



CONTACT US

+27 716 405 926

INFO@AFRICAJURISTS.ORG

OFFICE 504A, ROSEBANK MALL OFFICES 50

BATH AVENUE, ROSEBANK 2196 JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH AFRICA

AJJF ANNUAL REPORT **2023**

AFRICAJURISTS.ORG

Africa Judges and Jurists Forum.

Formed in 2012, the African Judges and Jurists Forum (AJJF) is a registered non-profit organization (114-472NPO) in South Africa, with offices in Uganda (Kampala) and South Africa (Johannesburg). AJJF is an influential pan-African network of eminent judges and jurists committed to promoting the rule of law and development in Africa.

AJJF's governance structure includes the General Convention, the Judicial Elders Council, which consists of Honourable Retired Chief Justices: Willy Mutunga (Kenya), Mohamed Chande Othman (Tanzania), Ernest Sakala (Zambia), David Maraga and Andrew Nyirenda (Malawi). The President of AJJF is Justice Willy Mutunga. The Board is chaired by Judge Moses Chinhengo. It includes Justices Lillian Tibatemwa (Uganda), O.B.K Dingake (Botswana), Charles Mkandawire (Malawi) and Thomas Nhlane (Swaziland). The Secretariat, led by Secretary General Martin O. Masiga, consists of legal experts, administrators, and communication and finance practitioners.

“AJJF focuses on promoting elections and the rule of law; access to justice; economic transformation and the rule of law; and fostering crisis response in the context of the rule of law. Through these efforts, AJJF aims to contribute to a more just and equitable Africa.”

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. About AJJF.....00

2. Statement of the President of
Africa Judges & Jurists Forum.....01

3. Statement from the Chair of the
Board.....01

4. Message from the Secretary-
General02

5. A map of Africa showing the
countries where AJJF is active.....03

6. What We Do.....03

7. Our Impact “since 2013”.....04

8. Highlights for 2023.....04 - 07

9. What Is Ahead?.....07

10. Photo Gallery.....08



2. Statement of the President of Africa Judges & Jurists Forum

Dear Members, Partners, and Stakeholders, Achievements and Milestones 2023 has been a landmark year for the AJJF. We successfully conducted several high-impact training programs and workshops aimed at building the capacity of judges and jurists. These initiatives have not only enhanced the competencies of our judicial officers but have also fostered a deeper understanding of the role of the judges in upholding the rule of law within our judicial systems.

Our advocacy efforts have been pivotal in promoting judicial reforms and safeguarding judicial independence. We have actively engaged with governments, civil society organizations, and international bodies to advocate for policies that strengthen the judiciary's role in upholding justice and human rights.

Looking ahead, the AJJF remains committed to advancing the rule of law and judicial integrity across Africa. Our strategic priorities for the coming year include enhancing our training programs, expanding our advocacy initiatives, and fostering greater regional collaboration. We are also dedicated to leveraging technology to improve access to legal education and resources.

In conclusion, I extend my deepest appreciation to our members, partners, and supporters. Your unwavering dedication and commitment have been the bedrock of our success. Together, we have made significant strides in promoting justice and the rule of law, and I am confident that we will continue to build on this momentum in the years to come.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership.



DR. WILLY M MUTUNGA, CHIEF JUSTICE, KENYA (2011-15)
PRESIDENT, AFRICA JUDGES & JURISTS FORUM (AJJF)

3. Statement from the Chair of the Board

The year 2023 has been another significant chapter in our journey. Throughout the year, we focused on strengthening judicial independence, promoting the rule of law, and advancing the cause of reparations for slavery and colonialism.

We also made significant strides in our engagement with international organizations, including the African Union and the United Nations, academic and research institutions as well as other non-governmental actors in advancing the discourse on reparations for the transatlantic slave trade and its legacies.

Looking ahead, our strategic priorities for the future include expanding our educational initiatives, deepening our partnerships with regional and international bodies, and continuing our advocacy for judicial independence and human rights. We remain committed to addressing the pressing issues of our time.

As we reflect on 2023, we are proud of the progress we have made and are optimistic about the future. We will continue to champion the rule of law, human rights, and reparative justice, working tirelessly to build a more just and equitable Africa.

My gratitude to our partners as well as to the Secretariat which is the fulcrum around which all our action is organised.



JUDGE MOSES CHINHENGO
CHAIR OF THE BOARD

4. Message from the Secretary-General

As we close the chapter on 2023, it is my distinct honor to present the Annual Report of the Africa Judges & Jurists Forum (AJJF). This past year has been marked by significant strides in promoting justice, enhancing judicial integrity, and reinforcing the rule of law across the African continent.

Our achievements in 2023 underscore our unwavering commitment to justice and our proactive engagement with various stakeholders to address pressing rule of law issues.

This year, we successfully facilitated a range of impactful activities. Notably, our participation in the UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent in Geneva highlighted our role as a primary civil society interlocutor on reparations for slavery and colonialism. Our collaboration with the AU ECOSOCC to foster collaboration between the African Union and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to realise their shared aspiration for redress for the historical injustices of the trans-atlantic trade in order to actualise repair and reclaim the dignity of Africans and peoples of African descent.

We also work to facilitate crucial judicial dialogue on judicial independence and roles in the context of electoral justice in collaboration with the Africa Electoral Justice Network (AEJN). This work was provided an opportunity for sharing best practices and addressing emerging challenges in electoral integrity. Working with the Southern and East African Chief Justices Forum, we supported judges in the region to dialogue on judicial independence, the protection of digital rights and the deployment of technology within the justice sector.

The tragic loss of Adv. Thulani Maseko was a profound challenge, yet our swift response and the establishment of the Thulani Maseko Foundation underscore our resilience and dedication to justice.

Our work in promoting economic empowerment, protecting civic space, and advancing digital rights has furthered our mission to uphold the rule of law across the continent.

Our vision for the future is clear: to continue being a beacon of justice and a catalyst for positive change in Africa through support to judiciaries.



MARTIN OKUMU-MASIGA
SECRETARY GENERAL

We will leverage our achievements, address challenges head-on, and work collaboratively with our partners to promote a just, equitable, and peaceful society.

In conclusion, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to members of our board, the judicial elders' council, dedicated team at the Secretariat, partners, and supporters. Together, we will forge ahead, guided by our unwavering commitment to justice.

6. What We Do

HUMAN RIGHTS

Promote the respect for constitutionalism, human rights and the rule of law in Africa in a manner consistent with regional and universal human rights law

IMPARTIALITY

Promote and improve the impartial and effective administration of justice in accordance with regional standards and universal principles of the rule of law

TRAINING

Promote the independence, accountability and effectiveness of judges, lawyers and prosecutors through training, the exchange of knowledge and other tools of professional development

DEVELOPMENT

Support and complement the legal aspects of the development efforts of the AU and African sub-regional economic communities.

PROTECTION

Represent and protect the professional interests of judges, lawyers & prosecutors including Training support to those that may be in distress owing to their professional work

NETWORKING

Promote networking and collaborative partnerships of judges and lawyers across the region in a pan-African spirit

PEACE

Contribute to the peaceful resolution of political conflict in a manner that is consistent with the rule of law and human rights values

SHARED PROSPERITY

Contribute to socio-economic transformation and shared prosperity in the region by enhancing the relevance of judges and lawyers to the developmental challenges in Africa

7. Our Impact “since 2013”

12

ORGANISED SYMPOSIUMS

15

NEW JUDGES INDUCTED

08

ATTENDED INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCES

10

ORGANISED WEBINARS

8. Highlights for 2023

A PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE ROLE OF LAWYERS IN PROTECTING OPEN CIVIC SPACE



AJFJ sponsored and hosted a panel discussion on civic space during the annual conference of the Pan-African Lawyers Union held in July 2023 in Livingston, Zambia. The purpose of the panel discussion was to sensitize members of the legal profession about the state of civic space in Africa, challenges and threats against civic space and the role they can play to address those challenges and threats.

Approximately 30 lawyers from across Africa attended and participated in the discussion. During the session, participants exchanged information on some of the case studies which demonstrate the role that can be played, through litigation, by lawyers and judges to defend and protect civic space.

B STUDY TOUR ON REPARATIONS FOR SLAVERY AND COLONIALISM.



In collaboration with the African Union’s Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), AJFJ organised a high level study tour to the Caribbean on slavery & reparative justice. Participants in this study tour were African Union Ambassadors, African Jurists and lawyers, academics and Human Rights Defenders.

The aim of the tour was to enable participants to draw lessons from their Caribbean counterparts on how the African Union, African civil society and jurists can collaborate to pursue the agenda to secure reparations for the trans-Atlantic slavery and colonialism. During the tour, participants visited key historical sites and engaged with local experts and activists to learn about the lasting impact of slavery and colonialism. In addition to organising the tour, AJJF also facilitated a panel discussion to sensitize participants on the role of the law in the pursuit of reparative justice, the opportunities and limitations of the international legal system.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE STUDY TOUR INCLUDE:

High-level plenary sessions bringing together representatives from the African Union, Caribbean Pan-African Network, civil society, and other stakeholders to set objectives and outline strategies

Site visits to historical sites, museums, and relevant locations providing context and insights into the legacy of slavery and colonialism

Practical workshops and training sessions enhancing participants' understanding of legal frameworks, advocacy strategies, and best practices in the advocacy for reparative justice

The study tour facilitated networking and collaboration among legal experts, policymakers, & stakeholders from various regions. It served as a platform for sharing experiences, building partnerships, and advancing the collective pursuit of reparatory justice

C ACCRA REPARATIONS CONFERENCE



AJJF SG, Martin Okumu Masiga presenting at the ACRA 2023

AJJF assisted in organising and participated in the Accra Reparations Conference held in Accra, Ghana from 14 to 17 November 2023.

The conference convened stakeholders from across Africa, and the diaspora to discuss strategies for advancing the reparative justice agenda.

AJJF facilitated panel discussions, workshops, and networking sessions, providing a platform for sharing knowledge and best practices. Key topics discussed during the sessions facilitated by AJJF include the legal and moral justifications for reparations, practical challenges affecting the implementation of the right to reparations as a remedy for historical injustices. AJJF was represented by Mr Martin Masiga and Dr Justice Mavedzenge. Through its active involvement at this conference, AJJF contributed to shaping the discourse on reparations and strengthening regional collaboration towards achieving justice for historical wrongs.

D CRISIS RESPONSE FOR THULANI MASEKO



On January 21, 2023, upon learning of the assassination of Adv. Thulani Maseko, AJJF swiftly coordinated a crisis response. AJJF took control of the public narrative by informing Pan-African HRD groups and the ACHPR and UN Special Rapporteurs on HRDs.

AJJF mobilized support for Maseko's dignified burial and the documentation of initial evidence for an independent investigation. On January 26, AJJF represented by Arnold Tsunga during the post-mortem examination, collaborated with Lawyers for Human Rights South Africa to record a key witness statement. Additionally, AJJF played a pivotal role in establishing the Thulani Maseko Foundation, aimed at preserving Maseko's legacy and supporting his family.

AJJF representatives advocated for justice at the SADC LA (September 2023) and PALU (August 2023) Conferences



E THE UNITED NATIONS REPARATIONS MEETING ORGANIZED BY THE UN PERMANENT FORUM ON THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT.

AJJF, represented by the Secretary General Martin Masiga, was invited to address the 32nd Public Session of the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent (WGEPAD) in Geneva, Switzerland, focusing on the Economic Empowerment of People of African Descent

“ The session was held on the 4th of May 2023. During the session, Mr Martin Masiga of AJJF presented on the role of the law as an instrument for the pursuit of reparative justice for the Trans-Atlantic slavery and colonialism, the opportunities and limitations of the international legal system. ”

F WEBINAR ON THE ROLE OF JUDGES IN ADDRESSING DISINFORMATION DURING ELECTION CAMPAIGN PERIODS AND EVIDENTIARY RULES IN ELECTION PETITIONS.

AJJF, in collaboration with the South Africa Judicial Education Institute (SAJEI) and the International Federation on Electoral Systems (IFES) under the auspices of the Africa Electoral Justice Network (AEJN) that the AJJF helped to found in 2019 organized a webinar on November 30, 2023, focusing on the role of judges in addressing disinformation during election campaign periods and evidentiary rules in election petitions. The webinar facilitated the exchange of experiences and resources between courts, tribunals, electoral management bodies, and civil society organizations (CSOs) regarding emerging challenges to the integrity of elections posed by disinformation and evidentiary access. Discussions encompassed types and standards of proof, as well as potential solutions in the face of information disorder.

G WEBINAR ON PRE-ELECTION JUDICIAL ELECTORAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION.

On May 24, 2023, AJJF in collaboration with the South Africa Judicial Education Institute (SAJEI) and the International Federation on Electoral Systems (IFES) under the auspices of the Africa Electoral Justice Network (AEJN), hosted a webinar examining the pre-election judicial electoral dispute resolution process in Nigeria and the pre/post-election judicial electoral dispute resolution in Kenya. Panelists delved into topics such as election technology litigation and access to evidence in both countries, as well as the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in Kenya and Nigeria's pre-election disputes.

Lorem ipsum

The webinar also addressed challenges and threats posed by election-related disinformation to the integrity and independence of the judiciary. Additionally, discussions included lessons learned from the 2022 Election Petitions process and key findings from AJJF's judges' observation mission of the presidential election petition process in Kenya found [here](#)

9. What Is Ahead?

The Norec Exchange Program

Webinar Series on Judicial Independence

All Africa Judges Summit.



NOREC Exchange Program Participants

10. Photo Gallery



AJJF assisted in organising and participated in the Accra Reparations Conference held in Accra, Ghana from 14 to 17 November 2023.



Arnola Tsunga Privileged to be spending the day with CJs Willy Mutunga and Othman Chande (Rtd) as the Centre for Strategic Litigation launches the Tanzania Yearbook of Public Law where he gave a keynote speech.



SADC LA (September 2023) and PALU (August 2023) Conferences



OFFICE 504A, ROSEBANK MALL OFFICES | 50 BATH AVENUE, ROSEBANK 2196 | JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: +27 716 405 926 | www.africajurists.org | Email: info@africajurists.org

Twitter: [@africanjurists](https://twitter.com/africanjurists) | Facebook -Africa Judges And Jurists' Forum | Registration 114-472npo