

Pushing the boundaries of transitional justice

In a keynote address during last month's regional launch of the UN Study on Children Deprived of Liberty at the University of Pretoria, former SA Constitutional Court justice Albie Sachs made a compelling case for the African conception of restorative justice as an important contribution that we, as Africans, can make to the world. In a [Mail & Guardian](#) analysis, Solomon Dersso notes that last year was a watershed year for transitional justice in Africa 'and **2020 is the year to make Sachs's call for Africa's contribution to the global discourse and practice of justice a reality**'. 'After almost a decade of legislative process, the AU assembly, the highest decision-making body of the AU, adopted the AU transitional justice policy in February last year. This was after the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights – the AU's premier human rights body – adopted a landmark study on Transitional Justice and Human and Peoples' Rights in Africa.' Dersso believes that together, these two normative documents present a conception of transitional justice reflective of the richness of the norms and transitional experiences on the continent. 'Although these documents draw on useful contributions of existing dominant models and experiences, they also seek to problematise and rectify the major drawbacks of the mainstream discourse and practice of transitional justice. In so doing, they seek to map new frontiers of transitional justice, distilling the lessons from the transitional justice experiences of various African countries and the restorative justice approaches of indigenous justice thoughts and practices.'