



African Judiciaries Research Network (AJRN) newsletter, no. 29, December 2025

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If anyone has any **information that they would like included in the next newsletter** (to be circulated the week of 5 January 2026) please email g.lynch@warwick.ac.uk. Similarly, if you have suggestions of people who we should contact about joining the network or would like to unsubscribe from the newsletter please email g.lynch@warwick.ac.uk.

Workshops & conferences:

AJRN workshop grant

The AJRN has secured funding for a series of workshops in Africa on judges/judiciaries with calls to be released on an annual basis. This call is for workshops to be held and fully invoiced by the **end of July 2026**. Applications can be submitted for **up to GBP5,000** as an upper limit. Workshops can be held anywhere in Africa and can focus on any aspect of African judges/judiciaries. However, priority will be given to applications that involve early career researchers and participants from different African countries (to facilitate comparative analysis and lesson learning); that have clear plans for how discussions will impact non-academic users; and which provide good value for money. Please note that, because this grant does not support research, no ethics approval or data management plan is required, but that successful applicants must secure their own institutional risk assessment prior to the workshop.

Applications should be submitted to Gabrielle Lynch (g.lynch@warwick.ac.uk) by **15 December 2025** and should include the following sub-headings and associated details:

Name, present position, institutional affiliation, and email address of lead applicant:

Title, location, and date of proposed workshop:

Details of workshop participants (this can include a list of workshop attendees or details of how a workshop call will be disseminated):

Outline of the aims, objectives, and non-academic impacts of the workshop (500 words):

Intended outputs (500 words):

Workshop plan timeline (a summary of key dates and deadlines):

Itemised Budget (Insert a table with details of costs and justifications, and the total amount requested. Please note that eligible costs include economy travel, accommodation, catering, room hire, and workshop outputs, but that they do NOT include research costs, honorariums, or institutional overheads).

CV of lead applicant (maximum of 2 pages):

If you have any questions about this scheme, please free to contact Gabrielle Lynch ahead of the deadline.

Judiciary and democracy in Africa conference, Lusaka, 21-22 October 2025, thanks

Thanks to everyone who participated in this workshop that was co-organised by the AJRN and Southern African Institute for Policy and Research (SAIPAR). Thanks to the Irish Embassy in Zambia and British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA) for their financial support, which facilitated the participation of scholars from Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, and Zambia.



Public opinion of the Kenyan judiciary workshop, Nairobi, 6 November 2025, thanks

The AJRN thanks the Kenyan National Steering Committee on the Implementation of the Alternative Justice Policy (NaSCI-AJS) for co-organising this workshop, which provided an opportunity for Prof. Gabrielle Lynch and Prof. Karuti Kanyinga to discuss their report on public opinion of the Kenyan judiciary with judges, judicial staff, and scholars. Lynch and Karuti are also grateful for the University of Warwick ESRC-IAA grant that supported some of the data collection and the workshop, and to the British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA) for hosting the event.

Alternative Justice Systems: New Frontiers for Legal and Social Science Scholarship, Praxis and Pedagogy Workshop, Nairobi, 7 November 2025, thanks

The AJRN was honoured to partner with the Kenyan National Steering Committee on the Implementation of the Alternative Justice Policy (NaSCI-AJS) for this workshop. It was great to hear about the work of the NaSCI-AJS and to discuss future research agendas and how to integrate AJS into law curriculums. Thanks to the British Institute in Eastern Africa (BIEA) and University of Warwick for supporting the event and the participation of scholars from Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Zambia.



Standing Group on Law and Courts section at the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) Conference, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, 8 – 11 September 2026

For information about the section and the ten pre-planned panels see: <https://ecpr.eu/Events/Event/SectionDetails/1647>. If you are interested in joining one of these panels with an individual paper, please contact the listed panel chair(s) no later than **15 December 2025**. Alternatively, you may contact the section chairs [Thalia Gertzso](mailto:thalia.gertzso@york.ac.uk) (thalia.gertzso@york.ac.uk) and [Johan Karlsson Schaffer](mailto:j.k.schaffer@gu.se) (j.k.schaffer@gu.se), who will forward your information to the relevant panel chair(s).

The organisers highly recommend that you first consider submitting your paper to one of the listed panel chairs. When sending your paper proposal to a panel chair, please ensure you follow the submission requirements: include a title (maximum 20 words), an abstract (maximum 500 words), 3-8 keywords, and your ECPR registered email address.

Of course, you are also welcome to submit your papers directly to the section rather than to one of the panels. The deadline for individual submissions is 5 January 2026 and you can submit a proposal using this

link: <https://ecpr.eu/MyEcpr/Forms/PaperProposalForm.aspx?EventID=349>

For more information about the General Conference, please visit <https://ecpr.eu/GeneralConference>

African judiciaries stream, African Studies Association of the UK (ASAUK) conference, Durham, 10-12 September 2026

As in 2024, the AJRN will be organising a stream of panels on African judiciaries at the ASAUK biannual conference in September 2026. The ASAUK will accept paper proposals for this stream in early 2026. Details to follow in a future newsletter!

Stream abstract:

African politics and societies are becoming increasingly judicialized. How judicial actors deal with cases and litigants, whether they act independently and impartially, why different stakeholders bring cases, how they argue them and how they respond to controversial rulings, and whether justice is seen to be done, will help to determine the future of African judiciaries, democracy, and stability. Despite their importance, African judiciaries remain relatively understudied. This stream welcomes papers on any aspect of African judiciaries. This includes the history of courts, judicial reforms and current practices; how judges behave both in and out of courts and explanations of their decision making; the ways in which different actors – from governments to lawyers and litigants – engage with, use and respond to the courts; the relationship between different legal systems; and public opinion. The stream is organised by the African Judiciaries Research Network in collaboration with the British Institute in Eastern Africa.

Publications:

International Handbook on Courts' Management of Self-Represented Litigants – call for papers

Dr. Jona Goldschmidt, professor emeritus at Loyola University Chicago, is preparing an edited collection of papers for a book entitled *International Handbook on Courts' Management of Self-Represented Litigants*. He is inviting scholars, judges, or practitioners in any African country to submit an abstract of a proposed paper for inclusion in the book.

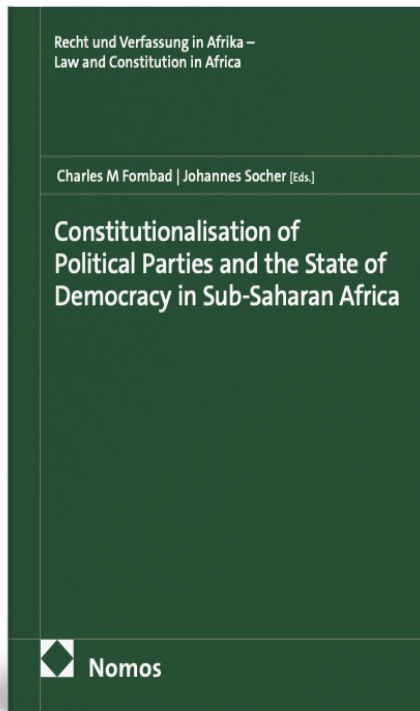
He has no set topics in mind but would like it to have broad international content. There are many aspects of the general subject of self-represented litigants (SRLs) in courts worldwide. The scope of the book will include SRLs in civil and criminal cases, in adversarial and civil code justice systems, and courts in Western, Non-Western, and Islamic legal systems. Other topics might be a history of the right to counsel and self-representation in different countries, programs established by courts to assist SRLs at trial or on appeal, or to process SRL cases efficiently, the law governing judicial assistance to SRLs, court rules permitting limited scope representation, permitting nonlawyer representation, etc. Papers that describe what courts themselves are doing in this area are most appreciated.

He invites interested individuals to submit their abstract of a possible submission along these or other relevant lines. Contributors will have about six months' time to submit the draft paper, but this deadline is flexible.

If this project is not of interest to you, please advise anyone you may know with relevant expertise who may be interested in contributing to this volume that they may contact Dr. Jona Goldschmidt at jgoldsc@luc.edu with any questions or ideas for a possible submission.

Recent publications by AJRN members

Miyandazi, V. (2025). The Role of Kenyan Courts in Tackling Persistent Inequalities: Navigating Deference and Accountability. *German Law Journal* 26(2): 234-254.



Constitutionalisation of Political Parties and the State of Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa

Edited by
Charles M Fombad and Johannes Socher

2025, approx 566 pp., softcover,
approx € 119.00

ISBN 978-3-7560-3353-9

E-Book 978-3-7489-6316-5

(*Recht und Verfassung in Afrika – Law and Constitution in Africa*, vol. 48)

To be published approx. 14. October 2025



Edited by C. Fombad and J. Socher, this volume offers unique insights into the regulation of political parties and its impact on constitutionalism and multiparty democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa. Building on an examination of the relevant international and African regional standards and drawing on experiences in continental Europe, it presents a detailed framework for analysing the constitutionalisation of political parties in Sub-Saharan Africa. Further contributions on 12 countries — Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe — analyse the experiences with the constitutionalisation of political parties in concrete cases.

A concluding chapter outlines key findings and some recommendations for reform.

With contributions by

Lukman Abdulrauf | José Adalima | Buluma Bwire | Mai Cheng | Zelalem Degifie | Abdou Khadre Diop | Charles M. Fombad | Bekezela Gumbo | James Nkuubi | Adriano Nuvunga | Neel R. Purmah | Johannes Socher | Heather A. Thuynsma | Ajereboh J. Tichock | Gerald Dan Yeakula | Edson Ziso



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Opportunities to write on African judiciaries

The **Commonwealth Judicial Journal** is always looking for articles on issues of interest to judicial officers across the Commonwealth. Articles should normally range from 2,000 to 3,500 words in length. Any references and/or citations should be integrated in the main body of the manuscript, as footnotes/endnotes will normally be removed. Hyperlinks should not be embedded in manuscripts submitted for publication. Papers should be submitted to info@cmja.org. All manuscripts received are evaluated by the Editor in consultation with the editorial board.

AJRN has teamed up with Democracy in Africa to launch a series of opinion pieces on African judiciaries and democracy. For details on how to write an article for **Democracy in Africa** go to <http://democracyinafrica.org/join-the-new-african-judiciaries-research-network-ajrn-today/>.

The AJRN has also been in touch with **The Conversation Africa** and **The Elephant** and is happy to report that:

The Conversation Africa welcomes articles on African judiciaries that are based on research. These can be republished anywhere in the world under a Creative Commons licence, giving your work a wider reach and introducing it to new audiences. You can pitch your idea for an article [here](#). You can subscribe to the Conversation Africa newsletter [here](#).

The Elephant welcomes articles of 1,500-3,500 words on African judiciaries. The Elephant is a popular online Kenyan news platform which seeks well researched, honest critiques, critical essays and sharp-eyed perspectives on a broad range of topics addressed from a Pan African lens. For details on how to submit a pitch and write for *The Elephant* see <https://www.theelephant.info/write-for-us/>.

Network information:

AJRN member profile of the month



Dr Victoria Miyandazi (Vicky) is a public law scholar, legal practitioner, and policy consultant whose work spans comparative equality law, comparative constitutional law, economic and social rights, electoral law, judicial politics and property law. Her scholarship, legal practice, and policy engagement position her as a leading voice shaping conversations on justice, governance, and transformative constitutionalism.

Vicky completed her LLB (First Class Honours) at Kenyatta University before proceeding to the University of Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, where she earned a Bachelor of Civil Law (Master's), Master of Philosophy in Law, and Doctor of Philosophy in Law. She joined the University of Nottingham School of Law as an Assistant Professor in Public Law in April 2025. She serves as the Module Convenor for Public Law and additionally teaches on the Land Law and Economic and Social Rights modules. Prior to this, she was the Knight Fellow in Legal and Constitutional Research at the University of St Andrews, teaching and supervising postgraduate research in Global Constitutionalism, Comparative Legal Studies, and The Idea of Law.

Her earlier roles include serving as a Legal Researcher to the Kenyan Judiciary Committee on Elections, contributing to electoral law reform; Researcher and Editor at the Oxford Human Rights Hub, where she led Oxfam (GB)'s *Action4Justice Kenya* project; and practising as an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya, specialising in constitutional and human rights litigation. She has also lectured at the University of Embu, teaching across Administrative Law, Property Law, Civil Procedure, Mooting, and Public International Law, and taught Equality Law and International Humanitarian Law through the University of Oxford–Ohio State Pre-Law Programme.

Vicky is the author of *Equality in Kenya's 2010 Constitution* (Hart Publishing, 2021), which was cited by the Supreme Court of Kenya in a 2025 landmark decision affirming the equality rights of children born out of wedlock (*SC Petition No. E035 of 2023*), and has published widely with leading presses including Hart Publishing, Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Edward Elgar, and JUTA. Her research on equality, fourth branch institutions, economic and social rights, judicial politics, and democratic governance appear in major journals and edited volumes.

Vicky is also a highly sought-after consultant on legal and governance reform. She serves as Lead Consultant on the UN Economic Commission for Africa/African Land Policy Centre's Land Governance Project in Kenya (2025). In addition, she is also a member of and has consulted for the African Network of Constitutional Lawyers on *Term Limits and Peaceful Transitions in Africa* (2023). She co-leads the legal workstream for the UK Young Academy's IMAGINE Project, focusing on mentorship and legal awareness for young people.

She is currently co-editing a major book project, *Equality Law Jurisprudence in Africa*, with Professor Cathi Albertyn and Dr Nomfundo Ramalekana, aimed at consolidating African-centred scholarship on equality.

Vicky's contributions have been recognised through several awards, including being named one of The Africa Report's '10 African Scholars to Watch' (2025) and election to the UK Young Academy (2023–2028). Her career reflects a deep commitment to bridging academic research, policy innovation, and grassroots perspectives to advance transformative justice and inclusive governance.

AJRN webpage

Apologies that the AJRN website (<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/research/ajrn>) is out of date – this is due to personnel changes at Warwick (the website host) – but it will be updated over the next few months.

If you want to be included in the list of network members on the website and future newsletters, then please send a photograph and a bio in the standard format (see list of network members below) with details of positions and institutional/organisational affiliation, up to 5 keywords on relevant research interests, and contact email/social media handle to g.lynch@warwick.ac.uk.

If you have already sent a bio for the newsletter, then please do send a photo for inclusion on the webpage.

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