



White genocide in South Africa ‘is a myth’ high court rules – a week after Trump cuts all aid to the country due to ‘human rights violations



US president Donald Trump
Source Wikipédia



Elon Musk
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LE MAGAZINE DES JURISTES DU QUÉBEC



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À la une

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MAGAZINE DES JURISTES DU QUÉBEC

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White genocide in South Africa ‘is a myth’ high court rules – a week after Trump cuts all aid to the country due to ‘human rights violations

White genocide in South Africa ‘is clearly imagined and not real’, the country’s high court has ruled.

The ruling came as part of a judgement to declare a bequest made in the will of a white South African man called Grantland Michael Bray to far-right organisation Boerelegioen (BL) invalid.

Bray, who died in 2022, had set aside £1.7million (R40m) in his will to fund training programmes by the BL, which he believed would ‘exterminate every black person in South Africa’.

The BL describes itself as ‘a civil defence movement that enables citizens to resist the promised slaughter of whites’.

Bray became paranoid about violent attacks on the white minority after BL engaged in ‘farmongering’ to convince people that murders of white farmers signified the start of a white genocide, Judge Rosheni Allie said in court.

A white genocide threat ‘is clearly imagined and not real’, according to the judgement seen by the Times.

The ruling, handed down on February 15, came just a week after US President Donald Trump cut all aid to South Africa due to alleged human rights violations against the white minority.



The ruling as part of a judgment declaring a bequest by Grantland Michael Bray to far-right organisation Boerelegioen (BL), which says it is ‘a civil defence movement that enables citizens to resist the promised slaughter of whites’, invalid (pictured above is part of a BL video)

Trump’s claims echo those of his tech billionaire advisor Elon Musk, who was born in Pretoria, South Africa, and said in 2023 that authorities in the capital city were anti-white.



White South Africans supporting US President Donald Trump and South African and US tech billionaire Elon Musk gather in front of the US Embassy in Pretoria, on February 15, 2025 for a demonstration



The White House said Trump is going to announce a program to resettle white South African farmers and their families as refugees

Musk even claimed that officials encouraged the killing of white people, who represent seven per cent of the population in South Africa.

But crime statistics don't support these claims, as the most recent data, from 2023, revealed that 49 farmers or their families were killed, which makes up just 0.18 per cent of the 27,000 murders recorded in the South Africa during that period.

Trump's executive order earlier this month to halt assistance came in response to a new law in South Africa that gives the government powers in some instances to expropriate land from people.

The White House said the law 'blatantly discriminates against ethnic minority Afrikaners'.

The Expropriation Act was signed into law by South African President Cyril Ramaphosa last month and allows the government to take land in specific instances where it is not being used, or where it would be in the public interest if it is redistributed.

It aims to address some of the wrongs of South Africa's racist apartheid era, when Black people had land taken away from them and were forced to live in areas designated for non-white citizens.

South Africa's white population – which includes Afrikaners, the descendants of mainly Dutch-colonial settlers – amounts to roughly seven per cent of the country's total population.

More than 30 years after the end of apartheid, this demographic still owns some 72 per cent of the country's private farmland, according to government data.

The White House has said that Trump is going to announce a program to resettle white South African farmers and their families as refugees, proposals many South Africans have hit back at as unfeasible.



Trump's executive order earlier this month to halt assistance came in response to a new law in South Africa that gives the government powers in some instances to expropriate land from people. The White House said the law 'blatantly discriminates against ethnic minority Afrikaners'

South Africa's former Boers

Musk has Trump's word the US will attract descendants of Boers (formerly from Holland) living in South Africa to immigrate in the US. No figure mentioned but no less than thousands. Are they abused by black population of South Africa? The high court said no to Elon Musk, a Boer descendant it seems.

CEO of Cement Giant Extradited from UAE. US involvement investigation.



CEO of Cement Giant Extradited from UAE. US involvement investigation.

Golden Visa Holder and CEO of a cement production giant, Ulugbek Shadmanov, was unlawfully extradited from the UAE yesterday with no judicial process.

[Click here to read more](#)

Why should all businesses care about the impact of financial fraud?

By Corey Bloom et Simon Gaudreau

Business leaders deal with a range of priorities every day, including hiring new talent, ensuring the business is running smoothly, and reacting to sudden changes in the current economic climate. With business owner's attention split between so many different demands, it's easy to lose sight of more hidden risks to their business — such as financial or workplace fraud.

MNP recently surveyed 256 Quebec business leaders to better understand their perceptions of financial fraud risk and uncovered some surprising results. Financial or workplace fraud was ranked as the second to last concern among Quebec business owners and senior executives — and this low level of concern is leaving many businesses vulnerable to threats. Let's discuss why the risk of financial fraud is often overlooked and the potential consequences of fraud on their business.

Why is the risk of financial fraud overlooked?

Fraud is a latent threat, which means it does not typically appear openly in the day-to-day operations of a company. Business leaders are often busy handling more immediate and visible concerns — such as addressing labour shortages or reaching operational objectives. This allows hidden risks such as fraud to go unnoticed.

Additionally, MNP's recent survey of Quebec business owners and senior executives revealed that three times as many respondents believe their company is less exposed to financial fraud risk than their competitors. They believe their competitors are at greater risk, which leads many to deprioritize fraud prevention within their own business.

However, the reality is that fraud can happen to any company. Twenty percent of survey respondents report that their business has fallen victim to fraud in the past. An additional 13 percent are not sure whether their business has been impacted by fraud — but believe that fraud may have occurred. This means more than a third of business have been victims of fraud or suspect it has occurred.

Businesses impacted in the past have been a victim of fraud three times on average. However, a startling 15 percent of businesses have been affected by fraud five times or more according to the results from MNP's survey. This makes it critical to take proactive steps to reduce their risks before fraud occurs and to reduce potentially severe consequences to their business.

What are the consequences of financial fraud?

Financial fraud can have a variety of consequences on a business, including:

Financial losses

Financial losses are the most direct consequence of fraud. The Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE)'s 2024 Report to the Nations states that 1,921 cases of fraud occurred in 2024, causing total losses of more than \$3.1 billion. Canada and the U.S. accounted for 38 percent of cases with a median loss of US\$120,000 per incident of fraud.

Additionally, the ACFE estimates that organizations lose approximately five percent of their revenue to fraud each year. This negatively impacts a company's cashflow and threatens business sustainability, continuity, and long-term growth.

Operational disruptions

Two-thirds of MNP survey respondents report that

fraud resulted in a moderate to very high impact on their financial and managerial stability. A lack of stability can cause operational disruptions, as companies struggling to maintain a healthy cashflow may find it difficult to pay suppliers or operating expenses on time.

Late payments may cause suppliers to cancel contracts with the business or lead to inventory shortages, which results in production delays. Additionally, their management team may be focused on crisis management and damage control when fraud is uncovered within their business instead of dedicating that time to ensuring their operations are running smoothly.

Reputational damage

Survey respondents perceived fraud to have a less significant impact on a business's reputation in comparison to its finances and management. However, 40 percent of businesses that experienced financial fraud reported a moderate to very high impact on their reputation.

Loss of morale

Fraud may also have a significant impact on employee morale depending on how their business reacts to a discovered fraud. It can cause a climate of uncertainty and suspicion in the workplace and heighten concerns about job stability — leading to lost productivity.

Additionally, employees will take issue if the perpetrator of the fraud does not experience

any consequences and remains within the business. Low morale often leads to employees losing confidence in the company, resulting in decreased productivity. It also contributes to increased turnover and higher training and hiring costs.

Take the next steps

Approximately one in three businesses will be impacted by financial fraud at least once during their existence. This makes it crucial to understand the risks

and assess vulnerabilities in businesses to avoid significant consequences and protect both their business and their bottom line.

Discover more insights in our whitepaper [Misconceptions about fraud risk pose significant threats to Quebec businesses.](#)

This report analyzes the results of our survey — and provides insights and tips from our Forensics and Litigation Support Services team to help you and your clients reduce fraud risk.



The graphic features a hand holding a magnifying glass over a document, with other document icons and a QR code on a dark blue background. The MNP logo is in the top right corner.

Who is underestimating the risk of financial fraud?

Survey of Quebec businesses reveals some worrying results

MNP recently conducted a survey of Quebec business leaders to gain a better understanding of their fraud risk perceptions — and uncovered some startling findings. The results revealed significant gaps in awareness, preparedness, and understanding that leave many organizations vulnerable to financial fraud.

Our latest whitepaper analyzes the gap between fraud risk perceptions and today's reality. It also includes insights and commentary from MNP's Forensics and Litigation Support Services team to help you and your clients reduce fraud risk.

For more information about how MNP's services can support your business, contact:

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Scan here to access the whitepaper



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IBAHRI condemns the renewed Israeli airstrikes and shelling of Gaza

The [International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute \(IBAHRI\)](#) condemns Israel's renewed airstrikes and shelling of Gaza that began on the night of 17 March 2025. With reports of almost 600 people killed since shelling resumed, the recorded estimated number of Palestinian fatalities stands in excess of 50,000 a disproportionate number of whom are non-combatants. In addition to the deaths, 562 Palestinians are reported to have been injured as Ramadan – a time of fasting, prayer, reflection and community for Muslims in Gaza and around the world – is observed.

The grievous war crimes committed by Hamas on 7 October 2023, was a heinous violation of international law. The taking of hostages is a contravention of international humanitarian law (IHL) which continues to be committed by Hamas. IBAHRI denounces these actions and the horrific atrocities of October 2023.

Despite the violations of Hamas, Israel too must abide by IHL. The IBAHRI views the Israeli air strikes as an egregious act following reports that defenceless Palestinian people who had been returning to Gaza since the ceasefire began on 19 January 2025 were targeted, as well as evacuation centres where many women and children were killed.

IBAHRI Director, Baroness Helena Kennedy LT KC, said: 'The Geneva Conventions, introduced in 1949, symbolised the international community taking a stand against inhumane acts in wartime. Civilians, prisoners of war, wounded and



sick combatants were to be protected, and the horrific acts witnessed in the Second World War were to be actions of the past. The violent attacks against the Palestinian people, who were disproportionately vulnerable women and children, evidences a clear breach of the laws of war.'

In support of the IBAHRI's position, Dr Mark Ellis, commented: 'Protecting civilians under international humanitarian law is a non-derogable principle. Even beyond treaties, protecting civilians is the norm. While exceptions under IHL, such as collateral damage in proportionate military operations, exist, they cannot shroud indiscriminate targeting of civilians, which remains absolutely prohibited.'

In November 2023, the [IBAHRI called](#) on both parties to the conflict to honour the principles of proportionality, necessity and distinction to which they are bound under customary and codified IHL. The IBAHRI stands by this call and strongly urges both sides to respect these vital principles.

The IBAHRI implores both sides to resume negotiations immediately to achieve a permanent cessation of the war and for the return of all hostages to prevent further catastrophic attacks.

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White genocide in South Africa 'is a myth' high court rules – a week after Trump cuts all aid to the country due to 'human rights violations'

Table of Contents

White genocide in South Africa 'is a myth' high court rules – a week after Trump cuts all aid to the country due to 'human rights violations' 3

Why should all businesses care about the impact of financial fraud? 5
By Corey Bloom et Simon Gaudreau

IBAHRI condemns the renewed Israeli airstrikes and shelling of Gaza 7

Attorney General James Takes Action to Stop Trump from Withholding Critical Disaster Relief Funding 9

Attorney General James Secures Critical Reforms to Address Sexual Harassment and Discrimination at Con Ed 11

The IBA stands in support of the US legal profession 14

Peacekeepers' safety in Lebanon 'in jeopardy,' UN official warns after Israeli fire injures two 15

Attorney General James Sues Trump Administration for Slashing Vital Health Funding 17

Swiss Parliament Adopts Motion to "Immediately Suspend" Support for UNRWA 19

Canadian Human Rights Icon Irwin Cotler Honored With Defender of Freedom Award at 2025 Geneva Summit 21

Mexico City to play host to international lawyers attending the IBA Annual Conference from over 100 jurisdictions 23

Ukrainian legal practitioners visit The Hague for high-level training in international criminal justice 25

IBA promotes the Rule of Law across the world through a series of short films 27

Inspirational Legal Women podcast series, launched by the IBA 28

Attorney General James Releases Statement on DOGE Access to Sensitive Personal Information 29

US sanctions against the International Criminal Court are denounced by the IBA 30

Attorney General James and Coalition of 22 Attorneys General Celebrate Court Victory Stopping Federal Funding Freeze 31

Attorney General James Takes Action to Stop Trump from Withholding Critical Disaster Relief Funding

AG James Leads Coalition of 22 Attorneys General Seeking Court Order to Stop Freezing of FEMA Funds

New York Attorney General Letitia James today led a coalition of 22 other attorneys general in seeking a court order to force the Trump administration to unfreeze essential funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Despite multiple court orders, including a preliminary injunction issued on March 6 blocking the Trump administration from unlawfully freezing federal funds, the administration continues to withhold hundreds of millions of dollars in grants to states from FEMA. This funding freeze threatens life-saving emergency preparedness and recovery programs addressing wildfires, floods, cybersecurity threats, and more. Attorney General James and the coalition today filed a motion to enforce the preliminary injunction, seeking a court order requiring the administration to immediately unfreeze FEMA funds.

“The Trump administration is putting lives at risk by continuing to freeze disaster relief and emergency preparedness funds to states,” said Attorney General James. “We sued to stop the administration’s reckless and illegal funding freeze, and the court has repeatedly ruled that the essential funding our communities rely on must be restored. I will continue to fight to uphold our laws and protect the resources we need to keep New Yorkers safe.”

The administration’s funding freeze policy, issued through an array of actions including a January 27

memorandum from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), illegally withheld trillions of dollars in federal funds for states and other entities like non-profit organizations and community health centers. In the days after the policy was first issued, New York and other states could not access Medicaid dollars. Funding for nonprofit groups that provide care for homeless veterans in New York City was also put on hold.

Most recently, withheld FEMA funds have jeopardized public safety, disaster response, and emergency preparedness throughout the country. In New York, tens of millions of dollars in federal grants to the New York Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) to support disaster preparedness and recovery programs have been frozen. As Attorney General James and the coalition assert in the motion to enforce, further freezing of FEMA funds would end disaster relief efforts and support for more than 4,000 survivors of the 2023 Maui wildfires.

Attorney General James and the coalition sued the administration over its freeze of trillions of dollars in federal funds on January 28, and on January 31, the court granted the attorneys general’s request for a temporary restraining order (TRO) blocking the freeze’s implementation until further order from the court. On February 7, Attorney General James and the coalition filed motions for enforcement and a preliminary injunction to stop the illegal funding freeze. On February 28, Attorney General James and the coalition filed a second motion for en-

forcement seeking to stop the Trump administration from freezing hundreds of millions of dollars in grants to the states from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). On March 6, Attorney General James and the coalition won a preliminary injunction blocking the Trump administration from unlawfully freezing federal funds to the states. As part of the preliminary injunction, the court required the administration to provide evidence of having unfrozen FEMA funds by March 14. These funds continue to be withheld.

This effort is led by Attorney General James and the attorneys general of California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Rhode Island. Joining the coalition are the attorneys general of Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia.

From Wrongful Incarceration to Advocacy: Final Member of Marquette Park 4 Set Free, Ready to Share His Story - Interview Op.

Wrongfully convicted and included in a \$50 million payout from the City of Chicago, Troshawn McCoy, a member of the Marquette Park 4, is free after serving more than 20 years in prison for a crime he did not commit. He is available for interviews to shed light on the systemic failures in the criminal justice system and to share updates on his new life and focus on advocacy.

Please refer to the press release below for additional information, and let me know if you would like to schedule an interview with Troshawn McCoy. Watch his emotional reunion with his mother here: <https://abc7chicago.com/marquette-park-4-wrongful-conviction-troshawn-mccoy-charles-johnson/1759417/>.

From Wrongful Incarceration to Advocacy: Final Member of Marquette Park 4 Set Free, Ready to Share His Story

When he was 17 years old, Troshawn McCoy was arrested, convicted and sentenced to 55 years in prison for a crime he did not commit. In 2017, after being incarcerated for more than 20 years, McCoy's conviction (along with those of three other men) was overturned, leading to a lawsuit in which the City of Chicago settled with the four men for a combined \$50 million.

McCoy was the first of four teenagers arrested in Chicago in 1995 for a double murder and robbery. Despite the lack of physical or forensic evidence linking the teens to the crime, all were convicted and given lengthy prison sentences.

"My experience serves as a powerful reminder of the urgent need for systemic reform and the human capacity to overcome profound adversity," McCoy said.

Chicago's legacy of overturned convictions and hundreds of millions of dollars in lawsuit settlements has led the Innocence Project to nickname Illinois the "wrongful conviction capital of the country." But no amount of money can compensate McCoy and other wrongfully imprisoned people for the years they've lost.

"While my settlement has provided financial stability, it underscores a poignant reality: material wealth cannot reclaim lost time," McCoy commented. "I cannot buy back the 22 years taken from me."

McCoy's harrowing story underscores the personal and familial toll of wrongful imprisonment and the systemic failures in the criminal justice system. Demonstrating remarkable resilience and strength, he is working toward rebuilding his life while fighting for others facing similar circumstances.

And McCoy's case isn't an isolated one. Chicago has a long and troubling history of corrupt policing, particularly in cases involving young Black men. According to the Innocence Project, 540 wrongfully convicted people in Illinois have been exonerated — more than in any other state.

"I don't know how it feels to be in your twenties, fall in love, dream of building a family, and create the stepping stones for your future," McCoy said. "All of that was taken away from me as I sat in a cold jail cell, knowing the truth, but being unable to do anything about it. I was robbed of my young adulthood, almost like a time glitch, where you look up and your life is just starting at 37 years old."

Attorney General James Secures Critical Reforms to Address Sexual Harassment and Discrimination at Con Ed

OAG Investigation Revealed Widespread Culture of Gender- and Race-Based Discrimination, Harassment, and Intolerance

Con Ed Must Enact Sweeping Reforms and Implement New Trainings to Protect Workers, Pay \$750,000 in Restitution to 17 Employees

New York Attorney General Letitia James today announced a settlement with Consolidated Edison, Inc. (Con Ed), a private utility company providing service in New York City and Westchester, for enabling a pervasive pattern of workplace discrimination and harassment against women employees and employees of color. An Office of the Attorney General (OAG) investigation found that Con Ed failed to address race- and sex-based harassment, maintained a hostile work environment for women, and unfairly disciplined women at higher rates than men, limiting their opportunities for career advancement. As a result of OAG's investigation, Con Ed must enact sweeping reforms and establish a comprehensive new training curriculum for harassment investigators, create new avenues for employees to propose workplace improvements for women working in field positions, and hire an independent consultant who will oversee settlement implementation and report back to OAG. In addition to the comprehensive programmatic relief, Attorney General James has secured \$750,000 in restitution for 17 impacted employees.

"When New Yorkers go to work, they deserve to trust that they will not encounter discrimination, harassment, or hostility," said Attorney General James. "Con Ed failed to protect its workers, allowing toxic, dangerous, and unlawful behavior to persist for years. The company's inaction is unacceptable, and today we are ensuring this illegal and discriminatory behavior is never tolerated again. My office will always stand up for workers and hold big companies accountable for failing to protect their employees."

With more than ten million customers, Con Ed is one of the largest utility companies in the United States and predominantly services New York. The OAG launched an investigation into Con Ed in 2021 after receiving multiple complaints of discrimination and harassment. The investigation, which included interviews with dozens of current and former Con Ed employees, testimony from multiple Con Ed representatives, and review of over 1,400 documents, revealed a broad culture of harassment and discrimination, particularly directed toward women employees in the traditionally male-dominated field workforce.

New IBA Anti-Corruption Committee report finds corruption remains a prevalent issue for the legal profession

The International Bar Association (IBA) Anti-Corruption Committee and Legal Policy & Research Unit (LPRU) have released a new report on the effects of corruption on the legal profession, revealing that, despite a significant increase in lawyers' understanding of international anti-corruption laws and instruments in recent years, challenges persist for the profession and the need for global collaboration to address the issue is stronger than ever.

The impact of corruption on the legal profession: an updated global picture report provides insights into corruption risks, trends and safeguards, sets out the current global landscape and identifies areas in need of improvement. Forming part of Phase 2 of the IBA's Anti-Corruption Strategy for the Legal Profession project, the report sets out the results of a 2024 survey into anti-corruption in the legal profession, building on the foundational survey from 2010.



The aim of the surveys is to explore what is working and what has changed in terms of international regulations and best practices for bars, law societies and law firms, as well as to elicit lawyers' opinions on the evolution of laws and regulations designed to combat the transfer of 'illegal assets' within their jurisdictions.

Key findings from the report include:

- more than half of survey respondents believe that corruption is a prevalent issue for the profession;
- 45 per cent of respondents have observed an increase in levels of corruption within their jurisdiction over the last decade; and
- in certain regions and practice areas, lawyers' access to specialised anti-corruption training and beneficial ownership information correlates with reduced perceptions of corruption risk, although gaps remain.

Promisingly, the survey results indicate a marked increase in lawyers' understanding of international anti-corruption laws and instruments.

The findings of the report will be presented by the IBA at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Global Anti-Corruption & Integrity Forum, during the session 'Ethics in Action: Lawyers as Guardians Against Corruption' in Paris on 25 March 2025. With input from OECD representatives and lawyers in corporate practice, the panel will share insights and examine how to strengthen anti-corruption frameworks, foster transparency and collaborate across sectors to tackle corruption effectively.

The OAG determined that Con Ed allowed a hostile work environment for women in these field positions, where they were subjected to verbal harassment, exclusion, and inappropriate comments about their appearance. Team members referred to their women colleagues using derogatory and sexist names, and regularly maligned women workers as lazy, unintelligent, and incompetent. Women were subjected to demeaning comments about their appearances, including the tightness of their pants, the length of their nails, and their weight. Multiple women were even criticized by male colleagues and supervisors for the length and frequency of their bathroom breaks, and several women reported that their male coworkers outright refused to work with them. Men often made exclusionary comments to women employees, including, "women don't belong in this department," "you don't belong here," and "maybe this job is not for you." One male supervisor was overheard saying that he "had it good" because he had an "all-male department." Two women even reported that their supervisors did not allow them to train and prepare for promotional exams, which men were permitted to do.

The investigation also revealed that Con Ed failed to take action to prevent and redress sexual harassment, including when male employees made lewd comments and engaged in inappropriate behavior. Several women were subjected to false rumors, unwanted romantic and sexual advances, inappropriate questioning, and outright harassment. One woman reported a particularly traumatizing incident involving a male coworker to Con Ed, after which the company opened an investigation and offered to change her location but did not offer to change the man's location or limit the accused from appearing at the woman's workplace.

Similarly, Con Ed failed to act to resolve issues of racial harassment. Several employees reported a supervisor for engaging in blackface to mock specific workers, making racially offensive jokes, and using a racial slur. Despite complaining to management, they didn't hear back from the company until they banded together to formally request an investigation, and the supervisor remained employed for an additional two years after the misconduct began.

Although Con Ed does have an anti-discrimination policy on paper, OAG investigators found that its Office of

Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) failed to effectively uphold such policies. For example, in every single one of the gender discrimination and harassment complaints that OAG reviewed, if the decision came down to credibility determinations, ODI found the victim lacking in credibility and chose to believe the denials of the accused. As a result, women were uncomfortable reporting discrimination or harassment to ODI. One woman who was subjected to unwanted advances and physical touching by a male coworker did not come forward with her complaint because she knew others had been sexually harassed by the same man, and not only was he not disciplined, he was promoted. Some women even reported being told by supervisors to keep allegations of harassment and discrimination to themselves to avoid causing problems at work or harming their coworker's career.

The OAG investigation broadly determined that Con Ed disciplined women at disproportionately high rates, particularly for attendance issues, while overlooking similar behavior by male employees. A review of disciplinary records revealed that while women comprised only 17 percent of Con Ed's unionized workforce between 2019 and 2022, they received 28 percent of the total documented disciplinary actions that Con Ed handed out for lateness and other attendance issues. This resulted in a culture of fear: two female employees reported arriving at work hours early and sleeping in their cars in the parking lot out of fear that they would be disciplined for arriving at work even seconds late, when similar lateness by men was ignored. Other women were held back from advancing based on their disciplinary records, which included minor infractions for which men were not disciplined. One woman was even placed on an unheard-of three-year probation period for missing work due to illness, and another was forced to pay back compensation she received for COVID-19 leave, when no man was ever forced to do so.

As a result of the widespread harassment and accompanying inaction from the company, several employees sought mental health counseling. Others have taken leaves of absence for stress and panic attacks, and at least two have quit. One woman who left the company in 2021 after giving up hope of ever receiving better treatment recalled that "every day going to work I was just feeling drained, crying, stressed out. It was just somewhere you didn't want to come to work." Another

woman, who came to Con Ed after working in almost entirely male environments for 21 years, told ODI that she had "never experienced the amount of disrespectfulness that she encountered at Con Ed in any other work environment."

Attorney General James is requiring Con Ed to implement sweeping programmatic changes to improve company culture, reporting, and accountability mechanisms. As part of this, Con Edison must:

- Hire an independent consultant to oversee its compliance with equal employment opportunity policies and recommend improvements to its investigative procedures;
- Implement all improvements recommended by the independent consultant or, within thirty days, provide a written explanation to OAG explaining its decision to reject the suggestion and offering a reasonable alternative measure;
- Establish an employee resource group to discuss workplace concerns and make recommendations on workplace improvements for women in field positions;
- Designate an additional high-level ODI employee who will focus on implementing the settlement and ensuring a discrimination-free workplace for women field employees at Con Ed;
- Implement enhanced oversight of its diversity and inclusion practices; and
- Train ODI investigators on effective investigation techniques and how to make proper credibility determinations.

Con Ed must report back to OAG on the status of these reforms every six months for the next three years and put at least \$200,000 toward implementing these changes.

Attorney General James has also secured \$750,000 for 17 workers who experienced particularly egregious discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. This settlement fund will be distributed by a third-party administrator who will contact settlement group members directly to notify them of the settlement and begin processing their claims.

The IBA stands in support of the US legal profession



International Bar Association
the global voice of the legal profession

Following the International Bar Association's (IBA) recent statement expressing deep concern over the ongoing erosion of the rule of law in the United States, the IBA stands in solidarity with the American Bar Association (ABA) and its statement rejecting the US administration's efforts to undermine the courts and the legal profession.

The IBA's mission is to uphold the bedrock principles of international law, including those outlined in the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers. These principles make clear that governments must:

- ensure that lawyers can perform their professional duties freely, without intimidation, harassment, or interference;
- guarantee that lawyers are not subject to prosecution, sanctions, or economic penalties for actions taken in accordance with their professional duties, standards, and ethics; and
- respect that lawyers must not be identified with their clients or their clients' causes simply because they are fulfilling their professional obligations.

The IBA remains steadfast in its commitment to protecting the independence of the legal profession and ensuring that lawyers and judges worldwide can carry out their vital roles without fear of political retaliation or undue pressure.

High praise for lawyer-editor Lyse Saint-Onge-Poitevin 66-year long career at W & L

Wilson & Lafleur official Claude Wilson and his team praised highly the former editor of the Civil Code annotated edition as well other major pieces of legal literature used daily by lawyers, judges, justices and other law specialists.



She joined W & L after her law degree and Québec bar admission. She worked for 66 years at the oldest law library in Québec and probably in Canada too funded more than 115 years ago. that her father, Mr. Saint-Onge managed for 42 years.

Lyse was well liked by all personnel and consulted often by lawyers and judges following important changes to the legal statutes she was familiar with.

N.B. André Gagnon expresses his own warm regards as a law student who graduated from the first batch of students from Université du Québec 1974-75 group. She helped some students who were in that class who had returned to study law after often a career in other area.

Merci chère Lyse.

Peacekeepers' safety in Lebanon 'in jeopardy,' UN official warns after Israeli fire injures two

Source: CNN

Concerns are mounting for the safety of United Nations peacekeeping forces in southern Lebanon amid Israel's ground incursion, UN peacekeeping chief Jean-Pierre Lacroix warned on Thursday, after Israeli fire resulted in the [injury of two UN troops](#).

Briefing the UN Security Council on Thursday, UN Under-Secretary General for Peace Operations Lacroix described hostilities between Israeli forces and Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah in southern Lebanon as "increasingly alarming," and putting "peacekeepers at serious risk."

"The safety and security of peacekeepers is now increasingly in jeopardy," Lacroix said.

The UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) reported early Thursday that the peacekeepers were injured after an Israeli tank fired toward an observation tower at its headquarters in the southern Lebanese city Naqoura.

The Israeli tank fire directly hit the tower, causing the peacekeepers to fall, UNIFIL said, adding that other "nearby positions have been repeatedly hit."

UNIFIL said that "any deliberate attack on peacekeepers is a grave violation of international humanitarian law."



The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have accused Hezbollah of operating in areas near UNIFIL posts, and said in a statement that it had asked UNIFIL forces to "remain in protected spaces" during the incident.

Related video CNN reports from deserted Lebanese beach

"The IDF is operating in southern Lebanon and maintains routine communication with UNIFIL," the IDF said in a statement after Thursday's incident.

"This morning (Thursday), IDF troops operated in the area of Naqoura, next to a UNIFIL base. Accordingly, the IDF instructed the UN forces in the area to remain in protected spaces, following which the forces opened fire in the area," the statement added.

UN deputy spokesperson Farhan Haq said the

two peacekeepers – both Indonesian – were hospitalized. Their injuries are not serious, he said.

UN peacekeepers have been stationed in [southern Lebanon since 2006](#), per a mandate by the United Nations Security Council. UN peacekeepers were drawn from armies of several nations to monitor the situation along the roughly 120-kilometer (74-mile) Blue Line which separates the two states.

The incident came as Israel expands its strikes across Lebanon. On Thursday, Israeli strikes on a densely populated Beirut neighborhood killed at least 22 people and wounded 117, the Lebanese health ministry said.

A senior Hezbollah official was the target of the attack, according to a source in the militant group and Israeli media reports. Wafiq Safa, leader of Hezbollah's liaison unit, survived the assassination attempt, the Hezbollah source told CNN. Israel has not publicly claimed Thursday's strikes or confirmed any targets.

International outcry

The injury of the UN peacekeepers drew condemnation from several countries including Italy, France, and Ireland, who all have contingents in the UN peacekeeping mission in Lebanon.

Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni summoned the Israeli ambassador in Rome on Thursday after what she described as "unacceptable" behavior by the Israeli forces.

Meloni's office said two Italian bases of UNIFIL were "hit by gunfire from the Israeli army" on Thursday and added that the prime minister spoke to the Commander of the Western Sector of the UNIFIL mission, Gen. Stefano Messina, for an update on the safety of the Italian troops.

The Italian leader also contacted Israel's Defense Minister Yoav Gallant to "firmly remind" him that "what is happening near the Italian

UNIFIL bases in southern Lebanon" is "unacceptable," according to an Italian government statement.

Indonesia's mission to the UN blasted Israel over what it called "deliberate attacks," saying Friday that Israel's actions "represent a blatant attempt to spread terror on the ground to intimidate both the peacekeeping mission and international community."

France also expressed "deep concern" after the attack, saying it was "awaiting explanations from the Israeli authorities."

"The protection of peacekeepers is an obligation imposed on all parties to a conflict. France calls on the parties to respect this obligation, and to allow UNIFIL to continue to implement its mandate, including by respecting its freedom of movement," a spokesperson for the French foreign ministry said.

Irish Foreign Minister Micheál Martin described the IDF's "targeting & firing on UNIFIL positions" as "reprehensible" and "unacceptable."

Earlier this week, Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris also expressed concern after Israeli tanks were stationed close to an UN outpost manned by Irish peacekeepers.

The European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs Josep Borrell condemned what he called an "inadmissible act," posting to X: "Another line has been dangerously crossed in Lebanon: IDF shelling of UN peacekeepers whose positions are known. We condemn this inadmissible act, for which there is no justification."

The EU foreign policy chief reiterated his support for UNIFIL and called for full accountability regarding the incident.

CNN's Charbel Mallo, Ben Wedeman, Eyad Kourdi, Tamara Qiblawi and Sharon Braithwaite contributed reporting.

Attorney General James Sues Trump Administration for Slashing Vital Health Funding

New York Attorney General Letitia James and a coalition of 22 other states and the District of Columbia today filed a lawsuit against the Trump administration for abruptly and unlawfully slashing billions of dollars in vital state health funding. On March 24, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced it was clawing back more than \$11 billion in funding previously allocated to states for public health, mental health, and addiction initiatives – including nearly \$400 million for New York. The attorneys general argue that these sudden and reckless cuts violate federal law, jeopardize public health, and will have devastating consequences for communities nationwide. Attorney General James and the coalition are asking the court to immediately stop the administration from rescinding the funding and prevent the breakdown of crucial health services.

“The Trump administration’s illegal and irresponsible decision to claw back life-saving health funding is an attack on the well-being of millions of Americans,” said Attorney General James. “Slashing this funding now will reverse our progress on the opioid crisis, throw our mental health systems into chaos, and leave hospitals struggling to care for patients. My office is taking immediate action to stop this heartless and shortsighted move and ensure these life-saving programs remain intact.”

In the lawsuit, Attorney General James and the coalition assert that if funding is not restored, key public health programs and initiatives across the country will have to be dissolved and disbanded, and thousands of health care workers will lose their jobs. The terminated funds, which were allocated by Congress at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, include \$11.4 billion in funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for pandemic preparedness, overdose prevention,

and community health programs, as well as \$1 billion from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for addiction treatment, suicide prevention, and crisis intervention programs.

The attorneys general warn that the revocation of this funding will cause immediate and irreparable damage in communities across the nation. Programs that provide harm reduction services, medication-assisted recovery treatment, and overdose reversal drugs are set to be slashed, just as the nation begins to turn a corner on fighting the opioid crisis and reducing overdose deaths. Funding for crisis intervention, suicide prevention, and community-based mental health care is at risk while the nation is currently facing an unprecedented mental health crisis. Financial support for hospitals, clinics, and long-term care facilities will be eliminated, exacerbating already devastating staffing shortages. Prevention programs that combat infectious disease outbreaks and future health emergencies are already being gutted.

In New York, more than \$400 million in critical funding has been terminated, including over \$300 million for the New York State Department of Health (DOH), Office of Mental Health (OMH), and Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) and over \$100 million for New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH)’s infectious disease detection and surveillance work. These cuts are already causing devastating, far-reaching consequences. At least 23 public health employees have already been laid off, and further layoffs are likely. More than 200 local organizations statewide have now lost funding for their efforts to address food insecurity, mental health, maternal health, and more. DOH has been forced to halt efforts to address health disparities and shutter programs focused on LGBTQ+ and immigrant health. Funding for school immunization programs has also been cut, which could have disastrous effects on

child vaccination rates. Most importantly, New York state's ability to manage infectious diseases, support vulnerable populations, and maintain critical health infrastructure is now in jeopardy, and there are long-term risks for public health preparedness and equity.

HHS has tried to suggest that terminating this funding is necessary because the "COVID-19 pandemic is over." This contradicts both ongoing public health data and the terms of the grants in question. In the lawsuit, the attorneys general assert that many of the eliminated funds were never intended solely for COVID-19 response – they were allocated to support long-term public health infrastructure, future pandemic preparedness, and critical behavioral health services.

Attorney General James and the coalition argue the federal government does not have the legal authority to unilaterally rescind funding it already allocated, particularly when states have built essential health programs around these commitments. The attorneys general add that the terminated funds are attached to specific congressional allocations, and that by cutting these funds, the administration is undermining Congress's constitutional power over federal spending. The lawsuit alleges the decision to terminate these funds was made abruptly, arbitrarily, and without any opportunity for public input.

In addition to preliminary and permanent injunctions, Attorney General James and the coalition are seeking a temporary restraining order to immediately halt the chaos and destruction the administration's funding cuts are causing.

"These federal health cuts are not only dangerous, but they undermine public health and will broaden the health disparities we have been working hard to eliminate," said DOH Commissioner Dr. James McDonald. "It is unprecedented and unacceptable to have funding terminated retroactively without warning or regard for the impact on this important public health work. I thank Attorney General James for taking immediate action, ensuring the health of New Yorkers remains a priority, and working to get these reckless actions during the federal transition reversed."

"The removal of these grants will affect prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and recovery services that many New Yorkers rely on, and which have saved thousands of lives throughout the state," said OASAS Commissioner Dr.

Chinazo Cunningham. "Amid the ongoing overdose crisis, it is critical that these services remain intact and available for those who need them. We fully support these efforts to ensure that this critical funding continues to go towards these vital addiction services in New York."

"The loss of \$27 million in federal funding will impact the mental health services and supports provided through our agency, including crisis stabilization and residence programs, Assertive Community Treatment teams and the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline," said OMH Commissioner Dr. Ann Sullivan. "We are pleased that New York State is challenging these cuts in an effort to avoid the consequences of losing this critical federal assistance. We look forward to working with the Attorney General and Governor Hochul as they challenge these cuts and fight to preserve funding for these important programs."

This is the latest action Attorney General James has taken to protect New Yorkers and the services they rely on from the Trump administration's illegal attacks. On March 14, Attorney General James and a coalition secured a court order reinstating federal workers subject to mass firings at 18 agencies. On March 13, Attorney General James led a coalition of 20 attorneys general in suing the Trump administration to stop the dismantling of the Department of Education. On March 10, Attorney General James secured a court order blocking the Trump administration from cutting critical grant programs for teachers and on March 6, Attorney General James secured a court order blocking the Trump administration's freeze of essential federal funds to states. On March 5, Attorney General James and a coalition of attorneys general won a court order stopping the Trump administration from withholding vital funding to the National Institutes of Health. On February 24, Attorney General James led a coalition of attorneys general in securing a court order preventing Elon Musk and members of DOGE from accessing Americans' private information through the U.S. Treasury and on February 13, Attorney General James and a coalition of attorneys general secured a preliminary injunction stopping the administration's illegal revocation of birthright citizenship.

Joining Attorney General James in this lawsuit are the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia, as well as the Governors of Kentucky and Pennsylvania.

Swiss Parliament Adopts Motion to “Immediately Suspend” Support for UNRWA

The Swiss Parliament’s lower house, the National Council, adopted a motion yesterday to « immediately suspend » support for UNRWA, by a vote of 99 to 88. Two related motions called on Switzerland to instead send aid directly to Gazans, and to seek a solution to replace UNRWA altogether.

The parliamentary motion’s explanatory comments specifically cite the reports of UN Watch, the independent non-governmental organization based in Geneva, in decrying UNRWA staff glorification of terrorism.

When the parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee held a hearing in April on UNRWA, Hillel Neuer, executive director of UN Watch, was the only critical voice to be invited as an expert witness.

In his presentation to the parliament, Neuer had presented a dossier on UNRWA’s terror ties, and exposed the « independent audit » released in April by former French foreign minister Catherine Colonna—which was used by Germany and other states as a pretext to reinstate funding—as a complete farce.

Comment from Hillel Neuer

“By calling for an immediate suspension of UNRWA funding, and for the agency to be replaced, the parliament of Switzerland has sent a powerful and unequivocal message: that UNRWA is tainted to the core by its complicity with terrorism,” said Neuer.

« This is the first defunding of UNRWA following the rigged Colonna Report, and the Swiss parliament’s decision amounts to a devastating rejection of the entire report. »



“The rebuke of UNRWA is especially poignant coming from Switzerland, which is the guardian of the Geneva Conventions, and is rightly upholding international humanitarian law against an agency that is cynically abusing those principles. »

« The vote is also a slap in the face to UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini, a Swiss national who invested an enormous amount of time this past year lobbying in Switzerland to block this motion. Lazzarini failed, and the facts prevailed. »

« Despite numerous attempts by UN Watch to pass warnings to Mr. Lazzarini of the terror ties of his employees, he has repeatedly refused to meet with us. »

« As I have said before, if Mr. Lazzarini and UNRWA truly cared about the complicity of senior UNRWA staff with terrorism, he would agree to meet with me and see our latest dossier. I am again urging him to meet with me. I will meet with him in Geneva, Amman, Jerusalem. I will meet with him anywhere.”

« But the truth is that the real leaders of UNRWA are not the handful of internationals who do the agency’s

fundraising in the West. It is rather individuals like Fathi al-Sharif, head of UNRWA's staff union in Lebanon and a senior leader of Hamas. Or officials like Suhail al-Hindi, who long headed UNRWA's staff union in Gaza and is an elected member of the Hamas Politburo alongside Yahya Sinwar. »

« The entire organization has been infiltrated and hijacked by Hamas terrorists to serve the terror group's war aims. »

« Over 173,000 people have signed UN Watch's petition demanding that Western democracies defund UNRWA and immediately seek a solution to replace its services. We commend Switzerland for acting on this appeal. »

UNRWA Sued For Promoting Terrorism

UNRWA and Lazzarini are currently the object of at

least six legal proceedings alleging that the agency promotes terrorism, in Canada, France and the US. An internal UN investigation fired at least 9 UNRWA employees for their involvement in the October 7th massacre.

In 2018, Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis said that UNRWA "has become part of the problem. UNRWA supplies the ammunition to continue the conflict. By supporting UNRWA, we keep the conflict alive. It's a perverse logic."

In 2019, Switzerland temporarily suspended funding for UNRWA, joining Belgium, the Netherlands and New Zealand, in wake of an ethics report that implicated then commissioner-general Pierre Krahenbuhl (now the head of the ICRC) in a corruption and abuse scandal. Contrary to certain reports, he was never cleared.

What we know about Israel's allegations against UN staffers in Gaza

The main UN agency in Gaza is in turmoil after Israel accused some of its staff members of involvement in Hamas' October 7 terror attacks.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) fired several employees in the wake of the allegations, which have not been made public.

Following Israel's allegations, UNRWA's main donor, the United States, and a growing number of countries have paused funding to the organization, which employs about 13,000 people in Gaza, as the humanitarian disaster spirals in the besieged Palestinian enclave.

Here's what we know.

What is UNRWA?

UNRWA was established by the United Nations after the 1948 Arab-Israeli war to provide humanitarian assistance for displaced Palestinians.

The organization characterizes Palestinian refugees as any "persons whose normal place of residence was Palestine during the period 1 June 1946 to 15 May 1948, and who lost both home and means of livelihood as a result of the 1948 War."

Those who fit that definition and their descendants now number 5.9 million, all of whom are considered eligible for UNRWA support. Israel has rejected the possibility of allowing the displaced Palestinians to return home, arguing that the move would change the country's Jewish character.

Since its establishment, the United Nations' General Assembly – a voting body of all member states – has repeatedly renewed UNRWA's mandate. The agency has provided aid to four generations of Palestine refugees, according to its website, covering education, health care, camp infrastructure, social services and emergency assistance, including in times of conflict.

[Click here to read more](#)

Canadian Human Rights Icon Irwin Cotler Honored With Defender of Freedom Award at 2025 Geneva Summit

The [Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy](#), a cross-regional coalition of more than 30 human rights organizations, presented its [Defender of Freedom Award](#) to Professor Irwin Cotler, international human rights lawyer, legal scholar, former Canadian justice minister, and nominee for next year's Nobel Peace Prize, for his renowned advocacy for political prisoners worldwide.

Earning an international reputation as "Counsel for the Oppressed," Prof. Cotler has been targeted by regimes from the Soviet Union to the Islamic Republic of Iran for his defense of prisoners of conscience around the world.

His clients have included dissidents who were speakers of the Geneva Summit and Courage Award recipients, including Russian opposition politician [Vladimir Kara-Murza](#), who was released from prison in August, and Saudi activist [Raif Badawi](#), who remains barred from leaving Saudi Arabia.

Following a distinguished career as a McGill University law professor, recognized as an eminent scholar of constitutional law, international law, and human rights law, Prof. Cotler then served for many years as a prominent and energetic member of Canada's parliament, and as the country's Minister of Justice and Attorney General. Today, he heads the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights.

"A moral giant and champion for political prisoners, Prof. Irwin Cotler has dedicated his life to fighting injustice, defending the oppressed, and advancing human rights," said Hillel Neuer, executive director of United Nations Watch, a co-organizer of the conference together with Human Rights Foundation, the Renew Democracy Ini-



Irwin Cotler

tiative, and more than 25 other human rights groups.

In November, it was revealed that the Iranian regime was attempting to assassinate Prof. Cotler in Canada, and that he has been living for more than a year under intense police protection.

"There is no one more deserving of our Defender of Freedom Award than Irwin Cotler," said Neuer. "He has tirelessly devoted his life to fighting injustice, and to defending activists worldwide who dare to defy oppressive regimes."

Presenting the award, Vladimir Kara-Murza, Russian opposition leader and survivor of two poisoning attempts and harsh imprisonment, said, "I've had the privilege of knowing Irwin Cotler for more than a decade. During this time, we have worked together on many issues, from imposing Magnitsky sanctions on human rights abusers to enacting street designations in honor of

Boris Nemtsov to advocating on behalf of political prisoners. And when I became a political prisoner myself, it meant the world to me that among the most ardent advocates for my liberation was Professor Irwin Cotler."

"It is often said that we live in a cynical age, in an age of expediency and realpolitik," said Kara-Murza. "But Irwin's whole life shows us that there is still room for principle in international politics and that is a cause for both celebration and gratitude." [Click here](#) for Vladimir Kara-Murza's full award presentation speech.

Irwin Cotler: "Even in the face of tyranny, the voices of truth and justice will not be silenced"

"I'm deeply moved and humbled by this award which I take to be in recognition of the cases and causes I've been privileged to engage in, as well as the heroic political prisoners, human rights defenders – represented at this year's Geneva Summit – and the victims of injustice who need us to be their voice, all of whom have underpinned and inspired my advocacy all these years," said Irwin Cotler.

"The liberation of these brave journalists, dissidents, lawyers, and community leaders can—and does—change the course of history. We must never stop advocating for their release from authoritarian regimes across the globe."

"Although there is still much work to be done to free these heroes, the Geneva Summit inspires me because it proves that even in the face of tyranny, the voices of truth and justice will not be silenced."

Upon being awarded the prestigious prize, Irwin Cotler addressed the audience via video, saying: "At times such as these—qui s'excuse s'accuse—that whoever remains silent indicts himself and herself, and where silence is complicity with evil, where silence is coming down on the side of the tormentors and not on the side of the tormented...we must not only speak up and stand up, but act together in this abiding struggle for freedom."

Watch Irwin Cotler's full speech [here](#).

About the Geneva Summit

Irwin Cotler spoke via video at this year's [Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy](#) to an audience of champions of human rights from around the world, including dissidents, activists, victims, and relatives of

political prisoners from Iran, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Tibet, Russia, Eritrea, and more who testified on abuses in their countries.

"The Geneva Summit of Human Rights serves as a global hub for dissidents, offering a unique opportunity to hear first-hand from frontline defenders of human rights, many of whom have endured brutal arrest, incarceration and torture," said Neuer.

Videos of speaker testimonies are available at www.genevasummit.org.

TD Bank hit with record \$3 billion fine over drug cartel money laundering



TD Bank will pay \$3 billion to settle charges that it failed to properly monitor money laundering by drug cartels, regulators announced Thursday.

The fine includes a \$1.3 billion penalty that will be paid to the US Treasury Department's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, a record fine for a bank. TD also intends to pay \$1.8 billion to the US Justice Department and plead guilty to resolve the US government's investigation that the bank violated of the Bank Secrecy Act and allowed money laundering.

The US Department of Justice said in a statement that TD Bank had "long-term, pervasive, and systemic deficiencies" in its procedures of monitoring transactions. The Wall Street Journal first reported the news late Wednesday.

[Click here to read more](#)

Mexico City to play host to international lawyers attending the IBA Annual Conference from over 100 jurisdictions

In September, international lawyers from more than 100 jurisdictions will arrive in Mexico City to participate in intense discussions and business dealings at the 2024 International Bar Association (IBA) Annual Conference. Considered the premier event for the global legal profession – lawyers in private practice, in-house counsel, human rights advocates, judges, bar leaders, regulators – the Conference will take place over six days from Sunday 15–Friday 20 September.

Law professionals, business leaders, government representatives, and regulators from around the world will convene to deliberate on topics related to the rule of law, democracy, human rights, artificial intelligence (AI), climate change, international trade, environmental, social, and governance (ESG), and many other contemporary issues confronting the legal profession and societies, against a backdrop of global geopolitical, economic, and technological tensions, challenges, and opportunities.

Ernesto Zedillo, president of Mexico from 1994–2000, is to give the keynote address at the Opening Ceremony on Sunday 15 September. In a video, released ahead of the Conference, Dr Zedillo said: ‘I hope that the impressive gathering of legal professionals and their respective bar associations and societies, due to take place this September in my country, helps to bring to the forefront not just the discussion of why without effective rule of law a society cannot achieve its full potential but also the way in which such effective rule of law must be accomplished.’

Mexico City – an important business hub

The capital city of Mexico is acknowledged by delegates registered for the Conference as an important financial

hub due to its proximity to the United States, the fact that several of the largest US companies have established headquarters or significant operations in Mexico, its sizeable consumer market, and its numerous free trade agreements. Many delegates will take advantage of the chance to strengthen current relationships with Mexican peers and/or forge new ones while they are in the city.

Showcase sessions

Alongside negotiating business deals, delegates at the Conference will attend any of the 200 sessions featuring knowledgeable international speakers from a variety of fields, including the four Showcase sessions from each area of the IBA:

Monday: the IBA’s Human Rights Institute showcase – femicide, murder and other crimes against women – a social crisis, focuses on a drama which is unfortunately so relevant in Mexico and in other parts of the world.

Tuesday: the Legal Practice Division showcase – digital assets and the future of financial services, focuses on the rise of the digital economy (including blockchain) significantly transforming global financial markets, traditional trading, investment, payments, borrowing and saving.

Wednesday: the Bar Issues Commission showcase – beneficial ownership, focuses on anti-corruption measures to fight money laundering, terrorist financing and other human rights abuses.

Thursday: the Section on Public and Professional Interest – creating great pro bono programmes, focuses on providing vital legal assistance to those who cannot afford it and mobilising lawyers who can offer expertise in cases with potential widespread impact to

ensure access to justice and the protection of human rights.

AI sessions

There are also 30 sessions devoted to the topic of AI. As organisations rapidly integrate AI into their operations to gain a competitive edge and spur innovation, the work of lawyers and legal education have been profoundly impacted. The IBA will discuss the ethical, practical, and legal considerations surrounding its application as well as the future directions for legal practitioners worldwide.

Contribution of the legal profession to society

At the session 'A world without lawyers?' on Tuesday, September 17, IBA President Almudena Arpón de Mendivil Aldama and former IBA President David W Rivkin will discuss the findings of the landmark IBA report on the social and economic impact of the legal profession with a host of legal experts including Lady Helena Kennedy LT KC, Director of the IBA's Human Rights Institute, and Lord Goldsmith KC, former Attorney General of the United Kingdom. The main topic of discussion will be the advantages maintaining the rule of law has for society and the economy.



SENATE OF CANADA

Canada-U.S. issues in tariff-ying times



Recent events between Canada and the United States have brought a new urgency to issues of trade, security and agriculture, among others. Senate committees have been studying these issues for years and have made recommendations on topics that remain relevant today, such as dismantling internal trade barriers, boosting made-in-Canada products and defending Canada's North.

Keep scrolling for informed perspectives on some of the most pressing issues of our time and find out what can be done to keep Canada competitive, innovative and resilient.



Trading perspectives

In 2016, facing the prospect of a new U.S. administration and Brexit, the Senate Committee on Banking, Commerce and the Economy urged the federal government to dismantle internal trade barriers to add billions of dollars to Canada's economy. The committee later warned Canada to avoid being overly reliant on the U.S. market and called for a major tax system overhaul to keep businesses from fleeing south.

Meanwhile, the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade said Canada should build on its solid relationship with Mexico and, in another report, noted the rise in protectionist sentiment to argue for the importance of free-trade agreements.

Ukrainian legal practitioners visit The Hague for high-level training in international criminal justice

Dr Mark Ellis, IBA Executive Director, commented: 'The study visit was critical in strengthening the capacities of Ukrainian colleagues to handle international crimes proceedings at the national level, in Ukraine. It is necessary that justice is not only seen to be done in Ukraine but is actually done and conducted correctly. I applaud the participants' commitment towards justice and accountability efforts in Ukraine and justice for all.'

The 11–14 June 2024 visit was organised by the International Bar Association (IBA) in partnership with the Ukrainian Bar Association (UBA) as part of a project titled 'Trial Monitoring in War Crimes Cases'. The UBA's visit was made possible by a grant agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Human Rights in Action Program, implemented by the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union (UHHRU). The project examines the respect of fair trial rights against international standards, with the aim of outlining best judicial practice and offering recommendations to address any shortfalls.

The IBA's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI) Director, Baroness Helena Kennedy LT KC, said: 'An extraordinary volume of war crimes cases has been brought before the Ukrainian national criminal justice system since the Russian aggression and the start of the full-scale war in Ukraine in 2022. In order to achieve justice and accountability and to make sure that fair trial standards are being followed, monitoring war crime trials is an essential step. Because of this, the IBAHRI has been working in collaboration



A delegation of 25 Ukrainian legal professionals recently travelled to The Hague to participate in training sessions to expand their knowledge and skills in the field of international criminal justice. Judges and prosecutors from district and regional courts, justices of the Supreme Court, officials of the Office of the Prosecutor General, defence lawyers and representatives of civil society organisations were among the delegation's participants.

with the IBA and the UBA on monitoring war crime trials in Ukraine; it is really crucial work.'

UBA Executive Director, Viktoriia Krasnova, said, 'The visit to The Hague has been an invaluable experience for Ukrainian legal practitioners. Building capacities in international criminal justice is crucial for Ukraine as we navigate the complexities of war crimes and ensure justice for victims. The knowledge and skills gained from this study visit will significantly enhance legal practitioners' ability to handle these cases with the rigor and fairness they demand. We extend our sincere gratitude to the International Bar Association and the IBA's Human Rights Institute for their unwavering support and dedication to justice and accountability in Ukraine.'

Over the course of the visit, participants visited Hague-based international tribunals and institutions, including the International Criminal Court, the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office, the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust) and the Register of Damage caused by the Russian aggression against Ukraine. During the visits, participants gained knowledge about the operations of global organisations and had the opportunity to engage with both working-level officials and high-level experts.

During training sessions, the participants explored different aspects of international criminal trials including the investigation, prosecution and adjudication of international crimes; fair trial rights and the rights of the accused, particularly during trials in absentia; the collection of open-source evidence; and the crime of genocide. Part of the study visit took place in association with the T.M.C. Asser Institute, which provided participants with sessions based on their fair trials handbook, and on judgement drafting from a fair trials perspective.

The Director of the IBA International Criminal Court and International Criminal Law Programme, Kate Orlovsky,

commented: 'We are honoured to have welcomed legal professionals from Ukraine, and to support them in their efforts to develop expertise and capacities to investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate international crimes in Ukraine.'

IBA support for Ukraine

The IBA condemned in the strongest terms the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 and has been active in the country ever since. The IBA works closely with both the UBA and the Ukrainian National Bar Association and has created a dedicated fund to support their humanitarian efforts. The IBA signed memoranda of understanding with the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine and with the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense aimed at ensuring accountability for war crimes and other international crimes. Furthermore, the IBAHRI Director Baroness Kennedy LT KC co-chairs a hybrid task force focused on the return of deported Ukrainian children, and the IBA-founded eyeWitness to Atrocities app is being used to gather potential evidence of crimes committed during the conflict and to draft reports, including, for example, on the destruction of Ukrainian healthcare facilities following the Russian aggression. The IBA also supports the establishment of the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine.

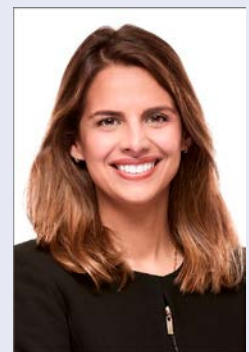
Torlys welcomes class actions partner Anne Merminod

Torlys is delighted to welcome Mtre Anne Merminod as a partner in our Montréal office. With nearly 15 years of experience defending high profile class actions, Anne brings additional bench strength to our leading litigation capabilities in Québec.

Anne is recognized as a leading litigator and has been ranked by indices such as Chambers Canada, Benchmark Litigation in its Litigation Star, 40 and Under List and Future Star categories, Best Lawyers and the Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory. She has also been named an awardee at the Canadian Law Awards and Lexpert Rising Stars: Lawyers Under 40.

Anne's practice focuses exclusively on class action defence. She represents a broad client base of public and private companies across many industries relating to product liability, life sciences, privacy and complaints.

Torlys Montréal Managing Partner Mtre Sylvie Rodrigue Ad. E. commented that Anne will be joining the team at a time of growing client need for effective, knowledgeable class actions advocacy in the province.



Anne Merminod

"With more and more class actions proceeding to long and complex trials in Québec, Anne's wealth of experience in such proceedings will contribute to help meeting client demands as they face a rising number of these disputes. She is a perfect addition to our already exceptional team," Sylvie said.

With the addition of Anne, the Montréal office is now comprised of 38 legal and non-legal professionals.

IBA promotes the Rule of Law across the world through a series of short films

Through a series of short films, the International Bar Association (IBA) – the global voice of the legal profession – is increasing awareness of the value and significance of the Rule of Law among people worldwide as the 2025 United Nations International Day of Education (UN Day) is commemorated.

Eight videos, each lasting approximately one minute, introduce the general public to the concept of the Rule of Law and show how everyday lives are affected when the different elements that comprise it are flouted. The central message is: 'Look after the Rule of Law, and it will look after you.'

Watch the series of films [here](#).

This UN Day highlights education as a human right enshrined in Article 26 of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), which reads: 'Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.'

IBA President Jaime Carey, commented: 'Upholding the Rule of Law is a core principle of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and vital for creating a just and peaceful world. However, we see that the Rule of Law is backsliding in many countries. Without a universally agreed definition of the Rule of Law, it can be difficult for citizens to grasp its meaning and/or importance. Nevertheless, there are some principles that should be universally understood including nobody should be above the law, that people have the right to a fair trial and that judges are independent.'

Mr Carey added: 'To help people better understand what the Rule of Law is, the IBA videos show situations when it is absent or violated. As an organisation, founded to protect and promote the Rule of Law and encourage adherence to it, on this UN Day of Education, the IBA is beginning a campaign to educate the public on the crucial role the Rule of Law plays in protecting liberties.'

The eight short films – which are available in English, Italian, Polish and Spanish – include and address:

- a basic introduction to the Rule of Law;
- how governments around the world can threaten the independence of the judiciary through threats and bribery resulting in unfair trials and justice not being served;
- how curtailing the freedom of the press and banning peaceful protest negatively affects society;
- the detrimental effects of corruption on society; and
- how the Rule of Law protects individuals who are discriminated against.

IBA Executive Director, Dr Mark Ellis said, 'The foundation of a well-functioning society is the Rule of Law. The idea is not abstract. For citizens to become guardians of the Rule of Law, they must be aware that their rights and the rights of society are safeguarded, and must be upheld by the state. We hope the IBA Rule of Law educational videos will help citizens better understand the need to protect the Rule of Law.'

The IBA contributes to improving education levels in law in myriad ways, through a range of training programmes and free knowledge and guidance readily available on its website covering all aspects of the legal profession. Also, the IBA Legal Internship Programme is available for undergraduate law students, postgraduate law students and newly qualified lawyers at IBA offices in London, The Hague and Washington, DC.

Inspirational Legal Women podcast series, launched by the IBA

The International Bar Association (IBA) Legal Policy & Research Unit (LPRU) has launched the podcast series 'Inspirational Legal Women'. The series encourages inspirational IBA members with interesting careers and remarkable stories to share their thoughts and experiences about what it means to be a woman in the legal profession and how they have navigated different types of workplaces and challenges over the course of their careers. The LPRU's Sara Carnegie, Director of Legal Projects, and Isla Tobin, Project Lawyer, will interview women across a variety of legal fields and jurisdictions.

IBA Secretary-General, Deborah Enix-Ross, lawyer at Debevoise and Plimpton LLP based at their New York, United States office for more than 20 years, features in the first episode of the series. Ms Enix-Ross co-founded the Women's Interest Network within the American Bar Association's International Law Section, advocating for women's legal issues, something she has continued to do within the IBA. Ms Enix-Ross was President of the American Bar Association from 2022-2023 and named on the Forbes List of America's top 200 lawyers in 2024.

This episode is followed by insightful, fortnightly instalments with other inspiring colleagues from across the world. The first conversation with Ms Enix-Ross is available to listen to [here](#).

Below are a few excerpts from the podcast.

'And so you have to decide, are you going to let someone stand in the way of what your goals are and what you want to achieve? And for me, the answer was no, I'm going to push forward. It may take me longer. It may be harder. It may be that my road is different. But I have a goal in mind, and I am going to do everything in my power to achieve that goal...'

'When I had the opportunity to appoint arbitrators, US arbitrators, I made sure that there were women. And so that was my way of breaking one barrier and then making sure that other women did not have to face that. I was involved in a group called Arbitral Women. It was women who were involved in international arbitration. It has taken off. It's a global organisation now...'

'Don't think you have to achieve everything right away. So, follow your passion. Set your own timetable. And then this one is really important to me. Lift as you climb. You may be the first to do something, but don't be the last. You may be the first woman. You may be the only woman, but make it your business to be sure that you're not the last one...'

[Click here](#) to read the full episode transcript.

[Click here](#) to download a photo of Deborah Enix-Ross.

A full list of episodes will be available [here](#).

The Inspirational Legal Women podcast series complements the LPRU's work on gender inequality in the legal profession, including the 50:50 by 2030: A longitudinal study into gender disparity in lawproject, which aims to explore and address the lack of gender parity across all levels and areas relating to law professionals, with a focus on senior positions. To date, 13 reports have been released as part of the project: England and Wales, Uganda and Spain in 2022; Chile, the Netherlands and Nigeria in 2023; and Brazil, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Ukraine and Türkiye in 2024. In December 2024 the Progress Report was published, which compiled the results of the reports that had been released up to December 2024, providing readers with an overview of the landscape. Also published in 2024 was a case study on Nepal, submitted to the IBA to sit alongside the IBA-written reports.

Attorney General James Releases Statement on DOGE Access to Sensitive Personal Information

New York Attorney General Letitia James today led a coalition of 12 attorneys general in releasing the following statement in response to the U.S. Department of the Treasury granting Elon Musk and his so-called “Department of Government Efficiency” (DOGE) staffers access to sensitive payment systems containing Americans’ personally identifiable information:

“In the past week, the U.S. Department of the Treasury has given Elon Musk access to Americans’ personal private information, state bank account data, and other information that is some of our country’s most sensitive data.

“As the richest man in the world, Elon Musk is not used to being told ‘no,’ but in our country, no one is above the law. The President does not have the power to give away our private information to anyone he chooses, and he cannot cut federal payments approved by Congress.

“This level of access for unauthorized individuals is unlawful, unprecedented, and unacceptable. DOGE has no authority to access this information, which they explicitly sought in order to block critical payments that millions of Americans rely on – payments that support health care, childcare, and other essential programs.

“In defense of our Constitution, our right to privacy, and the essential funding that individuals and communities nationwide are counting on, we will be filing a lawsuit to stop this injustice.”

Joining Attorney General James in releasing this statement are the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, Rhode Island, Vermont.

King’s Counsel

A King’s Counsel (post-nominal initials KC) is a senior lawyer appointed by the monarch (or their viceregal representative) of some Commonwealth realms as a “Counsel learned in the law”. When the reigning monarch is a woman, the title is Queen’s Counsel (QC).

The position originated in England and Wales. Some Commonwealth countries have retained the designation, while others have either abolished the position or renamed it so as to remove monarchical connotations — for example, “Senior Counsel” or “Senior Advocate”.

Appointment as King’s Counsel is an office recognised by courts. Members in the UK have the privilege of sitting within the inner bar of court. As members wear silk gowns of a particular design, appointment as King’s Counsel is known informally as taking silk and KCs are often colloquially called silks.[1] Appointments are made from within the legal profession on the basis of merit and not a particular level of experience. Successful applicants are normally barristers, or in Scotland, advocates, with at least 15 years of experience.

In most Canadian jurisdictions, the designation is regulated by formal statute, such as, for example, “King’s Counsel Act” of British Columbia, that requires the candidates to have a minimum five years of experience, and to have made an outstanding contribution to the practice of law with high professional standards and good character and repute.[2]

Historical origins in England and Wales

Historical background

The attorney general, solicitor-general and king’s serjeants were King’s Counsel in Ordinary in the Kingdom of England. The first Queen’s Counsel Extraordinary was Sir Francis Bacon, who was given a patent giving him precedence at the Bar in 1597, and formally styled King’s Counsel in 1603.[3][4] The right of precedence before the Court granted to Bacon became a hallmark of the early King’s Counsel. True to their name, King’s and Queen’s Counsel initially were representatives of the Crown.

[Click here to read more.](#)

US sanctions against the International Criminal Court are denounced by the IBA

The International Bar Association (IBA) denounces sanctions against the International Criminal Court (ICC). The IBA calls on all states to oppose sanctions and respect the judicial independence of the Court.

IBA Executive Director Dr Mark Ellis commented: 'The ICC is the cornerstone of the international justice architecture, created to realise the promise of "never again" and to bring justice to victims of "atrocities that deeply shock the conscience of humanity". For this work, the Court, its officials, and those cooperating with it, have at times faced political threats, intimidation and attacks from those seeking to undermine the Court's authority and obstruct its investigations. These attacks undo decades of progress for victims and weaken the rule of law globally.'

On 6 February 2025, United States President Donald Trump issued an Executive Order authorising sanctions against the ICC and its officials, including property blocking and visa bans for the persons designated by the Executive Order and their immediate family members.

The Court is actively investigating in 12 situations, including in ongoing conflicts in the situations in Afghanistan, Darfur/Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Ukraine, and proceedings against suspects from the Central African Republic, Darfur/Sudan, Mali and Uganda are ongoing in the ICC's courtrooms. The implementation of the sanctions could severely impact



the ICC's operations, undermining its justice mandate across all situations where it is investigating and prosecuting.

Sanctions were previously imposed by the Trump administration in 2020 and later revoked by the Biden administration in 2021, which stated that sanctions were 'not an effective or appropriate strategy for addressing the United States' concerns with the ICC.'

Dr Ellis added: 'By imposing sanctions, victims of international crimes will suffer greatly, and their effects would be felt far beyond the Court, including by witnesses protected by the Court and human rights defenders and civil society organisations cooperating with the Court's work. At this critical time for international justice and the rule of law, the US administration should respect the independence of international judicial institutions.'

One hundred and twenty-five states, not including the US, have signed on to the ICC's founding treaty, the Rome Statute. Under the Statute, all States Parties have an obligation to cooperate fully with the ICC in its investigation and prosecution of Rome Statute crimes.

Attorney General James and Coalition of 22 Attorneys General Celebrate Court Victory Stopping Federal Funding Freeze

New York Attorney General Letitia James and a coalition of 22 attorneys general today celebrated winning a court order halting the implementation of a Trump administration policy that would block many federal agency grants, loans, and other financial assistance programs. On Friday, Judge John J. McConnell of the U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island granted a temporary restraining order (TRO) blocking the administration's illegal funding freeze after Attorney General James and the coalition filed a lawsuit to stop the policy.

"The power of the purse belongs to Congress – not the President of the United States," said Attorney General James. "Last week, I led a coalition of attorneys general in suing to stop this dangerous and chaotic policy, and we won a court order to stop it while our lawsuit proceeds. Now, New Yorkers can rest assured that federal funds for critical services – meals for our seniors, health care, community public safety, disaster relief, and so much more – are currently not at risk. I will continue to fight in court to defend the essential programs and services New Yorkers need."

The TRO won by Attorney General James prohibits federal agencies from taking any action that would "pause, freeze, block, cancel or terminate" the provision of federal funding, unless otherwise permitted by existing statute or the terms of the grant. Because of Attorney General James' immediate intervention, programs that provide critical health and childcare services to families in need, deliver support to public schools, combat violence and expand public safety, provide life-saving disaster relief to states, and more are no longer at immediate risk of losing their funding.

In a notice sent to federal agencies and filed with the court this morning, the Department of Justice (DOJ) indicated its intent to comply with the court order and affirmed that the TRO blocking the illegal freeze applied to all federal funding awards or obligations, including those made to recipients such as hospitals, non-profits, or other organizations. The TRO applied to both current and future grants of federal assistance.

This morning, Attorney General James also sent a letter to hundreds of recipients of federal funding informing them that federal financial assistance cannot be frozen as a result of the administration's policy, which is now blocked. This included health care providers, who were informed that funding cannot be frozen or withdrawn on the basis of providing gender affirming care to minors. Attorney General James also reminded providers that regardless of funding, all providers in New York are obligated to comply with New York state laws, including those that prohibit discrimination against individuals based on their sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or membership in other protected classes. To comply with New York law, Attorney General James warns all providers that they must continue to provide health care services, including gender affirming care, to transgender or gender nonconforming individuals.

This lawsuit was led by Attorney General James and the attorneys general of California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Rhode Island. Joining the lawsuit are the attorneys general of Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia.



Les dernières actualités



20 mars 2025
Jean-Pierre Perreault est élu recteur de l'Université de Sherbrooke

Le conseil d'administration de l'Université de Sherbrooke annonce aujourd'hui que Jean-Pierre Perreault dirigera l'Université de Sherbrooke à titre de recteur à compter du 1er juin prochain, et ce, pour un mandat de cinq ans. Le professeur Jean-Pierre Perreault est la 11e personne à occuper le poste de recteur dans l'histoire de l'UdeS depuis sa création [...]

[Lire la suite](#)



19 mars 2025
IBA marks International Women's Day with launch of Phase 2 of its 50:50 by 2030 gender equality project

Phase 2 of the International Bar Association's (IBA) global project addressing the lack of gender parity at senior levels across the law launched today as International Women's Day (8 March) is commemorated around the world. The overall aim of the project is to achieve equal representation of men and women at the top of the [...]

[Lire la suite](#)



17 mars 2025
Danielle Ferron nommée juge à la Cour fédérale du Canada

La juge Danielle Ferron est diplômée en droit civil de l'Université de Montréal et a été admise au Barreau du Québec en 1993. Avant sa nomination, la juge Ferron était associée au cabinet Langlois Avocats depuis 2011. Elle pratiquait le droit dans le domaine des litiges civils et commerciaux, notamment dans le cadre de fraudes [...]

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Dernières parutions



13 décembre 2024
Volume 27, numéro 10

[Lire la suite](#)

News Highlights



4 mars 2025
Inspirational Legal Women podcast series, launched by the IBA

The International Bar Association (IBA) Legal Policy & Research Unit (LPRU) has launched the podcast series 'Inspirational Legal Women'. The series encourages inspirational IBA members with interesting careers and remarkable stories to share their thoughts and experiences about what it means to be a woman in the legal profession and how they have navigated different [...]

[Read more](#)



26 février 2025
White genocide in South Africa 'is a myth' high court rules – a week after Trump cuts all aid to the country due to 'human rights violations'

White genocide in South Africa 'is clearly imagined and not real', the country's high court has ruled. The ruling came as part of a judgement to declare a bequest made in the will of a white South African man called Grantland Michael Bray to far-right organisation Boereleigioen (BL) invalid. Bray, who died in 2022, had [...]

[Read more](#)



21 février 2025
Canadian Human Rights Icon Irwin Cotler Honored With Defender of Freedom Award at 2025 Geneva Summit

The Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy, a cross-regional coalition of more than 30 human rights organizations, presented its Defender of Freedom Award to Professor Irwin Cotler, international human rights lawyer, legal scholar, former Canadian justice minister, and nominee for next year's Nobel Peace Prize, for his renowned advocacy for political prisoners worldwide. Earning [...]

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