



VISION130
Renew and Reimagine
towards 2034

HUMAN RIGHTS

HUMAN RIGHTS CELEBRATION OF THE FACULTY OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

DATE: 18 March 2024 | **VENUE:** Albert Wessels Auditorium

PROGRAMME

Programme Director: Dr Annelie De Man

- 10:00-10:05** Opening and Setting the Scene – Dr Annelie De Man, Acting Director, Free State Centre for Human Rights
- 10:05-10:15** Word of Welcome: Prof Serges Kamga, Dean of the Faculty of Law, University of the Free State
- 10:15-10:30** Official Opening: Prof Francis Petersen, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, University of the Free State
- 10:30-11:35** Panel Discussion
Theme: Contribution of Sir Sydney Kentridge QC to Human Rights in South Africa and beyond
Moderator – Prof Elsabe Schoeman: Dean of Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria
Panellists:
- Former Justice Zak Yacoob – Retired Justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa
 - The Honorable Madame Justice Yvonne Mbatha, Judge of the Supreme Court of Appeal of the Republic of South Africa
 - Dr Adri Du Plessis–Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of the Free State
- 11:35-12:15** Questions and Answers
- 12:15-12:30** Entertainment – Ms Bayanda Mkhize
- 12:30-13:00** Handover ceremony of the books donated: Ms Vanessa Rose September
- 13:00-14:00** Lunch
- 14:00-15:00** Public Lecture
Theme: 30 years of Human Rights in South Africa? Any reason to celebrate? – Emeritus Constitutional Court Justice Albie Sachs
- 15:00-15:25** Questions and Answers
- 15:25-15:30** Vote of Thanks: Dr Russel Ally – Director, Institutional Advancement, University of the Free State

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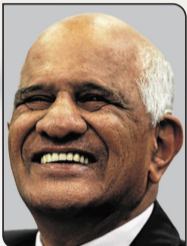




Albie Sachs is an activist, writer and former judge on the Constitutional Court of South Africa (1994 – 2009). He began practising as an advocate at the Cape Bar at the age of 21, defending people charged under the racial statutes and security laws of apartheid. After two spells of being detained in solitary confinement without trial, first for five months, then for three months, he went into exile in England, where he completed a PhD at Sussex University. In 1988, he lost his right arm and his sight in one eye when a bomb was placed in his car by South African security agents in Maputo, Mozambique. After the bombing, he devoted himself to the preparations for a new democratic constitution for South Africa. When he returned home from exile, he served as a member of the Constitutional Committee and the National Executive of the African National Congress until the first democratic elections in 1994.

Sachs is a Board member of the Constitution Hill Trust, which promotes constitutionalism and the rule of law. He has travelled to many countries sharing South African experiences that might help heal divided societies.

He is the author of several books, including *The Jail Diary of Albie Sachs*, *Justice in South Africa*, *Sexism and the Law*, *Soft Vengeance of a Freedom Fighter* and *The Strange Alchemy of Life and Law*. His latest books are *We, the People: Insights of an activist judge* (2016) and *Oliver Tambo's Dream* (2017).



Retired Justice **Zak Yacoob** took silk in 1991 and practiced as senior counsel until his appointment as a Justice of the Constitutional Court in 1998. In service as judge of the Constitutional Court of South Africa from 1998 to 2013, he became known nationally and internationally for his contribution to the socio-economic rights jurisprudence of South Africa. After his retirement he received the 2013 Felicia and Sydney Kentridge Award for Service to the Law in Southern Africa and was awarded five honorary doctorates from the Universities of Fort Hare, KwaZulu-Natal, Witwatersrand, Pretoria, and the Free State. Both before and after retirement as a judge, he has taught at Law Schools in Seattle, Melbourne, India, Maryland and also taught Constitutional law at Witwatersrand and in the joint programme between The Howard Law School, Washington, and the University of the Western Cape.



Justice **Yvonne Thokozile Mbatha** is a South African judge of the Supreme Court of Appeal. Before her appointment to the Supreme Court of Appeal in 2019, she was a judge of the KwaZulu-Natal High Court from June 2011 to June 2019. She acted in the Constitutional Court between August and December 2022.



Professor **Elsabe Schoeman** (BLC (UP) LLB LLD (Unisa)) is the Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Pretoria and a former Deputy Dean of the Law School at the University of Auckland. Her areas of specialisation are private international law/conflict of laws and comparative law. She has published widely in these areas and has also made contributions to international legal encyclopaedias, as well as submissions to law commissions (South Africa and Trans-Tasman). She has advised law firms in South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany on transnational commercial litigation. She holds an Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship and regularly researches at the Institute for Private International Law in Cologne and the Max Planck Institute in Hamburg, Germany. She is an elected associate member of the International Academy of Comparative Law, as well as a full member and judge of the Expert Committee of the St Petersburg International Legal Forum.



Adri du Plessis is a senior lecturer in the Department of Public Law, Faculty of Law, at the University of the Free State. She holds a doctoral degree in Constitutional Law. Her thesis was titled "The constitutional framework of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment". She has published in accredited journals and presented papers at national and international conferences. She is chairperson of the University of the Free State General and Human Research Ethics Committee and secretary of the Administrative Justice Association of South Africa Teaching Administrative Law subcommittee.



Vanessa September
BArch (UCT) 2003, MUD (UCT) 2018
Chair of Albie Sachs trust and Producer of The Albie Collection

The end of apartheid paved the way for me to fulfil a childhood dream - to become an architect to be able to design and build houses and create public spaces for people like me who grew up in a working-class neighbourhood surrounded by very little that was beautiful. At 30, I went back to high school and on to university to complete a Bachelor of Architecture degree. At 51, I returned to complete a Master of Urban Design degree. Currently I teach parttime in school of Architecture and Planning.

My focus has been on transforming underutilised spaces through community-led design processes into well-functioning public spaces. This led me to serve on the board of Project for Public Spaces in New York and work on a transformative public space agenda in Nairobi with UN Habitat. It also led to a part time appointment at the University of Cape Town where my goal is to inspire young would-be planners to be thoughtful when they make their mark on the landscape.

In 2020 I was appointed as the CEO of the Constitution Hill Trust (CHT). I oversaw and guided the development of the CHT into a functional institution. The primary work of the CHT is to tell the story of the making and workings of our Constitution and the Constitutional Court and to disseminate the information and knowledge to everyone in South Africa.

Currently, I am the producer of the Albie Collection. The collection is a curated conspectus of the life, love, law' literature and laughter of Albie Sachs. A place to land for people who wish to learn more about his life's work, the events that shapes his values and judgements and his thoughts on South Africa today.