



United Nations Forum on  
**HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY  
and the RULE OF LAW**

GENEVA, 16-17 NOVEMBER 2021

**Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law  
Third session**

**“Equal access to justice for all: a necessary element of democracy, rule of law and human rights protection”**

**Room XVII, Palais des Nations and Online (Zoom and UN Webcast)**

**PROGRAMME OF WORK**

**Tuesday, 16 November 2021**

**I. 10:00 - 10:30 Opening meeting**

Statement by the President of the Human Rights Council, **H.E. Ambassador Ms. Nazhat Shameem Khan, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Fiji to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva**

Statement by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, **Ms. Michelle Bachelet**

Remarks by the Chairperson of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law **Ms. Jan Beagle**, Director General, International Development Law Organisation (IDLO).

**II. 10:30 - 12:00 Equal access to justice: a foundation for human rights, democracy, the rule of law and sustainable development**

The panel will look at how equal access to justice is the foundation of governance systems based on human rights, democracy and the rule of law. It will explore how an independent judiciary is an integral component of an accountable system, characterized by checks and

balances aimed at preventing abuses of power. The panel will also illustrate how access to justice can safeguard participation, ensuring democratic space is protected and that electoral processes are genuine.

**Presentations by:**

- **Mr. Clement Nyaletsossi Voule**, Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association
- **Ms. Janine M. Otalora Malassis**, Justice of the Electoral Tribunal of the Federal Judiciary of Mexico

**Moderator:** Ms. Jan Beagle, Director General IDLO

**Discussion**

**12:00 - 15:00 Lunch Break and Side Events**

**III. 15:00 – 17:00 Making justice truly accessible to all**

The panel will look at the importance of legal empowerment and at how intersecting forms of discrimination limit the ability of people to have their voices heard, hold decision makers accountable, and seek remedy for crimes and human rights violations and abuses.

**Presentations by:**

- **Mr. Joshua Castellino**, Executive Director, Minority Rights Group
- **Mr. Larry Salomon**, Lawyer and Indigenous Representative, Nicaragua, Former Fellow, OHCHR Indigenous Fellowship Programme
- **Ms. Claire Carlton-Hanciles**, Executive Director, Legal Aid Board of Sierra Leone

**Moderator:** Ms. Ana Maria Suarez Franco, Permanent Representative in Geneva, FIAN International

**Discussion**

**Wednesday, 17 November 2021**

**IV. 10:00 - 12:00 When emergency strikes: access to justice in times of crisis**

The panel will look at the strategies adopted and challenges faced by justice systems in ensuring equal access to justice in the context of crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic. Speakers will consider lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic response and how these can guide rights-based responses to future crises.

**Presentations by:**

- **Ms. Mihaela Laura Radu**, Judge and President of the Bucharest Tribunal
- **Ms. Hadeel Abdel Aziz**, Executive Director, Justice Centre for Legal Aid, Jordan
- **Ms. Roselyn Hanzi**, Executive Director, Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights

**Moderator: Mr. Mark Stephens**, Deputy Chair, International Bar Association, Human Rights Institute

**Discussion**

**12:00 - 15:00 Lunch Break and Side Events**

**V. 15:00 – 16:45 Broadening the horizons of access to justice**

The panel will look at how human rights oriented justice systems can correct rather than perpetuate injustices and inequalities. It will discuss the experiences of victims in accessing justice and how people are strategically seizing justice systems to broaden public awareness of, and find solutions to, challenges that communities across the world face today, such as systemic racism and climate change.

**Presentations by:**

- **Ms. Sara Hossain**, Executive Director, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust
- **Ms. Lavanya Rajamani**, Professor of International Environmental Law, Faculty of Law, University of Oxford
- **Ms. Collette Flanagan**, CEO and Founder, Mothers Against Police Brutality
- **Mr. Pablo de Greiff**, Director, Transitional Justice Program, Center for Human Rights and Global Justice of the School of Law, New York University

**Moderator: Ms. Jan Beagle**, Director General, IDLO

**Discussion**

**VI. 16:45 - 17:00 Concluding Remarks by the Chairperson of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law**

**Session Closes**

**\*\*\* The Programme of Work may be subject to change \*\*\***