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**UNMIL supports Justice Ministry through training of state prosecutors**

**Monrovia, Liberia** – The Solicitor-General of Liberia, Counsellor-at-Law Tiawan Gongloe, has commended the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) for providing 12 prosecutorial consultants to serve as state prosecutors. The Liberian government has been struggling to clear a backlog of cases in court and Mr. Gongloe said UNMIL’s assistance has greatly enhanced the capacity of the Justice Ministry to prosecute rape, armed robbery and other cases.



Workshop participants during the group working session

The Solicitor-General made this statement at an UNMIL-Ministry of Justice organized workshop for 16 state prosecutors from the 16 political sub-divisions of Liberia under the theme: “Understanding Court Room Practice and Procedure.” The four-day workshop ended Friday, 27 October, at UNMIL Media Center in Monrovia.

Clr. Gongloe said the legal profession demands constant learning which requires understanding substantive and procedural laws, as well as improving the skills for making effective use of legal knowledge both in and out of the courtroom. “This workshop provides an excellent opportunity for learning through the exchange of views on various key areas for enabling prosecutors to perform their duties with greater certainty and confidence,” he added. He then thanked UNMIL, through its Legal and Judicial System Support Division (LJSSD) for working towards improving the Liberian justice system.

Also speaking at the workshop, Mr. Alfred Fofie, Director of UNMIL LJSSD, said although the LJSSD has conducted seven workshops for prosecutors over the past two years, this was the first time that the Division organized a training program to bring together only prosecutors who are qualified lawyers. “Past workshops have involved both lawyers and non-lawyers prosecutors with the requisite experience and expertise,” Mr. Fofie pointed out.

Mr. Fofie used the occasion to reiterate that UNMIL, through its LJSSD, is mandated to assist in finding solutions for the reform and rebuilding of the capacity of legal and judicial institutions and personnel with a view to helping restore the supremacy of the rule of law in Liberia. “In this connection, we shall continue to collaborate with the Ministry of Justice and other national stakeholders in organizing and conducting additional training programs aimed at building the capacity of personnel of the Ministry of Justice, the Judiciary and other legal institutions,” Mr. Fofie stressed.

The workshop, expected to enhance the capacity and ability of prosecutors to effectively discharge their statutory functions, was facilitated by personnel from the Ministry of Justice, the Liberian National Bar Association and UNMIL. It covered topics such as: “Examining the Prosecutorial Chart and Preparation of Case Initiation Report,” “Prosecutor’s Memorandum: The Key Contents of the Prosecutorial Report,” “Tools for Effective Prosecution,” “Introduction to Jury Trial,” “Preparation of Indictment,” “Trial Management and Techniques,” “Trial Advocacy Skills,” “Evidence and Rules of Admissibility,” “The Art of Cross Examination,” “Ethics of the Legal Profession,” as well as “Maintaining Case Statistics, Case Tracking and Prosecutor’s Trial Checklist.”

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