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## **Concept Note**

### **10th AUCIL FORUM (2024)**

#### **Theme:**

**“International Law, Alternative Justice, and Armed Conflicts”**

#### **Venue:**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Dates: 20-21 May 2024**

#### **By**

**Prof. Kevin Ferdinand Ndjimba (Chairperson of the Forum)**

**Dr. Belibi Sébastien Daila (Rapporteur of the Forum)**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Established in 2009 pursuant to Article 5(2) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the African Union Commission on International Law (AUCIL) is an independent advisory body of the Union. Its objectives, as outlined in its Statute adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, include the teaching, dissemination and promotion of international law and the Union's across and outside of the African Continent.
2. To execute these specific mandates, the AUCIL, beyond disseminating publications to Member States, researchers and the general public, also organizes an annual Forum on a pertinent and relevant issue within the realm of international law.

## **II. Background on AUCIL Forums**

3. AUCIL Forums, are generally take place in-person or in a hybrid format, during one of its two (2) annual statutory sessions. They constitute an interactive platform during which specialists and experts in international law, African Union law and related disciplines, exchange and discuss among themselves and with representatives of Member States, AUCIL Commissioners, researchers, scholars and all interested persons on regional integration or other relevant issues with legal implications for the African Union, Member States and African peoples.
4. These forums also provide an opportunity, through joint and critical reflection, to formulate ideas and outline an original African approach to international law. They provide an opportunity to bring these various stakeholders together, with a view to improving knowledge and deepening the understanding of international law on the Continent. Finally, the reflections carried out on this occasion constitute, for the African Union, for its various bodies and for its Member States, invaluable tools at the service of the construction of regional integration, in accordance with Agenda 2063.
5. In this context, previous AUCIL forums, the first of which took place in December 2012, have tackled a variety of themes on issues linked to the Continent's political and legal news. The themes addressed so far are:
  - a. "Codification in international law at the regional level".
  - b. "The Law of Regional Integration in Africa".
  - c. "Issues of Ratification and the Implementation of Treaties in Africa".
  - d. "The challenges of ratification and implementation of treaties in Africa".
  - e. "The Role of Africa in Developing International Law".
  - f. "The Legal, Political and Socio-Economic Consequences of Migration, Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa".

- g. “The Management of Natural Resources in Africa”.
- h. “Constitutional Democracy, Rule of Law and struggle against corruption”
- i. “International Law, Business Law, and Human Rights in Africa”

### **III. Theme of the 10<sup>th</sup> Forum**

6. As per the Decision of the AUCIL Plenary adopted during its 22<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Session, held from 8 to 23 May 2023 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the theme chosen for the 10th Forum is:

**“International Law, Alternative Justice, and Armed Conflicts”.**

### **IV. Background on the 10th Forum Theme**

7. The selection of this theme is justified by a twofold development on the Continent. Firstly, the multiplication of armed conflicts on the Continent, leading to considerable suffering and generational trauma, one of the consequences of which is the social disintegration and breakdown of state communities, with an increasingly international dimension. Secondly, the strong demand for alternative forms of justice in the face of the failure of the Western-style punitive justice system, whose principles and values not only fail to take account of people's original regulatory systems but, above all, fail to take account of the rights, suffering and reparation needs of victims.
8. On this basis, the ambition of the 10th forum is to analyze the multifaceted issues raised by the development of alternative and transitional justice systems and their adequacy with current international legal frameworks, particularly as regards the promotion of accountability, reconciliation and the protection of victims' rights in a society beset by numerous armed conflicts. In this context, participants will be asked to :
- a. To evaluate and discuss the effectiveness of alternative justice mechanisms in addressing legal challenges arising from armed conflicts;
  - b. To analyze the intersection between international humanitarian law, human rights law, and transitional justice in post-conflict situations;
  - c. To discuss the role of AU and its Member States in implementing international legal mechanisms for addressing armed conflicts and ensuring accountability;
  - d. To explore innovative approaches to promote accountability and reconciliation in post-conflict societies;
  - e. To identify challenges and opportunities for the development of international law in the context of armed conflicts in Africa.

## V. Participants.

9. Open to all researchers and practitioners of international law and related disciplines, the 10th forum is particularly aimed at:
  - a. Senior officials of the African Union, its organs and Member States representing the Ministries in charge of: Security; Foreign Affairs; Justice and Human Rights;
  - b. National and international lawyers and judges interested in international law, human rights and international and national criminal justice;
  - c. Researchers, academics and students from universities and research centers based on the Continent or in the diaspora working on themes related to the Forum's theme.

## VI. Expected results

10. The expected outcomes of the Forum include:
  - a. A better understanding of the nexus between alternative justice and the resolution of armed conflicts on the Continent;
  - b. An objective assessment of the contribution of alternative justice to the management of armed conflicts on the Continent;
  - c. Concrete proposals for alternative justice adapted to African contexts that could be put forward to Member States.

## VII. Practical arrangements for participation and submission of papers

11. The Forum will be held physically in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) at the African Union Headquarters. However, in case of *force majeure*, on-line participation by panelists and other participants is envisaged.
12. Proposals for individual or group papers, including title and abstract not exceeding 300 words, surnames, first names, qualifications and academic or professional institutions of the author, including telephone (WhatsApp number) and electronic (email address) contact details, accompanied by a one-page curriculum vitae, must be sent by **7 April 2024** to the following addresses:

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13. At the end of the examination of all the submissions, a confirmation email will be sent to the authors of the communications selected by the Organizing Committee. The full versions of the communications thus retained, presented according to academic canons and not exceeding a maximum of twenty (20) pages in font 12, must be sent to the same addresses at the latest one (1) week before the actual holding of the forum and will be the subject, at the end of this, of a publication in the AUCIL Journal.