



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Sixth Edition of the Academy of Constitutional Law

July- August 2021

“The nexus of peace processes and constitution-making in the MENA region”

Deadline for submitting applications: April 30, 2021

Introduction: The Arab Association of Constitutional Law (AACL) is organizing the sixth edition of the Academy of Constitutional Law (the Academy). Due to the global COVID-19 situation, the Academy’s 2021 edition will be organized virtually via ZOOM between the end of July 2021 and mid-August 2021. The exact dates will be announced later.

The Academy is part of an effort to encourage a more dynamic, continuous, and in-depth exchange of ideas between leading policy-makers and scholars in the Arab and MENA region. The Academy seeks to identify trends in constitution-making across the region and will create space for experts from across the region to engage with each other on a selected number of substantive areas and provides the opportunity to explore whether possible solutions to their common or country-specific problems exist. The Academy’s participants will be selected according to a competitive process.

The Academy’s proceedings: Academy participants will take part in an online program between the end of July 2021 and mid-August 2021. During that period, each participant will work to produce a paper related to the theme of the Academy (see below). Academy participants will receive training and guidance from prominent Arab and international scholars to enhance their methodological and research skills as well as their scientific knowledge of the general theme. The experts, reviewers and the AACL will work closely with the participants to develop their papers and prepare them for publication.

The papers: Academy participants will be required to produce papers in Arabic. Papers of high-quality will be featured in the publications of the Arab Association of Constitutional Law.

The papers must:

- (i) Be critical and analytical. A purely descriptive and superficial approach will not be accepted.
- (ii) Be comparative in their approach.
- (iii) Go beyond the constitutional text and consider implementation issues.

The research question:

Peace processes often raise significant constitutional issues that have profound implications for the resolution of a conflict. In many parts of the Arab region, constitutional processes contributed to peacebuilding, either as part of the negotiations of peace agreements or as an outcome of the agreements.

Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, Syria, Libya and Algeria have witnessed interim or permanent constitutional transitions that were linked in a way or another to post-conflict peace processes or peacemaking efforts. The most recent example is Sudan, where a peace agreement was signed in August 2020, pursuant to which a constitutional process is due to take place to consolidate all the gains into a final and binding legal document.

Thus, the participants of the sixth edition of the Academy will explore “The nexus of peace processes and constitution-making in the MENA region”, and will be required to research and publish a paper focused on one of the following issues:

1. The interlinkages of the constitution-making process (negotiation, drafting, duration and implementation) and peace-building in conflict-affected settings:

- What are the possibilities and limitations of constitution-making as an element of a peace process? To what extent does constitution-making enhance or weaken peace-building and stability in a conflict-affected setting?
- Which characteristics of the process play a role in consolidating peace agreements and ensuring successful implementation (new or revised constitution, transitional or interim arrangements, sequencing peace agreements and constitutions, interim constitutions, inclusive constitution-making)? And what issues in constitution-making may lead to a failure of a peace process and/ or a regression of violence and conflict? (selection of constitution-making bodies, public participation and inclusiveness, national ownership, external actors, etc.)
- What factors hinder or contribute to the stability and endurance of constitutions in the aftermath of a violent conflict, and as consequence enable or impede peace-building?

2. The impact of the constitutional design and the constitution’s content on the achievement of a sustainable peace:

- To what extent does the content of a constitution or specific constitutional provisions determine the viability of a peace agreement?
- How are disagreements on substantive issues in constitutional design dealt with to avoid the failure of the peace process and the buy-in of a new constitution? (the scope of constitutional matters to be discussed, constitutional deferral or incrementalism, etc.)
- How are sensitive issues such as constitutional principles, institutional design, responses to local or national peculiarities- religion, identity, gender, power-sharing, quotas, territorial arrangements, etc. addressed in the constitution to enhance the success of the peace process?

How to apply to the Academy: The participants will be selected according to a competitive process. Female applicants and students or early career scholars researching constitutional issues related to minorities in the region are encouraged to apply.

Eligibility criteria:

- Applicants must be fluent in both written and spoken Arabic. Working knowledge of a second language would be considered an advantage.
- Between the ages of 23 and 40.
- Enrolled in a PhD program or have recently received a doctorate in law or political science or a related field. Recent Master graduates and students may be accepted in exceptional cases.
- Demonstrate an interest in constitutional law and constitutional transformations in the MENA region, and/or in topics related to democratization, peacebuilding, human rights, and equality.
- Available to participate (remotely) in all scheduled days of the Academy in July-August 2021.
- Commit to work on their paper during the Academy and to accept methodological and scientific comments received from experts and reviewers and develop their paper accordingly to be prepared for publication.

Interested candidates are required to submit a complete application by email to lara.saade@dustour.org **no later than 30 April 2021.**

Applications should include the following:

- (i) The applicant's CV.
- (ii) A proposal (maximum 1000 words) in Arabic describing the subject of the paper that the applicant will develop during the Academy, the research question, its importance as well as the methodology.
- (iii) Writing sample (s) in Arabic related to constitutional law in general or the subject matter of the Academy.
- (iv) At least one letter of recommendation from a current or former supervisor or manager.

Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted for an interview in May 2021. Selected participants will receive formal notifications in June 2021.

Logistics, expenses, and honorarium: The Arab Association of Constitutional Law will cover all expenses related to the academic material and expert fees.

In addition, each Academy participant will be paid an honorarium upon completion of the research project, if it is accepted for publication by the Arab Association of Constitutional Law.