



## Preventing and Responding to Atrocities: The Responsibility to Protect, International Law, and the Case of the Central African Republic

New York City Bar Association, 42 West 44th Street

**10 September 2014**

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

**Philippe BOLOPION** joined Human Rights Watch as United Nations Director in August 2010. Prior to that, he spent five years working with the French daily *Le Monde* as the UN correspondent. There he covered a wide range of UN issues and traveled to such places as Darfur, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, Sri Lanka, Gaza, and Haiti, including on missions with UN secretary-generals and the UN Security Council. He has also worked as a journalist covering the United Nations for *France 24* and *Radio France Internationale* (RFI). Prior to working in New York, Bolopion was based in Pristina, where he reported on the end of the Kosovo Conflict in 1999 and 2000.

Bolopion is the author of *Le bain du bout du monde* (La Découverte, 2004). He is a graduate of the Institut d'Etudes Politiques (IEP) de Bordeaux and CUEJ, the journalism school of Strasbourg.

**Elizabeth DEFEIS** is a member of the International Law faculty of Seton Hall University School of Law and was Dean of the Law School for five years. She has lectured at various universities including in India, Bangladesh, Egypt, and Armenia. Prof. DeFeis has participated in programs involving human rights, democracy and constitution building, electoral reform, and standards for independence of the judiciary at the request of various governments and intergovernmental institutions such as the government of Armenia, the OSCE and the United Nations in Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Guinea Bissau, among others. She has also participated in fact finding missions in Gaza and the West Bank and Armenia. She has written extensively in the areas of International Law, Gender Equality and European Union Law. Prof. DeFeis has chaired the Committee on the United Nations and the International Law Committee for the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. She is active in numerous other professional associations and is a director of the Albert Einstein Institution, which explores alternatives to violence in the international context. Prof. DeFeis served as an Attorney with the United States Department of Justice in Washington D.C. and was also an Assistant United States Attorney in the Southern District of New York.

**Donald DEYA** is the CEO of the Pan African Lawyers Union (PALU). He is an advocate of the High Court of Kenya, and was previously the CEO of the East Africa Law Society, and, before that, Deputy CEO of the Law Society of Kenya.

Among other things, he chairs the Executive Committees of the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP), and of the Centre for Citizens' Participation in the African Union (CCP AU), respectively. He is a former Chair of the African Court Coalition (ACC), and is also a Councilor (and former Secretary) of the African Forum of the International Bar Association. He has initiated or participated in most of the litigation at the East African Court of Justice, and lately also litigates actively at the African Court on Human & Peoples' Rights.

**Adama DIENG** was appointed Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in 2012. A native of Senegal, Mr. Dieng has served as Registrar of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda since 2001. He began his career as Registrar of the Regional and Labour Courts in Senegal, and served as Registrar of the Supreme Court of Senegal for six years. From 1982 to 2001, Mr. Dieng worked for the International Commission of Jurists and, for the last ten years, as the organization's Secretary-General. During this period, he was appointed as Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General to Malawi in 1993, and as the United Nations Independent Expert for Haiti from 1995 to 2000.

A legal and human rights expert, Mr. Dieng has throughout his career contributed to strengthening of the rule of law, fighting impunity, and promoting capacity building of judicial and democratic institutions. He has also contributed to the establishment of several non-governmental organizations in Africa and to strengthening African institutions. Mr. Dieng was the driving force behind the establishment of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights as well as the draft African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption.

**Florent GEEL** has worked for the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) since 2001, previously representing FIDH to the United Nations in Geneva and currently serving as the director of the Africa Bureau. He is an expert in political science and international law, and has over ten years of experience working on human rights in situations of armed conflict and political transition in Africa. Mr. Geel has conducted investigative missions in various countries including Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, and most recently returned from a mission in the Central African Republic in February 2014.

**Alexander PAPACHRISTOU** joined the Vance Center as Executive Director in January 2012. He directs the organization's overall operations and focuses on its programmatic and institutional initiatives, as well as fundraising. Mr. Papachristou previously was president of the Near East Foundation, a participatory, community-based economic and social development organization working in Arab and African countries. For the preceding 18 years, Mr. Papachristou engaged in cross-border corporate finance in advisory and proprietary roles. Mr. Papachristou is a member of the board of the Media Development Investment Fund, as well as the advisory councils of Princeton University's Near East Studies Program and Bard College's Center for Civic Engagement. In late 2011, The New Press published *Blind Goddess: A Race and Justice Reader*, which Mr. Papachristou edited.

**Megan SCHMIDT** is the Senior Program Officer at the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect. Prior to joining the Coalition in December 2011, Ms. Schmidt interned with ICRtoP from September 2010 to May 2011 and received a summer fellowship with the Secretariat through August 2011. She holds a Master of Arts in Human Rights and Genocide Studies from Kingston University-London and is in the process of completing a Master of Arts in Humanities and Social Thought at New York University. Ms. Schmidt has previously interned with the Kurdish Human Rights Project and received a Graduate Research Fellowship with the Wiener Library where she conducted a comparative study on the Holocaust and the Rwandan Genocide.