

Megan Hirst



Call: 2015 (2006 - Supreme Court of Queensland, Australia)

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Profile

Megan Hirst practices in international criminal law, and international human rights law. She has over 15 years of experience in international institutions and courts, with a particular focus on victims' representation and the post-conflict protection of human rights.

Although Megan has significant experience in various aspects of international criminal proceedings, she has a particular interest in victims' representation before international criminal tribunals. From 2019 until 2022 she was International Lead Co-Lawyer for victims participating as civil parties in Case 002/02 at the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia. At the International Criminal Court (ICC), she is representing victims in pre-trial proceedings concerning crimes against the Rohingya in Myanmar, and the opening of an ICC investigation on Afghanistan. She has also previously represented victims in the ICC case against Dominic Ongwen, a former LRA commander in the conflict in Northern Uganda. Previously Megan worked in-house for both the ICC and the Special Tribunal for Lebanon on victims' participation issues, in which capacity she undertook litigation and played a key role in the development of policies and legal frameworks.

Outside of victims' representation Megan's international criminal work has included post-conviction litigation before the United Nations Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals

and advising the Registry of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon on a range of issues including immunities and international administrative law.

Megan also has experience advising on questions of public international law and international human rights law, in relation to litigation before both international bodies (such as the UN Special Procedures and Treaty Bodies) and domestic courts.

Megan's domestic practice has focused on children's rights. Together with Caoilfhionn Gallagher QC, she represented more than 45 complainant core participants before the Nottinghamshire Councils strand of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. She has also represented child claimants in community care and age assessment cases.

In addition to her work as counsel, Megan regularly leads international projects relating to human rights and rule of law development. She has particularly extensive experience in policy development and capacity building work in the East Timor, where she has worked since 2005. Her work there focuses on responses to historical mass atrocities and the strengthening of the justice sector. She also works regularly with local organisations focused on strengthening judicial responses to domestic and sexual violence in East Timor.

Megan is widely published on issues relating to international criminal justice and human rights. She co-edited the leading book on the law of victims' participation in international criminal tribunals, published in 2017.

What the directories say

"She is a first-rate lawyer who is incredibly committed to her clients. She has a wonderful advocacy style, calm but authoritative." - Legal 500 2024

"She is an incredibly hardworking, wonderful advocate." - Chambers and Partners 2024

"Megan is able to quickly assess legal points and strategic opportunities. She has in-depth knowledge of the workings of the ICC and victim participation specifically...a crisp writer and a fine practitioner who combines bold thinking and pragmatism to achieve results." - Chambers and Partners 2023

"Megan is a highly skilled technical lawyer and litigator." - Legal 500 2023

"Incredibly knowledgeable in her field and one of the leading lawyers for victim representation in the International Court. She is incredibly dedicated to her clients and finds genius solutions to difficult situations." - Chambers and Partners 2022

"A true subject matter expert, she is strategic and insightful in her approach. Excellent legal drafting and oral advocacy. Exemplary interpersonal skills, including managing challenging situations with diplomacy and integrity." - Legal 500 2022

Publications

Effective Legal Representation for Participating Victims: Principles, Challenges and Some Solutions” in R. Jasini and G. Townsend (eds), *Advancing the Impact of Victim Participation at the International Criminal Court: Bridging the Gap Between Research and Practice*, November 2020 (co-authored with Sandra Sahyouni).

“Valuing victim participation: why we need better systems to evaluate victims’ participation at the ICC”, in *Victims at the Center of Justice: From 1998 to 2018: Reflections on the Promises and the Reality of Victim Participation at the ICC*, FIDH, December 2018.

Megan Hirst and Kinga Tibori-Szabo (eds), *Victim Participation in International Criminal Justice* (Springer/Asser Press), 2017.

“Community Dispute Resolution in Timor-Leste: A legal and human rights analysis”, Access to Justice Brief published by Counterpart International (September 2016).

“Victims’ Participation and Reparations in International Criminal Proceedings”, in Scott Sheeran and Sir Nigel Rodley (eds), *Routledge Handbook of International Human Rights Law* (Routledge, 2013).

“Children and the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR) in Timor-Leste”, 2009, UNICEF Innocenti Expert papers on children and transitional justice (co-authored with Ann Linnarsson).

“An Unfinished Truth: An Analysis of the Commission of Truth and Friendship’s Final Report on the 1999 Atrocities in East Timor”, International Center for Transitional Justice, Occasional Paper Series, March 2009.

“Too Much Friendship, Too Little Truth: Monitoring Report on the Commission of Truth and Friendship in Indonesia and Timor-Leste”, International Center for Transitional Justice, Occasional Paper Series, January 2008.

“Justice Abandoned? An Assessment of the Serious Crimes Process in East Timor”, International Center for Transitional Justice, Occasional Paper Series, June 2005 (co-authored with Howard Varney).

“X v The Commonwealth: Inherent Requirements and the HIV Soldier: casualties of the anti-discrimination battlefield?” *University of Queensland Law Journal*, vol.21, no.1 (2000), 102.

Education

LLM (International law) (1st), University of Cambridge (2002)

LLB (1st Class Honours), University of Queensland (2000)

BA (History) (1st Class Honours), University of Queensland (2000)

Languages

Tetum

Dutch

Related practice areas

International Law

Actions Against the Police and Public Authorities

Public International Law

International Criminal Law

International Human Rights Law

Children's Rights Group