**8 SEPTEMBER 2022**

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**Minutes of the meeting held on the above date at the Labadi Beach Hotel, Accra Ghana**

**PRESENT:**

(#denotes Member Association representative notified to CMJA)

(\*denotes individual member)  
(! denotes Institutional Member)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Charles Mkandawire (in the chair)\* | Malawi | Tim Workman\* | England and Wales |
| Olivia Owusu \* | Ghana | Georgina Mensah Dodse | Ghana |
| Rita Ageyman Budu\* | Ghana | Amma A Gaisie | Ghana |
| Felix Datsomor\* | Ghana | David Le Hueze | Jersey |
| Irene Charity Larbi\* | Ghana | Yaw P Achampong | Ghana |
| Aytey Armah- Tetteh | Ghana | Mathilda Ribeirra | Ghana |
| Patrick Kamisa\* | Malawi | Folashade Aguda-Taiwo\* | Nigeria |
| Maeme Afual Tordimah | Ghana | Chester Crooks | Jamaica |
| Aomoru Ameten # | Kiribati | Isaac I. Kintu | Uganda |
| James Ereemye # | Uganda | Adam Mambi | Tanzania |
| Mohamed U. Zanwa | Nigeria | Clarence B Malakun\* | Malaysia |
| Mary Kalhomo | Tanzania | Ilvin Mugeta\* | Tanzania |
| Jovine C Bishansa | Tanzania | Fatimah Taeburi | Solomon Islands |
| Antonio Rumisha | Tanzania | Godfrey Kaweesa\* | Uganda |
| Lydia Ilunda \* | Tanzania | Julius Mwesigye | Uganda |
| Jackline Kagoya\* | Uganda | Patricia Amoko | Uganda |
| Juan Wolffe\* | Bermuda | Tyrone Chin | Bermuda |
| Vera N. Ngasa | Cameroon | Theophilisu Tayi Tatsi# | Cameroon |
| Leonard Maina# | Solomon Islands | John Keniapisia | Solomon Islands |
| Nchimunya Simaubi # | Zambia | Patricia Basaza-Wasswa\* | Uganda |
| Eliamani Laltaika | Tanzania | Venance John Mlingi | Tanzania |
| Abuera Uruaaba | Kiribati | Stephen Sondoh\* | Malaysia |
| Mohamed R Gwae\* | Tanzania | Moses B Ndelwa\* | Tanzania |
| Desdery Kamugisha | Tanzania | Felicia Gandedzi | Ghana |
| Abdou Conteh | Gambia | Vivian Solomon | Sierra Leone |
| Emmanuel E Roberts \*# | Sierra Leone | Henry Kwofie\* | Ghana |
| Patrick D Epu | Nigeria | S Asare Nyako | Ghana |
| Joseph Akamba\* | Ghana | Amos Wutah Wuni\* | Ghana |
| Sam Rumayike | Tanzania | Tim Bisong\* | Gambia |
| Nelson Awuku\* | Ghana | Maxwell O. Kpodo\* | Ghana |
| Derrick Annan\* | Ghana | Jones Dotse | Ghana |
| Roy Jones\* | Bahamas | Mostaphar Giyani | Tanzania |
| Aidan Mwikayowa | Tanzania | Barbara Tetteh -Charway\* | Ghana |
| Rita A A Doko | Ghana | Graeme Mew\* | Canada |
| Lynne Leitch\* | Canada | John Vertes\*# | Canada |
| Joao Antonio Beirao\* | Mozambique | Sandra Machatine Tenjua\* | Mozambique |
| James Ramsay | Canada | Agnes Dordize | Ghana |
| Cynthia Pamela Addo\* | Ghana | Merley Wood\* | Ghana |
| A B Poku Acheamong\* | Ghana | Margaret Mkandawire | Malawi |
| Sybil Roach Tennant\* | England and Wales | Simon S Gbiel\* | Ghana |
| Angelina Mensah -Homiah\* | Ghana | Margaret Welbourne\* | Ghana |
| Novisi Aoyene | Ghana | Celima Sowah\* | Ghana |
| Mariaman Owusu\* | Ghana | Dora Inkumsah-Eshun\* | Ghana |
| Maura McGowan\* | England and Wales | Fadhil Shabani Mgutta | Tanzania |
| Chiganga Tengwa\* | Tanzania | Christopher Bwakila | Tanzania |
| Paul Kelly | Papua New Guinea | John Carey \* | Papua New Guinea |
| Venitius Alweendo | Namibia | Flavian Zeija | Uganda |
| Kaly Kaul \* | England and Wales | Michelle Smith\* | England and Wales |
| Shabina Qureshi | England and Wales | Jacinta Murray\* | Papua New Guinea |
| Shamim Qureshi\* | England and Wales | Ambeng Kandakasi\* | Papua New Guinea |
| Winston Patterson\* | Guyana | Saadatu I. Mark\* | Nigeria |
| Nkonye Maha \* | Nigeria | Robin Knowles\* | England and Wales |
| Gibbs Salika \*# | Papua New Guinea | Rossica Salika | Papua New Guinea |
| Yonette Cummings Edwards\*# | Guyana | Charmaine Joy Pemberton\* | Trinidad and Tobago |
| Nene Amegatcher\* | Ghana | Wahabi Shaibu | Malawi |
| Martin Picton\* | England and Wales | Prosper Gobashie | Ghana |
| Alan Large\* | England and Wales | Howard Pemba | Malawi |
| Peter Kandulu \*# | Malawi | Adeline Kasimshura | Tanzania |
| Juliana Amonoo-Neizer\* | Ghana | Courtney Abel\* | Guyana |
| Kofi Akrowiah | Ghana | Constant Hometowu\* | Ghana |
| Clemence Honyenuga | Ghana | Senyo Dzamefe\*# | Ghana |
| Keritha C Makwasa\* | Tanzania | Chiza Kabwebwe | Tanzania |
| Catherine Daud | Malawi | Bertha Pidini | Malawi |
| Veronique Tetteh | Ghana | Rosemary Baah Tosu | Ghana |
| Rejoice Aseye Gadagoe | Ghana | Joseph Mensah | Ghana |
| Abaidoo Kuesi | Ghana | Yusif Asibey | Ghana |
| Eleanor K Barnes-Botchway\* | Ghana | Akosua A. Adjepong\* | Ghana |
| Ellen S Mireku | Ghana | Sylvester Ablorh | Ghana |
| Mary MamYassin Sey# | Gambia | Awa Bah\* | Gambia |
| Afia Adu-Amankwa | Ghana | Malike Awo Woanyandey | Ghana |
| Gloria Mensah Bonsu | Ghana | Matankiso Nthunya | Lesotho |
| Diratsagae b Molomo | Botswana | Juliana SP Mensah | Ghana |
| Adwa Akijaamaa Ofosu | Ghana | Rosemary Edith Hayford | Ghana |
| Priscilla D Miseku | Ghana | Neil McCallum | UK |
| Kwasi AMokye Gyiwah | Ghana | Charles EE Baidem | Ghana |
| Musa Ssekaana | Uganda | Devine Kswaku Ahiadu | Ghana |
| Idinnie H Jatiko | Uganda | Winifred Nabasinde\* | Uganda |
| Abigail Mshila | Kenya | Charity A Asem | Ghana |
| Jane Quaye | Ghana | Elfred Dankyi | Ghana |
| Ruby N A Quaison\* | Ghana | Ruby Aryeetey\* | Ghana |
| Naa Akowaah | Ghana | Patricia Quaison | Ghana |
| Judith Gleeson\* | England and Wales | Claudia Claasen # | Namibia |
| Atutala Shikalepo\* | Namibia | Ei Sun Oh # | Malaysia |
| Hugh Matthews\* | Scotland | Andrew Normand\* | Scotland |
| Gertel Thom | St Lucia (ECSC) | Ije Jombo-Ofo\* | Nigeria |
| Ifeoma Jombo Ofo\* | Nigeria | Sarafa Olaitan | Nigeria |
| Butamo Kasuka Phillip\* | Tanzania | Stella Mugasha | Tanzania |
| Shaban A Lila | Tanzania | Florence Nakachwa Dollo\* | Uganda |
| R . A B Singh | Guyana | Bright Akaande \* | Ghana |
| Seth Alafa | Ghana | Jennifer Bwalya | Zambia |
| Sangwani Nyimbiri | Zambia | Katrina Walubita\* | Zambia |
| Ihua Nladuewji | Nigeria | Shiraz Aziz | Turks and Caicos |
| Godwin Ibemesi\* | Nigeria | Rizine Mzikamanda\* | Malawi |
| CJ Ibrahim Juma\* | Tanzania | Peter Shivute # | Namibia |
| Satiu S Perese\*# | Samoa | Richard Cogswell\* | Australia |
| James Dingemans\* | England and Wales | Nestor Kayobera\*! | Burundi /EACJ |
| Momodou S M Jallow\* | Gambia | Bryan Skyes\*# | Jamaica |
| CJ Owiny Dollo\* | Uganda | Ntasai Manyarara\* | England and Wales |
| Tawanda Hondora | UK | Elen Mreku | Ghana |
| Orukari Amaebi | Nigeria | Aforkeya Obomejero | Nigeria |
| Walter Onnoghen\* | Nigeria |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**In attendance:** Dr Karen Brewer

The President apologised for the delay in the meeting due to technical difficulties. There seemed to be some confusion as to whether or not delegates could attend the General Assembly. This was not a closed meeting and anyone at the Conference was welcome to attend. The last General Assembly was held in Brisbane, Australia in 2018. The President pointed out that no CMJA President could claim any experience on how to handle the General Assembly as the only meeting they handled was the one they chaired as they were leaving the position. In his Opening Remarks for the Conference, the President had read out the Message from the CMJA Patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The CMJA had recently received information that Her Majesty remained under medical supervision at Balmoral Castle following serious concerns for her Majesty’s health and it had been asked to say a prayer for her.

Before the actual business of the General Assembly took place, the President informed those present that the CMJA had lost several of its members. The CMJA had lost Michael Lambert CBE, the longest serving person in the CMJA who Treasurer and Executive Vice President of the Association had been as well as being a Hon. Life Vice President of the CMJA. He had passed away recently in the UK. The CMJA had also lost its serving Treasurer, Patrick Latham who had passed away on 23 August 2022 and whom some of the delegates would have come across at the CMJA Conferences in previous years. In addition, the CMJA had been recently informed that former Secretary General, John Buchanan had also passed away recently. In addition, the CMJA had been officially notified of a number of members and friends who had passed away since 2019 and although the list was not exhaustive the following were remembered:

Former Chief Justice Augustino Rahmadhani – Tanzania

former Chief Justice Idris Legbo Kutigi- Nigeria

Justice Leigh Gower- Canada

Justice Charlie Quinn- Cayman Islands

Justice Chaka Makaooane – Lesotho

Justice Regina Sagu - Papua New Guinea

Sir Nicholas Kirriworm - Papua New Guinea

Former Sheriff Brian Lockhart- Scotland

Mrs Gloria Millwood- former Council Member - Jamaica

Chief Justice Irene Mambilima - Zambia

Former Chief Justice Lovemore- Malawi

Former Chief Justice George Elliott Harre- Cayman Islands.

Former Chief Judge Robert Magnus- Singapore

Mr David Stewart- Scotland

A minute silence was held for those who had passed since 2019. May their souls rest in peace.

[NB: shortly after the meeting, it was also announced that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had passed away].

The President introduced the other people on the platform, the CMJA Secretary General, Karen Brewer and Tim Workman, Executive Vice President, who liaises between the President and the Secretariat on behalf of the CMJA Council.

**1. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the last meeting had been circulated and had been made available on the CMJA website. They were assumed to have been read. There were no matters arising.

**It was resolved:** to sign the minutes as correct. Proposed James Dingemans, Seconded Richard Cogswell.

**2. APOLOGIES**

There were apologies from the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Justice Les Gavara-Nanu, OBE CSM | Papua New Guinea |
| Chief Justice of Mauritius and Mauritian Delegation | Mauritius |
| David Armati | Australia |
| David Hope | Scotland |
| Douglas Allan | Scotland |
| Richard Williams | Cayman Islands |
| Mary Beth Sharp | New Zealand |
| Linda Bradford Morgan | Australia |
| Chief Justice of Brunei | Brunei |

**3. PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

The President’s report had been circulated and placed on the CMJA website. He summarised some key points. He indicated that he had represented the CMJA at some conferences, including the SADC Chief Justices’ Forum where there had been discussions on strengthening judicial independence (including the appointments systems). The Forum had also adopted the Lilongwe Principles and Guidelines on the selection of appointments.

The President had also been invited to attend the International Commission of Jurists- Kenya Conference on the state of judicial independence in Africa, held in Cape Town to speak about the Latimer House Principles. He had also been invited to Lesotho to speak on the independence of the judiciary and access to justice. The President also represented the CMJA at the Senior Officials of Law Ministers Meeting and the Commonwealth Law Minsters Meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka in November 2019 where he presented a report on the activities of the CMJA, including the work that had been undertaken on promoting the Latimer House Principles, judicial appointments and the status of magistrates across the Commonwealth many of whom are still considered civil servants.

The President also reported that he had been invited to speak at the UNODC’s Global Judicial Integrity Network Conference in 2019 in Doha and had attended a judicial conference organised by the German government in Cote d’Ivoire which was attended by a number of francophone countries interested in learning more about the Commonwealth principles. This was important as Togo and Gabon had recently joined the Commonwealth.

The President indicated that being President involved a great deal of work.

**It was resolved:** to note the report

**4. HON TREASURER’S REPORT**

The audited accounts for since 2019 had been placed on the General Assembly page on the website together with the report prepared by the Hon. Treasurer Patrick Latham. With the passing of the Hon. Treasurer in August, the Secretary General gave a brief report on the current financial situation of the CMJA. Whilst the CMJA was a going concern, the association was highly dependent on Members paying their membership dues on time as it received very little other funding apart from any surpluses on Conferences.

**It was resolved:** to note the report. Proposer Richard Cogswell, Seconder Yonette Cummings Edwards

**5. SECRETARY GENERAL’S REPORT**

The Secretary General’s report had been placed on the General Assembly page on the website and was taken as read. She pointed out that whilst the CMJA public profile was visible at the CMJA Conferences, the CMJA’s main objective was the protection and promotion of judicial independence and a lot of work was being undertaken in this area. She emphasised the updating of the Guide for the Magistrate in the Commonwealth: Fundamental Principles and Recommended Practices which was published in August 2021. The CMJA was also working with the Chief Justice of Jamaica and Lord Justice Dingemans on a project to support the funding and resourcing of the judiciary – following the publication during the Pandemic of the Principles on Funding and Resourcing the Judiciary. It was hope that these principles would be submitted to the next Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting for consideration.

**It was resolved:** to note the report. Proposer Graeme Mew, Seconder Peter Shivute

**6. REGIONAL REPORTS**

The President indicated that these reports which were quite long were available on the General Assembly page of the website.

**It was resolved:** to note the reports. Proposer John Vertes, Seconder Winston Patterson

**7. DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMMES REPORT**

This was also available on the General Assembly page of the website and was taken as read.

**It was resolved:** to note the report. Proposer Charmaine Pemberton, CJ Gibbs Salika

**8 GENDER SECTION CHAIR REPORT**

This was also available on the General Assembly page of the website and was taken as read.

**It was resolved:** to note the report. Proposer Richard Cogswell, Seconded, James Ramsay

**9. REPORT FROM THE EDITOR OF THE JOURNAL**

This was also available on the General Assembly page of the website and was taken as read.

**It was resolved:** to note the report. Proposer Shamim Qureshi, Seconder Alan Large.

**10. ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION**

**10.1 Election of the President**

Only one nomination had been received for President of the CMJA that of Mrs Justice Lynne Leitch of Canada who had been a long standing member of the CMJA Council. The nomination received was endorsed by acclamation at the General Assembly. Annexed to these minutes is the acceptance speech made by the incoming President.

**It was resolved:** to appoint Mrs Justice Lynne Leitch President of the Association for the period 2022-2025.

**10.2 Election of the Regional Council Members**

The President indicated that despite the notices being sent out to all member associations, the CMJA had received few nominations by the deadline. In line with the Constitution, the Secretary General had extended the timing for the nominations to the time of the Regional Meetings held on 6 September 2022.

The following elections to Council had taken place at the Regional Meetings held on 6 September 2022:

**ATLANTIC AND MEDITERRANEAN**

Regional Vice President: Mr Justice Graeme Mew, Canada

First Council Member: Mrs Sybil Roach Tennant, England and Wales

Second Council Member: Sherriff Donald Corke, Scotland

**CARIBBEAN**

Regional Vice President: Hon. Justice Richard Williams

First Council Member: Hon. Chester Crooks

Second Council Member: vacant

**EAST, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA**

Regional Vice President: Judge Ilvin Mugeta, Tanzania

First Council Member: Nchimunya Simaubi, Zambia

Second Council Member: Jackline Kagoya, Uganda

**INDIAN OCEAN**

Regional Vice President: Justice Balusundaram Rajendran, India

First Council Member: Dr Ei Sun Oh, Malaysia

Second Council Member: Vacant

**PACIFIC**

Regional Vice President: Mrs Linda Bradford Morgan, Australia

First Council Member: Richard Cogswell, Australia

Second Council Member: Dr John Carey, PNG

**WEST AFRICA**Regional Vice President: Hon. Justice Emmanuel Roberts, Sierra Leone

First Council Member: Hon. Felix Datsomor, Ghana

Second Council Member: His Worship Godwin Ibemesi, Nigeria

Any vacancies would be filled by resolution of Council. These elections were endorsed by acclamation at the General Assembly.

The President thanked the outgoing Council and in particular those who were not standing for re-­election.

**10.3 Gender Section Representatives**

The following elections to Council had taken place at the Regional Meetings held on 11 September 2022:

**Atlantic and Mediterranean:** DJ Michelle Smith, England and Wales

**Caribbean:** Justice Charmaine Pemberton, Trinidad and Tobago

**East, Central and Southern Africa:** Ms Atutala Shikalapo, Namibia

**Indian Ocean:**  Datuk Stephen Sondoh, Malaysia

**Pacific:**  Mrs Linda Bradford Morgan, Australia

**West Africa:** Hon. Abena Asumah Oppong, Ghana

**11 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The following amendments were proposed to the Constitution:

**11.1 Amendments To Article 4.1, 6.2 and 9.1**

Previously, the Chairman of the Steering Committee which was responsible for the organisation of the CMJA Conferences, had been co-opted onto the Council. However, the Council feltl that the Chairman should in fact be an Officio Member of the Council and an Officer of the Association appointed by the Council in the same way that the Treasurer, Director of Programmes and Executive Vice President. The Council were therefore recommending to the General Assembly the following amendment (in bold below)

*“4.1 The Officers of the Association shall be:*

1. *the President,*
2. *the Executive Vice President,*
3. *the Regional Vice Presidents,*
4. *the Secretary General,*
5. *the Treasurer,*
6. *the Immediate Past President,*
7. *the Director of Programmes,*
8. ***the Chairman of the Steering Committee*”**

***6.2*** *The members of the Council shall consist of:*

1. *The President,*
2. *The Executive Vice President,*
3. *Six Regional Vice Presidents,*
4. *Twelve other elected members,*
5. *The Immediate Past President,*
6. *The Treasurer,*
7. *The Honorary Life Vice Presidents,*
8. ***The Chairman of the Steering Committee,*** *and*

*(i) Co-opted members.*

and:

***“9.1*** *The Council shall appoint the Executive Vice-President, the Treasurer,* ***The Chairman of the Steering Committee*** *and the Director of Programmes who need not be magistrates or judges or otherwise qualified to be Individual Members and the persons so appointed shall hold office until the first Council meeting after the conclusion of a General Assembly at which elections are held.”*

**11.2 Amendment To Article 3.3**

The following amendment (in bold below) was proposed to Article 3.3 as a number of courts had applied in the past to the CMJA for membership and the constitution is unclear about the position:

*“Any judicial body* ***OR COURT*** *of or including magistrates and/or judges in a Commonwealth Country or Countries accepted by the Council as a Judicial Association may, at the discretion of Council, be admitted as a Member Association, and more than one such Association from the same Commonwealth Country may, at the discretion of the Council, be admitted to membership.”*

**It was resolved:** to amend the CMJA’s Articles of Association to include the above provisions. Proposer Richard Cogswell, Seconder James Dingemans

**12 OPEN DISCUSSION**

Mr Godfrey Kaweesa suggested that it might be nice if the CMJA Patron recorded a message for the CMJA if they couldn’t attend in person, although it was pointed out that she had in fact sent a message which had been read at the Opening Ceremony by the CMJA President.

[NB: shortly after the meeting, we were informed that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had passed away and a message was placed on the CMJA website in tribute to her]

**13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Honorary Life Membership**The President spoke about Sheriff Douglas Allan who had been involved with the organisation of the CMJA Conferences since Edinburgh in 2000 and had served until recently as Chairman of the CMJA’s Steering Committee, participating in fact finding missions as well as being an active member of the Association for over 23 years and who could not be at the Conference for health reasons although he had attended the Council Meeting via Zoom. He reminded those present that being a Council Member was a voluntary position with no remuneration and Douglas Allan had contributed enormously to the work of the association not only as a member of the Steering Committee but also the Executive Committee, providing sound advice and support. The Council were proposing that Douglas Allan become an Honorary Life Member. The General Assembly were also informed that the CMJA would be changing the title of the Training Development Fund as well the Douglas Alan Training Development Fund, henceforth.

**Handover Of The Badge Of Office**

Justice Charles Mkandawire, the outgoing CMJA President of the Association formally handed over the Badge of Office to the incoming CMJA President, Mrs Justice Lynne Leitch

**14. SPEECH BY THE INCOMING PRESIDENT**

*“Thank you very much Charles and thank you to everyone here who was supportive of me assuming this position. It is a great privilege and an honour.*

*May I begin by saying that I think Charles deserves special thanks. He has had an extra year of responsibility because of the impact of the pandemic on our meeting and so I think we owe him, as I said, an extra expression of appreciation for taking on those duties. I also wish to acknowledge, and express appreciation for, Charles’ thoughtfulness. He has represented us very well over the past four years. He always exemplifies humility and graciousness and, on top of all these virtues, we really enjoyed his sense of humour.*

*Whilst I have gotten to know many of you since I have attended CMJA conferences over the past number of years, there are a number of you who do not know me. Let me tell you a few things about myself so that we might have some points of commonality and things to share over the next three years which may help us to know each other better and which may allow me to help you more.*

*I first became involved with the CMJA in 2010. It is very special to me that I am here today with John Vertes from Canada, who is a past President of the CMJA. It was John who encouraged me to become involved with this Association and I attended my first conference in Brighton in 2010.*

*At that time, I was the President of the Canadian Superior Court Judges Association and thereafter I chaired the Committee that made the quadrennial submissions to the Federal Government on judicial compensation for judges in Canada. That was a volunteer project over four years.*

*I am a High Court judge, in Ontario, the largest province in Canada. I have been a judge for thirty years. I have four children who are now between 31 and 36. In case you are wondering that includes a set of twins. I have been married 45 years to my husband John, who has come with me from time to time and who is planning on coming to Cardiff.*

*I have had a number of administrative positions within my court during my thirty years as a judge. I was a regional senior justice for six years in the 2000s. As I mentioned, I was very involved in the Canadian Superior Court Judges Association. As I acquired more experience with the court, I have become involved in international projects, working with our Federal Commissioner of Judicial Affairs. I have done work in a number of countries, some within the Commonwealth. So being involved in this Association feels very comfortable. I feel very privileged and honoured to be serving in this position. My background, before I was appointed, a long time ago, was in commercial matters so I remain quite involved in education in Canada on commercial issues and business law but of course over the years, I have done all kinds of work and presided over cases involving diverse legal issues.*

*I hope with that information I can develop some common points of interest. I look forward to working with all of you.*

*I particularly want to mention that I look forward to working with our Secretary General, Dr Karen Brewer. As Chair of the Gender Section for the last six years, I have worked closely with her preparing the newsletter. I have also worked with her through our partnership with UNODC. Over the course of the summer, I have been included in some of the communications of the Executive Committee and have developed an appreciation for how she works with other partner organisations. I have witnessed the respect that other Commonwealth organisations have for the CMJA. I want to say that we could not ask for a more capable or more dedicated Secretary General who has an intense passion for this organisation.*

*I would like to echo the appreciation for the judges of Ghana and the Local Organising Committee. I think it is truly remarkable that under their leadership working with Karen and her team this conference has been a tremendous success in terms of the number of delegates and the programme. Thank you all. Justice Dotse, when you opened the programme on Monday you said that you were confident that the Local Organising Committee would do Ghana proud. May I say that you were right with your prediction. They have done so.*

*I also look forward to working with our “beloved” Sham. Sham, everyone feels so comfortable and so welcome. You have an ability to have everyone say yes to you no matter what you ask and you do everything that has to be done to make this conference a success from developing the programme to making sure that everything is ready. We really can’t thank you enough for your dedication both before the Conference and all during the year. Thank you very much.*

*I also want to recognise and acknowledge the other members of the Executive Committee noting in particular the unflappable Tim Workman and Andrew Normand, Chair of the Steering Committee. I look forward to working with them as we prepare for future conferences over the next few years.*

*I also look forward to working with all of the Executive Committee, the Regional Vice Presidents and the new members of Council and all of you who make this organisation such a unique one. Truly, I think it is fair to say that this organisation is very special. We consider ourselves a family. We lost some members of our family this summer as has been noted. We are a family because we share common bonds, we have some common history but most importantly we share common goals. We all have the same aims and goals to advance the administration of justice by promoting judicial independence and in ensuring that in all of our actions we are promoting and maintaining public trust and confidence in the administration of justice. We share a commitment to education in the law. We share a commitment to the appropriate treatment of offenders, the protection of individuals’ rights and the prevention of crime.*

*We are part of a family, as I mentioned and what makes it special is that we are all interested in hearing from each other. This is a week of learning and sharing. We respect other people’s views and perspectives. We empathise with the challenges that are shared with us. We also celebrate other’s innovations and achievements and hope to emulate them.*

*We have stood together during tumultuous times over the last number of years in extraordinary circumstances and I believe we have come together this week stronger than ever. It is wonderful to think that our family has expanded to the extent that it has and can I ask all of you to be Ambassadors for the Association over the next year and encourage your colleagues to join the CMJA and become part of our family.*

*We have had a great week. I feel we have been energised by our discussions. I think we are leaving here with better and more information and new ideas. We have benefitted from hearing from all of us and we are going to implement some of these innovations and hope to have the same achievements in these projects as in the jurisdictions where they have been successful.*

*Thank you very much for giving me the honour and privilege of serving as President of the Association over the next three years. I very much look forward to keeping in touch with you between now and the next time we are together in Cardiff. I commit to you that I will do my very best to fulfil all the objectives of this Association. Please be in touch if you have any suggestions or comments.*

*All the best to all of you. Thank you to everyone for being here and for all your contributions. Before I came here, I read that Ghana was the friendliest country in Africa, I think I agree with that sentiment, with all due respect to all the other countries represented here.*

*On behalf of all of our family, thank you to everyone who has made this conference so successful.*

*It is my duty now to close the Conference. “*

Signed

President