MAJOR TYPES OF LEGAL SYSTEMS

**Religious law** refers to the notion of a religious system or document being used as a legal source

Islamic law: The law according to the Muslim faith and as interpreted from the Koran; also known as Sharia law. Sometimes referred to as Muslim law or even Muhammadan law.

**Civil law systems** have their origin in the Roman legal tradition. Civil systems vary widely, but they do have some trademark characteristics. Nations with civil law systems have comprehensive, frequently updated legal codes. Most importantly, case law is a secondary source in these jurisdictions.

Civil law is typically found in places once occupied by the French, such as: Belgium, the Netherlands, Mauritius, Quebec, Louisiana, Italy, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Spain, Latin America, and France and Germany.

**Common law systems**, while they often have statutes, rely more on precedent, judicial decisions that have already been made. Common law systems are adversarial, rather than investigatory, with the judge moderating between two opposing parties. The legal system in the United States is a common law system (with the exception of Louisiana, which has a mix of civil and common law).

Common law is typically found in places once occupied by the British, such as: Ireland, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, Nigeria and Ghana.