

# Global Classroom 2024

## Just Transition: Conditions for Change of the Global Order



*Collection of student abstracts*



# Preface

## The Global Classroom 2024 on Just Transition

The Global Classroom 2024 was a transformative six-month program, culminating in a student conference held from June 17-21 in Bishkek and Issyk Kul, Kyrgyzstan. Bringing together students from eight regional Master's programs across the Global Campus network, the initiative centred around the theme "Just Transition: Conditions for Change of the Global Order." This was not just a conference but the result of months of rigorous academic work, collaboration, and dedication from both students and organizers. The program provided a platform for in-depth research on issues like civil society engagement, democratic institution building, transitional justice, and the resilience of democratic institutions in times of global transition. The Global Classroom 2024 began with a competitive selection process that brought together a diverse group of students from across multiple regions, who then engaged in rigorous preparation including a MOOC on Transitology. Over six months, extensive collaboration with local coordinators and experts led to refined research presentations at a conference, where students not only presented their work but also received valuable feedback and networked with peers. The program's impact continues as students revise their papers for publication and the organizers collect feedback to enhance future iterations.

Global Campus of Human Rights extends sincere appreciation to the OSCE Academy in Bishkek for their role as the principal organizer and esteemed host of the event, which was instrumental to its success.

# Panel 1 Transition to and from Democracy

## **The Role of International Election Observers in Post-Conflict Democratization and Transitional Justice**

*Tenizbaeva Akylai*  
MAHRS, OSCE Academy in Bishkek

[a.tenizbaeva@osce-academy.net](mailto:a.tenizbaeva@osce-academy.net)

The transition from conflict to peace necessitates establishing democratic governance and pursuing transitional justice. Free and fair elections are essential in this process as they legitimize new political orders and foster public trust. Ensuring electoral integrity in post-conflict societies is a significant challenge, where international election observers play a critical role. This study investigates the influence of international election observers on post-conflict democratization and transitional justice, focusing on Kyrgyzstan's 2005 and 2010 elections. Through a qualitative research design, the study utilizes case studies and comprehensive reviews of election observation mission reports, scholarly articles, and relevant literature. The findings reveal that the presence of observers from organizations like OSCE/ODIHR was crucial in ensuring transparency, deterring fraud, and enhancing the overall credibility of the electoral process. Their detailed assessments and recommendations significantly influenced electoral reforms and fostered democratic norms. Additionally, observers' involvement impacted the pre-election period by ensuring respect for civil and political rights and deterring the use of administrative resources in favor of incumbents. Post-election, their reports increased transparency and accountability, leading to electoral reforms. The broad implications of this study suggest that international election observers are instrumental in supporting the transition to democracy in post-conflict settings by promoting accountability, transparency, and the rule of law. They ultimately contribute to long-term peace and stability by fostering democratic norms and supporting robust democratic institutions.

## **The Importance of Modifying the Authoritarian Institutional Framework to Consolidate Democracy: The Case of Chile and Its Constitution**

*Magdalena Schaub*

LATMA, Universidad Nacional de San Martín

[magdalena.schaub@gmail.com](mailto:magdalena.schaub@gmail.com)

This paper aims to analyze the transition to Chilean democracy, focusing on its main flaw: the retention of the institutional framework established during Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship, represented by the Political Constitution. Although the negotiated transition process in Chile met several requirements for success, and transitional justice measures were gradually implemented, the failure to modify the institutional framework of the dictatorship and its economic project delegitimized Chilean democratic institutions and weakened a democracy that had been solidly and consistently built, resulting in a deficient democratic consolidation. As a result, the legitimacy crisis deepened the distrust in Chile's democratic institutions and economic model, leading to a social uprising in 2019 that demanded the end of the 1980 Political Constitution. The political class attempted to address this social uprising through a constitutional process, which, however, failed not once, but twice, precisely due to the public's lack of trust in the country's institutions.



## From Democracy to Dynasty: Political Families and Power in Indonesia and the Philippines

*Rizky Ashar Murdiono*  
APMA, Mahidol University

[rizkyashar.mur@student.mahidol.edu](mailto:rizkyashar.mur@student.mahidol.edu)

Political dynasties have been a longstanding and integral part of Southeast Asian politics, firmly entrenched in the region's historical and socio-political framework. Despite the shift from monarchy and local chieftains to modern governance structures, dynastic tendencies persist, particularly in Indonesia and the Philippines. The study explores the intricate dynamics and challenges posed by political dynasties in these countries, highlighting their impact on declining democratic governance.

The research investigates the historical context, mechanisms, and implications of political dynasties in Indonesia and the Philippines. Through a comprehensive analysis of political families such as the Marcoses and Dutertes in the Philippines and the past president and current president in Indonesia, the study examines how these dynasties consolidate power across generations. It utilizes historical records, policy analysis, and case studies to uncover the methods these families use to maintain their dominance.

The findings reveal that political dynasties often lead to the concentration of power among a few families, undermining democratic principles of equality and fairness. This concentration fosters nepotism and patronage, weakening the effectiveness and integrity of government institutions. The study highlights that the persistence of political dynasties inhibits the development of strong democratic institutions, perpetuating socio-economic disparities, oligarchism, and corruption.

Broadly, the study implies that tackling the influence of political dynasties is essential for fostering more inclusive and equitable democratic systems in Southeast Asia. Effective reforms, including stricter enforcement of anti-dynasty laws and enhancing public awareness of democratic values, are crucial for mitigating the negative impact of political dynasties on governance.

## Consequences of Consociation: An Analysis of Power-sharing in Bosnia and Herzegovina

*Anju Sadasivam*  
ERMA, University of Sarajevo

[anjumarie21@gmail.com](mailto:anjumarie21@gmail.com)

This paper analyzes the impact of consociation on the regulation of conflict in plural societies in times of transition and beyond. It does so by focusing on the direct and indirect consequences of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This paper hopes to prove that the current conflicts and nuances of our globalized world have rendered the remedy of consociation in Bosnia and Herzegovina an urgent imperative. While there is a wealth of existing literature on consociation, including much on consociation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this paper provides a nuanced overview of the global challenges that face Bosnia and Herzegovina due to their consociational system. In order to do so, the paper will examine consociation both in theory and in practice before building upon established critiques of consociation and applying them to the region. Finally, it will discuss the current societal and international challenges in Bosnia and Herzegovina that result from consociation. Almost 30 years after the signing of the Dayton Accords, it is evident that they have not implemented a sustainable form of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, this paper will ultimately argue that while consociation is a valuable tool for establishing peace during times of conflict, it can serve to strengthen ethnic tensions in established democracies.

**Dynamics of Peacemaking and  
Peacebuilding in the MENA Region:  
A Study of Transitional Justice and  
International Human Rights Law**

*Faten Hamze*  
ArMA, Saint Joseph University of Beirut

[faten.hamze@net.usj.lb](mailto:faten.hamze@net.usj.lb)

In “Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model”, Rustow presents a dynamic model for understanding the transition from authoritarianism to democracy. His model emphasizes the importance of various factors and stages in the process of democratization, including the role of elites, societal mobilization, and the establishment of democratic institutions. Rustow’s work has been highly influential in the study of democratization and has helped shape scholarly understanding of this complex phenomenon. In the MENA region, transitions to democracy are characterized by dynamic shifts in power structures and societal norms that significantly impact the effectiveness of peacemaking and peacebuilding initiatives during conflicts and revolutions while experiencing anger against dictatorial regimes, including untruthful democracies and their aftermath. The discontentment from non- or poor access to basic needs and human rights violations resulted in a series of manifestos against previous regimes in the MENA region, looking forward to a change in political system shifting from oppressors’ rules to a democratic regime. Moreover, it is expected that the incorporation of transitology perspectives, transitional justice mechanisms, and IHRL frameworks can contribute to more sustainable and inclusive peace processes. However, failure in global-local paradigm regime shifts—including not only a corrupted way of governance system but also a population that is not willing to make a change—and the presence of liquid borders pose challenges to the implementation of these mechanisms approaches to navigate complex power dynamics and address root causes of failure and some possible transitology approach that may lead to success.



# Panel 2 Transitional Justice

## Transnational Justice and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

*Eleonora Cambuzzi*  
EMA, Global Campus Headquarters in Venice

[eleonora.cambuzzi@gmail.com](mailto:eleonora.cambuzzi@gmail.com)

My research question is twofold: should transitional justice address also economic, social, and cultural rights? If yes, should every transition from an authoritarian regime necessarily lead towards a democratic system? According to some authors, transitional justice is inherently legalistic and corrective. Therefore, it should only deal with accountability for gross violations of civil and political rights. However, in my paper, I argue that no justice can be attained if economic, social, and cultural inequalities underpinning the past conflict or authoritarian regime are not addressed. This necessarily requires that the focus that has traditionally been placed on criminal law as the principal means of transitional justice be shifted to other mechanisms. Among these, I address primarily the issues of redistribution of land in South Africa and of restitution of looted artifacts to Africa more generally. The focus on economic, social, and cultural rights casts some doubt on the assumption that the end point and ultimate goal of transitional justice mechanisms should be a transition to democracy. In my paper, I argue that in certain contexts, such as the South African one, claims of distributive justice can be associated mainly with a transition to socialism rather than a transition to democracy. This is closely linked to the fact that in certain post-conflict or post-authoritarian regime realities, questions of economic or social well-being could be at the forefront of people's minds (as demonstrated by a number of surveys carried out in various parts of the world, such as Uganda and the DRC), while civil and political rights could be of secondary importance. In conclusion, I argue that, while it is desirable that any transition moves towards a democratic system, this tendency of giving more importance to civil and political rights should be contextualized and even temporarily set aside in certain realities where the population believes them not to be of primary importance.

**The Curious Case of Compulsory  
Military Trainings for Students  
Impacting Transitional Justice in Some  
Asia-Pacific Countries**

*Anusha Shrestha*  
APMA, Mahidol University

[shrestha.anusha2017@gmail.com](mailto:shrestha.anusha2017@gmail.com)

Compulsory military training for students has become a prevalent practice in various countries, impacting the broader framework of transitional justice. This study briefly draws connections between the correlation of each pillar of transitional justice with memorialization as the fifth pillar. It explores the inherent tension between such military training programs and the principles of memorialization within transitional justice. Specifically, it investigates how compulsory military training in China, Vietnam, and the Philippines influences educational curricula and the collective memory of past conflicts. Through case studies and analysis of state-driven educational policies, this research examines the ways in which military training is integrated into academic settings and its implications for transitional justice. The findings reveal that while states aim to prepare students for military service, these programs often perpetuate biased historical narratives and contradict the goals of memorialization by weaponizing memories of conflict. These outcomes highlight a significant challenge: the clash between state-imposed military curricula and the need for a human rights-based approach to education that supports transitional justice. The broader implication of this study suggests a critical re-evaluation of educational practices in post-conflict societies to ensure they foster principles of transitional justice. The re-examination ought to focus on education as a means of memorialization that helps adopt a balanced understanding of history while creating a safe space for various narratives to co-exist.

## **Democratization and the Failure of Democracy in Afghanistan (2001-2021)**

*Javad Mohammadi*  
MAHRS, OSCE Academy in Bishkek

[j.mohammadi@osce-academy.net](mailto:j.mohammadi@osce-academy.net)

This essay examines the challenges of democratization in Afghanistan, specifically focusing on the period following the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001. Drawing on comparative analysis, more importantly with Iraq, the most similar case to Afghanistan, the study addresses significant disparities in the democratization processes among these contexts. It identifies a critical knowledge gap in understanding the unique obstacles faced by Afghanistan in establishing sustainable democratic institutions amidst deep-seated historical, cultural, and socio-economic challenges.

The investigation delves into the interplay of factors that contributed to the failure of democracy in Afghanistan, including issues of legitimacy, local culture, ethnic divisions, institutional weaknesses, and external interventions. By employing a comprehensive literature review and case study approach, the essay aims to critically assess the impact of foreign aid, military intervention, and local dynamics on democratization efforts.

Key findings underscore the complexities that exist in the context of nation-building in post-conflict environments with limited social capital and fractured national identities. The study highlights that while top-down models of democratization were applied, they often failed to resonate with Afghanistan's socio-political landscape, leading to a superficial implementation of democratic structures but increasing public distrust and strengthening opposition fronts, more specifically the re-emergence of the Taliban.

Ultimately, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of democratization failures in fragile and failed states and emphasizes the necessity for context-specific approaches to internalizing democracy. It also highlights the broader implications for international peacebuilding efforts and the imperative of aligning external interventions with local realities to foster sustainable democratic transitions.

## **The Role of Civil Society in Realizing Racial and Social Justice for the Creoles in Mauritius Through Transitional Justice Processes**

*Jolicoeur Marie Rebecca*  
HRDA, University of Pretoria

[jolicoeurmrebecca@gmail.com](mailto:jolicoeurmrebecca@gmail.com)

In 2009, the country set up a Truth and Justice Commission to investigate the effects of slavery and colonialism on Mauritian society and aim at achieving social justice and unity. From the emancipation period till now, the Creole population has been marginalized and faced discrimination, exclusion, hate speech, and ethnic or racial stereotypes or stigma in education, economic situation, employment, health, housing, and political life. The state has failed to recognize any form of discrimination against and human rights violations of creoles. Numerous works of literature have discussed the issue of racism and discrimination in the country, but the paper concentrates on identifying their contemporary forms, assessing their impact on Creoles' economic, social, and cultural rights, and examining the role of civil society in the realization of transitional justice processes. The aim of this research is to firstly investigate both the positive and negative contribution of civil society in the implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Justice Commission and measures taken to combat racism and discrimination against Creoles. In addition, the paper can serve as an advocacy tool and mobilize civil society organizations to hold the state accountable for the violation of human rights of creoles and provide viable solutions and a monitoring framework to address discrimination in Mauritius through a victim-centered, human rights, and collaborative approach.

## A Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a Vital Transitional Justice Mechanism: The Case of Kosovo

*Orestis Nicolaou*  
ERMA, University of Sarajevo

[orestisnc@gmail.com](mailto:orestisnc@gmail.com)

The establishment of Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs) is a pivotal mechanism within the broader framework of transitional justice, designed to address past human rights abuses and foster reconciliation in post-conflict societies. In the context of Kosovo, a region with a tumultuous history of ethnic conflict and political instability, the implementation of a TRC is crucial yet challenging. This study explores the necessity and feasibility of establishing a TRC in Kosovo, focusing on the deep ethnic divisions and political tensions between the Albanian-Kosovar majority and the Serb-Kosovar minority. The research delves into the specific challenges and potential benefits of a TRC, using a comprehensive analysis of historical, political, and social factors. Through a critical review of existing literature, this paper outlines a framework for implementing a TRC in Kosovo. The study finds that while significant obstacles exist, the establishment of a TRC can play a vital role in addressing past injustices, promoting healing, and fostering national unity. The broad implications of these findings suggest that a well-implemented TRC could significantly contribute to the long-term stability and democratization of Kosovo, setting a precedent for other post-conflict societies seeking sustainable peace and reconciliation.

# Panel 3 Transitional Justice & the melt-down of frozen conflicts

## **The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and Conflicts Resolution through Transitional Justice in Africa**

*Oluwatosin Senami Adegun*  
HRDA, University of Pretoria

[tosinadegun99@gmail.com](mailto:tosinadegun99@gmail.com)

Conflicts and military coups have challenged political stability in Africa, and the suitability of democracy as a system of government in Africa is questioned. In many cases, the process of transitioning from a conflict situation to peace or from an autocratic regime to democracy is actor-centered, and to achieve lasting peace and stability, human rights aimed at justice are central. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (Commission), as the monitoring body of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, has a role to play in this regard. Generally, studies have been conducted on transitional justice (TJ) and the need to have victim-centered TJ. However, these are silent on the role of the Commission in ensuring that states adhere to the human rights obligations in any TJ measure(s) adopted. The Commission can perform its role when considering states' reports through fact-finding, country visits, and consideration of individual communications in appropriate cases. In this paper, the Commission's Study on Transitional Justice of 2018 is considered, and the prevalence of conflicts in Africa affirms the need for the Commission to rise to the occasion by using its existing mechanisms and create special mechanisms like a Working Group on TJ to ensure victims' protection. Thus, the suitability and compatibility of TJ measures with human rights standards will be assessed, and states will be guided in upholding human rights in any TJ measure(s) adopted. As such, victims are protected with the potential of addressing past injustice and the achievement of lasting peace.

## **Queering Transitional Justice: Guaranteeing the Non-repetition of LGBTQ+ Rights Violations in Post-conflict Northern Ireland**

*Jessica Gill*

EMA, Global Campus Headquarters in  
Venice

[jessicagill259@gmail.com](mailto:jessicagill259@gmail.com)

The systematic persecution of LGBTQ+ individuals has been a pervasive aspect of armed conflicts worldwide, yet these human rights violations have been overlooked in the international community's approach to guarantees of non-repetition (GNR). This article addresses a critical gap in the literature by examining how the non-recurrence of LGBTQ+ rights violations can be ensured in post-conflict political transition. Using the case study of Northern Ireland, the paper evaluates the reforms implemented following the Good Friday agreement to prevent the recurrence of LGBTQ+ rights abuses committed during the ethno-political conflict known as 'the Troubles'. By queering the concept of guarantees of non-repetition, the initiatives in the institutional, societal, and cultural spheres aimed at preventing LGBTQ+ rights violations are troubled, questioned, and reimagined through a queer lens. Drawing on empirical insights derived from interviews, academic literature, and reports of LGBTQ+ civil society organizations, the analysis identifies best practices and challenges in guaranteeing the non-repetition of LGBTQ+ rights in Northern Ireland. The paper argues that queering the GNR framework is intrinsic to strengthening the protection of LGBTQ+ rights. The findings underscore the importance of integrating LGBTQ+ perspectives into transitional justice frameworks to ensure enduring safeguards against future violations.

## Political Transitions in Armenia

*Anush Mkrtchyan*  
CES, Yerevan State University

[mkrtchyananush98@gmail.com](mailto:mkrtchyananush98@gmail.com)

Armenia's political transitions have been shaped by a complex mix of internal dynamics and external influences, reflecting the country's efforts toward democratic development, national identity affirmation, and geopolitical stability. Since its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Armenia has undergone several major political changes, often spurred by public frustration with corruption, economic difficulties, and poor governance. The Velvet Revolution of 2018 is a pivotal moment in Armenian political history, where peaceful protests led to the resignation of long-time leader Serzh Sargsyan and the emergence of reformist Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan. This shift highlighted the public's desire for increased transparency, accountability, and democratic governance and fostered a more vibrant civil society.

However, the period following the revolution has faced significant challenges, including political polarization, ongoing regional conflict with Azerbaijan, tensions over Nagorno-Karabakh, and the need to balance relations with major powers such as Russia and the European Union. In addition to this, the corruption and rule of law undermine public trust in government institutions. The economic situation also makes it difficult to achieve political stability.

This research seeks to reveal the intricacies of Armenia's political journey, emphasizing the persistent tension between democratic goals and geopolitical constraints. The research focused on the failed and succeeded case studies and addressed the consequences of the political transitions from past to present. It also highlighted the significance of civil society and diaspora that played a crucial role before and during political transitions, particularly after the Velvet Revolution, when civil society reformed regarding democratic consolidation.



## Transition Without Justice: An Enduring Challenge in Mexico and Colombia

*Luis Fernando Herrera Martínez.*  
LATMA, Universidad Nacional de San Martín

[fernandoherreramrtz@gmail.com](mailto:fernandoherreramrtz@gmail.com)

This paper explores the challenges of political transition without achieving justice in Mexico and Colombia, examining their historical injustices and contrasting approaches to transitional justice (TJ). In Mexico, raging violence and persistent human rights violations highlight the need for comprehensive TJ mechanisms. Drawing from Colombia's experience, where mechanisms like the Special Jurisdiction for Peace have been implemented, this paper seeks to detect valuable insights for the Mexican context while trying to sketch a blueprint for navigating the complex intersection of democracy, violence, and justice. The paper studies the Mexican and Colombian transitions to democracy, highlighting their similarities as opposed to other Latin American countries. It also emphasizes the human rights violations generated by the "dirty war" and the "war on drugs" in the case of Mexico and the "armed conflict" in the case of Colombia. All while differentiating both countries approaches to transitional justice, focusing on the successful attempts of the Colombian experience and giving a perspective of what Mexico can learn from them.



## **Water Stress: Agricultural Reform and Consolidation of Power in Morocco**

*Matthijs Mantel*  
ArMA, Saint Joseph University  
of Beirut

[matthijsraymond.mantel@net.usj.edu.lb](mailto:matthijsraymond.mantel@net.usj.edu.lb)

This paper addresses the issue of water stress in Morocco by linking the consolidation of power of the Makhzen to the way the climate crisis affects water security in Morocco. It does this by reading the academic debate on water stress in Morocco through the lens of the academic field of transitology. By doing so, it illustrates how the modernization of agriculture, the industry responsible for 87% of the country's water consumption, has been at the heart of the state building of Late King Hassan II, as well as today's policy of King Mohammad VI. It traces back the roots of contemporary water management to the colonial protectorate phase. Building on insights from the scholarly work that critically engages with water management, it argues that some of the current issues are the result of water-intensive and export-oriented agriculture. This particular way of practicing agriculture, at the same time, relies on political decisions that serve the interests of the Makhzen. These decisions over time have been justified by different narratives. In recent years, the Moroccan government has made an effort to present itself as a green forerunner of Africa with their agricultural reform plan, the Morocco Green Plan (MGP). The academic consensus, however, agrees that the MGP is fundamentally unsustainable. Recent protests in the Oasis town of Figuig can therefore be considered an indicator of the first cracks in the green narrative of the Makhzen.

# Panel 4 Human Rights compliance in Times of Transition

## **International Human Rights Law as a Catalyst for Transitional Justice in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan**

*Alina Salakhunova*  
MAHRS, OSCE Academy in Bishkek

[a.salakhunova@osce-academy.net](mailto:a.salakhunova@osce-academy.net)

This study explores the role of International Human Rights Law in shaping transitional justice mechanisms in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Both countries, having transitioned from Soviet rule, face unique challenges in implementing democratic reforms. Kazakhstan, despite economic growth, struggles with centralized political control and limited enforcement of human rights laws. Conversely, Kyrgyzstan has experienced political instability and notable revolutionary changes aiming to establish a parliamentary democracy. This research examines how IHRL has influenced transitional justice strategies in both nations, focusing on criminal prosecutions, truth commissions, reparations, and institutional reforms. Utilizing comparative legal analysis, the study assesses the integration of IHRL principles into national legislation and their practical outcomes. Findings reveal that while both countries have made legislative efforts to align with IHRL, their effectiveness is hampered by political interference, weak judicial independence, and insufficient reparations. The study underscores the need for stronger judicial systems, political stability, and comprehensive reparative measures to enhance transitional justice processes in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

## Reevaluating the ASEAN Way: Stepping Away from the Non-Interference Norm for Long-term Regional Peace and Stability

*Nattida Phonyong*  
APMA, Mahidol University

[Nattida\\_phonyong@hotmail.com](mailto:Nattida_phonyong@hotmail.com)

Southeast Asia has experienced significant transformations since the end of the Cold War, evolving towards peace despite external interferences and territorial disputes. The traditional ASEAN Way, characterized by non-interference and consensus-based decision-making, has played a crucial role in maintaining regional stability. However, the recent crisis in Myanmar, marked by a military coup and severe human rights violations, shows the limitations of this approach. This study investigates the effectiveness of the ASEAN Way in addressing human rights issues within its member states.

The research focuses on the current situation in Myanmar to illustrate the inadequacies of the non-interference policy. Utilizing qualitative analysis of ASEAN's responses and policy frameworks, the study examines the constraints faced by the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and proposes necessary reforms.

Key findings indicate that ASEAN's non-interference principle hinders timely and effective intervention in human rights crises. The study suggests expanding AICHR's mandate to include investigative and enforcement powers, establishing a regional human rights court, formulating a regional human rights charter, and increasing civil society engagement.

These reforms are essential for ASEAN to adapt to evolving global dynamics and ensure long-term peace and justice in the region. By enhancing its human rights protection mechanisms, ASEAN can better fulfill its commitment to regional stability and cooperation while safeguarding the rights of its people.

## Transition and Human Rights in Belarus

*Alexander Maltsev*  
CES, Yerevan State University

[Alexander.Maltsev@tsu.ge](mailto:Alexander.Maltsev@tsu.ge)

This paper explores the post-electoral protests of 2020 in Belarus, the biggest ones in its independent history, and their consequences from the transitology perspective. The findings suggest that these protests may be rather easily seen as an initial stage of the transition. The study further addresses the question of whether the transition is closed (following the dispersal of the protests) or an ongoing one. In this connection, specific factors behind the protests are outlined, and several most important of them are examined in more detail (including human rights, national unity, geopolitical orientation, and religion). Human rights (of protesters, people in Belarus, and those in diaspora) are a particularly complex multi-dimensional factor influencing the transition (including such aspects as the role of international organizations and accountability for violations).

## **(Re)Framing Society Through Film: Assessing the Use of Participatory Filmmaking for Societies in Transition**

*Catriona O'Sullivan*  
EMA, Global Campus Headquarters in  
Venice

[catriona.m.osullivan@gmail.com](mailto:catriona.m.osullivan@gmail.com)

This paper argues that the arts and civil society are essential to transition processes. Traditional peacebuilding and democratic institution-building methods have at times had their pitfalls or failed to address less measurable elements needed for societies in transition. Therefore, the arts, specifically participatory arts projects, may be a way to address this. There is a gap in the literature in terms of pairing participatory arts projects with societies in transition more generally, especially with regards to the just transition. The specific method analyzed here is participatory filmmaking, and in what ways it has been applied until now, and where there may be ways it could be utilized further. Through a review of existing literature on the topic, this paper brings together research on transitiology, peacebuilding, and the just transition, with research on arts in peacebuilding and participatory filmmaking, through analysis of case studies in Europe. This paper argues that especially when made in collaboration with, or originating with, civil society, participatory film projects could: (1) serve as a space of bearing witness or testimony; (2) be therapeutic or cathartic; (3) ensure marginalized voices are heard and also model democracy through the inclusive method of making the film; (4) bring groups together who may not otherwise be in contact, potentially challenging views of 'the other'; (5) increase media literacy, which is important for democracy. Participatory filmmaking practice could therefore be an ideal method for ensuring a more sustainable and inclusive transition.

## The Role of International Actors in Peace Building in the Middle East

*HibaTollah Ibrahim Raad*  
ArMA, Saint Joseph University  
of Beirut

[hibatollah.raad@net.usj.edu.lb](mailto:hibatollah.raad@net.usj.edu.lb)

The Middle East has long been a hotspot for conflicts and violence, making the region complex and multifaceted regarding peacebuilding. The involvement of international actors has further complicated the situation, with each actor having unique mandates and strategies. Countries such as Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya, Lebanon, and Palestine have faced ongoing conflicts deeply rooted in political and religious factors, opening the door for numerous international actors to intervene in the peacebuilding process. This study explores the role of international actors in peacebuilding within the Middle East, focusing on the interplay of religious and political factors driving conflicts in the region. The Middle East has historically suffered from instability and violence, with countries like Syria and Palestine experiencing prolonged conflicts leading to severe humanitarian crises. International actors' involvement has been crucial in addressing these conflicts; however, their efforts are often complicated by regional power struggles and external interventions. In Syria, the civil war has drawn in multiple international players, including the United Nations, various INGOs, and powerful nations like the United States and Russia, each with its own agenda. In Iraq, the aftermath of the 2003 invasion saw significant international involvement in political restructuring and humanitarian aid, yet the path to stability remains fraught with challenges. Yemen's conflict is deeply influenced by regional powers like Saudi Arabia and Iran, whose interventions have prolonged the fighting and complicated peace efforts. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains one of the longest-standing and most intractable conflicts, with numerous international actors involved in mediation efforts, humanitarian aid, and advocacy for human rights. This paper investigates how international actors navigate these intricate landscapes, highlighting the successes and failures of their peacebuilding initiatives. By analyzing case studies and the roles of different organizations, the study emphasizes the need for coordinated, inclusive, and context-specific approaches. Addressing underlying political grievances, socio-economic disparities, and historical injustices is paramount to fostering sustainable peace in the Middle East. Through detailed analysis, this paper contributes to the ongoing discourse on the effectiveness of international interventions in one of the world's most volatile regions.

# Panel 5 Challenges of Transition

## The Role of the International Community in Haiti's Democratic Transition

*Jean Bonaparte*  
LATMA, Universidad Nacional de San Martín

[jnbonaparte@outlook.com](mailto:jnbonaparte@outlook.com)

Post-authoritarian transitions seem to have come to an end in Latin America. But in the Caribbean country of Haiti, the transition process is far from over. Instead of reaching a point where the country is converging towards democracy, its experience is different from the rest of the countries in the region. The democratic process, which began during the third wave of democratization, has not been able to consolidate itself, as transitology explains regarding the different paths to and from democracy. As a result of its interventions in the country over the years, the international community has become a key actor in the Haitian transition. In this paper, we aim to highlight the role that the international community can play in the democratization of Haiti. We consider the international community can help Haitians to conclude a pact of democratic guarantees, define the rules of transition, help to strengthen institutions, and lay the foundations of democracy. To advance this argument, the article considers the position of actors involved in Haiti's democratic transition; it refers to the international aspect of political transformations. We will see that, while transitology places limited emphasis on the international aspect, it nevertheless enables us to analyze the international influence on transition processes. The paper concludes with recommendations to improve the effectiveness of international engagement in fostering a successful transition to democracy in the country. By analyzing Haitian reality from a different paradigm, this article will contribute to future research on similar subjects.



## **The Role of the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities in Fostering Just Transitions in Africa: The Case of Gabon**

*Kipkoech Nicholas Cheruiyot*  
HRDA, University of Pretoria

[kipkoech330@gmail.com](mailto:kipkoech330@gmail.com)

This research examines the role that the African Union (AU) and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) play in fostering just transitions and addressing the issue of coups across Africa. Utilizing a desktop research methodology, the study primarily focuses on Gabon, even though a few other countries are referenced. Gabon has faced numerous instances of unconstitutional changes of government (UCGs), including constitutional amendments and electoral interference to extend term limits and facilitate continued stay in power, culminating in a coup in 2023. The research identifies a lack of effective coordination between the AU and RECs, which serve as the building blocks of the AU. It offers several recommendations aimed at ending coups and other forms of UCGs. The study underscores the importance of the AU and RECs addressing the root causes of coups, such as electoral and democratic process interference, undermining of democratic institutions, poor economic conditions, lack of accountability, and resource mismanagement. Among other approaches, adopting a developmental approach to these issues is imperative for effectively tackling the underlying causes of coups and other forms of UCGs, especially those related to the economic conditions of citizens.

## Amnesty Laws in Transitional Processes: Reflecting on the Spanish Pact of Silence from the Lens of Transitional Justice

*Raúl Suárez Pascual*  
EMA, Global Campus Headquarters in  
Venice

[raulsuarezpascual@gmail.com](mailto:raulsuarezpascual@gmail.com)

The Spanish transition to democracy (1975–1982) is frequently hailed as a textbook example of a peaceful, negotiated transition, resulting in rapid and stable democratization. However, this process was largely based on a pact of silence between the Francoist elites and a heterogeneous democratic opposition, crystallized in broad-reaching amnesty laws. As a result, transitional justice mechanisms were deliberately ignored in Spain until the early 21st century, with the amnesty laws playing a crucial role in preventing prosecution for grave human rights violations committed during the Franco dictatorship. This paper analyzes this political process and the amnesty laws through the lens of transitional justice. It starts with a historical contextualization, spanning from the Spanish Civil War to the key milestones of the transition to democracy. It then examines the process leading to the adoption of the amnesty laws, the various positions held within Spanish society regarding these laws, and their paradoxical impact of contributing to reconciliation while impeding justice. Afterward, the paper details the transitional justice measures introduced in the 21st century and the ensuing debate between their proponents and those who view these measures as divisive and vengeful. Finally, it compares the amnesty laws against international law standards. These standards offer a valuable procedural and substantive framework for analyzing amnesty laws in transitional processes from a human rights perspective. They enable a critical examination of the Spanish transition and suggest paths for improvement that could mitigate the eroding effects of deficient transitional justice on the credibility of the Spanish democratic regime.

## Exploring the Interlinkage of Transitional Justice and Media Freedom in Bosnia and Herzegovina

*Nejra Kravić*  
ERMA, University of Sarajevo

[n.kravic@gmail.com](mailto:n.kravic@gmail.com)

The linkage between transitional justice and press freedom is not often made. However, in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a state currently at the crossroads of media freedom and democratization, the nexus is more than apparent. Legislative measures, perceived by activists and journalists as threats to professional rights and livelihoods, along with a fragmented media landscape that reflects internal divisions and various funding challenges, are leading to a decline in media freedoms across the country. In my paper, I contend that the degree of media freedom in Bosnia and Herzegovina impacts the efficacy and sustainability of transitional justice mechanisms and processes, many of which have been developed over several decades. While ethical and high-quality journalism forms the backbone of any well-functioning democratic society, Bosnia's post-conflict configuration amplifies the crucial importance of a free press to an even greater extent. The way that the past is framed and presented through the media largely depends on the weaponization of ethnically charged narratives—making public interaction with media platforms extremely significant. I argue that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the media can serve as an instigator or a perpetrator of damaging rhetoric or an advocate of peacebuilding and stabilization efforts. My hypothesis is that higher levels of media freedom enable more objective reporting, increased accountability of institutions, especially the judiciary, and greater success in reconciliation efforts, thus supporting more enduring peace-building initiatives. Conversely, additional restrictions on media freedom, observed in Republika Srpska and across the state, impede public engagement with transitional justice, erode trust in institutions, and threaten the reconciliation process, exacerbating societal divisions.







# Global Campus of Human Rights

Europe  
South East Europe  
Latin America-Caribbean  
Asia-Pacific

Central Asia  
Caucasus  
Arab World  
Africa

## The Global Campus of Human Rights

is an international association of over 100 universities organised in eight regional hubs and dedicated to the promotion and advancement of human rights education, research, outreach and advocacy.

Established on the foundation of the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation (founded in 2002), the Global Campus has evolved into a network of academic institutions committed to empower individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect human rights and democratisation across the globe.

Global Campus Headquarters-  
Monastery of San Nicolo  
Riviera San Nicolo, 26  
1-30126 Venice Lido (Italy)  
+39 041 2720 911  
+39 041 2720 914  
info@gchumanrights.org  
www.gchumanrights.org



This project is co-funded  
by the European Union