

Expert Level (Deep Dive) Discussion on Transitional Justice Policy Options Document

1-2 September 2023

Marriot Hotel, Addis Ababa

Transitional Justice Working Group of Experts - Ethiopia

1. Introduction

In 2022, the Government of Ethiopia expressed interest to pursue transitional justice as a critical pathway of addressing gross violations of human rights in a more comprehensive and sustainable way - based on a policy framework that encompasses accountability, truth finding, amnesty, reconciliation, reparation and institutional reforms.

To this end, the Ministry of Justice on-boarded seasoned experts on transitional justice in 2021 to conduct a comprehensive research on transitional justice. Furthermore, in November 2022, the Ministry established the Transitional Justice Working Group of Experts (TJWGE). On November 3, 2021, a joint investigation report issued by the EHRC/OHCHR had already recommended to the Government of Ethiopia to roll out a transitional justice process, which was further cemented under the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement signed between the Government of Ethiopia and TPLF in November 2022.

Composed of 14 members - including 4 women, the TJWGE is mandated to organize and carry out a broad-based, inclusive and international-standards-compliant public consultations process and furthermore spearhead the development of a comprehensive and context-specific transitional justice policy for Ethiopia.

2. Consultation Process

Based on the 'Policy Options for Transitional Justice for Ethiopia' document, the TJWGE has conducted 6 national consultations in Addis Ababa, including one with internationally renowned experts on transitional justice, and 47 regional consultations. It also collaborated with CSOs and UN family offices in Ethiopia to jointly conduct 7 consultations - focusing on different clusters of the community, including women and victims of sexual violence. The TJWGE is concluding the public consultations process.

3. Objective of Expert Level (Deep Dive) Discussion on Transitional Justice Policy Options

From Day-1, the TJWGE has endeavored to ensure the effectiveness of the transitional justice consultations and policy design process by anchoring its undertaking on the principle of local ownership and leadership - as articulated under Section 23 of the AU Transitional Justice Policy Framework. Adhering to this principle is deemed critical to attend to local contexts, needs and aspirations of the people of Ethiopia. In this line, since March 2022, the TJWGE has immensely benefited from the observations submitted and feedback received in the context of the rounds of public consultations.

However, the TJWGE also finds it absolutely important that Ethiopia's policy making exercise must draw lessons from best practices and perspectives in other parts of the world. In this regard, the TJWGE has engaged in intensive collaborations and deliberations with various continental and international partners and scholars to solicit additional input and organize events to learn from the insight of international experts on transitional justice.

The key objective of the planned Expert-Level (Deep-Dive) Dialogue on Transitional Justice Policy Options for Ethiopia is to organize a platform for world-class experts on transitional justice to engage with members of the TJWGE in a rigorous reading and intensive round-table discussion on the policy options document and solicit concrete recommendations on each pillar of the policy options proposed under the document.

This exercise is a follow-up of the consultation that was conducted in Addis Ababa from 16-17 March 2022 involving international experts - which was co-organized through a collaboration with the AU/GIZ.

4. Participants of the Expert Level Debate/Discussion

Involving the attendance of all members of the TJWGE, the in-depth dialogue on the policy options document will engage imminent personalities with established track-record in transitional justice discourse.

Confirmed participants of the event include: Prof. Chaloka Beyani (London School of Economics), Prof. Tim Murithi (Director - Institute for Justice and Reconciliation), Mr. David Mandel-Anthony (Deputy to the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Criminal Justice, US State Department), Mr. Didier Gbery (ICTJ), Dr. Phuong Pham (Director: Evaluation Research | Harvard Humanitarian Initiative/Humanitarian Studies), and Mr. Abdul Trajan-Cole (Executive: African Studies Association, Former War Crimes Prosecutor - Special Court for Sierra Leone).

Also participating in the event are: Dr. Iris Breutz (Head of Program, Support to AU in the Area of Peace, Security and Governance), Prof. Eugene Bope Bakama (Africa Union), Dr. John I. Gbodi (Africa Union) Ms. Anke Rehfeld (GIZ), Ms. Rebecca Minkus (Advisor: Support to the AU in the Area of Peace, Security), and Ms. Annie Izere (GIZ).

5. Event Program

DAY 1 – FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 1, 2023		
TIME	SUBJECT	PROCESS OWNER
08:30-09:00	Registration	Kalkidan D. and Adi D.: Members of TJWGE
	Program Introduction	Kalkidan D. and Adi D. Members of TJWGE
09:00-9:20	Welcoming Remark	_____: Guest of Honor (TBC) Dr. Iris Breutz (Head of Program, Support to AU in Area of Peace, Security and Governance) or Prof. Eugene Bope Bakama (TBC)
09:20-10:00	Briefing on State of the National Consultations and Policy Designing Process	Dr. Tadesse Kassa W., Chair: TJWGE
10:00-10:20	Health Break - Catering	Marriot Hotel
10:20-11:00	Presentation: Critical Reading and Recommendations on 'Criminal Accountability: Subject Matter and Institutions'	Prof. Chaloca Beyani London School of Economics
11:00-12:30	Discussions/Debates	Moderator: Adi D.

DAY 1 – FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 1, 2023		
TIME	SUBJECT	PROCESS OWNER
	Complementary Intervention (TBC)	
12:30-13:30	Lunch	Marriot Hotel
13:30-14:10	Presentation: Critical Reading and Recommendations on 'Truth-seeking'	Prof. Tim Murithi Director - Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, South Africa
14:10-15:10	Discussions/Debates Complementary Intervention (TBC)	Moderator: Adi D.
15:10-15:30	Health Break - Catering	Marriot Hotel
15:30-16:10	Presentation: Critical Reading and Recommendations 'Reconciliation'	Prof. Tim Murithi Director - Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
16:10-17:30	Discussions/Debates Complementary Intervention (TBC)	Moderator: Adi D.
DAY 2 – SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 2, 2023		
09:00-09:40	Presentation: Critical Reading and Recommendations 'Amnesty'	Prof. Chaloca Beyani London School of Economics
09:40-10:40	Discussions/Debates Complementary Intervention (TBC)	Moderator: Kalkidan D.
10:40-11:00	Health Break - Catering	Marriot Hotel
11:00-11:40	Presentation: Critical Reading and Recommendations on 'Reparations'	Prof. Tim Murithi Director - Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
11:40-12:40	Discussions/Debates Complementary Intervention (TBC)	Moderator: Kalkidan D.
12:40-13:40	Lunch	Marriot Hotel
13:40-14:40	Presentation: Critical Reading and Recommendations on 'Legal/Institutional Reforms'	Prof. Tim Murithi Director - Institute for Justice and Reconciliation
14:40-16:00	Discussions/Debates Complementary Intervention (TBC)	Moderator: Kalkidan D.
16:00-17:00	Conclusions and Ideas on Next Steps	Organizers, Participants