



# CENTRE FOR AFRICAN JUSTICE PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

## HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY IN PRACTICE

### CONFERENCE REPORT



# **Conference Report: Human Rights Advocacy in Practice**

Organised by

Centre for African Justice,  
Peace and Human Rights

in collaboration with

Wigs in Gowns Society (WIGS),  
Leiden Public International Law Society (LPILS),  
Leiden University and REDRESS

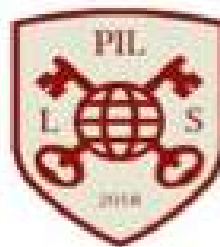
Leiden University | 24 May 2019





Centre for African Justice,  
Peace and Human Rights

# WiGS & LPILS Presents: *Human Rights Advocacy in Practice*



**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

**Time: 10:00-15:00**

**Location: Kamerling Onnes Building, Leiden Universiteit,  
Leiden Campus**

**Guest Speaker's**

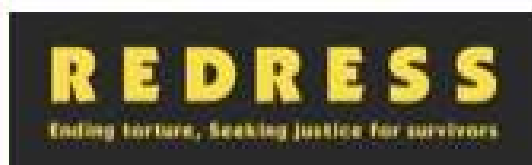
**TBA (Leiden University)**

**International Legal Advisor, Charlie Loudon (REDRESS)**

**Prof. Helen Duffy (Human Rights in Practice)**



<https://www.facebook.com/events/2322419697794565/>



**Universiteit  
Leiden**



# Event Schedule

10:15 – 10:30 Introductory and Welcome Remarks

Speakers Ms. Adesola Adeboyejo & Prof. Daniëlla Dam-de Jong

Welcome note from representatives of Centre for African Justice, Peace and Human rights, and Leiden University.

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10:30 – 11:00 Lecture – Legal Framework of Human Rights

Speaker Dr. Jens Iverson – Lecturer from Leiden University

Dr. Jens Iverson will discuss the interplay of human rights and jurisdiction issues from an academic perspective. The lecture will provide a short introduction to the legal framework for human rights, universal jurisdiction, and the politics involved in human rights enforcement.

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11:00 – 13:00 Litigating torture cases at domestic level through universal jurisdiction

Speaker Redress – Charlie Loudon – REDRESS's International Legal Advisor

This is an introduction to the strategies being used by NGO's and legal practitioners fighting impunity for crimes of torture. This lecture reveals the experience of REDRESS and the speaker will explain how the role of NGOs has evolved in the last decade; what NGOs can and are trying to achieve; and how this fits into the fight against impunity for international crimes and *Jus Cogens norms*.

In this lecture Redress will go over key lessons their legal practitioners have learnt through building universal jurisdiction cases at a national level; recent developments, decisions, and precedents that affect such cases; and what practitioners consider to guarantee their objectives are met when building universal jurisdiction cases at a domestic level.

The speaker has a chance to describe legal problems/issues practitioners' face, developments in universal jurisdiction at a national level, and a case study or situation to illustrate their case.

The aim of the lecture is to share best practises and the experiences of individuals who work on international justice cases using Universal Jurisdiction. This is an opportunity for our speaker to share why universal jurisdiction is important to combat impunity for Jus Cogens norms and Human Rights violations.

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14:00 – 16:00 Introduction to Strategic Human Rights Litigation

Speaker Prof. Helen Duffy – Legal Practitioner

The lecture will focus on the practice of international criminal justice. In this lecture we will follow on from the idea outlined in the previous lecture and focuses on the lessons legal practitioners have learnt from experiences litigating cases at a regional and international level.

This is an introduction to the strategies used by legal practitioners who litigate at regional and international human rights courts. This lecture explores some of Prof. Helen Duffy's cases as outlined in her recent book *Strategic Human Rights Litigation: Understanding and Maximizing Impact*.

In this lecture, Prof. Helen Duffy will go over key developments in strategic litigation practices and how this has impacted the work of human rights advocates. She will highlight recent developments, decisions, and precedents that affect litigating human rights cases at a supranational level.

The aim of the lecture is to share best practises and the experiences of individuals who work on human rights cases. This is an opportunity for our speakers to share why strategic litigation is an important to combat impunity for Jus Cogens norms and International Crimes.

Closing Remarks

End of Conference

# Welcome Note

On behalf of the Wigs in Gowns Society (WiGS) and Leiden Public International Law Society (LIPLS) welcome to our first event: Human Rights Advocacy in Practice.

The day will look at the challenges and strategies of legal practitioners involved in human rights cases. The day is broken into three sessions. To begin there is a short lecture to introduce the underlying theories and principles of today's discussion. After this, Charlie Loudon from REDRESS will lead an interactive session on universal jurisdiction and litigating torture cases at a national level. After a short break there is a second interactive session led by Prof. Helen Duffy on litigating human rights cases at a regional and international level.

The focus of the day is strategic litigation and the tools available to legal practitioners seeking justice for torture victims and human rights violations.

We are excited to welcome you to our first event and hope you enjoy the day.

## Facilitators

### **Centre for African Justice Peace and Human Rights**

CAJPHR is a non-governmental non-profit organisation with the view to increase the enforceability and knowledge of international law  
Wigs in Gowns Society

The WiGS platform aims at increasing the understanding and utility of issues and concepts of international (criminal) law, and offers a practical approach to the study of the law  
Leiden University

Leiden University, founded in 1575 is one of Europe's leading international research universities. The motto of the University is 'Praesidium Libertatis' - Bastion of Freedom. It has seven faculties in the arts, humanities and sciences, spread over locations in Leiden and The Hague.

### **Leiden Public International Law Society**

LPILS is a society run by Leiden Public International Law's students and alumni, for students and alumni dedicated to organise conferences, workshops, and extracurricular activities and promote career opportunities.

## **REDRESS**

REDRESS uses the law to seek justice and reparation for survivors of torture, to combat impunity for governments and individuals who perpetrate torture, and to develop and promote compliance with international standards.



## Capacity Building: Human Rights Advocacy in Practice

The Centre for African Justice, Peace & Human Rights (CAJPHR) in collaboration with Wigs in Gowns Society and Leiden Public International Law Society (LPILS) held a conference on Human Rights Advocacy in Practice in Kamerlingh Onnes Gebouw, Leiden University on 24th May 2019. The conference focused on the challenges and strategies legal advocates faced in human rights cases.

The two part conference was moderated by Dr. Daniëlla Damde Jong, Associate Professor of the Department of Public International Law and the Grotius Centre for International Legal Studies at Leiden University.

A Board Member of CAJPHR, Ms. Adesola Adeboyejo, provided welcoming remarks and introduced the first speaker, Dr. Jens Iverson, Assistant Professor at the Grotius Centre for International Legal Studies.





#### FIRST SESSION

The first session began with a lecture by Dr. Iverson about the interplay of human rights and universal jurisdictions from an academic perspective. The session gave special focus to the legal framework for human rights and universal jurisdiction as well as the politics involved in human rights enforcement. The second keynote speaker was Charlie Loudon from REDRESS, who led an interactive session on universal jurisdiction and litigating torture cases at a national level. Mr. Loudon was particularly helpful in sharing the strategies being used by NGOs and legal practitioners fighting against impunity for crimes of torture. By sharing the strategies used by NGOs and legal practitioners, Mr. Loudon also shone a light on the *Jus Cogens* norms and the challenges that legal practitioners encounter when building universal jurisdiction cases.

#### SECOND SESSION

In the second session, there was an interactive workshop conducted by Professor Helen Duffy at the Grotius Centre. The session focused on strategic human rights litigations in front of regional and international bodies. Additionally, it underscored the importance of these litigations in the quest for justice and against impunity for *Jus Cogens* norms. In the workshop, recent developments, decisions, and precedents that affected litigating human rights cases at a supranational level were highlighted. The conference provided insights into the strategies legal advocates use to fight against impunity for crimes that violate international law. Strategic litigation and other tools available to legal practitioners seeking justice for torture victims and human rights violations were also shared.





## PANELISTS

### Ms. Adesola Adeboyejo



**Adesola Adeboyejo is a Trial Lawyer at the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court. She has also worked with the Victims Participation and Reparations Section of the Registry of the Court. Prior to joining the Court, Mrs. Adeboyejo worked as Prosecution Counsel in the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) from 2001 to 2007, and as a Legal Adviser in the Investigations Division from 1999 to 2001.**

**Mrs. Adeboyejo served as Prosecution counsel in several cases at the ICTR. Prior to this she was the Legal Secretary to African Concern, an international NGO (1998) and ran her own law firm out of Lagos, Nigeria (1995 -1998). Mrs. Adeboyejo lectures regularly, and has been both a panel presenter and trainer at the annual ICC Seminar and Training for Counsel. She has also participated in training investigators, prosecutors and judges in national jurisdictions. Mrs. Adeboyejo is a 1989 graduate of the Nigerian Law School.**

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**Professor Helen Duffy currently teaches two Masters level courses at Leiden University, on the 'International Protection of Human Rights' in the Advanced Masters Public International Law programme and on 'Humanitarian law, Human Rights and Terrorism' on the regular LLM Programme. She supervises PhD and LLM candidates.**

**She also runs 'Human Rights in Practice,' an international practice based in the Hague that specializes in strategic litigation before regional and international human rights courts and bodies. Her publications on international law and practice include 'The War on Terror and the Framework of International law' CUP, 2nd ed. 2015 and Strategic Human Rights Litigation: Understanding and Maximising Impact.**

**Her current areas of research include human rights litigation, the interplay of human rights and humanitarian law and several issues related to counter-terrorism, human rights and the rule of law. Since January 2015 she has been appointed to the Gieskes Chair of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights. This chair is funded by the Gieskes-Strijbis Fonds.**

### Professor Helen Duffy







## Dr Jens Iverson



**Jens Iverson holds a Ph.D. from Leiden University, a Juris Doctor from the University of California, Hastings, Cum Laude, and a Bachelors of Arts from Yale University. Dr Iverson has additionally studied international law at the graduate level at the School of Oriental and African Studies, and international relations at New School University.**

**As President and Co-founder of the Hastings Human Rights Project for Haiti, he successfully co-petitioned Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on behalf of a former Prime Minister of Haiti, resulting in the end of his illegal incarceration. He is a member of the California Bar (2007), Order of the Coif, and the Thurston Society, and was a Yale Summer Travelling Fellow and Class of 1956 Fellow. Amongst other awards, he received the Student Leadership Award for Outstanding Service to Hastings and the Legal Community (2007), the Public Interest Clearinghouse Pro Bono Publico Award (2007), the California Bar Foundation Superior and Exceptional Merit Scholar for Public Service (2005, 2006), the William Blackfield Memorial Scholar for Achievement, Leadership, and Professional Promise (2006), and the Hastings Public Interest Law Foundation Fellowship (2006). He served as Articles Editor for the Hastings Race and Poverty Law Journal, Vice President of the Hastings International and Comparative Law Society, and President of the Hastings to Haiti Partnership.**

**Prior to joining academia, he practiced at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, and worked for Senior Judge Sterling Johnson, Jr. (E.D.N.Y), Professor Naomi Roht-Arriaza, Professor Ascanio Piomelli, the American Coalition for the ICC, the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, The Hague Appeal for Peace, and the Cambodian Genocide Program. Jens Iverson has published in wide-ranging areas, including international criminal law, environmental protection, international humanitarian law, history of international law, transitional justice, and human rights. His research has appeared in peer-reviewed journals in the U.S. and Europe and a number of edited volumes, and he has edited volumes for Oxford University Press and a special edition of the Journal of World Investment & Trade.**





## Prof Daniëlla Dam-de jong

Daniëlla Dam-de Jong has worked for the Grotius since 2007; first as a PhD candidate and later as Assistant Professor. She received a research prize by the Foundation Praemium Erasmianum and an honorary mention by the Max van der Stoep Human Rights Award for her dissertation *International Law and Governance of Natural Resources in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations*, which was published (with additions) by Cambridge University Press (2015).

Professor Dam-de Jong is a member of the ILA Committee on Role of International Law in Sustainable Natural Resource Management for Development and of the IUCN WCEL Specialist Group on Peace, Security and Conflict. She has written and advised extensively on questions of natural resource governance.

Her research interests relate to the international legal dimensions of environmental security, which involves international law in the field of peace and security, international humanitarian law, international human rights law, international environmental law, international economic law and international criminal law.

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Charlie Loudon is an International Legal Adviser, representing REDRESS and its clients in cases before international courts and tribunals, including the African human rights bodies, UN treaty bodies and UK domestic courts. He leads REDRESS' legal work on seeking the release of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and co-ordinates its work on prosecuting the perpetrators of torture using universal jurisdiction.

Mr. Loudon is a UK-qualified solicitor advocate. He practised for six years at an international law firm, where he acted in disputes against foreign states. He previously spent time at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the Ghana Center for Democratic Development. Charlie studied Law at Oxford University (BA) and International Law and African Politics at SOAS (MA). He writes regularly on international justice and human rights.

## Mr. Charlie Loudon





## Dr Claire Vergerio



**Claire Vergerio is an Assistant Professor of International Relations at the Institute of Political Science at Leiden University. As a scholar of International Relations, she works at the intersection of political thought, history, and international law. She is particularly interested in the regulation of warfare and its relationship to different visions of international order. Her current research revolves around the issue of when and why the right to wage war became the exclusive legal prerogative of sovereign states.**

**Through her work on the history of the laws of war, Vergerio also examines the historical construction of various popular but misleading narratives that are widespread in the disciplines of International Law and International Relations.**

**Before delving into historical materials, Dr. Vergerio had a longstanding interest in transitional justice and international criminal law, working on the Hissène Habré case during her time at Human Rights Watch (2010-2011), and as a legal officer on a defense team before the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in 2013-2014. This practical involvement in international justice cases pertaining to post-conflict situations constituted one of the key starting points of her historical investigations.**

**Her research has been published in International Theory, the Journal of the History of International Law, and Millennium: Journal of International Studies.**



## **The Wigs in Gowns Society (WiGS)**

### **Achievements**

**The WiGS's aimed to familiarise international and national undergraduate and graduate students with various issues of public international law. The WiGS platform focused on increasing the understanding and utility of issues and concepts of international (criminal) law, and offers a practical approach to the study of the law. To this end, the society held regular sessions on chosen topics reflecting contemporary concerns of international law and justice. The network could be extended to African universities (starting in Nigeria as part of the bottom-up and top-down initiatives) as well as young professionals, both in Europe and Africa.**

**Through the sessions, WiGS students were able to develop legal skills (such as debating, writing, augmenting, researching), as well as build a network with students and guest speakers to help them in their future career. The meetings required the students to participate actively in the discussion and gave them the opportunity to put theory in practice.**

**The sessions consisted of:**

- A presentation of the chosen issue of public international law by the speaker (generally students but also lecturers and professionals);**
- The analysis by the speaker (student, lecturer or professional) of a chosen piece of research relevant to the issue;**
- An open debate and discussion on said issue among the students (or between the students);**
- An opportunity to put theory into practice: through delivering speeches; sustaining legal argumentations; presenting opinion pieces; or drafting memorandums, contracts and other legal documents, etc.;**
- A general feedback on the session, through evaluation forms to be filled by the students.**





Organised by the  
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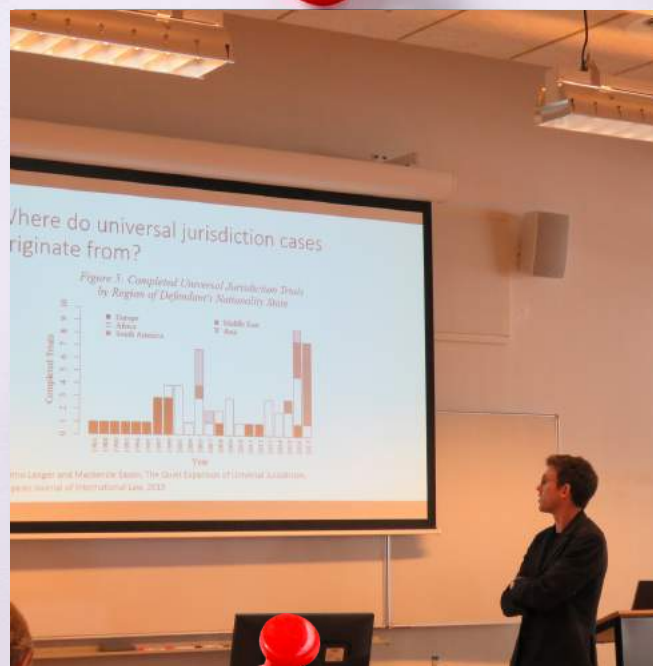
















## Thank you!

**Many thanks to REDRESS, Leiden University and LPILS for such a meaningful event. The enthusiasm and participation of the audience also contributed to the discussion about the methods and strategies available to fight against impunity.**