Editorial: Volume 14 No 2 2014

This issue of the African Human Rights Law Journal boasts a record number of contributions. This growth testifies to the increasing number of contributions submitted to the Journal and, we would argue, speaks both to its recognition as a respected outlet for scholarship on human rights in Africa, and to the greater visibility the Journal enjoys since becoming fully and freely accessible online.

The contributions appearing in the 'regular' part of the Journal span a wide array of thematic areas and approaches, and reflect the diverse nature of contemporary human rights concerns in Africa. Some are philosophical in nature, reflecting on the nature of 'African values', such as ubuntu (the article by Metz); and others are more historical in nature, for example, the article by Haskins that traces the link between contemporary homophobia in Africa and Roman law. A number of contributions look at institutional evolutions related to Africa, for example, the UN Universal Periodic Review, and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (the articles by Smith and Naldi respectively).

Contributions reflecting a broad sub-regional and narrow country-specific focus are included in this issue. Fombad and Kamga investigate the rule of law in Central Africa and the potential of impact litigation in Francophone Africa. Assim and Sloth-Nielsen look at kafalah as an alternative care option in Islamic Africa. Countries under specific scrutiny are Kenya (environmental rights); South Africa (human trafficking); Uganda (transitional justice); Nigeria (urban planning and its impact on the urban poor); and Namibia (personal liberty).

This issue of the Journal contains two 'special focus' sections. The first relates to the South African Constitution. The year 2014 marked 20 years since the entry into force of the South African interim Constitution on 27 April 1994 - a watershed moment in South Africa's constitutional history. Three contributions reflect on this milestone. Two of these contributions (by Smith and Ngang respectively) deliberate on crucial aspects of South Africa's Constitution - equality and socio-economic rights. A third contribution (by Diala) charts some of the influence of these developments in a broader - African - context.

The second 'special focus' section concerns the commemoration of the adoption, in 2003, of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (African Women's Protocol). In 2013, the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria organised a colloquium to mark ten years since this milestone. Some of the papers presented at this colloquium were reworked, and now appear as a 'special focus' section. These contributions are focused on article 14 of the Protocol, which deals with women's sexual and reproductive rights. One contribution (authored by Geldenhuys, Kaufulu-Kumwenda, Nabaneh and Stefiszyn) analyses the General Comment on articles 14(1)(d) and (e), adopted by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. Other contributions consider aspects that have not received much scholarly attention, namely, the meaning and implications of article 10(3) of the Protocol, which prescribes to state parties the prioritisation of social spending above military expenditure (the article by Klugman); the rights of women who have sex with women (the article by Muranda, Mugo and Antonites); and sterilisation (the contribution by Todd-Gher).

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