



UNIVERSITY
OF
JOHANNESBURG



SAIFAC SYMPOSIUM

Ensuring Free and Fair Elections in Africa: The Role of Electoral Commissions, the Media and the Courts'

In the run-up to South Africa's national elections, the South African Institute for Advanced Constitutional, Public, Human Rights and International Law (SAIFAC), a centre of the University of Johannesburg warmly invites you to attend a symposium on '**Ensuring Free and Fair Elections in Africa: The Role of Electoral Commissions, the Media and the Courts**', which will take place on Thursday, 11 April 2018 at Constitution Hill in Johannesburg.

Across the African continent, it is evident that electoral systems and their processes are under pressure. A number of devices have been adopted which seek to subvert the rules and conditions for free and fair elections. These actions have a detrimental impact on the health of democracy in these societies: it can lead, as in Kenya and Zimbabwe, to violence and a lingering sense of illegitimacy of the leadership as well as concomitant economic hardship. In this context, and with the South African elections just around the corner, the symposium will examine the role of three key institutions – electoral commissions, the media and the courts – in enhancing democracy and ensuring that elections in Africa are in fact free and fair. In particular, the symposium will engage the following questions:

- What are the necessary conditions for free and fair elections to take place?
- What are the devices used – in African contexts specifically – to undermine free and fair elections?
- And is it possible to design constitutional and legislative rules to guard against these abuses? If so, what would these look like?

The symposium will draw on the expertise of a range of prominent academics and actors in the areas of law and political science with a particular focus on South Africa, Zimbabwe and Kenya. The keynote opening address will be delivered by Peter Godwin, a leading Zimbabwean political commentator and writer. The event is organised with the generous support of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. Please see the [SAIFAC website](#) for a copy of the programme.

The details of the conference are:

DATE: 11 April 2019
TIME: 08h30-17h30
VENUE: Womens' Jail, Constitution Hill
RSVP essential to Naomi Hove
naomi@saifac.org.za

