No Transition, No Justice: How the Absence of Transitional Justice following the Civil War Has Led to Ongoing Racial Injustice in the United States

What is transitional justice?

Transitional justice is one of the most important tools societies emerging from conflict and repression can undertake as they come to terms with legacies of systematic and structural violations of human rights. Transitional justice processes may include truth-telling, accountability, and the award of reparations on the path toward justice and reconciliation. Although these processes have commonly been included as components of most recent peacebuilding efforts in Europe, Africa, Latin America, and other post-conflict contexts, the United States never undertook a transitional justice process following our Civil War, leaving truths untold and reconciliation unrealized.

Event Details

Friday, September 18, 2020
9 a.m.  Program begins with introductory remarks
5 p.m.  Concluding remarks

Zoom information will be sent to registrants prior to the symposium.

Register at: https://bit.ly/notransitionaljustice

Event Sponsors

Center for Comparative Legal Studies & Post-Conflict Peacebuilding
Center for Racial & Social Justice
Black Law Students Association, W.C. Jefferson Chapter
Reves Center for International Studies

Program Speakers

Opening Remarks
Albie Sachs
South African Activist & Constitutional Court Justice

Transitional Justice: What It Is & Why It Matters
David Tolbert
Acting Registrar of the Lebanon Tribunal
Former President, International Center for Transitional Justice

The South Africa, Sierra Leone, & Sri Lanka Processes: Lessons Learned
Yasmin Sooka
Member, South African Truth & Reconciliation Commission
Member, Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission
Chair, UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan

The Confederate Narrative in U.S. History: Subversion of Post-Bellum Ideals of Human Dignity & Equal Respect for All
Peggy Cooper Davis
John S. R. Shad Professor of Lawyering & Ethics,
New York University Law School
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How Long Has This Been Going On? The Civil Rights Movement & Beyond
Walter Riley
Attorney & Civil Rights Activist

Transitional Justice at Last: Asheville Forward
Councilmember Keith Young
City Council, Asheville, North Carolina

A Journey to the Promised Land: The Importance of Memory
Dr. Rex M. Ellis
Associate Director for Curatorial Affairs (Emeritus), National Museum of African-American History & Culture
Chair, 400 Years of African-American History Commission
Trustee, Fort Monroe Authority

A Special Message from Congresswoman Barbara Lee
U.S. Representative
California’s 13th Congressional District

Closing Remarks
Dean A. Benjamin Spencer
William & Mary Law School

Co-Chairs & Moderators
Professor Christie S. Warren
Director, Center for Comparative Legal Studies & Post-Conflict Peacebuilding

Mechelle A. King, JD ’21
William & Mary Law School