

Highlighting Commitments to Justice

The 2019 World Justice Forum will be convened on the theme of “Realizing Justice for All,” contributing to ongoing global efforts to mobilize further actions to accelerate implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16 (“SDG16”). The Forum will be part of a series of events leading up to the 2019 High Level Political Forum, including the Innovating Justice Forum, the Justice Partners Forum, and related events in the Hague, February 5-7; the OECD Global Policy Roundtable on Equal Access to Justice in Lisbon, March 27-28; and the Open Government Partnership Summit in Ottawa May 29-31. As part of this series, the World Justice Forum will provide an opportunity for announcements of plans by a wide variety of stakeholders to take action to increase access to justice and promote the rule of law.

What is a “Commitment to Justice?”

A “Commitment to Justice” is an announced plan to take specific concrete action to help address the justice gap—the majority of the world’s population who cannot obtain justice to resolve their legal problems. SDG 16 aims to ensure “access to justice for all,” and yet for some 5 billion people globally, this is a distant promise. Closing the gap will require action by diverse stakeholders inside and outside of government. As the global community focuses on this challenge in 2019, the World Justice Forum invites participating organizations and institutions to join the chorus of “Commitments to Justice.”

“Commitments to Justice” can be made by a wide range of actors, including: governments or governmental agencies at all levels (i.e., executive, legislative, judicial, and administrative, and at the national, regional, and local level); intergovernmental organizations; private sector firms; non-governmental organizations; professional associations; journalists and media organizations; and academic institutions.

“Commitments” can also take many different forms, including allocating financial, in-kind, and pro bono resources; undertaking legal, regulatory, or policy changes; supporting capacity building or educational initiatives; announcing a new collaboration to address access to justice issues; or planning new data collection, analysis, and research that can help us understand and solve the problem. Such commitments can have global, regional, national or local impact, and they can be new initiatives or a commitment to sustain on-going efforts.

Illustrative commitments include:

- A government committing to report on progress toward increased access to civil and criminal justice, as part of its Voluntary National Review reporting on SDG16
- A private sector firm announcing goals for pro bono or in-kind assistance to address a justice need
- An academic institution, a development organization, and a donor announcing a new collaboration to study the relationship between access to justice and public health

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
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- An international organization announcing plans to produce a best-practices guide on addressing particular challenges to access to justice
- A government announcing legislative, regulatory, or policy changes facilitating quality non-lawyer or paralegal support for citizens
- A health, labor, or education ministry announcing legal awareness programs
- A court system announcing a new pilot for on-line small claims dispute resolution
- States committing to gather and report on their citizens' legal needs, following the OECD's technical guidance on conducting legal needs surveys

How will Commitments to Justice be highlighted at the Forum?

Commitments to Justice will be highlighted throughout the Forum, April 29-May 2, 2019, in the Hague, with the final day, May 2, focused in particular on showcasing commitments and spurring action by a wide range of organizations and institutions. The commitments will be featured on WJP's website and social media as well as that of its co-producing partners and through outreach to the media. WJP would be pleased to coordinate these outreach activities with participating organizations seeking to highlight their Commitments to Justice at the Forum.

How will Commitments to Justice be registered and tracked after the Forum?

In addition to listing all commitments on its Forum website, WJP will coordinate registration of any Commitments to Justice highlighted at its Forum on the [UN Partnerships for the SDGs: Global Registry of Voluntary Commitments and Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships](#), where organizations can also post subsequent updates and progress reports.