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# Call for Papers

# Public Interest Litigation: The role of International Courts and Tribunals?

# 8 September 2021

Public interest litigation represents a way for issues of broad public concern—such as genocide, torture, nuclear disarmament and climate change—to be the subject of adjudication before international courts and tribunals. Applicants who are not necessarily directly affected by the conduct at issue may nevertheless pursue litigation on behalf of the victims or injured state(s), as well as the larger international community. The victims themselves may be a very broad group or difficult to identify with precision. Historically speaking, international courts and tribunals have not necessarily been the fora of choice for actors seeking to litigate matters of broad public interest. In recent years, climate change litigation has played out in domestic rather than international courts. Yet, in January 2020, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) confirmed the admissibility of a contentious case with a clear public interest character (*Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (*The Gambia v Myanmar)*). The Court’s historical resistance to hearing such cases thus appears to be firmly a thing of the past (*South West Africa*). The ICJ is by no means the only institution capable of or willing to hear such cases, and this call for papers encourages proposals concerning a range of institutions, such as the regional human rights courts and other human rights bodies, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, and inter-state arbitration tribunals. Proposals may focus on contentious as well as advisory proceedings. Subjects of particular interest include:

* The potential benefits and risks of public interest litigation before international courts and tribunals, whether legal, political, or practical;
* The potential legal or doctrinal obstacles to public interest litigation before international courts and tribunals;
* In-depth studies of particular cases, such as those that are ongoing or recently concluded;
* Comparative analyses of public interest litigation before domestic and international courts and tribunals, or before different international institutions; and
* The history and the future of public interest litigation before international courts and tribunals.

Members of the Interest Group are invited to submit abstracts of up to 500 words by emailing them to [igictesil@gmail.com](mailto:igictesil@gmail.com). The **deadline for submitting abstracts is 30 April 2021.**

The following information must be provided with each abstract:

* The author’s name and affiliation
* The author’s CV, including a list of relevant publications

Authors of selected abstracts will be notified by 1 May 2021. Draft papers should be submitted by 30 August 2021. The drafts will be circulated among the participants in the side event.

We plan to pursue the publication of the papers presented in a peer review journal.

For substantive questions, please contact the Interest Group convenors:

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