceeding is being heard or taken;
- (d) having been called upon to give evidence in a judicial proceeding, fails to attend, or having attended refuses to be sworn or to make an affirmation, or, having been sworn or affirmed, refuses without lawful excuse to answer a question or to produce a document, or remains in the room in which such proceeding is being had or taken, after the witnesses have been ordered to leave such room;
- (e) causes an obstruction or disturbance in the course of a judicial proceeding;
- (f) while a judicial proceeding is pending, makes use of any speech or writing misrepresenting such proceeding or capable of prejudicing any person in favour of or against any parties to such proceeding, or calculated to lower the authority taken;
- (g) publishes a report of the evidence taken in any judicial proceeding which has been directed to be held in private;
- (h) attempts wrongfully to interfere with or influence a witness in a judicial proceeding, either before or after he has given evidence, in connection with such evidence;
- (i) forcibly retakes possession of land from any person who has recently obtained possession by an order of court; or
- (j) commits any other act of intentional disrespect to any judicial proceedings, or to any person before whom such proceeding is being heard or taken, commits an offence.

15. Punishment for Contempt of Court

- (1) Save as otherwise expressly provided in this Act or in any other written law, a person who is convicted of contempt of court is

liable to a fine not exceeding NLe. 20,000.00 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or to both.

- (2) Without prejudice to subsection (1), the court may order that the accused person be detained in police custody until the rising of the court.
- (3) A court may at any time revoke an order of committal made under subsection (2) and, if the offender is in custody, order his discharge.
- (4) Subject to subsection (1), the accused may be discharged or the punishment awarded may be remitted on apology being made to the satisfaction of the court.
- (5) Notwithstanding anything contained in any law for the time being in force, no court shall impose a sentence in excess of that specified in subsection (1) for any contempt either in respect of that court or of a court subordinate to it.
- (6) Notwithstanding anything contained in this section, where a person is found guilty of civil contempt, the court may if it considers that the fine will not meet the ends of justice and that imprisonment is necessary ~~to~~ direct that the person be detained in prison for such period not exceeding six months as the court may deem fit.

16. Punishment against management of company;

- (1) Where a company is found guilty of contempt of court in respect of any undertaking given to a court by the company, every person who, at the time the contempt was committed, was in charge of and was responsible to the company for the conduct of business of the company, as well as the company, shall be deemed to be guilty of the contempt and such person may with the leave of the court be committed to prison:

Provided that nothing in this subsection shall render any such person liable to punishment if the person proves to the satisfaction of the court that the contempt was committed

without his or her knowledge or that he or she exercised all due diligence to prevent its commission.

(2) Where the contempt of court is committed by a company and it is proved to the satisfaction of the court that the contempt has been committed with the consent or connivance of, or is attributable to any neglect on the part of any director, manager, secretary or other officers of the company, such director, manager, secretary or other officers shall also be deemed to be guilty of the contempt and may, with the leave of the court be committed to prison and in addition, be liable to a fine not exceeding Le. 50,000.00.

(3) No State officer or public officer shall be convicted of contempt of court for the execution of his duties done in good faith.

PART V – DEFENCE TO CONTEMPT OF COURT

17. Defence to Contempt of Court

In proceedings for contempt of court, it shall be a defence if it is proved to the satisfaction of the court that the conduct in issue;

- (a) is a fair comment on the general working of the court made in good faith, in the public interest and in temperate language;
- (b) is a fair comment on the merits of a decision of a court made in good faith and in temperate language;
- (c) is a publication of a fair and substantially accurate report of any judicial proceeding;
- (d) is a publication of any matter amounting to contempt of court by reason of its being published during judicial proceedings, by a person who had no reasonable grounds to believe that such judicial proceedings were pending at the time of the publication of the matter;
- (e) pertains to distribution of a publication containing any matter amounting to contempt of court by a person who had no reasonable ground to believe that the publication contained or was likely to contain any such matter;

- (f) is a true declaration made in good faith and in temperate language for initiation of action or in the course of disciplinary proceedings against a judge or judicial officer;
- (g) is a plea of truth taken up as a defence in any contempt of court charge under this Act or any written law;
- (h) is a relevant observation made in judicial capacity by a superior court on an appeal or revision or application for transfer of a case or by a court in judicial proceedings against a judge or judicial officer;
- (i) is a remark made in an administrative capacity by an authority in the cause of official business, including a remark connected with a disciplinary inquiry or in an inspection note or a character roll or confidential report; or
- (j) pertains to any other matter exempted from constituting a commission of an offence of contempt of court under any other written law.

18. Innocent Publication or Distribution;

- (1) A person is not guilty of contempt of court under the strict liability rule if that person has published any matter which interferes or tends to interfere with, or obstructs or tends to obstruct, the course of justice in connection with any civil or criminal proceedings pending at the time of publication, if at that time, that person had no reason to believe that the proceedings were pending.
- (2) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this Act or any other law, the publication of any matter referred to in subsection (1) in connection with any civil or criminal proceedings which is not pending at the time of publication does not constitute contempt of court.
- (3) A person shall not be guilty of contempt of court under the strict liability rule if that person distributed a publication containing any matter referred to in subsection (1), if at the time

of distribution that person did not know or had no reason to believe that it contained such matter or was likely to contain any such matter.

- (4) The burden of proof of any fact tending to establish a defence under this section to any person is upon that person.
- (5) Subsection (3) does not apply in respect of distribution of
 - (a) any publication which is a book or paper printed or published; or
 - (b) any publication which is a newspaper published, other than in conformity with the Newspapers Act (Cap. 111).

19. Fair and Accurate Report of Judicial Proceeding not Contempt;

- (1) A person is not guilty of contempt of court for publishing a fair and accurate report of judicial proceedings held in open court if the report is published in good faith.
- (2) In any judicial proceedings held in open court, the court may, where it appears necessary to avoid the risk of prejudice to the administration of justice in those proceedings, or in any other proceedings pending or imminent, order that the publication of any report of the proceedings, or any part of the proceedings, be postponed for such period as the court determines is necessary for that purpose.

20. Fair Criticism of Judicial Act

A person is not guilty of contempt of court for publishing any fair comment on the merits of any case, which has been heard and determined.

21. Complaint against presiding officers of courts not contempt;

- (1) A person shall not be guilty of contempt of court in respect of any complaint made by that person concerning the judge or person presiding in court or tribunal to
 - (a) a competent authority;
 - (b) a judicial officer.

22. Publication of information relating to proceedings in chambers or in camera, not contempt except in certain cases;

(1) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act, a person is not guilty of contempt of court for publishing a fair and accurate report of judicial proceedings before any court sitting in chambers or in camera except in the following cases;

- (a) where the publication is contrary to any law;
- (b) where the court, on grounds of public policy or in exercise of any power vested in it, expressly prohibits the publication of all information relating to the proceedings or of information of the description which is published;
- (c) where the court sits in chambers or in camera for reasons relating to public order or national security, the publication of information relating to those proceedings;
- (d) where the information relates to a secret process, discovery or invention which is in issue in the proceedings.

(2) Without prejudice to subsection (1), a person is not guilty of contempt of court for publishing the text or a fair and accurate summary of the whole, or any part, of an order made by any court sitting in chambers or in camera, unless the court has expressly prohibited the publication thereof;

- (a) on the grounds of public policy or interest;
- (b) for reasons connected with public order or national security;
- (c) on the ground that it contains information relating to a secret process, discovery or invention, or in exercise of any power vested in it.

23. Discussion of public affairs

A publication made as part of a discussion in good faith of public affairs or other matters of general public interest is not contempt of court under the

strict liability rule if the risk of impediment or prejudice to particular legal proceedings is merely incidental to the discussion.

24. Sources of information

A person is not guilty of contempt of court for refusing to disclose, the source of information contained in a publication for which the person is responsible unless it is established to the satisfaction of the court that such disclosure is necessary in the interest national security or for the prevention crime.

25. Publication of matters exempted from disclosure in court;

Where a court, having power to do so, allows a name or other matter to be withheld from publication in relation to proceedings before the court, the court may give such directions prohibiting the publication of that name or matter as appear to the court to be necessary for the purpose for which it was so withheld.

26. Other defences not affected

Nothing contained in this Act shall be construed as implying that any other defence which would be a valid defence in any proceedings for contempt of court has ceased to be available merely by reason of the provisions of this Act.

PART VI – CONTEMPT OF COURT PROCEEDINGS

27. Trial for contempt of court shall not constitute double jeopardy;

(1) Nothing in this Act shall prevent;

- (a) a court from trying a person for any other related criminal offence or adjudicating a civil matter; or
- (b) a person from instituting or seeking prosecution for any other offence provided for under any other written law.

28. Power of High Court to punish contempt of subordinate courts;

The High Court has the same jurisdiction, power and authority, in accordance with the same procedure and practice, in respect of contempt of magistrate court as it has and exercises in respect of contempt of the High Court.

29. Procedure where contempt is in superior court;

- (1) Where it is alleged that, or appears to a superior court that a person has committed contempt of court in its presence or hearing, the court may cause such person to be detained in custody and at any time before the rising of the court, on the same day or not more than twenty-four hours thereafter shall;
 - (a) cause the person to be informed in writing of the contempt of court with which he or she is charged;
 - (b) afford that person an opportunity to make his or her defence to the charge;
 - (c) after taking such evidence as may be necessary or as may be offered by such person and after hearing him or her, proceed, either forthwith or after adjournment, to determine the matter of the charge; and
 - (d) make such order for the punishment or discharge of such person on such terms as may be just.
- (2) The court shall grant bail to the person referred to in sub-section 1 if the proceedings cannot be completed on the date of the hearing.

31. Criminal contempt in other cases

- (1) In the case of criminal contempt, a superior court may take action on its own motion or on an application made by any person.
- (2) In the case of any criminal contempt of a subordinate court, the High Court may take action on a reference made to it by the subordinate court or on a motion made by the Attorney-General & Minister of Justice or an application made by any other person.

- (3) Every motion or reference made under this section shall specify the contempt of court the person is charged with.

PART VII – MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

32. Revision of order

- (1) The High Court may, on an application made by a person aggrieved by an order by a magistrate court to punish for contempt of court revise such order on such terms as it deems fit and may upon revision;
 - (a) uphold the order of the magistrate court;
 - (b) reverse or overturn the order; or
 - (c) release the applicant with or without conditions.
- (2) An application under subsection (1) shall be made on the following grounds;
 - (a) an error apparent on the face of record; or
 - (b) discovery of new and important matter or evidence which, after the exercise of due diligence, was not within the knowledge of the applicant and could not be produced by him or her at the time when the order was passed.

33. Review of order

- (1) The High Court shall have power to review its own orders made in respect of this Act.
- (2) Pending the review of an order under subsection (1), the High Court may order that;
 - (a) the execution of the punishment or order to be reviewed be suspended; and
 - (b) if the subject of the order or decision is in confinement, the subject be released on bail.

34. Appeals

- (1) An appeal shall lie from any order or decision of the High Court in the exercise of its jurisdiction to punish for contempt to the

Court of Appeal and from the Court of Appeal to the Supreme Court.

(2) Pending an appeal, an appellate court may order that;

(a) the execution of the punishment or order appealed against be suspended; and

(b) if the appellant is in confinement, the appellant be released on bail.

(3) Where a person aggrieved by any order against which an appeal may be filed satisfies the High Court that he or she intends to file an appeal, the High Court may also exercise all or any of the powers conferred by subsection (2).

(4) An appeal under subsection (1) shall be filed;

(a) in the case of an appeal to the Court of Appeal or to the Supreme Court, within thirty days, from the date of the order appealed against.

35. Limitations of actions for contempt;

No court or any person shall initiate any proceedings for contempt of court either on its or his own motion or otherwise after the expiration of a period of six months from the date on which the contempt of court is alleged to have been committed.

37. Act to be in addition to and not in derogation of other laws relating to contempt;

The provisions of this Act shall supersede any other written law relating to contempt of court.

38. Rules

The Rules of Court Committee may make rules for the better carrying out of the purposes of this Act.

39. Transitional provisions

- (1) Any proceedings, actions, or applications initiated under the common law, and pending at the time of the coming into force of this Act, shall continue to be governed by the common law.
- (2) Notwithstanding the commencement of this Act, any orders, directions, judgments, or decisions made under the common law and in force at the commencement of this Act, shall remain valid and enforceable until varied, discharged, or set aside by a competent court.
- (3) All pending investigations, inquiries, or prosecutions for contempt of court under the common law shall continue, and any subsequent proceedings arising from such investigations, inquiries, or prosecutions shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of this Act.
- (4) Any penalties, sanctions, or punishments imposed under the common law prior to the commencement of this Act shall remain in force, and the provisions of this Act shall apply for the enforcement, execution, or implementation of such penalties, sanctions, or punishments.
- (5) Any pending appeals or reviews filed under the common law shall be transferred to the appropriate appellate or review jurisdiction as provided by this Act and shall be adjudicated upon in accordance with the procedural and substantive provisions of this Act.
- (6) Nothing in this transitional provision shall be construed as affecting the validity, force, or effect of any act done, decision made, or proceedings taken under the common law, or as derogating from any rights, privileges, or remedies available to any person under the common law or any other law.
- (7) This transitional provision shall come into force on the same day as this Act receives Presidential Assent and shall remain in effect until all proceedings, actions, or applications initiated under the common law are finally determined or otherwise disposed of.