

Joint Human Rights Conference “**Human Rights and Change**”

16-18 June 2014, at Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey

The ECPR Standing Group on Transitional Justice and Human Rights, in collaboration with ISA, IPSA, ECPR and APSA organised this third joint human rights conference on Human Rights and Change. The focus of the conference as reiterated by the key-note speakers and panelists was the issue of globalising justice and democracy through human rights norms and standards. Over 100 practitioners and academics met in Istanbul to discuss the impact of ongoing rapid societal changes which significantly affect the international human rights regime and community.

Key-note speakers, among them Turkish Judge Riza Tuermen, reflected on the importance of human rights in current disputes in Turkey. Professor Edward Mortimer from the University of Oxford highlighted the change in global governance by focusing on local developments and actors which are largely empowered due to human rights diffusion and awareness. Professor Ruti Teitel from New York addressed the shifts in Transitional Justice as being a contemporary and multi-disciplinary area of research of change during transitions. Speakers and panelists addressed the fact that the international human rights arena is rapidly changing beyond its norms and standard. International human rights are currently moving closer to the people on the ground. Apart from the political, legal and societal difficulties, conflicts and obstacles they face, they also require effective implementation as well as adaptation measures in all private or public sectors of society.

Discussions about the changes in international human rights fields arose around the question as to what extent globalisation affects the international criminal justice system, norm dissemination, religion, tradition, gender, participation or the role of international organisations, business and CSO's. The Arab Spring and the violent developments in the Middle East were equally reflected in the debates as part of the changes that are currently taking place in regional and international governance and human rights regimes.

The conference showed once more that human rights has moved from being considered a sub-discipline toward being a fully recognised subject across all aspects of legal or political sciences.

<http://www.isanet.org/Conferences/HRistanbul2014.aspx>

Anja Mihr, The Hague Institute for Global Justice/ Utrecht University



Edward Mortimer, Oxford University