

Bingham Centre eBulletin - April 2015



Dear friends,

We are pleased to send you our latest eBulletin to update you on the Centre's recent activities. You can expect to hear from us four or five times a year. If you would like to keep up to date with us more regularly, you can follow us on Twitter [@BinghamCentre](#) or subscribe to our full range of events notifications at www.binghamcentre.biicl.org

Recent Bingham Centre highlights include...

Constitutional Reform in Myanmar



Our work on constitutional reform in Myanmar continued with a visit to Myanmar's capital, Nay Pyi Taw in late January. Six international experts and one Burmese lawyer conducted seminars for a total of 48 members of parliament of Myanmar and private meetings were held with several more MPs and senior political figures including the Attorney General and the leader of the NLD, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. A number of constitutional options were presented to the participants, including amendment formulae, executive power, the military's role, administrative justice and federalism.

India and the Post-2015 Agenda: Shaping The Connections Between Law and Development

The Bingham Centre hosted an event (funded by DFID) in New Delhi on 27 February 2015. High-level speakers considered the place of the rule of law in the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda. As the world's largest democracy, India's role will be crucial in persuading UN members states to endorse the rule of law in the 'new' sustainable development goals that will be agreed by the General Assembly later this year.

Capacity Building in the Criminal Justice Institutions in the OPTs (West Bank)



In March 2015 the Bingham Centre hosted a study visit to London as part of the centre's joint project (with the Slynn Foundation, supported by the FCO's Arab Partnership Fund) on the roles and mandates of the Palestine Justice Institutions. The visitors included the Palestine Chief Justice, Minister of Justice and Attorney General. This was followed by Sir Jeffrey's return visit to Ramallah in mid-March.

Venice Commission

The centre is now an associate member of the Venice Commission (The Council of Europe's Commission for Democracy through Law). We are assisting in particular with the drafting of a checklist on the rule of law. The Centre Director and Maurice Wohl Associate Senior Research Fellow, Justine Stefanelli, attended a meeting of the commission in March.

Guidelines for Judicial Appointment Commissions: Practice and Procedure

In countries where the task of selecting judges is entrusted to a judicial appointments commission (JAC), and the practice and procedures of this body are of vital importance to securing an independent judiciary that is able to uphold the rule of law. The Bingham Centre has partnered with the University of Cape Town to develop guidelines for JACs, in a project funded by the Claude Leon Foundation. On 21-23 April 2015, the Director and Associate Senior Research Fellow, Dr Jan van Zyl Smit, will take part in a workshop in Cape Town with experts from South Africa, England and Wales, Canada, Malaysia, Kenya, Nigeria and India.

The Global Law Summit

The Bingham Centre was asked to organise the final afternoon of the three-day Global Law Summit in London. The Centre's session on 25 February was preceded by a lively warm-up session by the Mayor of London. The subject, The Rule of Law & Economic Development, attracted a full house. The speakers were Sir Jeffrey Jowell QC, Justice Catherine O'Regan (formerly of the South African Constitutional Court), Harish Salve SA (former Indian Solicitor General), Hong Kong Chief Justice Ma, and Lord Mandelson. All speakers emphasised how the rule of law encourages investment and stability but is also a means of empowerment and accountability.

