



## **BUILDING BLOCKS FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION ON TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE**

**6-7 October 2021 from 9.00 – 13.00 (CEST)**

**Online via Teams**

### **PROGRAMME**

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> October**

**09.00 – 09.15 Introduction and welcome**

- Axel Kenes, Director Multilateral Affairs, Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Stephan Parmentier, Professor of Sociology of Crime, Law and Human Rights Law, Leuven Institute of Criminology, University of Leuven
- Valérie Arnould, Senior Research Fellow, Egmont – Royal Institute for International Relations

**9.15 – 10.00 The role of the EU and AU in transitional justice**

Moderator: Elisabeth Baumgartner, Key expert, EU Facility on Justice in Conflict and Transition

Speakers:

- Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, African Union
- Eamon Gilmore, EU Special Representative for Human Rights

**10.00 – 11.15 Panel 1: Transitional justice and sustaining peace**

Transitional justice has become a core component of policies for building sustainable peace. It is meant to operate transformations at the individual, collective and institutional level that are supportive of peace. The links between transitional justice and other peacebuilding policies such as DDR, SSR and rule of law support has long been recognised, though many challenges remain in how to best coordinate or integrate these policies. The role of transitional justice in conflict prevention and rebuilding social cohesion has also garnered growing interest. At the same time, (post-) conflict societies are challenging environments for transitional justice to operate in, as the unstable political and security context can limit transitional justice's ability to operate effectively and with independence.

This session will explore the following questions:

- *How integrated are transitional justice and peacebuilding policies in practice?*
- *What are the opportunities and risks associated with a greater integration of both?*
- *What types of transitional justice activities are best able to support conflict prevention and/or transformation?*



- *How can partners engage in conflict-sensitive transitional justice?*
- *How can the AU and EU mobilise and support transitional justice in peacebuilding contexts?*

Moderator: Stephan Parmentier, Professor of Sociology of Crime, Law and Human Rights Law, Leuven Institute of Criminology, University of Leuven

Speakers:

- Fernando Travesí, Executive Director, International Centre for Transitional Justice
- Idayat Hassan, Director, Centre for Democracy and Development
- Alexander Mayer-Rieckh, Key Expert, EU Facility on Justice in Conflict and Transition
- Stephen Oola, Director, Amani Institute

**11.15 – 11.45 Coffee break**

**11.45 – 13.00 Panel 2: The socioeconomics of transitional justice**

One of the most prevalent critiques of transitional justice has been its relative neglect of socioeconomic rights violations and questions of social justice and structural injustice. The fact that the actors involved in civil-political and socioeconomic rights violations are often closely imbricated and that structural injustices can be key drivers of conflict and human rights violations, underscores the importance for transitional justice to address these issues. However, in practice integrating these socioeconomic components in transitional justice continues to pose challenges. At the same time, states and international partners sometimes blur the line between transitional justice and development policies, which can undermine the ability of transitional justice to provide specific redress to victims of mass atrocities.

Some of the questions this session will explore are:

- *What is the role of transitional justice in addressing structural injustice?*
- *What justice approach is appropriate for dealing with socioeconomic rights violations?*
- *What role is there for transitional justice when victims' immediate demands are the satisfaction of their everyday subsistence needs?*
- *How to avoid the 'developmentisation' of transitional justice?*
- *Are there successful examples of transitional justice initiatives that have promoted social justice and socioeconomic rights, from which lessons learned can be drawn?*
- *How do we address the challenge of preference for national reconciliation in TJ mechanisms and limited concerns for accountability?*

Moderator: Valerie Arnould, Senior Research Fellow, Egmont Institute

Speakers:

- Tim Murithi, Head Peacebuilding Interventions Programme, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
- Amanda Cahill-Ripley, Senior Lecturer in Law, Liverpool University
- Khanyisela Moyo, Lecturer in Law, Ulster University
- Solomon Dersso, Commissioner, African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights



**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October**

**09.00 – 10.30 Panel 3: Civil society and victims' groups**

Traditionally, transitional justice has tended to be state-centric, looking both to the state for the creation of transitional justice mechanisms and expecting transitional justice to help strengthen and reform state institutions. However, civil society also has a central role to play in transitional justice. It has been proactive in building momentum around transitional justice agendas, pressuring states and international actors to act on justice promises, and in counteracting attempts at political instrumentalisation of transitional justice. They also facilitate victims and local communities' engagement with and participation in transitional justice processes, as well as act as vehicles for victim empowerment. Increasingly, there is also a recognition that civil society-led processes aimed at human rights evidence collection, memorialisation, rebuilding community relations, truth-telling etc. also need to be acknowledged as constituting transitional justice.

Some of the questions this session will explore are:

- What are some examples of successful civil society-led transitional justice processes?
- What are some of the opportunities and challenges for such initiatives?
- What are the current innovations and developments on CSOs engagements in TJ processes?
- How have civil society actors managed relations with the state in their advocacy or implementation of transitional justice?
- How can the AU and EU best support civil society initiatives on transitional justice?

Moderator: Tine Destrooper, Associate Professor in Law, University of Ghent

Speakers:

- Andrew Songa, Civil Society Secretariat Coordinator, The Charter Project Africa
- Baba Galleh Jallow, Executive Secretary, Gambian Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission
- Simon Robins, Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Applied Human Rights, University of York
- Gentil Kasongo, Researcher Great Lakes Region, Impunity Watch

**10.30 – 11.00 Coffee break**

**11.00 – 12.30 Panel 4: Gender dimension of transitional justice**

Both the EU and the AU have recognised the importance of incorporating gender in the analysis and practice of transitional justice. However, all too often gendering transitional justice has only meant addressing sexual violence. While important, it is essential to address the full scale of specific forms of victimisation suffered by women during periods of mass violence as well as the sexual violence targeted at men. Looking at transitional justice through a gender lens also highlights that continuities of violence often exist between the conflict/repression phase and the post-conflict/repression period. Gendering transitional justice also means addressing the exclusion of women from



transitional justice processes, as well as being cautious that transitional justice measures do not end up reinforcing patriarchal values and structures.

Some of the questions this session will explore are:

- What are some best practices with regards to gendering transitional justice?
- How can women's participation in transitional justice best be supported?
- What has been the role of women's association in transitional justice?
- How can the AU and EU integrate gender-sensitivity in their transitional justice activities?

Moderator: Laura Davis, European Peacebuilding Office

Speakers:

- Annah Moyo, Advocacy Programme Manager, Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation
- Sahla Aroussi, Associate Professor Global Security Challenges, University of Leeds
- Philipp Schulz, Postdoctoral researcher, University of Bremen
- Danae van der Straten Ponthoz, Global Reparations Study Lead, Global Survivors Fund

**12.30 – 13.00** *Wrap up and Concluding remarks*

Stephan Parmentier, Professor Sociology of Crime, Law and Human Rights Leuven Institute of Criminology, University of Leuven