



CALL FOR PAPERS
THIRD ANNUAL COLLOQUIUM

Theme:

ETHICS, ACCOUNTABILITY AND FAIRNESS IN ELECTIONS: LESSONS FOR AFRICA

You are cordially invited to contribute Abstracts for the 3rd Annual Colloquium of the WIPHOLD-Brigalia Bam Research Chair in Electoral Democracy at UNISA which will be held at the UNISA Main Campus from 28th – 30th October 2015, UNISA, Pretoria. The theme of the 3-Day Colloquium is: “***ETHICS, ACCOUNTABILITY AND FAIRNESS IN ELECTIONS: LESSONS FOR AFRICA***” The papers presented at this Colloquium will be selected and submitted for possible publication in a special accredited publication.

Ethics and accountability in elections are critical elements that election observers, scholars, election management bodies (EMBs) and election practitioners usually examine in a country in order to understand the role of elections in its political system. An increasing body of research and practitioner experiences suggests that ethics and accountability might be the cornerstones of Africa’s transition to democracy. While lack of accountability can potentially undermine political stability in a country (Chiroro, 2008), to what extent is accountability the answer to Africa’s election woes? Current research suggests that international focus is now on attempts to restore the credibility of elections (Norris, 2014), but in Africa how does Africa deal with the challenges of electoral integrity? Other pertinent questions to be asked regarding such values include: Whose ethics, accountable to whom? What are fair electoral practices according to which or whose criteria is fairness determined (Elklit & Svensson, 1997)?

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Elections in Africa have been held for decades, yet some key concepts still need to be interrogated and understood by the voters, political parties, election management bodies, media, observers and other relevant role-players. The 3rd Annual Colloquium therefore seeks to bring together academics, practitioners, politicians and other stakeholders to debate these issues and share their experiences of elections in Africa. The aim of the Colloquium is to keep the tradition of publishing the Colloquium's papers in accredited journals and to ensure continual meaningful interaction between academics, election management practitioners, students, civil society organisations, and all stakeholders who are interested in elections continentally and globally.

While it is generally agreed that elections are the proverbial cornerstone of every modern democracy, there is very little consensus on what constitutes free and fair elections in Africa. Key contentious issues include the ethics of elections, accountability, freeness and fairness. The unfettered involvement of the corporate world in funding political parties and their campaigns leads observers to ask the question, to who are the elected officials accountable? Is it to the political party, government, the funders or their constituency? Moreover, the criteria for appointing election authorities or executives and who appoints them persistently arises whenever one political party loses and another wins in African elections

Similarly, the concept of free and fair elections might be in the intensive care unit if what happened in the 2013 Zimbabwean elections can pass the test of electoral integrity. These elections were declared by the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) to be free and credible as opposed to free and fair. Such shifting of the threshold needs to be engaged. Similarly, the outcome of the recent elections in Côte D'Ivoire, Kenya, Madagascar and Mozambique also left more questions unanswered regarding integrity of elections in the continent.

The Colloquium will explore and seek to answer the above questions including addressing, among others, the following theoretical and practical issues. Thus, scholars and members of the academic community, EMBs and election management practitioners, diplomats, members of civil society organisations and other stakeholders are invited to contribute to the understanding of Africa's EMBs by participating in the Colloquium through presentations and discussion of papers. A Call for Abstracts is

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therefore made and papers which address the above theme may explore, but should not be limited to, the following sub-themes:

1. What entails integrity of electoral systems and institutions and how does this affect judgement on credibility of elections?
2. What accounts for contestations over credibility of elections?
3. What ethical issues underpin the conduct of Africa's elections; whose ethics do we rely on, and what kinds of elections have integrity and are credible, free and fair?
4. The role of electoral observer and monitoring missions and the bases of their value judgement on electoral outcomes.
5. Is there still a justification for external (western) observers when Africans are not invited to observe western elections?
6. To what extent does the role of regional or local election observers and monitors have an impact on election integrity in Africa?
7. Does the funding of political parties by commercial, state and other interests impact on ethical considerations in African elections?
8. Who accounts to whom in African elections and to what extent?
9. Do African continental and regional governance institutions play an effective role on ethical and value dimensions pertaining to elections?
10. Which individual case studies can help us understand the above concepts? What lessons can be drawn from and for Africa?

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACT: 31 March 2015

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF FULL PAPER: 31 July 2015

Special Issue theme: *Ethics, Accountability and Fairness in Elections: Lessons for Africa*

Publication guidelines: Please use Harvard or APA author guidelines for formatting, referencing, style, and other requirements.

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