



Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002

2002 CHAPTER 26

PART 1

THE JUDICIARY

General

[^{F1}1 Guarantee of continued judicial independence

- (1) The following persons must uphold the continued independence of the judiciary—
 - (a) the First Minister,
 - (b) the deputy First Minister,
 - (c) Northern Ireland Ministers, and
 - (d) all with responsibility for matters relating to the judiciary or otherwise to the administration of justice, where that responsibility is to be discharged only in or as regards Northern Ireland.
- (2) The following particular duty is imposed for the purpose of upholding that independence.
- (3) The First Minister, the deputy First Minister and Northern Ireland Ministers must not seek to influence particular judicial decisions through any special access to the judiciary.
- (4) In this section “the judiciary” includes the judiciary of any of the following—
 - (a) the Supreme Court;
 - (b) any other court established under the law of any part of the United Kingdom;
 - (c) any international court.
- (5) In subsection (4) “international court” means the International Court of Justice or any other court or tribunal which exercises jurisdiction, or performs functions of a judicial nature, in pursuance of—
 - (a) an agreement to which the United Kingdom or Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom is a party, or

Changes to legislation: Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002, Section 1 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 12 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- (b) a resolution of the Security Council or General Assembly of the United Nations.]

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Textual Amendments

- F1** S.1 substituted (8.5.2007) by [Constitutional Reform Act 2005 \(c. 4\)](#), **ss. 4(1)**, 148; S.I. 2007/1121, **art. 2**

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 31(1A) inserted by [2023 c. 41 Sch. 13 para. 5\(2\)](#)
- s. 31(7) inserted by [2023 c. 41 Sch. 13 para. 5\(4\)](#)