
AFRICAN JOURNAL OF LEGAL STUDIES

FOREWORD

On behalf of the entire Editorial Board, I am pleased to present the inaugural issue of the *African Journal of Legal Studies* ('*AJLS*') on the theme of *Justice and Reconciliation*. It is dedicated to the memory of all those who were killed in the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.

As my colleagues and I have discovered over the past few months, starting a scholarly periodical is a daunting task that requires enormous amounts of time, patience and attention to detail, but above all, commitment. Our willingness to take on this challenge reflects our conviction that this journal meets an important need. Ultimately, however, only you the reader, and the passage of time, will determine the accuracy of our assessment.

The rationale for our journal stems from the Africa Law Institute's profound belief that academics and rule of law advocates interested in the world's second largest continent should have a forum dedicated solely to the promotion of critical, innovative, and *interdisciplinary* scholarship on current governance crises in Africa. For it should be abundantly clear that no one field, whether law, political science, sociology, economics, or development studies, can hold all the answers to the almost overwhelming questions facing Africans, and those concerned about Africa, in the early part of the twenty-first century.

By launching the *AJLS*, the Institute hopes to contribute to the literature on African governance by offering an outlet for innovative and critical perspectives on how best to wrestle that continent's multifaceted problems. We further hope that this modest contribution will inspire academics, practitioners and NGOs, both inside and outside of Africa, to engage in ongoing debate and reflection on the deconstruction of conventional wisdom, as well as identification of holistic, policy-oriented and culturally sensitive solutions for implementation by African policy makers.

That said, the *AJLS* is not interested solely in publishing theoretical studies with little or no practical implication. Rather, our goal is to publish original, critical and timely scholarship that bridges theory and practice across a variety of disciplines.

On the occasion of our first edition, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to all those who responded to our call for papers. While

unable to accept every submission, we are proud that the two pieces selected confirm the original thinking and literary quality we are confident will be this journal's hallmark. I also wish to thank the dedicated members of our Consultative Board who kindly reviewed articles and offered their insightful commentary, often on short notice. Last but not least, I thank my colleagues on the Editorial Board whose collective efforts made this first issue possible.

We are excited about sharing these papers with you our readers, but scholarly debate is a two-way street. The *AJLS* is therefore pleased to invite you to send your questions and comments, which we will pass along directly to the authors. We ask simply that you deliver all correspondence via e-mail to ajlscomments@africalawinstitute.org and that you include the author's name and the full title of the article in your message. All author responses will be posted on our website at www.africalawinstitute.org/ajls as soon as possible after we receive them.

Lastly, to make the *AJLS* a more meaningful and user-friendly resource for our readers, we dearly welcome any comments you might have on possible future topics, the journal's balance between theory and practice, or any other matter relating to the substance and form of this publication. Wherever we can improve the quality and value of our new journal, we are most willing to do so.

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