

Concept Note

Side-Event: Advancing the Crimes against Humanity Treaty: Expert Perspectives and Reflections

Monday 26 January 2026, 3:00 – 6:00 PM
Trusteeship Chamber

Co-hosts: Mexico, The Philippines, The Gambia, and Switzerland

Background

The first session of the Preparatory Commission (PrepComm) is a critical moment to shape the scope, structure, and ambition of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Humanity. Key questions under discussion include the definition of crimes against humanity, obligations of prevention and punishment, jurisdictional bases, extradition and mutual legal assistance, the role of national implementation, and intersections with gender justice, environmental justice, victims' rights, and complementarity with international courts.

This side event will convene leading experts to provide an independent, technically grounded assessment of ongoing Prep Comm discussions, including reflections on Clusters 1-4 and a highlight of key issues for upcoming working group sessions, including Cluster 5 and proposals for additional provisions. The discussion will aim to support States by identifying areas of convergence, emerging fault lines, the legal underpinnings of key issues, and opportunities to strengthen the treaty's contribution to accountability, prevention, and survivor-centered justice.

Speakers:

- **Professor Leila Sadat**, James Carr Professor of International Criminal Law, Washington University School of Law
- **Dr. Patricia Sellers**, Visiting Fellow, Kellogg Faculty of Law, University of Oxford
- **Dr. Priya Pillai**, Executive Director, Asia Justice Coalition
- **Professor Olympia Bekou**, Professor of Public International Law and Head of School, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Nottingham
- **Professor Tom Dannenbaum**, Professor of Law, Stanford Law School
- **Natalie L. Reid**, Partner & Co-Chair, Public International Law Group, Debevoise & Plimpton