

International Conference:

The Contribution of Non-Western Legal Systems to International Human Rights Law

Brussels 13-14 September 2010

Call for papers

This international conference focuses on the interaction between international human rights law and domestic law. Traditionally, when the interaction between international and national law is analyzed, this is done from a top-down perspective. In such a situation one is usually posing the question how international law is transposed or applied in the domestic legal system and which remedies exist when national law is not in conformity with the conditions set by international law.

The conference aims at analyzing the interaction between international and national law from a different and more bottom-up perspective. To what extent is international law and in particular international human rights law influenced by developments at the national level? The focus will be on non-Western legal systems as they often have a different view about human rights than conceptions generally adhered to in the West.

The influence of Non-Western legal systems on international human rights law will be analyzed from three angles:

1. the contribution of domestic constitutional and other courts in non-Western countries;
2. the efforts in non-Western countries to deal with multiculturalism within societies by accepting a degree of legal pluralism in the interpretation of human rights; and
3. the interpretation of human rights by social movements or actors from the relevant countries when they formulate human rights claims.

In each instance the question will also be addressed whether these legal and social practices at the national level have or had any impact on regional and/or international human rights bodies.

Key dates:

Papers will be selected on the basis of abstracts of no more than 500 words. Abstracts should be submitted by e-mail to Koen De Feyter (Koen.defeyter@ua.ac.be) and Stefaan Smis (ssmis@vub.ac.be) by **1 April 2010**. Papers will be selected by **15 April 2010**. The full text of the paper needs to be submitted by **31 August 2010**. A number of papers will be selected for publication in Human Rights & International Legal Discourse. Others will be selected to be published in an edited volume focusing on the theme of the conference.

Enquiries should be addressed to Koen De Feyter and Stefaan Smis.

Conference team:

- Prof. Eva Brems (University of Ghent)
- Prof. Koen De Feyter (University of Antwerp)
- Prof. Franck Maes (University of Ghent)
- Prof. Cedric Ryngaert (Catholic University of Leuven)
- Prof. Stefaan Smis (Vrije Universiteit Brussels)
- Prof. Stefan Sottiaux (Catholic University of Leuven)
- Prof. Wouter Vandenhole (University of Antwerp)
- Prof. Kim Van der Borght (Vrije Universiteit Brussels)
- Prof. Jan Wouters (Catholic University of Leuven)