



Diverse pathways to people-centred justice: Launch event for the report of the Working Group on CIJ and SDG16+

- Date and time:** Monday 23 Oct. 2023, 11:00 a.m.-12:45 p.m. (Eastern)
- Venue:** United Nations Secretariat Building, Conference Room 6
- Co-convenors:** Cordaid; Folke Bernadotte Academy; IDLO; Namati; ODI; Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just, and Inclusive Societies; UN Development Programme (on behalf of the Working Group on CIJ and SDG16+)
- Co-sponsors:** Permanent Missions of Canada and the Netherlands to the United Nations, others tbc

Overview

On 23 Oct., the **Working Group on Customary and Informal Justice (CIJ) and SDG16+** will organize a public event to launch its new report, [*Diverse pathways to people-centred justice*](#), published in Sept. With speakers to include senior policymakers, judicial officials, customary authorities, civil society actors, and grassroots activists, and CIJ practitioners, the launch event will highlight key recommendations in the report and make the case for the centrality of CIJ systems in achieving justice for all in line with SDG16+. It will take place during the week of the 30th Informal Meeting of Legal Advisors.

Background

Established in 2020, the Working Group draws together diverse justice stakeholders from around the world to pursue a common agenda that advocates for **the centrality of CIJ systems in achieving justice for all**. It explores and seeks to identify the most effective means of including CIJ systems in efforts to achieve justice for all, and shares key findings through policy- and practice-oriented recommendations for the global justice.

The 2030 Agenda provides the overarching framework for the Working Group’s activities. CIJ is particularly relevant to two targets associated with SDG16 on peaceful, just and inclusive societies: target 16.3, on promoting the rule of law and ensuring equal access to justice; and target 16.6, on

developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. Equal access to justice for all cannot be realized without engaging the systems that most people—and the most excluded constituencies—already turn to. Those systems must be subject to the same basic standards of effectiveness, accountability, and transparency as state institutions.

CIJ is also essential to the achievement of SDG5 on **gender equality and empowerment of women** and girls, as global commitments to achieving this goal requires women to be equal under the law and receive equal treatment and benefits to men, both to uphold their individual rights and to strengthen their communities and societies; and, given the importance of CIJ actors to the management of land and natural resources, to achievement of SDGs related to land, environmental, and climate justice.

Following on from the landmark 2023 SDG Summit (Sept. 18-19), the 30th Informal Meeting of Legal Advisors will take place during the week of 23 Oct.; legal advisors from a broad cross-section of UN Member States will convene in New York City, along with relevant personnel from UN permanent missions, UN and other multilateral agencies, and civil society. Given the concentration of relevant personnel in New York City during that week, the Working Group on CIJ and SDG16+ will jointly implement a **public launch event** for its new report, *Diverse pathways to people-centred justice*, on a date to be determined.

The launch event will engage policymakers, thought leaders, and experts from the national and global levels in a **dynamic dialogue on CIJ**. It will be a means of centring sustained, rights-based engagement with CIJ actors in the global justice agenda and serve as a public platform for discussion of the key recommendations contained in the report.

Main objectives

The **main objectives** of the launch event include:

- Share findings and recommendations on the role of CIJ in achieving justice for all with key policymakers;
- Present the case for greater and more effective investment in CIJ systems, building momentum for greater engagement with CIJ systems to strengthen access to justice in the final years of the Decade of Action; and
- Illuminate the intersections of CIJ with other aspects of the sustainable development agenda, especially efforts to achieve gender equality and land, environmental, and climate justice.

Format

The event **format** will be an in-person panel discussion. The moderator will introduce speakers, each of whom will have an opportunity to make a brief statement conveying key messages. There will be opportunities for facilitated exchange between the moderator and speakers. Speakers will be briefed in advance on key insights and recommendations in the major report and asked to transmit specific key messages aligned with the report. Every effort will be made to ensure that speakers constitute a high-level ensemble reflecting gender and regional balance.

Speakers (listed in alphabetical order)

Jan BEAGLE (New Zealand), Director-General, International Development Law Organization

Jhoana Alexandra DELGADO Gaitán (Colombia), Vice Minister for the Promotion of Justice

Chief Mary LARTEH (Liberia), Paramount Chief of Jorquellah

Hon. Luis Henry MOLINA (Dominican Republic), President of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Dominican Republic

Dr Val NAPOLEON (Canada), Director, Indigenous Law Research Unit, and Research Chair, Faculty of Law, University of Victoria

Viviana PATAL (Guatemala), Legal Director, Women's Justice Initiative

Chief Willie PLASUA (Vanuatu) (recorded message), President of the Malvatumauri

Dr Margaret SATTERTHWAITE (United States), UN Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers

Katy THOMPSON (United Kingdom), Head of Rule of Law, Security & Human Rights, UNDP

Target audience

The **target audience** for the event is policymakers and practitioners, including those engaged in and around the 30th Informal Meeting of Legal Advisors, specifically:

- Legal advisors attached to UN Member State foreign ministries
- UN permanent missions in New York City, esp. Justice Action Coalition and g7+ members and OECD-DAC donors, and specifically personnel following SDG16+ implementation, the UN Secretary-General's New Vision for the Rule of Law and New Agenda for Peace, and related policy processes
- UN system, esp. UNDP, UN Women, OHCHR, OLA, GFP for the Rule of Law, and the peacebuilding architecture (UNPBC, PBSO, etc.)
- National and global CSOs and networks focused on access to justice, rule of law, human rights, gender equality and justice for women, and environmental and climate action issues