

**Fourth session of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law:
“Strengthening democracies to build back better: challenges and opportunities”**

BIOGRAPHIES OF PANELLISTS AND SPEAKERS

(as of 23 November 2022)

Panel 1. Learning through adversity: mapping pandemic-related democratic erosion



Mr. Thomas E. Garrett, Secretary General, Community of Democracies

Thomas E. Garrett has worked in the field of politics and advocacy for more than three decades. Elected as the Secretary General of the Community of Democracies (CoD) in September 2017, he was reappointed Secretary General in 2020.

Prior to the CoD, he supported reformers and democrats across the world with his work at the International Republican Institute, a non-profit, nonpartisan organization that supports democracy, civil society, women and youth political empowerment and democratic governance in more than 80 countries. Over the past 23 years, Garrett directly led more than 325 training programs on topics relating to political participation. He has worked on election observation missions in Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Mali, Mongolia, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tunisia and Ukraine.

In 2017, the Government of Mongolia conferred the Order of Friendship on Garrett for his work in support of Mongolian democracy. His master’s degree is in diplomacy and international relations and his undergraduate degree is in political science.



Ms. Beata Balogová, Editor-in-chief of SME, a major daily and news outlet in Slovakia, former Vice-Chair of the executive board of the International Press Institute

Beata Balogová is the editor-in-chief of the daily SME, a major newspaper and news site in Slovakia. She graduated from the School of Journalism of Columbia University in New York. Beata was also a Fulbright scholar appointed to the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri Columbia in 1994.

From 2016 to 2022, Beata served as a member of the executive board of the International Press Institute (IPI) advocating media freedom in the Central European region. She won the Opinion Award of the European Press Prize in 2019. She is also a three-time laureate of the Slovak national journalism prize Novinárska cena. She authored two books: a collection of essays “Book full of People” and a novel “Cornelias”.



Ms. Raissa Belintani, Coordinator of the Strengthening Democratic Space Programme at Conectas Human Rights

Raissa Belintani coordinates the Program for Strengthening Democratic Space at Conectas Human Rights in Brazil, and was also a member of the Strategic Litigation team at the same organization. She has a law degree from the University of São Paulo (USP) and a master's degree in Humanities, Rights and Other Legitimacies, also from USP. Previously she was the Institutional Relations Coordinator of the Brazilian Platform for Drug Policy (2019-2020), Advocacy Advisor at the Brazilian Institute of Criminal Sciences (2019-2020), and researcher at the Instituto Terra, Trabalho e Cidadania (2018-2019), always working in the areas of human rights, gender, and access to justice. She also

worked as a legal assistant at the Court of Justice of the State of São Paulo (2013-2017), and was a consultant to the Brazilian National Council of Justice, in partnership with UNDP Brazil, for the elaboration of a manual on Resolution No. 348/2020, which addresses the procedures regarding LGBTI persons accused, convicted or deprived of liberty.



Mr. Clement Nyaletsossi Voule, Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association

Clément Nyaletsossi Voule, a Togolese national, is the appointed Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association. Prior to his appointment, he led the International Service for Human Rights' (ISHR) work to support human rights defenders from states in transition and coordinated the organization's work in Africa as the advocacy director. He also worked as the Secretary-General of the Togolese Coalition of Human Rights Defenders, as a campaigner for the Togolese Coalition for the International Criminal Court and as Secretary-General of the Amnesty International section in Togo.

Follow him on Twitter at @cvoule.

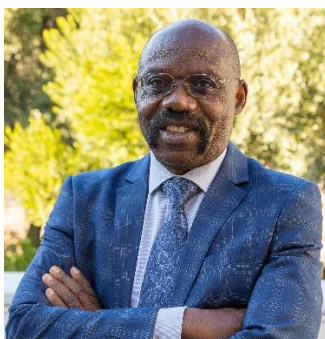
Focused discussion 1. State of democracy worldwide in the post-pandemic context



Mr. Staffan Ingemar Lindberg, Professor of the Department of Political Sciences, University of Gothenburg, Founding Director of the V-Dem Institute (University of Gothenburg), Principle Investigator of the V-Dem Project (Varieties of Democracy)

Professor Lindberg is the Director of the university-wide research infrastructure V-Dem Institute at the University of Gothenburg, founding Principal Investigator of Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem), founding Director of the national research infrastructure DEMSCORE, ERC Consolidator, Wallenberg Academy Fellow, co-author of Varieties of Democracy (CUP 2020), *Why Democracies Develop and Decline* (CUP 2022) as well as other books, and over 60 articles on issues such as democracy, elections, democratization, autocratization, accountability, clientelism, sequence analysis methods, women's representation, and voting behavior. Lindberg is currently leading several large research projects, including "Failing and Successful Sequences of Democratization", "Varieties of Autocratization", and "The Case for Democracy", and also has extensive experience as consultant on development and democracy, and as advisor to international organizations, ministries, and state authorities.

Panel 2. Building blocks of building back: developing stronger institutions and fostering trust in government



Mr. Charles Fombad, Professor of Comparative Constitutional Law, Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria; Director of the Institute for International and Comparative Law in Africa

Charles Manga Fombad is Professor of law and the Director of the Institute for International and Comparative Law in Africa, (ICLA), Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria. He holds a Licence en Droit (University of Yaounde), LL.M and PhD (University of London) and a Diploma in Conflict Resolution (University of Uppsala). Professor Fombad is a member of the editorial board of several distinguished national and international journals. He is a member of the Academy of Science of South Africa, an Associate Member of the International Academy of Comparative Law and a Vice President of the International Association of Constitutional law. He has published more than 90 articles in peer-reviewed journals and more than 60 book chapters and is the author/editor of 16 books and monographs. He is the series editor of the Stellenbosch Handbooks in African Constitutional Law published by Oxford University Press. Professor Fombad is also co-editor (with Professor Rainer Grote of the Max Planck Institute) of the introductory reports to African constitutions published as part of OUP's Constitutions of the Countries of the World Online. His research interests are in

comparative African constitutional law, media law, the African Union law, and legal history, especially issues of mixed systems and legal harmonisation.



Mr. Chris Thornhill, Professor of Law, University of Manchester

Chris Thornhill is Professor in Law at the University of Manchester, United Kingdom. He specializes in the Sociology of Law and Comparative Constitutional Law. He is currently engaged in a long-term project that addresses constitutional law and national security law. He has written monographs on democratic crisis and global constitutional law, on the sociology of law and the global transformation of democracy, and on the sociology of constitutions. His research has been published in Spanish, Russian, Chinese, German, Japanese, Portuguese, and Croatian.

Professor Thornhill is a member of a number of research bodies. He is a member of the Academia Europaea (Committee Member, Law Section) and has been a panel member for the European Science Foundation, the European Research Council, the Romanian Research Council, the AHRC. He is the recipient of prizes for research in legal sociology from Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie; Humboldt Stiftung; Brazilian Government Research Council; World Complexity Science Academy.

He has held visiting Chairs in Sociology, Government and Law in Germany, Brazil and Chile. These include the Niklas Luhmann Distinguished Visiting Professorship in Sociological Theory at the University of Bielefeld and the Cátedra Internacional Ministro Celso de Mello (Law, IDP, Brasilia). He is editor of an important book series on Constitutional Law in Latin America, *Desafíos Constitucionales*, and he is extensively involved in judicial education in South America and Central Asia.



Ms. Claudia Escobar Mejía, Guatemalan lawyer and former judge; Distinguished visiting professor at George Mason University in the Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center (TraCCC); Executive Director of the organization Be Just

Claudia Escobar Mejía is a Distinguished visiting professor at George Mason University in the Terrorism, Transnational Crime and Corruption Center (TraCCC) and a Practitioner-in-Residence of the Master of Science in Foreign Service (MSFS) at Georgetown University.

Escobar is also the Executive Director of Be Just, an organization that promotes the rule of law by strengthening the institutions of the justice sector supports anti-corruption initiatives, and respects human rights. She is a former judge of the Court of Appeals of Guatemala, recognized internationally as a corruption fighter. In 2017 Escobar received the Democracy Award, given by the National Endowment for Democracy.

She is affiliated with Transparency International (TI), as a member of the International Council. Also, Dr. Escobar sits on the Board of Directors of Integrity Initiatives International (Triple III) and the Integrity Sanctuary Organization.



Ms. Hon. Dyah Roro Esti Widya Putri, member of the House of Representatives of Indonesia

Hon. Dyah Roro Esti Widya Putri is a Member of Parliament in Indonesia representing the district of Gresik and Lamongan of East Java, Indonesia. She currently sits in Commission VII which deals extensively with the Energy, Research, Innovation and Industry sectors. She is also Secretary of the Green Economy Caucus at the Indonesian Parliament. Prior to her career in politics, she graduated from Imperial College London under the Indonesian Ministry of Finance LPDP Scholarship and is Co-Founder of the Indonesian Energy and Environmental Institute.

Panel 3. All in this together: social cohesion and community-led resilience and response systems



Ms. Julia Leininger, Head of the Department “Transformation of political (dis-) order“ at the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS); member of the advisory board of International IDEA; board member of the Foundation for Peace and Development

Dr. Julia Leininger, PhD University of Heidelberg, heads the department “Transformation of political (dis-)order” at IDOS, the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (formerly DIE, German Development Institute) in Bonn. Her comparative research focuses on explaining democratization, social cohesion, international democracy support and protection as well as governing the SDGs. She co-leads the project “The politics of social cohesion“. Leininger translates her academic research into policy advice and has engaged in impact measurement of the governance programs in Africa. She is member of the advisory board of International IDEA and board member of the Foundation for Peace and Development. Her research is published in academic outlets such as Democratization, Nature Climate Change and Third World Quarterly. Leininger teaches at Universities Heidelberg and Duisburg-Essen.



Ms. Tatjana Vlašić, Deputy Ombudswoman of Croatia

Tatjana Vlašić holds an MA from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb and a joint MA degree in Democracy and Human Rights from the universities of Sarajevo and Bologna. As a Fulbright Scholarship recipient, she attended a specialization at the University of California, Berkeley with a focus on anti-discrimination policies.

From 2008 to 2015 she served as an advisor and, subsequently, assistant to the director of the Government Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities. From 2015 until her appointment as Deputy Ombudswoman she was employed as an advisor to the Ombudswoman managing national and international projects, undertaking research, delivering training sessions for various stakeholders, engaging in co-operation at national and international levels, as well as organizing public campaigns and conferences in the areas of human rights protection and combating discrimination.

An important part of Vlašić’s work is co-operation with the key stakeholders at the international level, such as the United Nations, UNHCR, the Council of Europe and OSCE/ODIHR, performing the role of the Croatian national liaison officer for the co-operation with the European Union’s Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), teaching anti-discrimination and Constitutional human rights protection courses at the State School for Public Administration, as well as participating in the process of the 2019 re-accreditation of the Office of the Ombudswoman as a Status “A” national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles.



Mr. Charles Kajoloweka, Executive Director of Youth and Society

Charles Kajoloweka is a human rights activist, Founder and Executive Director of Youth and Society (YAS), a non-profit human rights and governance watchdog in Malawi. He has 10 years of experience in human rights, governance, youth development and NGO leadership. Kajoloweka is the current Ambassador for Sustainable Development Goal 16 under the 16x16 Youth Initiative hosted by the UNDP and the Government of Italy. He is also the Ambassador for Malawi 2063, the Malawi’s long term development vision. He has previously served in various governance and development capacities including National Integrity Committee (NIC) of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB); Core Advisory Panel (CAP) of the National Planning Commission; Council for Non-Governmental Organisations in Malawi (CONGOMA); Mzuzu University Council; Mzuzu City Council; and Special Task-force on State-Party under Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs.

Kajoloweka holds a Master's degree in Human Rights and Democratization in Africa from the University of Pretoria, South Africa. He is also a recipient of the prestigious Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) in the United States of America and the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) in Austria. Kajoloweka has contributed to the research in areas of Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values and Digital Rights and Inclusion. In terms of research, Kajoloweka has most recently contributed to the “2021 Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values Index” under the Centre for AI and Digital Policy (CAIDP). He specifically researched on the state of AI in Kenya. He is also one of the authors for the 2021 Africa LONDA Report on digital rights and inclusion in Africa and his research focused on Malawi.



Mr. Mohamad Mansour, Deputy Director of ABAAD - Resource Center for Gender Equality

Holding a Masters in Biology, and degrees in Psychology and Mediation/conflict resolution, Mohamad Mansour is the Deputy Director of ABAAD – Resource Center for Gender Equality an ECOSOC-accredited organization based in Lebanon and working on gender-related issues throughout the MENA region. ABAAD is a member of the United Nations Global Compact and was granted the “WOMANITY Award”.

With 15+ years of experience in the non-profit sector, Mansour held several positions within international and national NGOs. He is a member of the steering committee of the Lebanese Humanitarian and Development NGOs Forum (LHDF), a member of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), the Gender Focal Point on the advisory board of the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund (LHF, Lebanese Country Based Pool Fund) and an elected member of the Lebanese Red Cross General Assembly.

Focused discussion 2. Implementation of recommendations of the Forum's previous sessions



Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, United Nations Secretary General's Youth Envoy

Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake was appointed as the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth in June 2017 at the age of 26. In this role, Jayathma works to expand the United Nations' youth engagement and advocacy efforts across all four pillars of work – sustainable development, human rights, peace and security and humanitarian action – and serves as a representative of and advisor to the Secretary-General.

Originally from Sri Lanka, Wickramanayake has worked extensively on youth development and participation, and has played a key role in transforming the youth development sector in her home country.

Prior to taking up her post, Wickramanayake was instrumental in creating the movement for civic and political engagement of young people, especially young women in Sri Lanka named “Hashtag Generation”. Previously, she advocated for global youth development on an international level including as the first ever Sri Lankan Youth Delegate to the United Nations and as the youth lead negotiator and member of the International Youth Task Force of the World Conference on Youth 2014 where she played a critical role in mainstreaming youth in the Post-2015 Process and in the establishment of World Youth Skills Day.



Mr. Rogier Huizenga, Human Rights Programme Manager at the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Mr. Rogier Huizenga has 20 years of experience in handling and promoting solutions to complex political and legal challenges across continents in the areas of human rights and parliamentary democracy.

Since 2011, Mr. Huizenga is responsible for shaping and implementing IPU's human rights programme and for ensuring stronger links between IPU's work on sustainable development, peace and human rights. He has taken the lead in enhancing the impact of the IPU's efforts to strengthen the capacity of parliaments to be “guardians” of human rights. Since 2011, Mr. Huizenga has served as Secretary of the IPU Committee on the Human Rights of Parliaments which examines and promotes solutions for individual cases of human rights violations affecting MPs.

Between 2000 and 2011, Mr. Huizenga occupied different positions in the IPU's human rights programme.

Before joining the IPU, Mr. Huizenga worked for the International Service for Human Rights and the Association for the Prevention of Torture, two international human rights organizations based in Geneva. He also worked in Bogota (Colombia) for the Colombian Commission of Jurists.



Mr. Mark Cassayre, Permanent Observer of the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva, Switzerland

Mark Cassayre presented his credentials to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva and assumed his duties as the Permanent Observer of IDLO to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva on 1 April 2021.

Before joining IDLO, Mark served for over 20 years as a career member of the United States Foreign Service, with his most recent assignment being the Deputy Chief of Mission and Chargé d'Affaires at the United States of America Mission in Geneva. His other overseas assignments included tours as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the United States of America Embassy in Maputo, Mozambique, and positions in Nairobi, Kenya; Kyiv, Ukraine; Windhoek, Namibia; and Geneva, Switzerland. Domestically, he served as the Director of the Office of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs in the Bureau of International Organizations of the State Department; as Senior Advisor at the Department of State's Foreign Service Institute; and as a National Security Affairs Fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution.

Mark has a Master's degree in international relations from the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, Switzerland, and Bachelors' degrees in political science and French from the University of California at Santa Barbara.

Panel 4. Strengthening safeguards against future crises: inspiring examples to drive change



Mr. Rodrigo Uprimny Yepes, Professor Emeritus at the National University of Colombia; member and senior researcher at the Center of Studies Dejusticia; member of the International Commission of Jurists; member of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Rodrigo Uprimny Yepes is a Colombian lawyer, with a PhD in Political Economy from the University of Amiens Picardie, a DSU (Master's Degree) in Sociology of Law at the University of Paris II, and a DEA (Master's Degree) in Economy of Development at the University of Paris I (IEDES).

Currently, Uprimny is professor emeritus at the National University in Bogotá. He has been a visiting scholar at several other universities. Uprimny is also founder and senior researcher at the Center of Studies on Law, Justice and Society (Dejusticia) and member of the International Commission of Jurists and of the

Freedom of Expression Foundation (FLIP). He has been member of the United Nations Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights since 2015 and is currently the Vice Chair.

Uprimny was Deputy Justice of the Colombian Constitutional Court for eleven years and has been an independent expert in several cases before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Uprimny has written several books and articles on human rights, democracy, transitional justice and drug policy.



Ms. Claudia Chwalisz, Founder and CEO of DemocracyNext; former Innovative Citizen Participation Lead at OECD

Claudia Chwalisz is an author, activist and entrepreneur working to build new institutions for the next democratic paradigm of citizen participation, representation and deliberation.

She is the founder and CEO of DemocracyNext, an international non-profit, nonpartisan research and action institute.

Chwalisz is the lead author of the first OECD report on deliberative democracy, “Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave” (2020, co-authored with Ieva Česnulaitytė). She also led the development of the OECD. Good Practice Principles for Deliberative Processes.



Ms. Nighat Dad, founder of the Digital Rights Foundation, member of the Information and Democracy Commission; member of the Oversight Board of Meta

Nighat Dad is a Pakistani lawyer and the founder of Digital Rights Foundation, a charity organisation focused on cyber harassment, data protection and free speech online in Pakistan and South Asia. As a feminist and pioneer for women’s rights activism in Pakistan, Dad has raised awareness of patriarchy and illuminated her own experience as a women engaged in digital rights activism.

Dad is an inaugural member of the Oversight Board, which since 2020 has been working to better protect freedom of expression on Meta’s platforms by making principled, independent decisions about important pieces of content.

Her accomplishments include being named a Next Generation Leader by Time Magazine in 2015, the Dutch Human Rights Tulip Award in 2016, a TED Global Fellowship in 2017 and nomination as a Young Global Leader by World Economic Forum in 2018, as well as being listed among 2019’s 21 Young Leaders from Asia by Asia Society.



Ms. Courtenay Howe, Senior Advocacy Advisor at STOPAIDS and Project Manager at the Platform for ACT-A Civil Society and Community Representatives

Courtenay Howe is the Project Manager of the Platform for ACT-A Civil Society and Community Representatives hosted by WACI Health, Global Fund Advocates Network (GFAN) and STOPAIDS and Senior Advocacy Advisor at STOPAIDS focusing on global health governance and meaningful participation of civil society and communities.