



Federal Foreign Office



INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL LAW SERVICES

## **Project Description “International Justice Radio Workshops”** **Raising awareness of international criminal and transitional justice issues**

### **Project Management:**

Bettina Ambach, Bahnstr.33a, 40878 Ratingen

Tel. +34 91 3456505, [Bettina@bettinaambach.de](mailto:Bettina@bettinaambach.de), [www.bettinaambach.de](http://www.bettinaambach.de)

Collaboration between Bettina Ambach & International Criminal Law Services ([www.iclsfoundation.org](http://www.iclsfoundation.org)), a Hague-based NGO specializing in the field of international criminal law and practice

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**Monday 7<sup>th</sup> - Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2009 in Kampala / Uganda and  
Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November - Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2009 in Nairobi / Kenya**

The “**International Justice Radio Workshop**” seeks to:

- convey knowledge of the goals and functioning of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague;
- strengthen the ability of local radio journalists to report on issues of peace, justice and reconciliation;
- improve the skills and develop the professionalism of local radio journalists;
- bolster a comprehensive system to end impunity for the worst crimes known to humanity.

The long awaited “Review Conference of the Rome Statute” is scheduled to take place in Kampala, Uganda in May 2010. Prior to this conference, these media seminars can play a crucial role by informing people in the region about the International Criminal Court so as to enhance understanding of the institution.

There are 30 African states among the 110 member states of the ICC. Indeed, not only did African states play an important role in initially setting up the court, but the majority of the cases now before the court were brought at the specific request of these states. Nevertheless, a certain amount of friction is to be observed between the court and existing and potential member states in Africa. The main cause of this friction lies in the indictment of the Sudanese President, Umar al-Baschir. In

addition, there is some criticism from ICC-friendly states, such as Uganda and Kenya, in respect of the court's overall effectiveness. In the case of Uganda, there are doubts as to whether activities at the court are conducive to peace, while Kenya, on the other hand, is concerned about whether the crimes should be adjudicated at the local courts, at a new special tribunal based on its home soil or at an international court thousands of miles away.

Following questions will be discussed during the workshop: Would it be accurate to say that the issuance of arrest warrants for individuals such as Kony or Baschir has a negative effect on peace negotiations? Is the policy of forgiveness for heinous crimes pursued by the "Central Commission for Amnesty" in Uganda in contradiction to International Criminal Law?

Should peace exist as a condition for the activities of a criminal court and other initiatives of transitional justice ("peace before justice") or, alternatively, are peace and justice parallel processes ("peace through justice")? How do people in East Africa traditionally deal with revenge, punishment and forgiveness?

In Kenya different opinions are expressed as to where those responsible for the crimes committed during the post election violence should be prosecuted. Will Kenya refer the situation to the ICC in accordance with Article 14 of the Rome Statute? Will Kenya arrest and deliver anyone indicted by the ICC? Will there be a special tribunal that meets international standards? What are the efforts of the Kenyan government to conduct national proceedings? Is it more important to promote healing and reconciliation through a Truth Commission rather than to pursue judicial persecution? Or does a neglect of justice lay the foundation for future violence?

To provide the general public with reliable information about international criminal justice and other transitional justice mechanisms, well-informed and professionally trained journalists are called for. A sound understanding of International Justice is of the essence, particularly in circumstances where ex-political leaders and/or warlords stand trial thousands of miles away. Ideally, people in crisis areas should find comfort in and identify with the court in The Hague.

By developing their technical ability and their knowledge to report on such issues, local journalists will be in a position to broaden public understanding. Thus, the workshop seeks, not only to contribute to strengthening peace, the rule of law and reconciliation, but also to increase awareness and the willingness to see the perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide brought to justice.

**Trainers:** Bettina Ambach & Joseph Roberts-Mensah, radio director of the "United Nations Mission in Liberia"

**Participants:** 12-14 Kenyan radio producers with a minimum of three years' experience in state-owned, private and community radio stations.

**During the first week, high profile guest lecturers will visit and address the workshop participants. After their respective presentations, the guest lecturers will be questioned and interviewed by the journalists/participants. The resulting materials will become an integral part of the final production of radio reports at the end of the two-weeks-workshop.**