



Jorik + Jakkals No 60 (Africa Day) - Rapport Weekliks, 22 May 2016

About the Centre for Human Rights

The **Centre for Human Rights** was established in 1986 and is celebrating its 30th anniversary during 2016. It is both an academic department and a non-governmental organisation. The Centre works towards human rights education in Africa, a greater awareness of human rights, the wide dissemination of publications on human rights in Africa, and the improvement of the rights of women, people living with HIV, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, sexual minorities and other disadvantaged or marginalised persons or groups across the continent.

Centre for Human Rights

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Winner 2012 African Union Human Rights Prize • Lauréat 2012 du Prix des droits de l'homme de l'Union Africaine
Winner 2006 UNESCO Prize for Human Rights Education • Lauréat 2006 du Prix UNESCO de l'éducation aux droits de l'homme



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Programme

DISCUSSION FORUM
By, for and of Africa?
Reflections on the South
African Constitution at 20

25 May 2016 (Africa Day)



BACKGROUND

On 9 May 1996, 10 years after the Centre was founded, then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki made his 'I am an African' speech, on the occasion of the adoption of the current South African Constitution. His inaugural words grounded the Constitution in an African identity that stretches beyond the borders of South Africa, in a mutually reinforcing manner, with other African countries.



The year 2016 marks 30 years since the entry into force of the normative pillar of the African regional human rights system, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. Commemorating this milestone, the African Union has declared 2016 the year of human rights, with a focus on the human rights of women.

The year 2016 also marks 30 years since the establishment of the Centre on 1 May 1986. Its programmes span 150 universities as well as a large number of individual and institutional partners in 50 African countries. This large footprint across the continent makes the Centre a useful setting to reflect on the “African-ness” of the South African Contitution.

The Centre’s role in negotiating the new Constitution took the form of meetings between the government of the time and the ANC in exile. The founding director of the Centre, Judge Johann van der Westhuizen, played a particular role as an expert in drafting the Constitution. Judge van der Westhuizen, having recently retired from the Constitutional Court of South Africa and returned to the Centre, will be an important part of these dicussions.

On this day we are gathered here to reflect on the extent to which the South African constitution is an African constitution in its inspiration, ownership and solidarity with the rest of the continent; and the extent to which the South African constitution has been relevant to our international relations within Africa.

Welcome!

BY, FOR AND OF AFRICA?
REFLECTIONS ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTITUTION AT 20

Programme Director: Ms Thuto Hlalele, Centre for Human Rights	
WELCOME	
16:00-16:10	Welcome Prof Anton Kok, Deputy Dean, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria
16:10-16:20	Introduction Prof Frans Viljoen, Director, Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria
SETTING THE CONTEXT	
16:20-16:35	Framing “African-ness” Prof Charles Ngwena, Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria
THE 1996 CONSTITUTION AS “AFRICAN”	
16:35-16:45	Justice Johann van der Westhuizen (Introductory remarks) Retired Judge, Constitutional Court of South Africa and Extraordinary Professor, Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria
16:45-17:00	Dr Frene Ginwala Former Speaker, National Assembly of South Africa
17:00-17:15	Dr Mathole Motshekga Chairperson, Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Services
17:15-17:30	Justice Zak Jacob Retired Judge, Constitutional Court of South Africa
17:30-17:50	Discussion
THE 1996 CONSTITUTION INTO AFRICA	
17:50-18:00	Advocate Pansy Tlakula (Introductory remarks) Chairperson, African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights
18:00-18:15	Prof Sandy Africa Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria
18:15-18:30	Dr Alfredo Tjiurimo Hengari South African Institute of International Affairs
18:30-18:50	Discussion
CLOSING	
18:50-19:00	Closing remarks Mr Norman Taku, Assistant Director, Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria