

Dear members and sympathisers of VIRA,
On Monday 26 November 2018 at 12h30,
VIRA, in cooperation with the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies, organizes
a lunchconference (in English) about

**“The Trial of the Kaiser :
The Dawn of International Prosecution”**

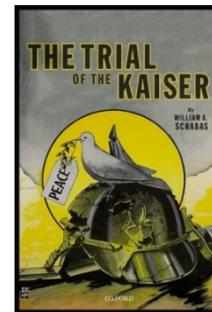
by

Prof. dr. William SCHABAS

Professor of International Law,
Middlesex University London,
Universiteit Leiden, Sciences Po Paris



He will be introduced by
Prof. dr. Jan WOUTERS
Professor international law
and international organisations, KU Leuven



Within days of the armistice on 11 November 1918, the victors began planning a trial of Kaiser Wilhelm II. Article 227 of the Treaty of Versailles of 1919 accordingly pledged a trial of the Kaiser by an international tribunal, “for a supreme offence against international morality and the sanctity of treaties”. But the Netherlands gave asylum to the Kaiser and refused to extradite him and the tribunal was never established.

This landmark attempt to establish the first ever international criminal tribunal was part of an extremely dynamic period in international lawmaking, but enthusiasm soon died down and the project was not seriously revived until World War II. Because of the Wilhelm II precedent, the idea of executing the World War II criminals without trial was immediately set aside and the Nürnberg Tribunal was established (1945). Later on, special international criminal tribunals were created for the former Yugoslavia (1993), Rwanda (1994), Sierra Leone (2002), Lebanon (2009) and Kosovo (2015). Finally, the International Criminal Court was established in 2002 as a permanent body. To date there have been 3 convictions and 6 acquittals, with several other cases at the trial or pre-trial stage.

Much progress has been made since the attempted trial of the Kaiser. But is the current international criminal law system really that effective? How far are we from an effective sanctioning system with regard to crimes against humanity, genocide, etc.? Is there scope for empowering the ICC with universal jurisdiction? And why does Africa appear to be so reluctant?

This conference will take place on Monday **26 november 2018 at 12h30** at the University Foundation, Egmontstraat 11, 1000 Brussels (Metro Trône, parking Porte de Namur). Aperitif from 12u00.

For participation, please register before **Thursday 22 November 2018 noon** via :

- the website of VIRA, <http://www.vira-org.be/inschrijving-vira-activiteit-lunchconferentie/> or

- an e-mail to vira@mail.org or

- a telephone-call to VIRA-secretary M. Lieven VERMOTE (0032 2 672 92 49 or 0032 498 22 02 75)

and transfer to banking account IBAN BE87 4300 7406 0194 BIC KREDBEBB of VIRA, Egmontstraat 11, 1000 Brussels, of 40 € for members of VIRA, 45 € for non-members and 12 € for students.

Cancellations must be entered by Friday 23 November noon. There will be no reimbursement afterwards.

Johan SWINNEN, Chairman of VIRA

Prof. dr. William SCHABAS

Professor William A. Schabas is a leading international authority and both a theoretician and a practitioner on international criminal law. He is currently professor of international law at Middlesex University in London and professor of international human law and human rights in Leiden. He is also distinguished visiting faculty at the School of International Affairs of Sciences Po in Paris.

Professor Schabas (°1950 in Cleveland USA; Canadian and Irish nationality) holds Bachelor and Master of Arts in History degrees from the University of Toronto, as well as Bachelor, Master and Doctor of Laws degrees from the University of Montreal. He is a doctor honoris causa of Northwestern University (Chicago), Case Western University (Cleveland), Copenhagen University and Dalhousie University (Halifax).

Professor Schabas drafted the 2010 and 2015 United Nations quinquennial reports on the death penalty. He was a member of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission and chairman of the international Commission to investigate violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

He has been a lawyer and legal counsel in litigation before the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (The Hague), the European Court of Human Rights (Strasbourg) and the United Nations Human Rights Committee (Geneva).

He is the author of more than twenty books and 400 academic journal articles in the fields of human rights, international criminal law, war crimes, genocide, death penalty etc. His writings are often cited in judgments of international and national courts.

Professor Schabas is an Officer of the Order of Canada, a member of the Royal Irish Academy and honorary chairman and emeritus professor of the Irish Centre for Human Rights, Galway.

Prof. dr. Jan WOUTERS



Jan Wouters is full professor of international law and international organisations at the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL), Jean Monnet chair *ad personam* for “European Union and global governance” and founding director of the Institute for International Law and of the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies, an interdisciplinary research centre that has been recognized as Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence and as an KU Leuven Centre of Excellence. In addition, he is chairman of the Council for the Management of International Affairs of KU Leuven. Prof. Wouters studied law and philosophy at the University of Antwerp, at Yale University and at Harvard University. He is a visiting professor at Sciences Po (Paris), the Luiss Università (Rome), the Europacollege of Bruges and at Columbia University (New York). He published 65 books, 130 newspaper-articles and about 200-tal chapters in internationally edited books.

Coming activities of VIRA

Wednesday 19 December 2018 (12h30) at the University Foundation: Guido GRYSEELS, Managing Director of the AfricaMuseum of Tervueren about the re-opening and the re-arrangement of the AfricaMuseum.

Wednesday 23 January 2019 (18h00) at the headquarters of the KBC-Bank, Havenlaan Brussels: annual new-year reception with Didier REYNDERS, Minister of Foreign Affairs, about the priorities of Belgium as a member of the UN-Security Council (2019-2021)

Becoming a member of VIRA

You can become a member of VIRA by filling in the membership form to be found on the website of VIRA (<http://www.vira-org.be/lidmaatschap/>) and by making a bank transfer of 35 € tot the account of VIRA. This transfer stands for the membership fee for the remaining months of 2018 and for the year 2019. Persons younger than 30 and full-time students are exempted from paying the membership fee.