

PRESS STATEMENT

The National Constitutional Review Commission (NCRC), in collaboration with the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law (MPIL) and the Institute for International and Comparative Law in Africa at the Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria (ICLA) held a three-day conference on 'Constitutional Challenges in South Sudan'. The conference took place from 20-22 August, in Juba, South Sudan and was funded by the German Foreign Office.

The conference was one of the first conferences to address the challenges and possible options for the future constitution of South Sudan, one year after the country gained its independence and the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan 2011 entered into force.

It was officially inaugurated by Professor Akolda Ma'an Tier, Chairperson of the NCRC, Ms. Lepel, Deputy Director-General for Global Issues of the German Foreign Office, Ms. Hilde Johnson, UN Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, Professor Rüdiger Wolfrum, Director of the MPIL and Professor Erika de Wet, co-director of ICLA.

The conference focused especially on questions regarding state organization, i.e. the horizontal separation of powers between the different branches of government (executive, legislative, judiciary) and the vertical separation of powers between different levels of government (national, state and local level). Advantages and disadvantages of different forms of decentralisation were portrayed by referring to different examples of constitutional design, such as Tanzania, South Africa, Ethiopia, Cameroon and India. In addition the honourable members of the NCRC discussed with the international experts the influence of international law on national constitutional law and its implications for South Sudan.

Statement Prof. Akolda: "This conference has been a wonderful opportunity to exchange knowledge with the international experts and discuss these issues amongst the members of the NCRC. It was a very good starting point for the constitutional process and I call upon the international community to support our joint endeavour."

The MPIL is a world renowned independent and non-profit institute of legal research and learning. Approximately 200 employees and scholarship holders from across the globe are engaged in research on current developments in international law, European law, and comparative public law from various countries from all continents. The MPIL has been offering technical legal advice and has been engaged in professional legal training in South Sudan since 2002. Within its Global Knowledge Transfer Programme, the MPIL is also actively supporting many other countries with legal advice and legal training. These include e.g. Afghanistan, Iraq, Kirgizstan, Libya, Mongolia, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen.

ICLA was established in 2011. It serves as a first port of call for those who wish to engage in legal research and legal reform in Africa involving comparative or international law at the advanced level. ICLA strives to provide technical assistance to African governments and international organisations and engaging in legal reform on the continent. It also engages in collaborative projects with researchers on the continent and abroad.