



JUDICIARY OF SEYCHELLES

PRESS STATEMENT

From: The Judiciary
Date: 28th February 2017
To: All media

On behalf of all judges and magistrates, the Judiciary wishes to respond to the public, verbal attacks on the Judiciary as an institution and on its non-Seychellois judicial officers specifically. These attacks include statements made at recent public political rallies and circulated on social media. The statement that the Judiciary is “in the hands of foreigners”, which has xenophobic undertones, is untrue. Less than 10% of the total judicial officers in Seychelles are non-Seychellois. The comments made in this regard constitute an attack on the few individuals who suspend their lives in other countries to assist the Seychelles Judiciary when we are unable to fill judicial positions based on applications received. Judicial officers cannot respond individually to attacks of this kind and nor should they have to. The Judiciary as a whole supports them in the important work they do for this country.

We wish to remind lawyer-politicians of their legal responsibilities under the Legal Practitioners’ Act, specifically of their overriding duty as ‘Officers of the Court’ under the Legal Practitioners (Professional Conduct) Rules, 2013 and their commitment to maintaining public confidence in the administration of justice.

Breach of these rules is a failure of professional ethics and such statements, made for personal gain, bring disrepute to the Judiciary and the esteemed reputation of the Bar Association of Seychelles.

The Judiciary is committed to transparency as an institution and welcomes the media to engage with it on the truth underlying any allegations that are made regarding specific cases.

We also stand by our commitment to fulfilling our mandate under the Constitution and are confident in the skills and independence of our judicial officers. We request that public officials and officers of the Court refrain from attempts to intimidate the Judiciary. We have a job to do and must continue to perform our functions independently and without fear of recrimination.

