

Webinar Series (March-Apr 2026)

Reinventing the World Court

As the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) plays a central role in the development of international law and practice. Yet, in an international legal order characterised by the increasing complexity of the international dispute resolution landscape and evolving expectations of legitimacy and effectiveness, the Court faces a range of structural, procedural, and normative pressures. This three-part webinar series examines the ICJ from an institutional perspective, with a view to assessing the adequacy of its current design and practices, and to exploring possible avenues for adaptation and reform to ensure that the Court remains authoritative and responsive to the demands of an evolving international legal system.



Webinar 1 – 31 March, 3.30 pm SGT / 9.30 am CEST

*Reassessing the ICJ: Institutional Design,
Representation and Legitimacy*



Introduction:
Celine Lange,
CIL



Moderator:
Prof. Makane Mbengue,
University of Geneva



Conclusions:
Prof. Beatrice Bonafe,
Paris Pantheon-Assas /
Sapienza University, Rome

PANEL



Saadia Bhatti,
Gide



Prof. Nicolas Angelet,
Université libre de
Bruxelles



Peter Tzeng,
Foley Hoag

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Webinar 1 will examine the institutional structure of the International Court of Justice and the extent to which it reflects contemporary expectations of legitimacy, equity, and effectiveness. The discussion will address the Court's composition, mandate, and internal structure, including issues relating to judicial terms, election processes, and campaign practices. Particular attention will be paid to questions of diversity, geographical representation, and gender balance, as well as to broader concerns about equity and representativeness within the Court. The session will invite reflection on whether structural reforms may be necessary to ensure that the ICJ continues to command confidence and authority as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations.

CIL

CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW
National University of Singapore