From the Director:

The Bingham Centre has really hit its stride now and we are proud of the work produced, reflected in the seminal research publication on safeguards for immigration detention, discussed below and supported by the Nuffield Foundation. Having External Fellows of the quality of Michael Fordham QC (working with Justine Stefanelli and Sophie Eser on that project) and Dr Mark Elliott (working on our response to the government’s proposals on judicial review) has significantly increased our capacity. We hope other of our supporters will collaborate with us in different ways. In addition, due to the generosity of the David and Elaine Potter Foundation, the appointment of Dr Lawrence McNamara as the Deputy Director of the Centre has made a huge difference to the quality and efficiency of our fast-growing output.

Some of our research projects emerge after ‘brainstorming’ sessions on subjects that may need attention. Others are undertaken in response to requests from a variety of sources. Although those projects and events below may appear to be somewhat broadly spread, we strive to keep them all within a clear and balanced strategy.

Some work in progress has not been mentioned here, such as my recent visit, with the Slynn Foundation (Sir Henry Brooke and Sir David Latham), to Ramallah on Palestine’s West Bank. It is important that, if and when Palestine becomes a state, its institutions are viable. With support from the EU and the British Consul General in Jerusalem, the Bingham Centre was asked to scope the balance between the courts and the executive there (with the Slynn Foundation looking to judicial training). Also in that region, I went, with Naina Patel, Eric Metcalfe and Ivan Hare, to Bahrain to assist the Bahraini Ministry of Justice with a law of free expression consistent with international human rights standards. And, as discussed below, we have just completed a Manual on Constitutional Options, which will be taken around Burma/Myanmar during a period where reform of the constitution is being considered.

Thanks to all our readers for their support.

Professor Sir Jeffrey Jowell KCMG QC
Director, Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law
Guest contributor Michael Fordham QC writes about the catalyst for the Bingham Centre’s new report on Immigration Detention and the Rule of Law:


The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has been troubled by the “deprivation of liberty, applied to asylum-seekers, refugees and immigrants in an irregular situation” (WGAD Annual Report 2008, A/HRC/10/21, 16 February 2009, §65). “Countries around the world are increasingly using detention as a migration management tool” (International Detention Coalition, The Issue of Immigration Detention at the UN Level (2011)). In the United States, immigration detention tripled between 1996 and 2008, many left to “languish in detention indefinitely” and many “held… without access to an immigration judge or judicial body” (Amnesty International, Jailed Without Justice (2008), pp.3, 6). In Europe (PACE Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, Report on the Detention of Asylum Seekers and Irregular Migrants in Europe (2010)), immigration detention “has increased substantially in recent years... to a large extent due to policy and political decisions resulting from a hardening attitude towards irregular migrants and asylum seekers”, while “conditions and safeguards afforded to immigration detainees who have committed no crime are often worse than those of criminal detainees”, “[d]etention has a high cost in financial terms” and “there is a clear lack of a precise, accessible legal framework governing the use of detention”.

In the UK – the only EU member state to practise indefinite immigration detention – “at any one time, several thousand immigrants and asylum seekers are detained indefinitely without trial or charge” (Johnston (2009) 23 Imm Asylum and Nationality Law 351, 364). Here (Migration Observatory, Oxford University, Policy Primer, Immigration Detention: Policy Challenges (2011), p.5) “detainees rarely know the term of their confinement” and “find it hard to bear not knowing what will happen in their case”. Here, immigration detention is pursued “with a ruthless determination” (R (Kambadzi) v SSHD [2011] UKSC 23 §27 Lord Hope), and the “unpopularity” of immigration detainees “has allowed policy-makers to shrug off defeats in the courts and continue regardless” (London Detainee Support Group, No Return, No Release, No Reason (2010) p.24). Here, approximately 30,000 migrants enter immigration detention every year and to operate a typical facility, holding an average of 194 detained migrants at any one time, costs some £8.5million per year (Migration Observatory, Oxford University, Briefing: Immigration Detention in the UK (2012)).

The International Detention Coalition includes over 200 NGOs from more than 50 countries working to protect the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers in immigration detention. Its call (The Issue of Immigration Detention at the UN Level (2011)) is that “the UN and civil society must remain vigilant, proactive and work collaboratively to ensure governments uphold international human rights standards for those in immigration detention”.

October 2013 saw the launch of the Bingham Centre’s report on Immigration Detention and the Rule of Law. The Report articulates 25 Safeguarding Principles. It gathers together ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ law; ‘binding’ and ‘persuasive’ sources; informative reference-points; international, regional and national materials. When Lord Bingham wrote his Belmarsh judgment (A v SSHD [2004] UKHL 56), he gathered (§§57–63) an array of sources. None were “binding”; all helped expose a use of immigration detention as contrary to the rule of law.
Constitutional Awareness Training in Burma/Myanmar

Jeffrey Jowell, writes:

During the week of 14 October, two events were organised in Burma/Myanmar directed by the Bingham Centre, working with the new Myanmar Lawyers Association and supported by LexisNexis. A Parliamentary Committee has been set up in Burma to consider possible reforms to the current (2008) Constitution. In order to raise public awareness of the issues, which is so necessary for the lasting legitimacy of any reforms, the Bingham Centre was asked to draft a Manual for circulation to the general public outlining: What is a Constitution? What are the key provisions of the present constitution? What areas might be reformed? The Bingham Centre Manual has been translated into Burmese and published by LexisNexis in Burma. The document is forming the basis for the training of over one hundred trainers who will then go around the country explaining its content. The Bingham Centre obtained funds from two generous donors to send Alex Goodman, a barrister at Landmark Chambers, to travel to Burma to direct the training of the trainers in Yangon on 14 and 15 October, and then to direct discussions on the Manual with members of the Parliamentary constitutional reform committee on 16 and 17 October.

The Protection of Human Rights and Constitutional Review in the UK and Taiwan

Lucy Moxham, Research Fellow in the Rule of Law, Bingham Centre writes:

In July 2013, the Bingham Centre was awarded funding under the British Academy’s International Partnership and Mobility Scheme to conduct a comparative study of the domestic application of international human rights standards and the constitutional review of legislative action in the UK and the Republic of China (Taiwan), including visits in both directions. Co-funding has been awarded by the National Science Council of Taiwan. The Centre is collaborating with Professor Frederick Chao-Chun Lin of the National Taipei University. The project is intended to build on discussions begun in October 2012 in Taipei about the rule of law and to develop a long-term collaboration between the legal communities of the two countries. Given recent developments in both countries, we believe this is a timely opportunity to collaborate on developing a future research programme on these topics. I am leading this programme of work.

Experts Meeting: The Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Nepal

Lucy Moxham, Research Fellow in the Rule of Law, Bingham Centre writes:

Since the internal conflict between the Nepal Government and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) that took place in Nepal between 1996 and 2006, there have been calls for transitional justice measures in the country. In May 2013, the Bingham Centre together with Advocacy Forum-Nepal convened a meeting in London to discuss the text of the ‘Ordinance on Investigation of Disappeared Persons, Truth and Reconciliation Commission’ and to propose methods of working for the Commission. We were delighted that the meeting was attended by a number of experts from the transitional justice field and those with relevant country expertise, from NGOs, civil society, academia and legal practice. The meeting was aimed at discussing possibilities for coordination between existing criminal justice mechanisms, a forthcoming truth commission and personnel reforms for the civil service and security forces; and the opportunities and challenges presented by this potential overlap. The lack of a coordinated approach across transitional justice measures risks undermining the potential impact of these processes. I am leading this programme of work.
Immigration Detention and the Rule of Law: Launch of Safeguarding Principles

Justine Stefanelli, Maurice Wohl Fellow in European Law, Bingham Centre writes:

To mark the successful completion and publication of the Centre’s report on immigration detention and the rule of law, supported by the Nuffield Foundation, the Bingham Centre launched its 25 Safeguarding Principles, which promote the accountability of immigration detention under the rule of law, at the Royal Courts of Justice on 1 October 2013. Led by Michael Fordham QC, with myself and Sophie Eser, this report draws on legal instruments, promulgated standards, working illustrations and judicial observations. It includes ‘soft law’ sources and finds inspiration in the principled proactivity of NGOs. The report also benefitted from the expertise of a number of specialists from across Europe who offered comment on the draft report during a workshop held at the Bingham Centre in May. The report can be downloaded from our website.

Bingham Centre Review: Streamline Judicial Review

Dr Lawrence McNamara, Deputy Director, Bingham Centre writes:

The Bingham Centre is undertaking a Review to consider and report on possible ways of improving procedures in the Administrative Court, to save and protect public funds, in a manner consistent with the rule of law. Launched on 2 October 2013, the Review aims to issue an interim report by the end of this year and a final report in early 2014. It will be chaired by Michael Fordham QC, Fellow of the Bingham Centre. The other members of the Committee are: Martin Chamberlain QC, Iain Steele and Zahra Al-Rikabi.


Judges After Transitions: Achieving Legitimacy Within the Rule of Law

Dr Jan van Zyl Smit, Research Fellow in the Rule of Law, Bingham Centre writes:

Working with the Center for Constitutional Transitions at the New York University School of Law, the Bingham Centre is establishing a research network to examine a challenging problem that confronts most transitional societies in their efforts to build a constitutional democracy. This is the question of what to do about judges who are perceived to be compromised by their subservience to the former regime or through other forms of institutional corruption or dysfunction. This issue has arisen in many different contexts, including in Central and Eastern European states after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Latin American states emerging from military dictatorship, post-conflict states in Africa and Asia, and most recently in the countries of the Arab Spring.

The rule of law generally requires that judicial independence and security of tenure be respected, and in normal times this includes setting a high threshold of proof for removing a judge from office. But in transitional situations, exceptional or collective measures have often proved attractive, for example, dismissing a whole cohort of judges or requiring them to reapply in competition with new applicants. The justification for such measures is the urgency of putting in place a judiciary that is able to secure public confidence in its decisions, which may include momentous disputes that are litigated between contending political parties during the transition (e.g., a disputed election). But such interventions also carry the risk of setting a poor precedent for future judicial-executive relations by further politicising the judiciary and, treating suspect judges in this fashion may represent a missed opportunity to demonstrate high standards of due process, an aspect of the rule of law which the legal system as a whole is aspiring to achieve.

The aim of this project is to produce a policy manual on the various options for the reform of transitional judiciaries, accompanied by country case-studies. The Centre’s Director, Professor Sir Jeffrey Jowell QC, is co-ordinating this project together with Professor Sujit Choudhry of NYU, and steering committee members include myself and Bingham Centre Advisory Council member, Justice Kate O’Regan (formerly of the Constitutional Court of South Africa).
Cape Town Judicial Appointments Conference

Dr. Jan van Zyl Smit, Research Fellow in the Rule of Law, Bingham Centre writes:

I participated in a conference on judicial appointments organised by the University of Cape Town in September. The conference brought together judges, local and international academics, and South African civil society to reflect on the experience of using a judicial service commission (JSC) which is independent of the main branches of government to interview and select or recommend candidates for judicial office. This model was adopted by post-apartheid South Africa in 1994, replacing the former Westminster system in which the power to appoint judges vested in the Executive. The membership of the JSC is specified by the Constitution and includes representatives of the judiciary and legal profession as well as politicians. The track record of the JSC has become increasingly controversial, however, with concerns being expressed about politicians dominating the work of the Commission; excessively robust or intrusive questioning of judicial candidates interviewed in public; and uneven progress towards meeting the target of a Bench that is broadly representative of South Africa’s demography, including both race and gender. (See also above ‘Judges After Transitions: Achieving Legitimacy Within the Rule of Law’.)

New Training Courses

The Bingham Centre’s Education and Training Department currently has three different courses on offer to those who are interested in developing their understanding of the rule of law and its practical application at home and abroad.

Contact the Centre Administrator, Sandra Homewood (s.homewood@binghamcentre.biicl.org) for further information about courses

Constitutions and the Rule of Law: A two-day course for development practitioners

Have you ever wondered how constitutions can shape the development of rule of law in a country? This two-day course considers how both the provisions of a constitution and the institutions that it creates can further or hinder the rule of law. Tom Bingham’s eight rule of law principles are each considered via a combination of lectures and interactive group sessions using real-life scenarios from a diverse range of countries including South Africa, Kenya, Bosnia Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Guatemala, India, Malaysia and Russia. Topics include: how the role of religion and custom can affect the accessibility of law; how the powers of the executive can affect the exercise of discretion; and how the structure of the judiciary can affect access to justice. Participants will come away with a rich understanding of the rule of law and how it can be furthered through the design of a constitution, depending on the specific legal, political and social background of the country concerned.

The Human Rights Act Overseas: A half-day course for UK government advisers

Have you ever wondered how the Human Rights Act applies abroad, whether to naval officers sailing off the Horn of Africa, managers of relief programmes in Syria or diplomats evacuating holiday-makers stranded by the ash-cloud? This half day course considers the situations in which human rights obligations should be considered. An overview of the Act and the jurisprudence on its extraterritorial application is followed by interactive group sessions using hypothetical scenarios from British missions in a diverse range of countries including Afghanistan, Yemen, Libya, Spain, Mali and North Korea. Participants will come away with a thorough knowledge of when Human Rights Act considerations are relevant to the work of British advisers working overseas in an aid, diplomatic or defence capacity.

International Human Rights Frameworks: Six evening sessions for junior lawyers

Have you ever wanted to get more involved in your firm’s international pro bono work but not felt like you had a sufficiently thorough grounding in the relevant legal frameworks? This six week evening course considers the main international human rights frameworks, the current debates surrounding them and their practical application to pro bono work. Topics covered include: the UN system, the European system, women’s rights, children’s rights, economic and social rights and rights at war. Each one hour session involves lecture based presentations with time for questions and answers. Participants will come away feeling much better equipped to tackle international pro bono projects that are outside their normal areas of practice.
Bingham Centre News

Human Rights Monitoring Mechanisms

The Open Society European Policy Institute has commissioned the Bingham Centre to draft a report outlining a possible model for an EU monitoring mechanism based on analysis of existing mechanisms for monitoring implementation of standards on the rule of law, democracy and human rights in operation at the Council of Europe and United Nations levels. The project is being led by Research Fellows Justine Stefanelli and Lucy Moxham.

Bingham Centre Submits Response to Government Legal Aid Consultation

The Bingham Centre has responded to a series of Government consultations on reforms to legal aid and judicial review. On 4 June 2013, the Bingham Centre submitted its response to the Government’s first consultation on reforms to legal aid. The Centre was highly critical not only of the proposals to reduce legal aid, but also in other areas, such as in prisons, the proposal for a residence test, and the proposal that legal aid should be provided for judicial review claims only where an application for permission is successful. In particular, our response cast doubt upon the evidence base of the proposals. The Centre also submitted written evidence to the Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry into the proposed legal aid reforms.

In late September the Government launched its second round of consultations, this time on both legal aid and judicial review, which included new reforms that would restrict standing for judicial review claims and which retained original proposals to limit legal aid for permission work in judicial review. In its response on 1 November, the Centre responded to these and other issues. The Centre was critical of the standing reforms, noting (among other things) the damaging effect it would have on cases which had a strong public interest dimension and the wider effects such limits may have on the practice of good administrative decision-making. On the legal aid issues, we welcomed the fact that government had provided further data but our analysis led us to conclude that the further data provided was still not adequate and that there was still insufficient evidence on which to base the proposed reforms. We argued that where there are concerns about the wasting of court time and resources, the best available evidence suggests that it is not legally aided claimants or their representatives who are failing to consider or handle matters appropriately; rather, the evidence suggests it is privately funded litigants who are proceeding with less care.

The full responses are available on our website.

World Justice Forum IV, The Hague

In July 2013, a delegation from the Bingham Centre participated in the World Justice Forum IV in The Hague. This provided an opportunity to meet and hear from other organisations and individuals committed to advancing the rule of law around the world. We presented a poster introducing the work of the Bingham Centre.

The Case for a Rule of Law Development Goal Post-2015

On 9 September 2013, the Centre’s Director, Professor Sir Jeffrey Jowell KCMG QC, participated in an event in Parliament, ‘The Case for a Rule of Law Development Goal Post-2015’ organised by the Africa Justice Foundation. The event was chaired by Cherie Blair CBE QC, President of AJF, and speakers included The Rt. Hon. Andrew Mitchell MP, Former Secretary of State for International Development and others. Panellists explored why the rule of law is needed in the post-2015 development framework that will succeed the current UN Millennium Development Goals and how it might feature in that agenda. The Director said that the Development goals should recognise the positive effect of the rule of law on sustainable development.

BIICL Awarded Independent Research Organisation Status by Research Councils UK

The British Institute of International and Comparative Law (BIICL) has recently been awarded Independent Research Organisation status by Research Councils UK, the body that administers government funding for research each year across seven research councils. As a result, the Bingham Centre, as a part of BIICL, is now eligible to apply for research funding from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC). Together, these two research councils have an annual budget of around £400 million and support arts, humanities and social science research from across the UK’s university sector and around 25 Independent Research Organisations.
Recent Events

The Bingham Inaugural Lecture: Twenty-First Century Problems – Twentieth Century Law by Professor Harold Koh

The Bingham Centre was delighted to hold its inaugural Annual Lecture at Lincoln’s Inn on 9 May 2013. With the generous support of Fountain Court Chambers, the Centre welcomed Professor Harold Koh to deliver the lecture, titled “Twenty-First Century Problems – Twentieth-Century Law”. Professor Koh was Dean of Yale University Law School there from 2004 to 2009 and is presently the Sterling Professor of International Law. His extensive human rights legal work across his career has been internationally recognised. He has served in two US government administrations: from 1998-2001 he served as US Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; and from 2009-2012 he was Legal Adviser to the US Department of State.

Addressing an invited audience of around 200 people, Professor Koh examined a number of contentious contemporary legal issues. He drew especially on his recent experience as Legal Adviser to the Department of State and the matters he encountered in that role. Taking questions from the audience, he reflected on the need for process and transparency in the US approach to drone strikes, among other things.

A UK Without Convention Rights: Freedom or Danger? – A Comparative Conversation

On 16 May 2013, the Bingham Centre and the Human Rights Lawyers Association gathered experts to discuss the question, ‘A UK Without Convention Rights: Freedom or Danger? – A Comparative Conversation’ in light of the recent inconclusive report of the UK Bill of Rights Commission and statements by the Home Secretary and others about the UK’s possible withdrawal from the European Court and/or Convention on Human Rights. The event was chaired by the Rt. Hon. Lord Dyson, Master of the Rolls. The panel included David Anderson QC, Brick Court Chambers; Judge András Sajó, Justice of the European Court of Human Rights, speaking in his private capacity; and Professor Hugh Corder, Professor of Public Law, University of Cape Town.

There was broad consensus from the panel that there would be serious and far-reaching implications beyond its borders if the UK were to leave the Convention system. The Convention was said to provide a mutual set of interconnected obligations, acting as an important restraint on the abuse of state power and as a protection to minorities. The respect accorded to the UK’s legal system and values and the impact of any UK disassociation with Convention Rights as interpreted by the Strasbourg Court, should not be underestimated. Indeed, it was commented that the ramifications of withdrawal would damage the level of protection of human rights in the UK and would have an impact throughout Europe and in the Commonwealth. The papers from David Anderson QC and Professor Hugh Corder are available on the Centre’s website. We would like to thank Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer for its generosity in hosting this event.

Access to Justice and Legal Aid: Can Modern Technology Compensate for Cuts?

The Bingham Centre hosted an event on 3 June 2013 which examined how different technologies might fill the gaps in legal aid left by recent Government cuts. Although the Bingham Centre remains resolute in its opposition to many of the legal aid cuts, the aim of the seminar was to look beyond the issue of the cuts themselves and to think of practical ways to preserve access to justice for those affected. Led by Roger Smith OBE, former director of Justice, panellists explored the potential for increased provision and use of online legal services. Drawing from experiences in the UK and other jurisdictions such as the Netherlands and the EU, speakers addressed the importance of simplified procedures, ease of access and the role of local and national governments.

Prosecutorial Discretion and the Rule of Law

On 16 July 2013, Keir Starmer QC, the Director of Public Prosecutions, delivered a public lecture for the Bingham Centre in which he explained why not all crimes should be prosecuted and how discretion is (and should be) exercised when deciding whether or not a prosecution is required in the public interest. The lecture engaged with Lord Bingham’s discussion in his book ‘The Rule of Law’ on the need for strict law to be tempered by controlled discretion. Mr Starmer said, “I am not under any illusion; there are risks attached to the exercise of discretion. Whilst in appropriate circumstances it can be a force for good, poorly exercised discretion can mask corruption and malevolence”. “Prosecutorial discretion”, he said, “is a good thing. It takes the edges off blunt criminal laws; it prevents injustice; it provides for compliance with international obligations; and it allows compassion to play its rightful part in the criminal justice response to wrongdoing. But it also calls for strict accountability through guidelines, reasons and challenge”. The full text of the speech is available on the Bingham Centre’s website. We are grateful to Lady Justice Arden for chairing the seminar and to Hogan Lovells for hosting the event.
**Upcoming Events**

**Do Our Tax Systems Meet Rule of Law Standards? 20th November 2013**

Following on from our successful event on taxation in March 2013, this one-day conference will discuss whether aspects of the UK tax framework comply with the rule of law standards set out in Tom Bingham’s book, ‘The Rule of Law’. The conference will offer different perspectives on this important issue, including a comparative perspective from overseas, with a view to achieving practical outcomes. The event will conclude with a debate on the GAAR between David Goldberg QC and Graham Aaronson QC. The purpose of the conference is to initiate a dialogue on tax and the rule of law with a view to developing best practice in this area. Berwin Leighton Paisner is generously hosting this event. CPD points are available through attendance at this event.

**Judicial Activism and the Rule of Law: Lessons from India 28th November 2013**

Indian courts have for some decades enjoyed a reputation for judicial activism. The promises and pitfalls of this phenomenon will be discussed in a lecture by Harish Salve SA, an eminent advocate and former Solicitor-General of India. Drawing on his vast experience, Mr Salve will offer his assessment of the rise of public interest litigation that has seen the courts go to great lengths to require specific government action in areas such as housing and health rights, and the right to a clean environment. Widely celebrated in legal circles, such interventions into policy-making have inevitably proved controversial in the world’s largest parliamentary democracy. The lecture is being jointly sponsored by ALBA (The Constitutional and Administrative Law Bar Association).

**Singapore: The Importance of the Rule of Law in Promoting Economic Development May 2014**

The Bingham Centre, in conjunction with Linklaters and the Singapore Academy of Law, will host a one-day conference in Singapore in 2014 to examine linkages between the rule of law and economic development. The conference theme builds on the Bingham Centre’s participation in UN meetings and wider debates on finding ways to include the rule of law and good governance in the post-2015 international development framework that will replace the current UN Millennium Development Goals. Judges, academics, practitioners, and corporate lawyers from the UK, Singapore and further afield will share their perspectives on this important debate and how it is viewed in the Asia-Pacific region. They will also examine the rule of law obligations of business and finance corporations, and will consider how the rule of law is secured in the international investment context.

**Register at:** [www.biicl.org/events/](http://www.biicl.org/events/)

**Update: The Bingham Appeal**

The Second Phase of the Bingham Appeal was formally launched on 9 May 2013 at the Bingham Centre’s Inaugural Lecture and Dinner. Under this Phase, the Bingham Appeal is looking to double its initial resources to at least £5m by 2015, with the aspiration to achieve overall resources of at least £10m over the longer term. This will ensure that the Centre is properly resourced to make a major impact and become a world leader in its field. It will provide funding for both the Centre’s growing network of talented research fellows and a significant portfolio of applied research projects. Continued support from the legal community, corporations, philanthropic funders and individual donors both in the UK and internationally will be vital to achieving this ambitious goal.

The Bingham Centre is delighted to announce it has appointed four new Board Members. Professor David Cole, Mr Philip J Kessler, Mr Steven G Kobre and Mr Gary G Lynch join as Advisory Board and Appeal Board Members to support the Bingham Centre’s vital policy, programmes and development activities in the US.

For further information about the Bingham Appeal please contact Development Director, Alice Reynolds, on 0207 862 5157 email: a.reynolds@biicl.org. To give online, simply visit [www.biicl.org/development/support/](http://www.biicl.org/development/support/) and choose from the various methods of giving.