

PRESS RELEASE

The first meeting of the 22nd Council of the Law Association of Trinidad and Tobago was held yesterday under the Chairmanship of the Association's President Mr. Martin G. Daly S.C.

In response to public concern, the Council carefully re-examined the provisions in the Legal Profession Act Chap. 90:03 and related legislation concerning delinquent attorneys. While recognising the limited powers of the Association, the Council resolved to prepare a plan of action for the exercise of those limited powers and to prepare urgently needed amendments to current legislation to make disciplinary control more prompt and effective.

One such amendment that will be proposed is that upon conviction of a criminal offence, an attorney will be immediately struck off the roll, unless the Court before whom he appears orders otherwise.

The Council is also concerned about the delinquency of attorneys in the payment of prescribed fees to practice, and is considering what further practice directions may be issued by the competent authorities to prevent attorneys who have not paid their fees from appearing in court, preparing deeds and carrying out other professional responsibilities.

In keeping with the declared intention of the President that the Council should be sensitive to the needs of practitioners in all parts of the country and in all areas

of law, the President has been mandated to investigate reports that the views of the Association, including those of its members skilled in current law, are not being sought in respect of criminal proposals for the reform of criminal law and criminal procedure.

The next meeting of the Council will be held in San Fernando and it is hoped to use the occasion of that meeting to strengthen dialogue with members in an area of practice outside of Port of Spain.

Martin G. Daly S.C.
President
Law Association of Trinidad and Tobago
April 16, 2008