



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council



FACULTY OF  
LAW

## **The Role of Parliaments in the Protection and Realisation of the Rule of Law and Human Rights**

**Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

**The Attlee Suite, Portcullis House  
Westminster**

### **Conference Programme**

**0900 - 0915** Registration and coffee

**0915 - 0930** Introductions and welcome: **Professor Andrew Thompson, Arts and Humanities Research Council**

**0930 - 1000** **Keynote addresses:**

**Gianni Magazzeni, Chief of the Americas, Europe and Central Asia Branch, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

**Nico Schrijver, Professor of International Law, Leiden University, Member of Dutch Senate and Executive Committee Member of the Inter-Parliamentary Union**

**1000 - 1100** **Session 1: Parliament's Role in relation to the rule of law and human rights**

Chair: **Katherine Zappone, Member of the Irish Senate**

Panel:

**Murray Hunt, Legal Adviser, Joint Committee on Human Rights**

**Natalie Samarasinghe, Executive Director, United Nations Association – UK**

**Robert Spano, Judge of the European Court of Human Rights**

- Why should parliaments have a role in the protection and realisation of the rule of law, including human rights, and what is that role?
- What institutional machinery do parliaments need to perform their role?

- What is the role of legal advice to parliament?
- How can the rule of law and human rights be mainstreamed across all of a parliament's activities and functions?
- What will give politicians a sense of ownership of the rule of law and human rights?

**1100 - 1115** Tea/Coffee break

**1115 -1130** **Keynote address: Dr. Josephine Ojiambo, Deputy Secretary General of the Commonwealth**

**1130 - 1230** **Session 2: Desirability of internationally agreed principles and guidelines.**

Chair: **Dr. Josephine Ojiambo**

Panel:

**George Kunnath, Head of Programmes, Westminster Foundation for Democracy**

**Karen McKenzie, Head of Human Rights, Commonwealth Secretariat**

**Hon Neto Agostinho MP, Member of Kenyan Parliament and Convenor of the Kenya Parliamentary Human Rights Association**

- Does the experience of parliaments trying to build their capacity in relation to rule of law and human rights suggest that some principles and guidelines would be useful?
- Are there examples of the advantages and disadvantages of using some principles and guidelines to develop the ability of parliaments to perform their role?
- Are cultural differences between states an insuperable obstacle to international agreement on some principles and guidelines?

**1230 - 1330** Lunch

**1330 - 1445** **Session 3: Substance: what should be the content of any principles and guidelines?**

Chair: **Professor Sir Jeffrey Jowell QC, Director of the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law**

Panel:

**Sarah Cleveland, Professor of Human and Constitutional Rights at Columbia Law School and Member of UN Human Rights Committee**

**Kirsten Roberts, Dickson Poon School of Law, Kings College**

**Sam Muller, Director, Hague Institute for the Internationalisation of Law and former Chair of the Rule of Law Global Agenda Council of the World Economic Forum**

- What guidelines already exist for parliamentarians and is there scope for more?
- What sorts of subjects should be included in a set of principles and guidelines?
- Which matters should be covered by principles and which by guidelines?
- How can we judge the effectiveness of parliaments' work for the protection and realisation of the rule of law and human rights?
- Should parliaments evaluate their own performance in the protection and realisation of the rule of law and human rights, and what methodologies might be used?

**1445 - 1515** Tea/Coffee break

**1515 - 1630** **Session 4: Process: how to get from here to international agreement**

Chair: **Dr. Michael Addo, Professor of International Law, University of Exeter, Member of the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights and Chair of the Co-ordination Committee of UN Special Procedure Mandate Holders**

Panel:

**Gianni Magazzeni, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

**Nico Schrijver, Professor of International Law, Leiden University and Member of Dutch Senate**

**Rashida Manjoo, Professor in the Department of Public Law, University of Cape Town and former UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women**

- What should be the process for taking forward a set of principles and guidelines?
- Should the objective be adoption by the UN General Assembly, as with the Paris Principles and the Belgrade Principles?
- Is there scope for more detailed principles and guidelines at regional level?
- How will any adopted principles and guidelines have the maximum impact?
- What are the relevant lessons to be learned from the history of international standard-setting?

**1630 - 1650** Wrap up general discussion and agreement of next steps.

**1650 - 1700** Final remarks from the Chair and close.