

Dominic Raab's Speech at the Opening of the Legal Year 2021



PUBLISHED OCT 1, 2021
BY [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

I want to welcome each of you as we celebrate the Opening of the Legal Year.

I am only sorry that the celebrations had to be scaled down this year, but I hope that colleagues from across the jurisdictions will be able to join us in 2022.

Over this last year your tenacity and hard work have allowed our justice system to continue working, under the unprecedented pressures you faced because of COVID-19.

As a result of those endeavours...

... domestic abuse victims were able to obtain protection orders...

... remand of dangerous suspects could be extended....

... and businesses and citizens could solve a range of disputes, from commercial contracts to family disputes.

And in the face of what can only be described as enormous challenges, you kept people safe from harm and ensured that our society is fair.

We were one of the first countries in the world to resume jury trials, something about which we should be very proud and has allowed us to address unavoidable delays much more quickly than some other jurisdictions.

I want to thank all of you in the room, as well as the lawyers, the judges, and court staff right across England and Wales who are continuing to work so diligently and so assiduously.

Of course, it's a team effort and you will be able to depend on me as your Lord Chancellor, Justice Secretary and Deputy Prime Minister

... to uphold the rule of law...

... to defend steadfastly the independence of the judiciary...

... and to support a clear separation of powers.

And as I carry out my duties, I have a number of emerging priorities, in particular...

... to deliver our prison building programme so that the prison estate can protect the public from the most serious and dangerous offenders...

... to create a prisons system that properly rehabilitates criminals and prepares them for life on the outside and as a result cuts reoffending...

... to increase court capacity using the innovation that can deliver better experience and restore effective justice for the average citizen...

... to deliver a step change in the way we support victims to whom we all owe a great duty of care, as too often they have felt that they are an afterthought rather than being at the front and centre, the beating heart of our work.

I'm also looking forward to very carefully considering Sir Christopher Bellamy's recommendations from the Independent Review of criminal legal aid, so that I can respond in due course.

On all of these things there will be time for us to discuss how we can work together, but in the words of Peter the Great:

Destiny may ride with us today but there is no reason for it to interfere with lunch.

Thank you all very much.

Press release distributed by Media Pigeon on behalf of

GOV.UK, on Oct 1, 2021. For more information subscribe and follow us.

Media Assets

Embedded Media

Visit the [online press release](#) to interact with the embedded media.

<https://mediapigeon.io/newsroom/govuk/releases/en/dominic-raabs-speech-at-the-opening-of-the-legal-year-2021-12242>

GOV.UK

Newsroom: <https://mediapigeon.io/newsroom/govuk>

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/>

Primary Email: publiccorrespondence@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Social Media

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/cabinetofficeuk>

Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/cabinetoffice>

Linkedin - <http://www.linkedin.com/company/cabinet-office>

Youtube - <http://www.youtube.com/user/cabinetofficeuk>

Flickr - <http://www.flickr.com/photos/cabinetoffice/>
