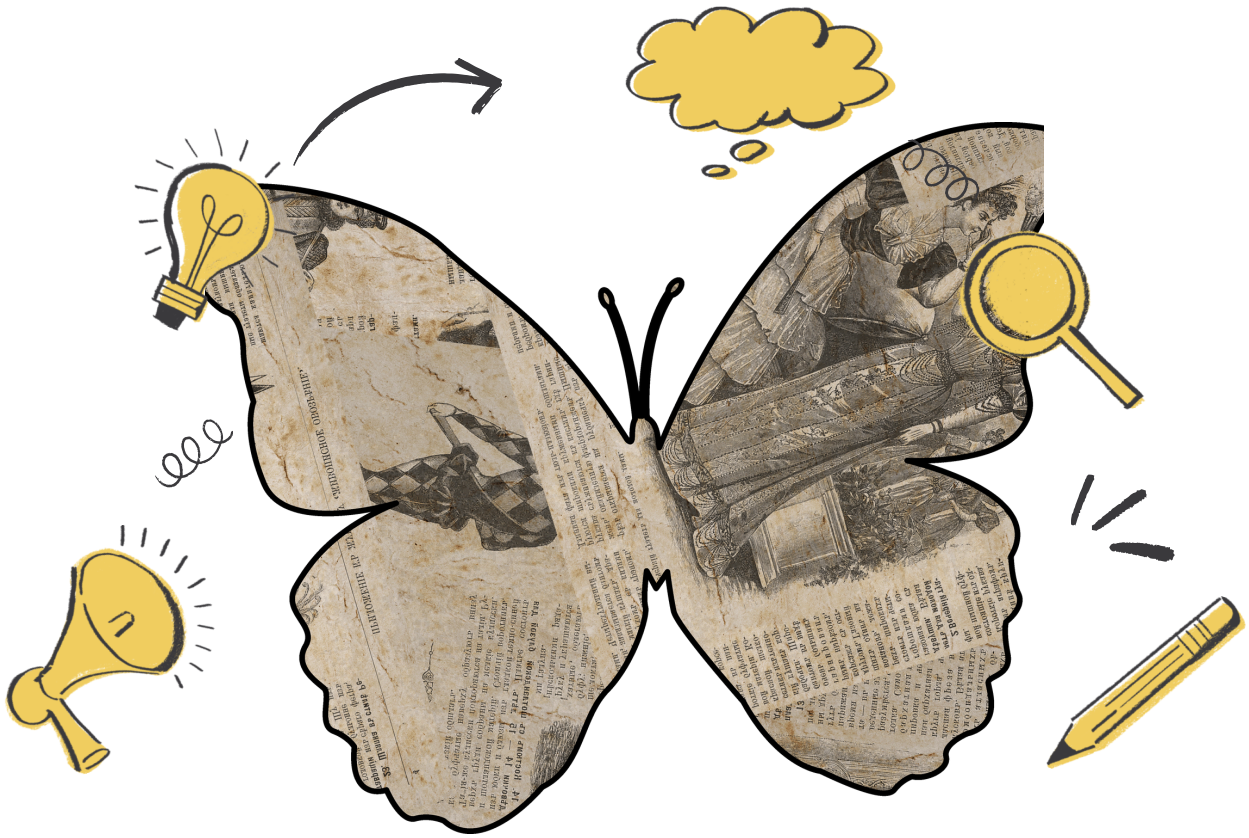
Law and Development
University of Antwerp

November
2026

LDRG Newsletter



Dear colleagues and friends,

Welcome to the Law & Development newsletter. Once a month, we bring the wider group together in one place: member publications, past events, and invitations to what's coming next. It's also meant to be a bit more than a bulletin, a way of keeping us connected as a community.

How it works

For the monthly newsletter, send us information by the last Monday of the month at lawanddevelopment@uantwerpen.be and we will include them in the following month's edition.

What you can send

- Invitations to collaborate on a specific topic, such as a journal issue, a grant, or a blog post
- Recent Events or Outputs (not limited to Publications)
- But also the fun things!
    - Personal updates - New positions, New projects, A festival you'd like to tell the group about or invite people to join
    - A social event, museum exhibition, or interest to research members

And so on...

Happy reading, and we look forward to hearing from you or meeting you at one of the upcoming events!

What's Happening This Month

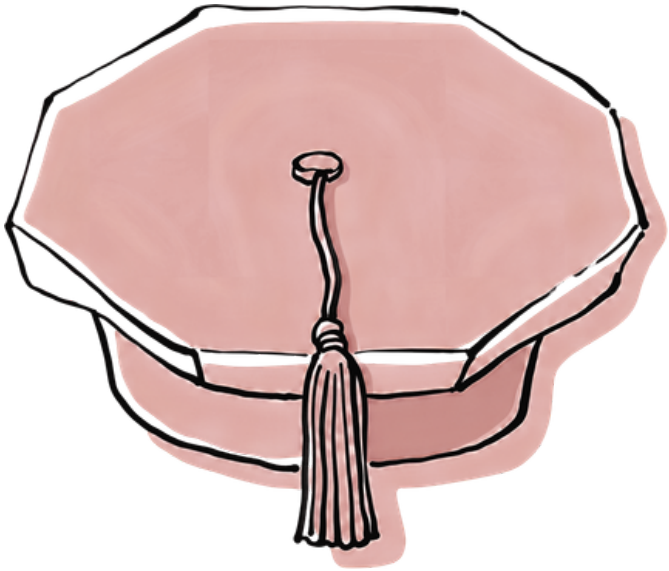
Public Doctoral Defences

6th November 2026

Joint PhD UHasselt and UAntwerpen
Adjudicating economic and social rights in the context of structural crises: The quest for enhanced legal accountability - **Marion Sandner**

Please confirm your attendance by emailing marion.sandner@uhasselt.be





19th November 2026

Preventing Adverse Human Rights Impacts in Global Value Chains by Contracts and Contract Law: The Integrated Protection Model - **Begüm Kilimcioğlu**

Attend a special event on the occassion of Begüm's defence!

"What Private Law Can (or Cannot) do for Human Rights"

11.30 to 14.00 on 19th November, Room City Campus S.E.122
More details and registration link here

Joint Seminar

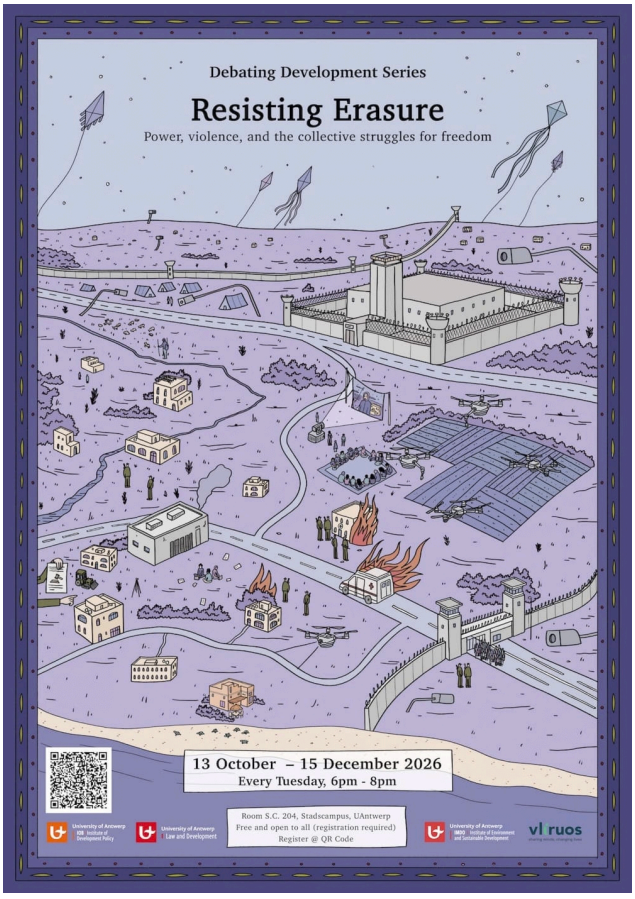
Government and Law x Law and Development Research Groups

Visiting Researchers **Saad Zilali** and **Blerina Duli** will present during a joint seminar of two research groups.

13 November 2026

See more details here.





Debating Development: Resisting Erasure

13 October - 15 December 2026

Our group members are co-organising this year's Debating Development Series together with other faculties and institutes at the University of Antwerp. Join a session every Tuesday from 13th October to 15 December in Antwerp from 18:00-20:00. Find all details here.

Meet New LDRG Members



Lorena Bisignano joins as an FWO doctoral researcher under the supervision of Professor Tomaso Ferrando

Lorena is a FWO doctoral researcher working at the intersection of business and human rights, environmental law and sustainable finance. Her research explores how banks can be held accountable for human rights and environmental harm linked to their financing activities, and how the law can help steer finance towards a more just and sustainable future. With a background in civil society research and advocacy, she is passionate about human rights, environmental justice and the role of law in driving change, both within and beyond academia.

Géraldine Mbolo joins as an FWO Doctoral Researcher under the supervision of Professor Wouter Vandenhole

Her research project examines how CEDAW and the Maputo Protocol (the flagship women's human rights instrument in Africa) could accommodate gender complementarity within marriage and cohabitation to remedy epistemic injustice in the definition of women's human rights and strengthen their authentic universality.



Dr. Héctor Herrera joins the LDRG as a voluntary staff

Dr. Héctor Herrera is a legal scholar and development researcher holding a PhD in Development Studies from the University of Antwerp and an LLB from the University of the Andes, Colombia. His research examines urban climate governance, climate finance, and climate justice through political ecology and socio-legal perspectives. He also serves as Senior Officer for Urban Research, Innovation and Development at the ICLEI World Secretariat.

Raphaëlle Gauthier joins as FWO Doctoral Researcher under the supervision of Professor Tomaso Ferrando

Her research focuses on the neocolonial risks of integrating Rāhui — an ancestral Ma'ohi marine governance practice from French Polynesia — into blue carbon credit mechanisms. Through a decolonial legal lens and decolonial methods of research, I will examine whether what looks like recognition of Indigenous knowledge may in fact constitute a new form of colonialism: blue colonialism.



Professor Tarcisio Magalhaes joins the LDRG as an Affiliate Researcher

Growing up in Brazil, I saw early on how much a tax system shapes people's lives: who gets rich, who stays poor, and how wide the inequality gap grows, both within and across societies. These questions have followed me throughout my academic career, even as I repeatedly moved between countries and institutions.

Since I came to the University of Antwerp in 2021, my research has focused on how taxation steers individuals and firms towards or away from socially and environmentally responsible behavior, how it enables or prevents countries from raising the revenue they need for sustainable development, and, more recently, how it can entrench or reduce wealth concentration at the top. My work is sociolegal, critical and comparative, drawing on interdisciplinary and mixed-method approaches. I'm very excited to join the Law & Development group and look forward to working together on projects aimed at advancing justice and human rights.

An open letter to European university leaders launched

UNIVERSITIES FOR JUSTICE

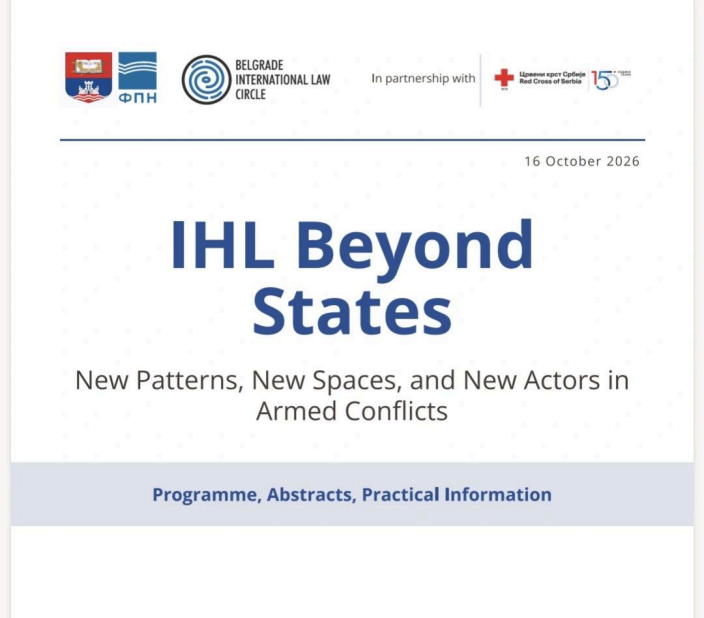
European universities against complicity

Universities for Justice is a Europe-wide campaign bringing together university staff, students and alumni to mobilise universities in solidarity with Palestine. We call on universities to end cooperation with complicit Israeli institutions, press for action at EU level, and defend academic freedom and Palestinian academic life.

Staff, students and alumni can sign our Open Letter. Universities and other knowledge institutions can sign the Institutional Appeal, while organisations, unions and individual academic leaders can endorse it.

READ & SIGN THE OPEN LETTER →

LDRG Highlights from October



Karla Grković Prica presented at the IHL Beyond States conference on 16 October 2026 at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Political Science, in Belgrade, Serbia.

She analysed the position of corporate actors in armed conflict and potential avenues for holding corporations internationally responsible for involvement in international crimes.

Tomaso Ferrando taught students in the Master Degree in World Politics and International Relations at the University of Pavia as a visiting professor

The lecture linked the idea of 'food systems as a commons' with the structural causes of food insecurity.











VLIR-UOS TEAMs Project launched at Wolaida Sodo University, Ethiopia

From **26 to 29th October 2026**, the VLIR-UOS-funded TEAM Project "Durable solutions through a human rights-based approach for displaced women and children in the Omo-Gibe River Basin, Southern Ethiopia" was officially launched at Wolaita Sodo University. The five-year project is a collaboration between the law schools of the University of Antwerp, Ghent University and Wolaita Sodo University. It aims to strengthen Wolaita Sodo University's institutional capacity in research, education and societal engagement.

As part of this capacity building, two PhD candidates, **Tamene Ena Heliso** and **Teketel T. Labena**, have been selected to carry out research within the project. **Prof. Wouter Vandenhole** and **Dr Anne Oloo** travelled to Ethiopia to represent the Belgian partners at the launch. Colleagues from Ghent University, **Prof. Eva Brems** and **Prof. Giselle Corradi**, took part in the launch activities online. During the four-day visit, the team delivered a training on human rights-based approach capacity building to Wolaita Sodo staff, alongside institutional meetings with the university administration (including the University President, Dr Guche Gule, and Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer, **Dr Zewdneh Tomass Tonjo**).

Upcoming Opportunities for Engagement



Winter/Summer School: Critical Approaches to Global Food Law and Policy

1-5 February 2027 in Antwerp and 5 days in June/July in Rome

Applications Open!

With the support of the Law & Development Research Group (University of Antwerp), Università degli studi Roma TRE and Terra Nuova, and with the technical participation of the #Right2Food Team of the FAO, the third edition of the Winter/Summer school on Critical approaches to Global Food Law and Policy will be organised.

More details here

Application Deadline: **3 December 2026. If you require a visa,** please apply before 5 November 2026.

Can we — legal researchers, law lecturers, lawyers, judges and NGO members working in Europe — imagine and develop ways of carrying out our work in a decolonial manner?

Join the international conference of the Decolonising Legal Methods in Europe Project.

More details here





Call for Papers

Criminological Perspectives on Palestine 2027: Atrocity Crimes and Questions of Responsibility, Complicity & Accountability

March 31st – April 2nd, 2027, Faculty of Law and Criminology, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels, Belgium.

The deadline for abstract submission is **31 January 2027.**

See more details here

LDRG in the News!

Waarom Oekraïners blijven terugvechten - Dr. Deborah Casalin

Dr Casalin argues here that calls for fewer weapons and negotiations overlook Ukrainians' daily experience of Russian attacks and occupation. For them, armed self-defence is a matter of survival, rather than a rejection of peace.

De Morgen, 20 October 2026

Read here

Van "mijn land is verdeeld" tot "wie zou het beter hebben gedaan?": drie Antwerpenaren over verkiezingen in herkomstland

Professor Tarcrisio Diniz Magalhaes interviewed for a newsreport on the Gazet van Antwerpen, 31 October 2026

Read here

Het uiteindelijke doel van deze besparingen: de privatisering van de universiteiten

Several LDRG members joined this opinion piece published by De Standaard, 7 October 2026

Read here

Featured Publications

- **Arınç Onat Kılıç** on ESG verification in debt swaps: "**From conservation to value capture: how ESG verification in debt swaps instrumentalises conservation for surplus value capture" in the Transnational Legal Theory Journal. Arinç also contributed to an OECD report titled "Guidance on Innovation Financing for SIDS".**
- **Marion Sandner wrote for the Strasbourg Observers about a recent case - titled "International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and International Movement ATD Fourth World v. Belgium: Drawing a Red Line against begging bans and the stigmatization of people living in poverty".**



Latest Conversations from Our Blog

Law and Development Conversations

A blog dedicated to critical conversations in Law and Development scholarship, inspired by the intellectual legacy of late Professor Koen De Feyter

[The Weaponization of Poverty and Geography in the Brazilian Elections]

Michael Marcondes Smith

[The International Order After Gaza: Failures, Emancipatory Possibilities, and Decolonial Futures]

Raphael Banti

[Towards a "Super" Independent Accountability Mechanism in Development Finance?]

Janet Jebichii Sego

[From Cultural Property to Living Heritage: UNESCO and the Paradoxes of Heritage]

Pauno Soirila

Assembled by Devanshi Saxena and Marion Sandner

Please feel free to **forward this newsletter** to your networks. Anyone not yet on the mailing list can subscribe by emailing lawanddevelopment@uantwerpen.be with the subject line **"Subscribe to the Newsletter" or subscribe on our LinkedIn page.**

Law and Development
University of Antwerp

Spokesperson:

Tomaso Ferrando

LinkedIn