

Call for Papers
African Consortium for Law and Religion Studies
International Conference

16-19 May 2027

Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique

Theme: Law, Religion, and Accountability in Africa

The African Consortium for Law and Religion Studies (ACLARS) invite scholars, policymakers, religious and cultural leaders, practitioners, and civil society actors to submit papers for an international conference to be held at the University of Mondlane in Mozambique, 16-18 May 2027. The conference will address law, religion, and accountability in Africa, focusing on how legal systems, religious and cultural traditions, and social institutions can help promote responsible governance and protect the dignity of individuals and communities.

Throughout Africa, religion continues to be a significant source of moral authority, social structure, and governmental legitimacy. Religious organizations, doctrines, and authorities are pivotal in molding public life, mediating conflicts, mobilizing social movements, and influencing legal and political discourse. African states concurrently contend with enduring governance issues, including corruption, institutional fragility, human rights abuses, and inconsistent law enforcement. These dynamics prompt pressing inquiries regarding accountability: who is responsible for holding authority accountable, by what standards, and through which institutional frameworks? The interplay between law, religion or belief, and accountability is consequently intricate and significantly impactful. Religious traditions frequently offer robust ethical frameworks for justice, integrity, stewardship, and accountability. Religious actors and institutions may also become entangled in conflicts regarding authority, legitimacy, and governance. In numerous African contexts, legal systems coexist with religious and customary normative frameworks, resulting in heterogeneous legal environments where accountability issues must be addressed across various realms of authority.

This conference aims to analyze the interplay between religious norms, legal institutions, and accountability mechanisms within African societies. Participants are encouraged to examine both beneficial and contentious functions of religion or belief in influencing legal responsibility, fostering ethical governance, enhancing human dignity, and confronting social injustice. The conference will examine the role of the rule of law in ensuring that public authority is exercised within constitutional frameworks that protect rights and prevent abuse of power. Also, it will explore the contribution of social ethics, including religious moral traditions and civic values, in shaping cultures of responsibility and integrity in public life. Comparative and interdisciplinary approaches are encouraged.

Submissions may encompass, but are not restricted to, the following themes:

1. Religious and Democratic Responsibility

- Religious authority and civic responsibility in African governance
- Religious influence and electoral integrity

2. Jurisprudence, Theology and Constitutional Theory

- Constitutional safeguarding of freedom of religion or belief in Africa
- Secularism, pluralism, and constitutional architecture
- Judicial interaction with religion or belief in African jurisprudence

3. Legal Pluralism and Normative Authority

- Interactions between state law, religious law and customary law
- Hybrid responsibility frameworks within pluralistic legal systems
- Religious courts and conflict resolution systems

4. Religion, Morality and Corruption Prevention

- Religious ethics and civic integrity
- Religious organizations and anti-corruption initiatives
- The ethical condemnation of corruption within African religious and cultural systems

5. Accountability in Religion and Human Rights

- Religious involvement in global human rights standards including gender-based violence
- Religious entities and transitional justice
- Religious responses to state violence and oppression

6. Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding

- Religious mediation and conflict resolution
- Religious entities in post-conflict accountability mechanisms

7. Accountability in Religious Institutions

- Governance frameworks within religious institutions
- Fiscal accountability and transparency within religious communities
- Regulatory framework governing religious groups or humanistic associations

8. Emerging Concerns

- Religious organizations and gender equity
- Climate justice, religious/cultural/humanistic conviction, and legal responsibility
- Youth movements, religion, and campaigning for social justice

In sum, we seek papers that examine critically the nexus of LAW, RELIGION, and ACCOUNTABILITY in the AFRICAN CONTEXT, pertaining to questions of religious freedom, power, authority, hierarchy, and agency. Proposals will be evaluated on their analytical clarity, empirical evidence, comparative value, and relevance to the conference theme.

Submission instructions

In addition to the above-suggested topics, ACLARS is willing to accept contributions relevant to the field of law and religion from all interested persons for the 2027 Conference. Priority will however be given to proposals that are relevant to the overall theme of the conference. It is imperative that these contributions be placed in the African context. Abstracts (not exceeding 250 words) should be submitted by **30 September 2026**. To be considered, abstracts and author information must be submitted using the online Proposal Submission Form you can access by clicking on the preferred language here: [English](#) [French](#) [Portuguese](#). Each individual author may submit only one proposal. The conference Programme Committee will notify successful applicants by 7 December 2026.