

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



October 2026

Associate Legal Adviser (100%)

Job location: South Africa or Lesotho

For candidates with an existing right to work in South Africa or Lesotho

Target start date: January 2027

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) is a worldwide organization of judges and lawyers united in affirming international law and rule of law principles that advance human rights. Its strategic goals for 2021-2025 are: (1) to develop, defend, and strengthen international institutions, instruments, and standards on rule of law and human rights; (2) to improve domestic implementation of, and compliance with, international law and standards; (3) to bolster the effectiveness and independence of judges and lawyers; and (4) to improve access to justice for all and accountability. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, ICJ has a presence in Africa, Latin America, Asia & the Pacific, Europe & Central Asia, and the Middle East.

OVERVIEW

The Associate Legal Adviser for the Africa Programme supports the broader objectives of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) in promoting human rights, justice systems, the rule of law, and access to justice across the region. Operating under direct supervision of the Senior Legal Adviser this position assists in implementing the ICJ's strategic initiatives, contributing to research, advocacy, and project management. The ALA's particular focus will be on implementing ICJ projects in Lesotho relating to:

- accountability for corruption, and in particular the protection of whistleblowers;
- the promotion of gender equality, women's economic empowerment, and gender-based violence; and
- the promotion of SOGIE-SC rights.

The ALA supports implementation of the Africa's programme using a range of innovative advocacy strategies to support ICJ legal interventions, including: field research into human rights issues related to law and justice; writing, contributing to and editing human rights reports, legal memos and briefing papers; engaging with partners and advocacy targets including civil society, local and international media, government, diplomats, UN agencies and mechanisms.

MAIN TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Programme Support:

- Lead the ICJ's work in Lesotho and assist in the development and execution of the Africa Programme, using ICJ's range of legal, research, advocacy and capacity building tools to advance the Programme's goals.
- Draft various research items, including reports, briefing papers, opinion pieces and webstories relating to the ICJ projects in Lesotho and Africa.
- Take the lead in the planning and organization of workshops, seminars, and training sessions to build the capacity of lawyers, judges and other stakeholders in the region.
- In particular to support the implementation of the ICJ's work in Lesotho relating to gender equality, women's economic empowerment, gender based violence, the promotion of SOGIE-SC rights and the protection of whistleblowers.

Research and Analysis:

- Strong research skills and ability are absolutely necessary for this position. The Candidate will need to be responsible for contributing substantially to legal research and the preparation of reports, briefing papers and other documents on human rights issues relevant to the Africa region.
- Monitor and analyse legal and political developments, human rights and the rule of law developments internationally, including monitoring law reform initiatives and access to justice.

Advocacy and Communication:

- Engaging in advocacy efforts in various forums, contributing to the creation of engaging and informative content across multiple platforms (social media, newsletters, the ICJ website) to raise awareness and support advocacy initiatives of the Programme.
- Develop and implement communication strategies, manage press relations, and produce press releases and public statements to amplify the ICJ's visibility and advocacy impact.
- Experience in media and communications will be advantageous.

Legal Interventions:

- Provide assistance to the Regional Director and Senior Legal Adviser in preparation of legal interventions, including drafting briefs and conducting background research for cases before national and regional courts and treaty monitoring bodies. The candidate will need to identify cases for strategic litigation and assist in the legal research required to draft the pleadings.

Training and Capacity Building:

- Under the guidance of the Regional Director and Senior Legal Adviser, assist in designing and delivering training sessions and capacity building exercises on ICJ Africa priority issues, including the development of materials and modules:

developing advocacy initiatives, trial observations and assisting partners in developing litigation strategies and drafting court submissions.

Networking and Representation:

- Help maintain and develop relationships with the legal, political and academic communities in governments, as well as donors, NGOs, and other stakeholders in the region's human rights community;
- Under the guidance of the Regional Director and Senior Legal Adviser, represent the ICJ in various capacities as directed, developing and maintaining relations and contributing to the organization's external communications and media work.

ICJ Network Engagement:

- Support engagement with the ICJ Network, facilitating the exchange of ideas and information on human rights issues within the Africa region.

Collaboration Across ICJ Projects:

- Work collaboratively with staff from other regional and international programmes, contributing to joint efforts and sharing updates on the Africa Programme's activities.

Resource and Budget Management:

- Support the management of the programme's resources and budget, including assisting in budget preparation and monitoring expenditure.

Fundraising and Reporting:

- Contribute to fundraising efforts, including drafting project proposals and maintaining donor relations.
- Prepare regular reports on programme activities for internal use and donor reporting.

Other Duties:

- Undertake additional tasks and responsibilities as requested by the Senior Legal Adviser or the Director of the Africa Programme.

KEY REQUIREMENTS

Education:

- A degree in law.
- Advanced degree in international human rights law or international humanitarian law highly desirable.
- Practical legal training and experience in litigation and drafting will be advantageous.

Work experience:

- Progressive international experience in legal research, human rights advocacy, or related activities (minimum three years; internships and traineeships may be counted 50%);
- Experience of practical legal and advocacy experience at the national and international level working for the implementation of international human rights standards highly desirable;
- Experience working in Lesotho is desirable.

The candidate can be based in Maseru or in South Africa, with a preference for those based in either Johannesburg or Bloemfontein as frequent travel to and in Lesotho is required.

Language skills:

- English proficiency: proven high-level legal writing and editing skills;
- Knowledge of additional languages relevant to the Africa region is highly desirable, particularly ability to communicate with partners in Sesotho.

Computer skills:

- Knowledge of Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint.

Other competencies:

- Demonstrated interest in and commitment to human rights and the rule of law
- Experience in communications work, design, creation of audio-visual materials, development of communications strategies or management of social media is an asset.
- Good knowledge of international human rights and humanitarian law and international and regional human rights jurisprudence;
- Political judgment and the ability to develop and carry out innovative advocacy and legal work;
- Strong analytical and organizational skills, with the ability to manage multiple tasks and projects effectively.
- Communication, teamwork and interpersonal skills, with the capacity to work collaboratively and in a multicultural environment.
- Openness and flexibility, capacity to adapt to changing priorities and needs.
- This role is designed for individuals eager to start their career in human rights law and advocacy, providing a unique opportunity to contribute to and learn from the ICJ's efforts to promote justice and human rights in Africa.

APPLICATIONS

Interested applicants should provide all materials outlined below to recruitment@icj.org by the **26 October 2026**, midnight Central European Time (CET).

- CV (maximum 2 pages); please indicate your home address and your phone number on your CV. The HR unit may contact you by phone.
- Cover letter (maximum 1 page);

Please include **"Associate Legal Adviser Africa"** in the subject line of the application e-mail. The ICJ shall not be liable for not opening proposals that are submitted with a different subject.

Please appreciate that due to the volume of applications, only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

The ICJ is committed to the principle of equal employment opportunity and values a diverse workforce. The ICJ's policy is to practice a fair and non-discriminatory recruitment and selection procedure and to strive for and maintain international and multi-cultural personnel.

Applications are encouraged from all qualified candidates without distinction on grounds of race, colour, sex, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity.

ICJ staff must adhere to its Code of Ethics which states that discrimination, bullying and harassment in any form will not be tolerated, nor sexual harassment, violence or assault in any form. The successful candidate will be required to pass a background check.

ACCESSIBILITY NOTICE: *Applicants with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations throughout the recruitment process may send their requests through an email to recruitment@icj.org, or call +41 229 793 833.*