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**Preparatory Meeting for the Fifteenth
United Nations Congress on Crime
Prevention and Criminal Justice**
Abu Dhabi, 25–30 April 2026

Conference room paper submitted by Brazil and Canada**

**Recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting on Equal
Access to Justice for All, held in Brasilia, Brazil from
9 to 11 December 2024**

Introduction

This document contains recommendations of the expert group meeting held in Brasilia, Brazil from 9 to 11 December 2024 in accordance with General Assembly resolution [78/227](#) of 19 December 2023. For reference the agenda and list of experts nominated by Member States is also enclosed as an annex. The report on the meeting of experts and on the implementation of resolution [78/227](#) will be submitted to the CCPCJ at its 34th session in May 2025. The recommendations are shared for consideration by the regional preparatory meetings of the Fifteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and for possible inclusion in the draft Abu Dhabi declaration.

In resolution [78/227](#) the General Assembly requested the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to convene a meeting of experts, nominated by Member States, during the intersessional period, with a view to sharing information on challenges, lessons learned, best practices and enabling factors needed to enhance the functioning of criminal justice systems to ensure equal access to justice for all.

The meeting was organised by UNODC and hosted at the Ministry of Justice and Public Security in Brasilia, Brazil from 9 to 11 December 2024, with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil and the Government of Canada. The meeting was held in Arabic, English, French, Spanish and Portuguese. 40 experts nominated by 30 Member States participated in the meeting.

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Recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting on Equal Access to Justice for All, 9–11 December 2024, Ministry of Justice Palace, Brasilia, Brazil

Experts discussed a wide range of topics and measures that are relevant to ensuring equal access to justice for all in the criminal justice context, such as addressing and eliminating discrimination, representative justice institutions, responsible use of technology, collection of data and measurement of impact, equal access to justice for all and the environment, and cross-sectoral, multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder approaches.

Experts agreed that:

States who have the primary responsibility to ensure equal access to justice for all, should be encouraged to:

1. ensure equal access for all during all phases of the criminal justice process, and ensure that this includes equal access for all in their interactions with law enforcement, prosecution, independent and impartial tribunals and judiciary, and other criminal justice institutions, legal aid providers and victim support services;
2. promote and support the implementation of people-centered¹, equity-based, gender-responsive, and identity-inclusive criminal justice systems and reforms to eliminate structural and cultural barriers, ensuring fair and equal treatment for all individuals and strengthening knowledge of, and trust in the criminal justice system, its institutions and the administration of justice;
3. ensure that efforts to advance equal access to justice for all are data-driven, evidence-based, inclusive and transparent, informed by qualitative and quantitative data and research and developed through wide engagement of groups and individuals with lived experience of structural inequalities and exclusion, and the participation of diverse voices in decision-making while guaranteeing the allocation of sufficient resources for the implementation, evaluation and further adjustments, as necessary;
4. address the legacies of colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade, such as systemic racism, discrimination and poverty, as these continue impacting the experience of Afrodescendants/Black populations, and Indigenous Peoples and traditional communities in their contact with the criminal justice system, adopting an intersectional approach;
5. promote inclusive and intersectional approaches to access to justice by addressing the compounded vulnerabilities faced by individuals at the intersection of multiple identities and factors, including in integrated and holistic support services;
6. review existing criminal laws, practices and policies to increase access to justice in line with international best practices, including by decriminalizing conduct and eliminating law enforcement and criminal justice practices that target and/or disproportionately impact poor and marginalized persons, such as persons who face institutional barriers and challenges deprived of liberty due to inability to pay fines or fees.
7. consider the impact of crimes that affect the environment including for Indigenous Peoples and local communities and examine the challenges this poses for

¹ During the course of the Expert Group Meeting, experts agreed on the importance of the engagement of various groups, including, inter alia, women, minorities, migrants, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, children, young people, LGBTIQ+ individuals, older persons, refugees, internally displaced persons, stateless persons, marginalized communities and others with specific needs, in implementing a people-centered approach. The experts however did not agree on a single definition of people-centered justice. For further illustration of a “people-centered approach”, refer to the document entitled “New Vision of the Secretary General for the Rule of Law” issued by the Secretary General of the United Nations.

ensuring access to justice for all, including the threats posed to environmental and human rights defenders;

8. encourage law enforcement agencies and criminal justice institutions to systematically collect, analyze, and disseminate data, disaggregated by factors such as, among others, race, gender, and age, ensuring its accessibility to promote transparency, and inform evidence-based policymaking, and include safeguards to ensure the protection and security of personal data that is collected and stored;

9. strengthen and/or establish independent and internal oversight bodies to monitor law enforcement and criminal justice practices, ensuring transparency and accountability, including for over-policing, detention and criminalization of groups in vulnerable situations, in particular Afrodescendants/Black populations, Indigenous Peoples, migrants and other communities and the treatment of victims throughout criminal proceedings;

10. adopt strategies to promote diversity, equality and equity within law enforcement and criminal justice institutions, legal aid services, victim support services, and among legal professionals and organizations supporting the criminal justice system, including by implementing legal and policy reforms to address structural barriers and encourage participation, eliminating bias in recruitment processes, promoting career development processes and addressing workplace discrimination. Such efforts should be accompanied by transparent data collection/collation and regular public reporting to measure progress;

11. promote measures to increase efficiency and access to legal services that foster inclusive and equitable access to justice, including, where relevant, through the responsible use of technology, and only in line with the below safeguards;

12. ensure that any responsible deployment of technology, including AI, includes its regulation and the evaluation of its impact on access to justice, in alignment with the international commitments made in the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, The Global Digital Compact, and the first General Assembly Resolution on Artificial Intelligence ([A/78/L.49](#));

13. ensure that any responsible deployment of technology, including AI is in accordance with the principles of legality, proportionality, necessity, accountability, and non-discrimination, and a requirement for safety, privacy, and human rights-by design, as well as formative and regular periodic evaluations that include consultations with diverse stakeholders to ensure effectiveness, accuracy, and the absence of harm, in particular mindful of the potential impact of such technology exacerbating existing biases and discrimination;

14. removing barriers, in line with the United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems, to promote the delivery of quality, fair, effective, inclusive, equitable legal aid² services at all stages of the criminal justice process, for anyone detained, arrested, suspected of, or charged with a criminal offence, and for victims and survivors, and witnesses, if the person has no means or where the interests of justice so require. This can be achieved through employing a variety of models, including through partnerships with and between community organizations, civil society, universities, bar associations and grassroots organizations and the use of paralegals, community/popular defenders, public defenders, university legal clinics. The exchange of best practices on the efforts to implement the UN Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems is encouraged;

15. promote the use of a variety of community based and restorative justice approaches to increase access to justice, in line with international human rights and other international standards;

² As defined in the United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems ([A/RES/67/187](#), annex).

16. promote public awareness of the right to equal access to justice for all, in particular among those living in rural or remote areas and groups and communities that face discrimination and inequality, those facing other barriers to access, such as language, disabilities, and those in vulnerable situations, through legal information and education and awareness raising and take proactive measures to bring the justice system closer to the people;

17. consider reporting on their implementation of resolution 78/227 and use and application of UN standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice related to access to justice in their inputs to the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and its regional preparatory meetings, as well as in the annual session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice under the agenda item on UN standards and norms in crime prevention and criminal justice;

18. create cross-sectoral, multidisciplinary, multistakeholder programmes that provide access to justice and develop referral mechanisms between these organisations, to address gaps in the delivery of access to justice. This includes promoting a whole of government approach and interministerial cooperation, for example, by bringing together justice, education and health concerns, to provide trauma-informed support services for victims of violence or rehabilitation programmes for prisoners.

Experts also encouraged the UNODC to:

1. Support the development of knowledge and exchange of experience amongst States on evidence-based approaches in addressing discrimination in access to justice, including the role of law enforcement, prosecutors and the courts in measures to detect, investigate, and eliminate disparities and unjust outcomes, with particular attention to marginalized and discriminated populations, bringing together experts, community organizations, and practitioners, to develop technical tools and training materials and provide technical and material assistance to Member States, upon request, to ensure access to justice for all;

2. develop technical tools and training materials, and support professional networks across countries, on ensuring a representative and inclusive criminal justice workforce and profession, building on lessons learned and evidence-based approaches from across the world, in partnership with representative community, civil society and professional networks and organizations;

3. develop guidance on methodologies to measure equal access to justice for all in the criminal justice system, including measuring legal needs, access to legal aid, victim support systems, justice delivery mechanisms, and the barriers faced by groups in vulnerable situations. This includes ensuring disaggregated data collection and survey methodologies that address the nuanced challenges faced by marginalized groups;

4. develop a series of global research and knowledge products to highlight access to justice challenges, barriers and lessons learned of groups facing intersecting and multiple barriers to justice and discrimination, based on a global review of the evidence-base;

5. lead on the development of a global initiative to harness multi-sectoral knowledge to inform the development of safeguards and technical guidance to ensure that any use of AI in the criminal justice system is safe, fair, non-discriminatory, accurate, and effective;

6. foster global collaboration to inform the development of AI solutions for the real-time translation and transcription of underrepresented languages, for use in the criminal justice system, in accordance with the priorities of data protection, accuracy, equal access, and non-discrimination.

7. develop a professional competency framework for criminal justice professionals, legal aid providers and victim support providers to ensure equal access to justice for all;

8. support capacity building in the area of cross-sector, multi-stakeholder, multidisciplinary approaches, including through peer-to-peer learning and sharing of promising practices, with very practical guidance on how to bridge the silos between sectors.

Annex 1: Agenda of the meeting of experts

DAY 1 Monday 9th of December	
Location: Modular rooms 2, 3 and 4 of the Palace of Justice	
09:00 - 09:30	Registration of participants and welcome coffee
09:30 - 10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Welcoming remarks and introduction to the event: ○ Objectives of the Expert Group Meeting ○ Presentation of the Experts
10h30 - 12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consultation with Civil Society Organizations on equal access to justice for all (hybrid session: in-person for Brazilian CSOs and online for international CSOs)
12h30 - 14:30	Lunch break
	High-level event on Human Rights, Access to Justice, and Criminal Justice
	Panel 1 – Brazilian Government experiences: MoJ, SAJU, SENAD, SENASP, SENAPPEN, CNJ
	Panel 2 – External and Global Experiences: MoFA, UNODC, Canada and MST
16:30 - 17:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Panel 1 - Introduction Global overview of access to justice: barriers, challenges, best practices and factors that support the improvement of access to justice

DAY 2 Tuesday 10th of December	
Location: Modular rooms 2, 3 and 4 of the Palace of Justice	
09:00 - 09:30	Registration of participants and welcome coffee
09:30 - 11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Panel 2 - Discrimination in access to justice
11:30 - 13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Panel 3 - Representative criminal justice institutions
13:00 - 14:30	Lunch break at mezzanine at Black Room
14:30 - 16:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Panel 4 - The responsible use of technology in the criminal justice system
16:00 - 17:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Panel 5 - Data collection/Measurement of impact
17:30 - 18:00	Closure coffee

DAY 3 Wednesday 11th of December	
Location: Modular rooms 2, 3 and 4 of the Palace of Justice	
09:00 - 09:30	Registration of participants and welcome coffee
09:30 - 11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Panel 6 - Equal access to justice for all and the environment
11:30 - 13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Panel 7 - Cross-sectoral, multidisciplinary, multi-stakeholder approaches in access to justice
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch break on the mezzanine floor of the Black Room
14:00 - 16:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Final panel - Discussion of conclusions and pending issues from panels 1-7 ○ Discussion and adoption of recommendations, next steps
16:00 - 18:00	Closing reception

Annex 2 – Biographies of experts nominated by Member States

Experts Nominated by the Group of Eastern European States

Poland

- Maria Jolanta Grochulska serves as civil administrator at the Department of Judicial Assistance and Human Rights within the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Poland, a position she has held since 1996. Her work involves coordinating the Ministry's cooperation with the Council of Europe in areas under the Steering Committee for Human Rights in the fields of Biomedicine and Health (CDBIO). She conducts compatibility studies of Polish legislation with international legal instruments, prepares comparative law analyses, and drafts legislative projects related to human rights and biomedicine. Since 2014, she has been a member of the CDBIO and has represented Poland in intergovernmental expert groups, including the amendment of the UN's Mandela Rules.

Romania

- Cristina Lenuta Bostinaru Beclea is a legal specialized personnel assimilated to magistrates with seven years of experience in the justice sector, including six years dedicated to crime prevention. She serves within the Department for Crime Prevention at the Ministry of Justice in Romania, focusing on the National Anti-Corruption Strategy, criminological research, and victimological analysis. Her role involves collaboration with international organizations, including the United Nations, European Union institutions, and the European Network for Victims' Rights, to advance crime prevention and victim support efforts. Cristina has been involved in significant projects, such as "Strengthening the Administrative Capacity of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy" and "Protecting Victims of Crime."

Slovenia

- Ciril Keršmanc serves as a Judge in the Criminal Law Division of the District Court of Ljubljana, Slovenia, since 2017. He served as an European Judicial Network contact point (2019–2021) and has led the Specialized Criminal Department for Serious and Organized Crime since 2021. Appointed by the Supreme Court President, he has participated in working groups on integrating AI tools into court workflows. In 2024, he joined the Ministry of Justice working group addressing challenges related to illegal migration and continued leading AI-focused pilot projects in judicial operations.

Experts Nominated by the Group of Western European and Other States

Canada

- Michele Leering (PhD, CM) is a Visiting Scholar at Queen's University Faculty of Law in Ontario, Canada and former Executive Director/Lawyer of the Community Advocacy & Legal Centre, a non-profit community legal clinic. In addition to her legal practice as a community justice lawyer, she led local participatory action research projects into poverty, homelessness, and access to justice, and undertook legal needs and capacities studies. She has worked to transform legal services to be more holistic and evidence-based to respond more effectively to the multi-faced and intersecting needs of clients and marginalized communities. She promotes a wide diversity of legal approaches including early intervention and prevention, promoting legal health, systemic change and law reform, working with trusted intermediaries, and robust community legal education initiatives – reflecting her passion for encouraging legal literacy, capability and empowerment. She believes in the power of trusted intermediaries – service providers (including healthcare), community helpers, and others – for reaching people who need legal help, and advocates for developing a people-centred justice ecosystem. In addition to her recent doctoral study exploring integrative reflective practice as a legal professional competency and enabler of innovation, she recently completed research on the impact of health justice partnerships in four countries as an access to justice and health equity intervention (Measuring What Matters). Earlier qualitative research included a pilot study of the unmet civil legal needs of people remanded or incarcerated at a detention centre. She was also a collaborator on nine-clinic project funded by the federal Department of Justice to support Survivors of gender-based violence. She is a member of the International Legal Aid group and has worked with the Open Society Justice Initiative, Namati, and others internationally to share information about legal clinics as a vibrant model for meeting access to justice and legal empowerment needs. She was inducted in 2022 as a member of the Order of Canada.

France

- Guillaume Vieillard is a magistrate and a doctor in private law. He currently serves as Office of Institutional and Diplomatic Affairs at the Delegation for European and International Affairs of the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Justice (France). In this capacity, he oversees the diplomatic agenda of the Minister of Justice and manages the Ministry's relations with international organizations. He provides expertise on issues such as the rule of law, democracy, combating discrimination, equal access to justice, and fundamental rights. He represented France at the OECD Global Roundtable on Equal Access to Justice in 2024 and holds key roles in various advisory groups and European networks related to fundamental rights.

Portugal

- Júlio Gantes Gonçalves da Costa serves as a Law Judge with extensive expertise in criminal law and judicial cooperation. He has served in various courts throughout Portugal and internationally in Timor-Leste under cooperation agreements. Since 2002, he has held several judicial appointments in Portugal's Courts, and in 2023, he was appointed as a member of the Superior Council of the Judiciary.

Portugal

- Carla Maria Arrabaça Martins Falua is the Senior Coordinator of Criminal Investigation, bringing 35 years of experience in the judiciary and law enforcement sector. She has extensive expertise in professional training and has actively contributed to numerous working groups on police and criminal practice. Her career reflects a strong commitment to advancing the field of criminal investigation and supporting effective justice systems.

United States of America

- Christina White Smith is Deputy Director for Policy of the Office for Access to Justice, U.S. Department of Justice. Prior to that, she was Senior Counsel handling criminal justice and carceral-related issues. During her over 12-year tenure with the Justice Department, Ms. Smith has also served as a Senior Attorney Advisor in the Office of Pardon Attorney, including during the time of the Clemency Initiative targeting nonviolent drug offenders, a Trial Attorney in the Criminal Division, and as a Special Assistant United States Attorney for the Southern District of California. Prior to joining DOJ, she clerked for Chief Judge Ruben Castillo of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois and worked as a litigation associate for Mayer Brown LLP. In addition, Ms. Smith is an adjunct faculty member at Georgetown University Law Center and previously served as an adjunct at The George Washington University Law School.

United States of America

- Arash Hafizi currently serves as a Multilateral Affairs Advisor in the Office of Global Programs and Policy within the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) at the U.S. Department of State. In this capacity, Arash represents the Bureau through engagement in multilateral fora related to cybercrime and transnational organized crime. Arash has served in various capacities within the INL Bureau, and as part of the U.S. delegations to the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the Ad Hoc Committee (AHC) to negotiate a new Cybercrime Treaty.

United States of America

- Jennifer Smith is the Executive Director of the International Legal Foundation (ILF). An international expert in the field of legal aid and an experienced criminal defense lawyer, Ms. Smith has worked on legal aid reform across Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. At the ILF, Ms. Smith has spearheaded efforts to strengthen international support for the right to quality legal representation for poor and vulnerable persons accused of crimes. She contributed to the United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems and has contributed to a number of UN guidance tools that assist governments and other stakeholders in the implementation of the right to legal aid for the criminally accused. She was also the driving force behind the first-ever international legal aid conference held in Johannesburg, South Africa in June 2014, now a biennial event. She holds a law degree from Boston College and received the institution's Hon. David S. Nelson Public Interest Law Award in 2019.

Experts Nominated by the Group of Latin American and the Caribbean States

Chile

- Pablo Alberto Aranda Aliaga is the Head of the Department of Studies and Projects at the National Public Defender's Office in Chile, a position he has held since January 2021. With extensive experience in criminal defense for groups in vulnerable situations, he specializes in adolescent criminal justice, indigenous and migrant defense, prison advocacy, and the defense of individuals deemed unfit to stand trial due to mental health issues. He also designs and implements defense models and training programs within the Public Defender's Office.

Colombia

- Jorge Enrique Vallejo Jaramillo is a lawyer specialized in Criminal Law and Criminology from the University of Medellín and Legal Institutions in Criminal Law from the National University of Colombia. With over 30 years of professional experience, he has served for 16 years as a magistrate of the Superior Court of the Bogotá Judicial District after practicing as a university professor and prosecutor before the Criminal Courts of the Medellín Circuit. He also provides instruction in various areas of criminal justice and legal research.

Costa Rica

- Patricia Solano Castro serves as the President of the Criminal Cassation Chamber of Costa Rica, a position she has held since June 22, 2020. She has over 30 years of judicial experience and held the position of Vice President of the Supreme Court of Justice from 2019 to 2023. She is committed to fostering efficiency, transparency, and integrity to strengthen the judiciary and ensure ethical and humanized access to justice.

Cuba

- Yurais Álvarez Morales currently serves as the Provincial Director of Justice of Havana, a position she has held since July 2022, appointed by the Governor of Havana. She has held various key roles, including Principal Registrar of Property in Centro Habana and Head of the Provincial Department of Property, Commercial, and Heritage Registries. She is the focal point of Cuba at Conference of Ministers of Justice of the Ibero-American Countries as well as has represented Cuba internationally at events.

Cuba

- Gladys Maria Gladys María Padrón Canals currently serves as Registrar of Civil Status at the Office of the Special Registry and as Head of the Secretariat at the Ministry of Justice in Cuba, positions she has held since September 17, 2024. She has over two decades of experience in the judicial and legal sectors, including as President of the Criminal Chamber of the Provincial Court of Havana until July 2023. She holds a specialization in Criminal Law and has represented Cuba in various international events, including the IberRed meeting in Madrid in 2024. Her expertise also includes internal control and judicial treatment of social reintegration.

Dominican Republic

- Vanessa Acosta Peralta serves as a judge at the Supreme Court of Justice of the Dominican Republic, appointed in 2019. She is also the Deputy Coordinator of the Judiciary's Commission for Gender Equality. Since joining the judiciary in 2003, she has held various roles across different courts, contributing significantly to advancing access to justice, particularly in gender and human rights. Her professional development includes extensive training in judicial reasoning, procedural law, and gender-sensitive justice.

Mexico

- Arturo Guerrero Zazueta serves as the Director General of Human Rights, Gender Equality, and International Affairs of the Federal Judiciary Council, a position he has held since February 1, 2023. His previous roles include serving as a lawyer at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, consultant for the Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and Secretary of the Plenary of the Federal Judiciary Council. He is engaged in academia as a university professor.

Panama

- Carlos Mario Martínez Zevallos serves as the Deputy Prosecutor at the Subregional Prosecutor's Office of Bajo Chiquito within the Office of the Attorney General. Since joining the institution in 2017, he has held positions including Operational Assistant, Administrative Coordinator, Judicial Secretary, and Prosecutorial Assistant. He also contributes to academia as a university lecturer.

Paraguay

- Juan Jim Zaracho, Coordinador de la Direccion de Asistencia Juridica Internacional de la Corte Suprema de Justicia de la República del Paraguay. Juan Jim Zaracho serves as the Coordinator of Institutional Integrity for the Paraguayan Judiciary, leading initiatives to promote transparency, anti-corruption, and good governance policies. With extensive experience in international judicial cooperation, he has implemented key programs such as the National Integrated Plan and self-assessment tools for judicial improvement. Previously, he coordinated the design and implementation of disciplinary and integrity systems within the judiciary, contributing to strengthening institutional accountability and citizen participation.

Experts Nominated by the Group of Asian and the Pacific States

Malaysia

- Justice Dato Mohd Radzi Bin Harun currently serves as a High Court Judge in Kuantan, Pahang, a position he has held since March 2020. He began his career as a Magistrate in 1989 and later served as a legal advisor to the Ministry of Transport and in various roles at the Attorney General's Chambers from 1997 to 2013. He was appointed Head of the International Affairs Division in 2016 and subsequently held the position of Chairman of the Special Commissioner of Income Tax Malaysia (2016–2018). In March 2018, he was elevated to the Bench as a Judicial Commissioner before becoming a High Court Judge.

Philippines

- Joan Carla V. Guevarra is an Assistant State Prosecutor and Program Director at the Department of Justice. With over eight years of service at the DOJ, she supervises operations of the Department of Justice Action Center, provides legal assistance, handles 8888 complaints, and implements legal aid initiatives such as the Katarungan Caravan. Previously, she held roles as Prosecution Attorney, Legislative Staff Officer, and Associate Lawyer. Ms. Guevarra's expertise is further supported by specialized training in orientation for new prosecutors, witness management, gender sensitivity, mediation, among others.

Thailand

- Dr. Kattiya Ratanadilok serves as the Director of the Justice Research and Development Institute at the Ministry of Justice, and a leading expert in criminal justice reform, focusing on juvenile justice, forensic psychology, and human rights. She has been instrumental in legislative reforms such as the Preventive Measures for Recidivism in Sexual or Violent Offenses Act B.E. 2565 (2022) and initiatives to increase the minimum age of criminal responsibility, aligning Thailand's juvenile justice policies with international standards. Her contributions have been recognized with honors, including the Outstanding Civil Servant Award in 2020 and the Justice Ministry's Research Award in 2019.

Experts Nominated by the Group of African States

Algeria

- Mustapha Moudjadj is the Director of Foresight and Organization at the Ministry of Justice, a position he has held since January 2019. With over five years of experience in this role, he is responsible for overseeing the monitoring of judicial activities, performance analysis, and the optimization of judicial services. He has

promoted digital transformation projects in the justice sector, including the design of IT systems and digital platforms for judicial operations.

Algeria

- Rostom Mansouri, Public Prosecutor, Ministry of Justice of Algeria. is a distinguished prosecutor based in Algiers, Algeria, currently serving at the Dar El-Beida Court. With a career spanning over a decade in the Algerian judicial system, ROSTOM has developed extensive expertise in criminal law and judicial investigations. Known for his commitment to justice, he has held various key positions within the Ministry of Justice, contributing significantly to the legal process and rule of law in Algeria.

Angola

- Costa Antonio Sindula Chipepe, Costa António Sindula Chipepe serves as a Judge and the National Director of Justice Administration in Angola. He also heads the Department of Judicial Cooperation and the Department for Monitoring Justice Delegations at the national level, under the Direcção Nacional de Administração da Justiça (National Directorate of Justice Administration)/Ministério da Justiça e dos Direitos Humanos (Ministry of Justice and Human Rights).

Burkina Faso

- Bambara Bado Egnoma Pascale serves as the Director of Access to Justice and Victim Support at the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights. In this role, she oversees efforts to facilitate access to justice and provide support to victims, contributing to the Ministry's mission of promoting fairness and equity. Prior to this position, she served as a Policy Officer at the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, responsible for institutional relations, from 2019 to August 15, 2024. She also spent 10 years as a judge, serving at the High Court of Kongoussi from 2009 to 2013 and the High Court of Ouagadougou from 2013 to 2019.

Burkina Faso

- Ouedraogo Jean, Police Commissioner, Director of Judicial Police of Burkina Faso.

Egypt

- Amr Abou Hashima, is a Chief Prosecutor and a Member of the Legislation Sector at the Ministry of Justice in Egypt. With a career spanning over two decades, he has served in key prosecutorial and judicial roles, including as a judge in the criminal courts. His expertise encompasses prosecution, judicial leadership, and legislative development.

Kenya

- Edwin Otieno Oduor, Senior Principal Prosecution Counsel is an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya who started his legal career in 2010 and is a Senior Principal Prosecution Counsel at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. He joined the ODPP from private practice in 2014 and has risen through the ranks. He previously served as the Head of Station in Kisii and Turkana County Offices and is currently the Head of the Marsabit County Office. Mr. Otieno has extensive experience as a practitioner in the field of Criminal Justice spanning 14 years and has been involved in sensitive and complex criminal prosecutions, appeals at the High Court and Court of Appeal as well as constitutional petitions. He is an ardent advocate for empowering the poor and the marginalized to effectively access justice and fully realize their human rights.

Nigeria

- Evbu Igbinedion is the Executive Secretary of the Administration of Criminal Justice Monitoring Committee, a statutory body tasked with ensuring an efficient and effective criminal justice system in Nigeria. A seasoned lawyer and multi-national development professional with over 14 years of experience, she has worked with various government institutions and development partners in law, criminal justice administration, and legislative drafting. Known for her versatility and intellectual expertise, she has served on numerous committees as both a secretary and member, contributing significantly to institutional and corporate proceedings.

South Africa

- Nobolao Martha Mbhele has been a Judge of the High Court of South Africa, Free State Provincial Division, since January 1, 2016, and as Deputy Judge President of the Free State High Court since July 1, 2021. She acted as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Appeal from December 2023 to May 2024 and was appointed acting Judge of the High Court of Lesotho in 2016. Beginning her legal career in 1996, she has held various leadership roles, including as a director at Mhlambi Incorporated and within organizations such as the Free State Law Society, the Black Lawyers Association, and the Law Society of South Africa. Judge Mbhele is a dedicated advocate for gender equality and has contributed to initiatives addressing violence against women and advancing trial advocacy programs.

South Africa

- Ntsumbedzeni Nemasisi, National Operations Executive of Legal Aid South Africa. Ntsumbedzeni Nemasisi is the National Operations Executive responsible for Legal Aid South Africa's legal service delivery, by ensuring the provision of quality legal services to indigent and vulnerable persons in the Republic of South Africa. His wide and valued experience and organisational skills enable him to contribute to the improvement of the quality and accessibility of legal services rendered to clients of Legal Aid SA. As a legal practitioner and a

seasoned Executive, he has extensive knowledge, experience and expertise on the constitutional right of access to justice to everyone, particularly indigent and vulnerable persons. His vast experience stems from his professional career that expands over a period of 18 years, and this includes positions held at the following public Institutions: The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development- Family Advocate, Public Protector of South Africa- Head of Legal Service, Information Regulator (SA)- Executive: Promotion of Access to Information.

Tanzania

- Janethreza Aloyce Kitily serves as a Prosecutor at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in Tanzania and is currently Acting Assistant Director for Case Management (AgADCM). In her role as a prosecutor, she prosecutes all types of criminal cases, from the lower courts to the Court of Appeal, and coordinates investigations across various investigative organs. As AgADCM, her responsibilities include ensuring the quality of prosecution services. She has been with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions since 2008.

Tanzania

- Fortunata Anastas Guvette, State Attorney, National Prosecution Services of Tanzania.

Uganda

- Ms. Rachel A. Odoi-Musoke is the Senior Technical Advisor and Head of the Governance and Security Programme Secretariat. She oversees the planning and implementation of government programs in governance, security, justice, law, and order. With over 24 years of experience, Ms. Odoi-Musoke has worked extensively in human rights advocacy, legal reforms, and justice sector transformation. Additionally, she is qualified in Program Management, Strategic Planning, and Dispute Resolution. Ms. Odoi-Musoke also serves on boards, including Eco-Trust Uganda, and is a passionate advocate for human rights, focusing on women, children, and environmental protection.

Zambia

- Humphrey Mweemba is the Director/CEO of the Legal Aid Board Zambia, where he leads efforts to ensure equitable access to justice for underserved communities. In this role, he oversees the Legal Aid Fund, interprets the Legal Aid Act, and develops national policies aimed at strengthening Zambia's justice system. With over 18 years of experience in Zambia's justice sector, he has provided effective legal representation in civil and criminal cases, including appearances before the Supreme Court. Since joining the Board in 2005, Mr. Mweemba has risen through the ranks, holding key positions such as Deputy Director and Principal Legal Aid Counsel, consistently improving service delivery. Renowned for his strategic vision, he has introduced innovative approaches to justice and community empowerment, making a lasting impact on Zambia's legal landscape.

Zambia

- Mukelabai Ngenda serves as an Access to Justice Analyst in the Governance, Policy, and Planning Department of the Ministry of Justice in Lusaka, Zambia. A civil servant (technocrat) in the Government of the Republic of Zambia, he has extensive experience in human capital management, legal analysis on access to justice, and human rights. He is passionate about addressing bottlenecks in the criminal justice system to holistically protect and fulfill inmates' human rights while facilitating the provision of adequate and impactful correctional services.

Zimbabwe

- Salome Chihuri is a Principal Law Officer in the Ministry of Justice, Legal, and Parliamentary Affairs, where she has served for the past 12 years. Her responsibilities include participating in the Justice, Law, and Order Sector to promote access to justice and address issues affecting the justice delivery system. She contributes to legal policy development, drafting legislation, and providing legal advice and briefs to the Ministry. Additionally, she has been a member of inter-ministerial committees on human rights and international humanitarian law.

Zimbabwe

- Fortunate Dzingai Maringe is a dedicated legal professional currently serving as a principal legal officer at Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Zimbabwe under department of Legal Aid directorate. With a strong commitment to promoting access to justice she is involved in the implementation of the legal aid services. She has over 13 years experience in the legal field and has developed an expertise in legal advocacy and policy development. She holds a Master's of Laws Degree(LLM) as well as a Bachelor of Laws Honours Degree(LLBS). She is passionate about advancing equity and justice in the legal system. She continues to strive for innovative solutions and strategies that address the evolving needs of those seeking legal assistance reaffirming her commitment to the principle that justice should be accessible to all.