

# **HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR MAGISTRATES AND COURT CLERKS SOUTH TARAWA, 4-6 APRIL 2011**

## **OPENING SPEECH BY CHIEF JUSTICE SIR JOHN MURIA**

A very good morning to you all and it is wonderful to see you all being enthused to learn more about human rights and gender awareness. Like others, I, too, am convinced that the rights of every human being, male or female, are the endowed treasure and heritage of mankind. When we lose sight and respect for this treasure and heritage, we sow seeds of discrimination, hatred and disrespect for ourselves, our neighbor and environment. The unfortunate consequence of such misdeeds is fighting, wars and destruction of ourselves, our neighbours and our world.

Yet we in the Christian world, forget that human rights and gender equality have biblical foundation. We read in Galatians 3:28 where St Paul affirmed: *"There is neither Jew or Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus"*. So we must resolve to respecting the rights of our fellow human beings and accept our equality as human beings.

What better place to start than the body administering justice, i.e. the Courts and their army of officers and staff. You are part of that army in this challenge. The more you equip yourselves with knowledge and skills in

human rights and gender awareness, you will become effective champions of human rights and gender equality in your work as well as in your every day life in the community.

The intended objectives of this Workshop are to enable you to be fully conversant with the human rights and gender principles, as well as to be able to apply those principles in your work. Those objectives are very pertinent and relevant in your work.

I wish you all the success in your three days' workshop.

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