



African Judiciaries Research Network (AJRN) newsletter, no. 23, June 2025

If anyone has any information that they would like included in the next newsletter (to be circulated the week of 7 July 2025) 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.



CALL FOR ABSTRACTS: THE ROLE OF THE JUDICIARY IN A DEMOCRACY.

TIMELINES:

- **Deadline for abstracts not more than 300 words: Submit by 10th June, 2025.**
- **Deadline for articles between 4000 and 6000 words: Submit by 30th August, 2025.**
- **Conference on "The role of the judiciary in a democracy": 21st and 22nd October, 2025.**

Who should contribute: Anyone with interest in the topic. These may include historians, political scientists, legal practitioners and academics, and judges (both active and retired).

Location:
SAIPAR, Lusaka



Government
of Ireland
International
Development
Programme

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS: THE ROLE OF THE JUDICIARY IN A DEMOCRACY

Introduction:

The Southern African Institute for Policy and Research (SAIPAR) will host a conference on "The Role of the Judiciary in a Democracy" on 21 and 22 October 2025. The conference will coincide with the launch of an edited book celebrating 50 years of the Zambian Supreme Court. The Supreme Court of Zambia clocked fifty (50) years of existence in 2023, having been established in its current form in 1973. From an initial establishment of five judges, the Supreme Court currently has an establishment of 13 judges. For good or ill, over the last 50 years of its existence, the Supreme Court has significantly shaped the country's life by determining high-profile cases across various branches and disciplines of the law. These include high treason, homicides, presidential election disputes, nerve-wrecking political disputes, human rights cases, employment and industrial relations, corporate and commercial transactions, as well as personal law disputes..

SAIPAR is, therefore, inviting abstracts on the general theme of the role the judiciary in a democracy in Zambia, the region and beyond.

The abstracts may consider any sub-themes around the role of the Judiciary in a democracy such as:

- **Judicial reforms;**
- **Access to justice;**
- **Resolution of commercial disputes;**
- **Environmental jurisprudence;**
- **Resolution of electoral disputes;**
- **Judicial independence and accountability;**
- **Use of technology in adjudication;**
- **Role of international law in domestic dispute resolution;**
- **Courts and development of customary law;**
- **Bar, bench and academia relations;**
- **Alternative dispute resolution;**
- **Human rights jurisprudence;**
- **The role of the judiciary in strengthening democracy.**

Abstracts of not more than 300 words are therefore invited to be submitted by 10 June 2025. For those whose abstracts will be approved, full articles of between 4, 000 and 6,000 words will need to be submitted by 30 August, 2025. All the papers submitted will be subjected to peer review. Those whose papers will be accepted will be invited to attend the conference in October 2025 and make presentations. Additionally, accepted papers will be considered for publication in a special edition of the Zambia Social Science Journal (ZSSJ).

SEND YOUR ABSTRACTS TO:

1. Dr. Pamela Towela Sambo, University of Zambia: pamela.sambo@unza.zm
 2. Dr. O'Brien Kaaba, University of Zambia: obrien.kaaba@unza.zm
 3. Mr. Chanda J. Chungu, University of Zambia: chanda.chungu@unza.zm
 4. Dr Marja Hinfeldar, SAIPAR: marja.hinfelaar@saipar.org
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Constitutional Roundtable, Thursday 22 June 2025

You are cordially invited to join the Centre for Social Justice and partners for a Constitution Review Roundtable on "The Constitutional Commitment to Social Justice: A Constitution Review Conversation for a Re-Imagined South Africa".

The Roundtable will bring together academics, law and policy makers, lawyers, judges, civil society and state-based researchers to reflect on the extent that the people and the government of South Africa have embraced social justice, to evaluate progress and identify gaps with a view on whether there is a need to strengthen or clarify the constitutional commitment to social justice.

The insights from the Roundtable will be used to prepare:

- A formal submission to Parliament assessing the adequacy of our social justice progress, and
- A Brief outlining key steps needed to drive change in areas where progress remains insufficient.

Confirmed Speakers:

Hon. Minister Mmamoloko Kubayi – Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development

Prof Thuli Madonsela – Director, Centre for Social Justice, Stellenbosch University

Justice Albie Sachs – Retired Justice of the Constitutional Court

Ms Alex Motshwanetsi Mathole – Co-Lead, V20 Solidarity Stream

Ms Maricia Froneman – Head of Access to Justice, THUMA Foundation

Mr Thembaletu Seyisi – Researcher, Centre for Social Justice, Stellenbosch University

Event Details

Date: Thursday 22 June 2025

Time: 17:00 – 19:00

RSVP- https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=Azv6pjwKWEKEM6Eg3_zTSHTL8d8_0pFAuaW5c-Ozz3lUMEVEOEYxUkdBMjFaVjVWUzZSQU83MkpFWS4u

Join here: <https://shorturl.at/94oaB>

Enquiries: Tseyisi@sun.ac.za

Commonwealth Magistrates' and Judges' Association Conference, September 2025

The Commonwealth Magistrates' and Judges' Association is organising its next Triennial Conference on the Theme: "Innovations in Judicial Practice: Embracing Change for A Better Future". The conference will be held in Banjul, the Gambia from 21-26 September 2025. Information on registration is now available on the CMJA's conference website: www.cmja.biz.

AJRN at the European Conference of African Studies (ECAS), Prague, 25-28 June 2025

The AJRN has two panels on African judiciaries at the forthcoming ECAS conference on 25-28 June. If anyone else is going to be at the conference then please email g.lynch@warwick.ac.uk, as we'll organise some AJRN drinks!

Recent publications by network members

Dawuni, J. Jarpa (ed.) (2025) African women judges: Storytelling as freedom (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan)
https://trebuchet.public.springernature.app/get_content/3aedf69a-0668-4f4b-8b0f-afbfbef179be4?sap-outbound-id=E768EF693F8D63995C9CB51022612044DD87B245

Kuwali, Dan (2025) *Jus ad Pacem*: Ending the Beginning of War in Africa. *US-China Law Review* 22 (1): 1-22

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/>.

AJRN member profile of the month



Jessica Hickle is a PhD candidate in the department of Political Science at Yale University. Her dissertation explores the causes and consequences of legal challenges to election results, focusing on the case of Malawi. As litigation becomes increasingly common among losing candidates and parties, the project seeks to explain the logic of this post-election strategy. The project also examines the short and long term consequences of election litigation for elites, voters, and the strength of democratic institutions. Other work focuses on the role of lawyers in shaping political outcomes. One project examines the strategies employed by Tanzanian lawyers to advance civil rights in adverse contexts. Jessica's research has been published in *Law and Social Inquiry*.

Prior to graduate school, Jessica was a research officer at the Open Government Partnership where she analyzed the impact of transparency and accountability reforms by judiciaries and other public sector institutions in African countries. She earned her B.S. in International Politics from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University.

AJRN webpage

The AJRN has a webpage (<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/research/ajrn>) where you can find past newsletters as well as information on events, opinion pieces and members. **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 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. E.g.

Prof. Gabrielle Lynch, Professor of Comparative Politics, University of Warwick, UK; judicial behaviour, election petitions, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia; g.lynch@warwick.ac.uk; @GabrielleLynch6.

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

Network members

NB: If you want to be included in the list of network members in future newsletters and the website, please send a photo and bio in the standard format (see 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.

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