

## CONCEPT NOTE

### Lakilaki Colloquium for National, Regional and International Judges

#### **Background**

The United Nations Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals ('Mechanism') was proud to commence operations in July 2012 in Arusha, Tanzania, followed a year later by its branch in The Hague, in The Netherlands. The United Nations Security Council decided, in its resolution 1966 (2010), that the Mechanism would continue the rights, obligations and ongoing functions of, *inter alia*, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). The Mechanism assumed that task in full from 1 January 2016, following the closure of the ICTR at the end of 2015, and inaugurated its new premises for the Arusha Branch of the Mechanism at Lakilaki, Arusha, on 25 November 2016.

The Mechanism has a roster of 25 judges, comprised of diverse regions of the world and representing varied legal cultures, under the current Presidency of Judge Theodor Meron. Two of these judges are senior Tanzanian judges, with a further eight stemming from around the African region. The breadth of skill and experience of this group of international judges, representing a diverse range of legal traditions and judicial cultures, is an extraordinary asset both for the Mechanism and the international judicial community at large.

#### **Purpose and Format**

Thanks to an external grant from a generous donor, the Mechanism is pleased to be able to commence a series of capacity-building and knowledge-sharing initiatives aimed at professional communities in Tanzania and, in time, around the region. As a first step in this series, the Mechanism is proud to host a Colloquium for National, Regional and International Judges at its premises at Lakilaki, Arusha, over the two days of Friday 5 May and Saturday 6 May 2017.

The Mechanism's presence at Lakilaki, in partnership with the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and the people of the Arusha region, represents a new phase of the United Nations' long-standing commitment to the area dating back in excess of twenty years. The design and architecture of the Mechanism's new premises integrate local, regional and international elements. At the same time, the presence of the Mechanism in Arusha represents a new addition to the already varied national, regional and international institutions situated there. The Mechanism's new premises recognise in concrete, practical terms the value of judicial colleagues of diverse vantage points coming together, sharing respective knowledge and experience, and collectively building our abilities to do better for the societies we serve.

The inaugural Lakilaki Colloquium seeks to bring together national judges from the Tanzanian judiciary, notably the Chief Justice of Tanzania and judges of the High Court in Arusha, with sub-regional and regional judges from the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) located in Arusha, and Tanzanian and international judges from the Mechanism. Thematically, the Colloquium is built up on four foundational components of modern international criminal practice: the law of the crime of genocide, the law of crimes against humanity, the law of war crimes, and the law of modes of liability for international crimes, combined with associated discussion at each stage. The two-day Colloquium aims to deepen a shared understanding of these key aspects of international criminal law, through a methodological lens of shared reflection on complementary approaches to judicial decision-making at national, regional and international levels.

At the same time, the Colloquium offers a first opportunity to introduce the Mechanism, through its new premises, to its sister judicial institutions in Arusha and to the respected judges which serve through them. There will be opportunity to tour the site and its facilities, and to examine particular innovations which may be of interest to participants' own institutions in turn.