



AN INITIATIVE OF  
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# EMINENT JURISTS PANEL on Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **International panel on counter-terrorism and human rights holds European Union public hearing in Brussels**

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The Eminent Jurists Panel on Terrorism, Counter-terrorism and Human Rights, an independent group of experts appointed by the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) in October 2005, is in Brussels this week to hold a three-day public hearing on counter-terrorism law and policy in the European Union and its Member States. This is the fifteenth and penultimate hearing in a global inquiry on the compatibility of counter-terrorism measures with international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

The European Union hearing, co-organized by the ICJ and the European Policy Centre, and hosted by Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, will explore the impact of terrorism and counter-terrorism on the protection of human rights and the rule of law in the European Union and in European states, including France, Spain, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Belgium.

The Panel is represented in Brussels by its Chair, Justice Arthur Chaskalson (South Africa), and by Robert K. Goldman (United States); Hina Jilani (Pakistan), Vitit Muntarbhorn (Thailand) and Raúl Zaffaroni (Argentina).

Europe has a long experience of terrorism, and of the struggle to combine effective counter-terrorism measures with protection of the rights of suspects and respect for the rule of law. Since 2001, however, there has been a renewed focus on the need to counter international terrorism in Europe, both in national law and policy, and at the European Union level.

"There are many lessons to be learnt from the past challenges faced by European states in countering terrorism. We are here to understand that experience, but also to listen to a range of perspectives on how European governments and regional institutions are now addressing the global threat of terrorism, and the implications of this for the protection of human rights in Europe," said Justice Chaskalson.

At the hearings, the Panel will hear testimonies from lawyers, academics, national and international human rights organisations, European Union and Council of Europe bodies and government representatives. The Panel will also hold private meetings with senior representatives of European Union institutions and European Governments, and expects to confirm further high-level meetings with European Union institutions in the coming days.

The Brussels hearing of the Panel is open to the public. No registration is necessary. Further information including the programme of the hearings is available at [http://ejp.icj.org/hearing.php?id\\_rubrique=12](http://ejp.icj.org/hearing.php?id_rubrique=12).

The ICJ is an international non-governmental organisation comprising sixty of the world's most eminent jurists and has a worldwide network of national sections and affiliated organisations

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On Friday 6 July at 10.30 am, the Panel will hold a press conference at the Residence Palace (Passage Room, 155 rue de la Loi, 1040 Brussels) to share its preliminary conclusions on the issues debated at the hearing.

## **Background**

The Panel is composed of eight judges, lawyers and academics from all regions of the world. The Chair of the Panel is Justice Arthur Chaskalson former Chief Justice of South Africa and first President of South Africa's Constitutional Court. The other members of the Panel are: Georges Abi-Saab (Egypt), former Judge at the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda; Professor Robert K. Goldman (United States), former President of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and former United Nations Commission on Human Rights' expert on counter-terrorism and human rights, Hina Jilani (Pakistan), a lawyer before the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the UN Secretary General's Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders; Vitit Muntarbhorn (Thailand), Professor of Law at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok and UN expert on human rights in North Korea; Mary Robinson (Ireland), now Head of the Ethical Globalization Initiative, and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and former President of Ireland; Stefan Trechsel (Switzerland), former President of the European Commission on Human Rights, and judge at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia; and Justice E. Raúl Zaffaroni (Argentina), a judge at the Supreme Court of Argentina. The Panel exercises its mandate independently, with the logistical support of the ICJ Secretariat and its network of organizations.

The Panel has held hearings in Australia, Colombia, East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda), the United Kingdom (in London on current counter-terrorism policies and in Belfast on lessons from the past), North Africa (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia), the United States, the Southern Cone (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay), South-East Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand), the Russian Federation South Asia (India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Maldives), Canada, and the Middle East (Egypt, Yemen, Jordan and Syria). The Panel will also visit Israel and the Palestinian Occupied Territory in August 2007. The Panel will publish a global report in early 2008.

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