

VUB Law & Criminology talks

Facultaire Onderzoekscommissie · Faculteit Recht en Criminologie

Democracy in Africa: Past, present and future

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*Organised by the Department of International and European Law; Introduction by **Prof. Dr. Stefaan Smis***

Introduction

Africa is the oldest continent, the birthplace of mankind and the cradle of civilisation. It has a rich history; old and diverse cultures; and abundant and varied natural resources. Yet, a large majority of Africans remain poor, disenfranchised and oppressed.

For five and half centuries, the trajectory of Africa's autonomous development was distorted by the intervention of nascent Europe: the slave trade, the colonial project and the Cold War. A legacy of the colonial system, the prototype independent African state has failed to deliver freedom, democracy and prosperity, giving rise to a crisis of legitimacy and relevance.

Against this backdrop, the lecture on *Democracy in Africa: Past, Present and Future* will discuss the basic causes of the democratic deficit in Africa today and its prospects. The discourse will focus on the concept of self-determination as a political right of (1) a nation to independence, (2) a people to a government of their choice and (3) diverse groups to autonomy in the management of their day-to-day affairs.

Bibliographical note:

Ambassador Andebrhan Welde Giorgis is a researcher at the Department of International and European Law at the VUB Centre for International Law. He is also President of Eri-Platform, an international civic association promoting inclusive dialogue on vital national, regional and international issues impacting Eritrea and the Horn of Africa. It works to foster understanding of, respect for and commitment to the *rule of law, democratic principles and human rights*.

Andebrhan is Senior Expert in the Global Governance Institute, founding Board member of the European Centre for Electoral Support and Brand Ambassador of Wallonia, Belgium. He has extensive experience as a freedom fighter, diplomat, academic, international negotiator, mediator and political consultant

Free entrance, no registration required.

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11:00 - 13:00

Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Pleinlaan 2, 1050 Brussel

Room: 4C306

