

## The Recommendations of the Annual International Conference of the College of Law, Qatar University titled «Legal Aid: Means and Challenges» 21-22 March 2022

### Mohamed Yehia Mattar

Head of the Legal Skills Department, Clinical Professor of Law, College of Law, Qatar University  
mmattar@qu.edu.qa

### Yassir Al Iftaihat

Associate Professor of Private Law, College of Law, Qatar University  
Yassir@qu.edu.qa

Legal aid is considered a human right in accordance with international standards and constitutional notions. It is imperative to expand the concept of legal aid to include legal representation, legal education and legal awareness. Colleges of law play a fundamental role in providing legal aid through law clinics, in addition to enhancing a culture of voluntarism in collaboration with law firms to serve the Qatari society. The Annual International Conference of the College of Law at Qatar University discussed the different aspects of legal aid and reached the following recommendations:

- 1) Affirm the constitutional principles of the right to justice, which is the right of all people to be protected and guaranteed. The role of the law in defining the procedures and conditions for the exercise of this right is enhanced by the pillars of justice, charity, freedom, equality, and dignity on which the Qatari society is based.
- 2) Apply the international legal aid standards contained in the United Nations Principles and Guidelines on access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems of 2012 and the Model Law of 2017.
- 3) The obligation of the State and its authorities to create social reality in such a way as to optimize the concept of legal aid to vulnerable groups, by expanding the protected groups and the need to make the society aware of the concept of legal aid on the religious and moral side.
- 4) Adopt an independent law on legal aid outlining the various forms of such aid, including legal advice, legal representation, legal awareness, and areas of legal education, including various criminal, civil, administrative, personal status and other cases.
- 5) Regulation of legal aid in the national judicial system taking into account two elements:
  - The obligation to strengthen the discretionary power for issues related to legal aid for vulnerable groups in litigation, expansion of legal aid to include exemption from fees and judicial expenses for groups in need and facilitation of access to legal information through a rights awareness program and dispute settlement mechanisms with the obligation of establishing the concept of groups in need.

- The obligation of lawyers to provide legal aid to vulnerable groups must be strengthened and the seriousness of the assistance provided by lawyers must be ensured.
- 6) Adopt legislation giving law clinics in the College of Law, in cooperation with civil society organizations, an effective and genuine role for legal aid to vulnerable groups.
- 7) Establish an independent legal aid institution with an independent legal personality, which regulates the various matters of legal aid, defines its concept, and decides who has the right to provide it and who is eligible to receive it, and the necessary procedures to do so, under the supervision of the Council of Ministers.
- 8) Draft a code of ethics on legal aid that establishes a culture of volunteerism, gives priority to vulnerable groups in providing legal aid and defines the roles of those who perform it.
- 9) Establish a legal aid fund, which is provided by the State in addition to donations from society.
- 10) Make appropriate amendments to the Law of the Legal Profession No. 23 of 2006 and its amendments of Law No. 1 of 2018 in accordance with the duty of counsel to provide free legal aid and in order to fulfil the lawyers' mission to establish a state of justice, charity, social solidarity and moral dignity that reflects the identity of the Qatari society.

Cite this article as: Mattar, M.Y. & Al Iftaihat, Y. "The Recommendations of the Annual International Conference of the College of Law, Qatar University titled «Legal Aid: Means and Challenges»" *International Review of Law*, Volume 11, Issue 3, 2022, Special Issue on the conference of "Legal Aid: Means and Challenges," Collage of Law, Qatar University, 21-22 March 2022

<https://doi.org/10.29117/irl.2022.0247>

© 2022, Mattar, & Al Iftaihat, licensee QU Press. This article is published under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0), which permits non-commercial use of the material, appropriate credit, and indication if changes in the material were made. You can copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format as well as remix, transform, and build upon the material, provided the original work is properly cited.