



**Ratification of the Statute of the International Criminal Court by the Republic of Armenia. Problems and Process**

Conference - Yerevan, April 6, 2013



American University of Armenia



International and Comparative Law Center - Armenia



Coalition for the International Criminal Court



International Committee of the Red Cross

**RATIFICATION OF THE STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT BY THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA: PROBLEMS AND PROCESS**

**6 APRIL 2013**

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA**

**PANEL BIOGRAPHIES AND ABSTRACTS**

**Panel One: Ratification of the Rome Statute**

Mr Armen Baibourtian

*Biography:* Mr Armen Baibourtian (Armenia) is the Senior Adviser to the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the United Nations Development Programme Resident Representative in Armenia since May 2008. He holds doctorates in Modern World History from Yerevan State University and in International Studies from Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi). A diplomat by profession, he held the position of the Deputy Permanent Representative of Armenia to the UN from 1993 until 1995 focusing upon international security and conflict resolution issues. He served as Armenia's first Consul General in Los Angeles from 1995 until 1997 and later as its first Ambassador to India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Indonesia from 2000 until 2004. He twice served as Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia between 1997 and 2000 and from 2004 until 2008 with portfolios in International Organisations, Europe, America, Asia-Pacific, Africa and Legal Issues. In 1998, he was the head of the Armenian delegation to the Rome Conference that concluded the Statute of the International Criminal Court in which capacity he addressed the Assembly. From 2005 until 2006, he led negotiations with the European Commission on the European Union European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan.

*Abstract:* Armenia supported the establishment of the International Criminal Court, agreeing that the ICC should have jurisdiction over genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, grave violations of humanitarian law in international and non-international armed conflicts and aggression. However, clear definitions in the Rome Statute were required for each of the crimes. The position of Armenia was that the ICC should be independent of the UN Security Council and any State. States must not refuse to provide the Court with the information it requires and must be obliged to comply with Court orders. The Court should have the power to determine whether a State had fully complied with such orders. Since States were rarely willing to hold their own citizens accountable, Armenia supported Article 17 of the Statute giving limited but adequate power to the Court to determine whether States are 'unwilling' or 'unable' to act in a specific situation. This does not mean that the Court must only act when a national institution cannot discharge its responsibility. Where an institution is able to exercise its jurisdiction, the intervention of the Court is not necessary. The Court should have the authority to determine whether there is such an effective national court.



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### Ms Kirsten Meersschaert Duchens

*Biography:* Ms Kirsten Meersschaert Duchens (Netherlands) is the Regional Coordinator for Europe at the Coalition for the International Criminal Court: an international network of 2,500 civil society organizations in 150 different countries, working in partnership to strengthen international cooperation with the Court. The Coalition works to ensure that the Court is fair, effective and independent, to make justice both visible and universal and advance stronger national laws that deliver justice to victims of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Meersschaert Duchens joined the Coalition in 2007 and has headed its European department since 2011. She is a graduate of New York University, the *Universiteit van Amsterdam* and the *Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques* where she read degrees in political science, international relations and humanitarian studies. Meersschaert Duchens is an experienced advocate on international justice issues, particularly in the greater European region. She is responsible for implementing the Coalition's campaigns in 54 European and Central Asia States, in particular to promote universal ratification, effective domestic legislation, European States' and European Union support for the ICC and for the integrity of the Rome Statute and fulfilment of the principle of complementarity.

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*Abstract:* The Rome Statute is a groundbreaking treaty in international law. Creating, for the first time, a permanent institution mandated to investigate and prosecute genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and aggression, the Statute bears witness to a collective desire to ensure justice for grave international crimes. But as a treaty-based Court, the strength of the International Criminal Court rests on its membership: only a truly universal Court will be able to address these crimes wherever they occur. Indeed, the absence of some 70 States – including 13 European/Central Asian States – from the Rome Statute system presents a great challenge to the goal of ensuring an end to impunity as well as to the ICC's long-term legitimacy – one that civil society, supported by the international community, works endlessly to address. Addressing an overview of ICC membership in Europe, Meersschaert Duchens will recount the experiences of other (European) States in ratifying the Rome Statute, highlighting the principal legal and constitutional obstacles and the corresponding solutions States have found to address them. Meersschaert Duchens will also provide insight into the position and policies of the European Union on the ICC and the implications for third States not yet party to the Rome Statute.



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### Ms Tamar Tomashvili

*Biography* Ms Tamar Tomashvili served from 2008-2009 as Deputy Head of the Public International Law Department at the Ministry of Justice and as Head of the same Department from 2009-2012. Previously, she served as a Legal Adviser at the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the UN and Other International Organizations at Geneva from 2006-2007 and as Head of Human Rights Protection Unit at the General Prosecutor's Office from 2004-2005. She was a member of the negotiating team of Georgia at the Geneva Discussions from 2009-2011, negotiating an Association Agreement with the EU from 2010-2011 and working on the follow-up to the Preliminary Objections judgment of the International Court of Justice in the *Case on Application of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Georgia v. Russian Federation)*. Ms Tomashvili is co-founder and currently an associate at GRASS (Georgia's Reforms Associates), a public policy think tank and consultancy. She holds LL.M. in International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights from Geneva Academy and a Bachelor's Degree in International Law from Tbilisi State University.

*Abstract:* Ms Tomashvili's presentation will briefly analyse Georgia's experience with respect to Statute of the International Criminal Court that it ratified in 2003 by parliamentary decree number 2479. It reviews the 2003 Law on Cooperation between Georgia and the International Criminal Court defining authority in charge of cooperation with the ICC, jurisdictional issues, handling of the ICC requests, procedures related to the surrender of the person and enforcement of the ICC decision, etc. Her speech will also examine a series of amendments to the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code of Georgia aimed at implementation of the ICC Statute in 2009 and 2010, describing the need for further clarifications in relation to the definition of crimes, modes of liability, immunities (irrelevance of official capacity) and provisions addressing investigation/surrender procedures. The speech will also address the preliminary examination opened by the Office of the Prosecutor of ICC in relation to August 2008 armed conflict between the Russian Federation and Georgia, experience of national investigation and cooperation with the ICC.



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### **Panel Two: Integration of States Parties and the Rome Statute**

Professor William Schabas, OC, MRIA

*Biography:* Professor William Schabas (Canada) is professor of international law at Middlesex University in London. He also holds appointments at: the National University of Ireland Galway, where he is professor of human rights law and chairman of the Irish Centre for Human Rights; the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Beijing) as honorary professor; Kellogg College (Oxford) where he is a visiting fellow; and the Université du Québec à Montréal as *professeur associé*. Professor Schabas is also a barrister-at-law as a ‘door tenant’ at 9 Bedford Row Chambers in London.

Professor Schabas is one of the leading experts in the world on international criminal law, including the International Criminal Court. He is the author of more than twenty books dealing in whole or in part with international human rights law, including *The International Criminal Court: A Commentary on the Rome Statute* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), *Introduction to the International Criminal Court* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.), *Genocide in International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2009) and *The Abolition of the Death Penalty in International Law* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). He has also published more than 300 articles in academic journals, principally in the field of international human rights law and international criminal law. His writings have been translated into Russian, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Nepali and Albanian.

*Abstract:* The International Criminal Court enters its second decade facing many challenges. It is now a mature institution, in an operational sense, but it continues to struggle to fulfil its mandate to judge the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole. It has explored hitherto undeveloped tracks like the participation of victims in proceedings at the international level. Although during its first decade it was surrounded and supported by a community of international tribunals, most of the temporary institutions established by the United Nations are closing their doors, leaving the Court alone as the standard-bearer for international justice. It has yet to set a convincing course in the selection of situations for prosecution. Problems in this area have provoked difficulties in the relationship of the Court with many African states. A common explanation for the Court’s difficulties is shortcomings in co-operation by States in the apprehension of suspects. This may distract attention from a more serious problem: the practical difficulties of prosecution that have meant several cases have been rejected at different stages of the procedure. With about two-thirds of the world’s countries having joined the Court, its place within the international order seems confirmed. The symbolic importance of ratification of the Rome Statute cannot be underestimated, particularly by peoples who have themselves been victims of atrocity, like the Armenians.



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Judge Howard Morrison CBE, QC

*Biography:* Judge Howard Morrison (United Kingdom) was elected by the Assembly of States Parties from the Group of Western European and other States as a judge of the International Criminal Court on 11 March 2012. He serves in the Trial Division of the Court. Judge Morrison was called to the Bar of England and Wales by Grays Inn in 1977 after graduating in law and working in international development in Africa. He practised in criminal, civil and family law until 1986 when he was appointed a Resident Magistrate in Fiji before being promoted to Chief Magistrate at the time of the 1988 military coups. He was called to the Fijian Bar and then, during service as an *ad hoc* Attorney General in the Caribbean in 1989, the Bar of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court. In 1989 he was appointed an Officer of the British Empire for services to the Fijian judiciary during the military coups.

Returning to the United Kingdom, he practised for many years on the Oxford and Midland Circuit and in Courts Martial in the UK and Germany in criminal law as a prosecutor and criminal defence barrister. He was appointed a Recorder of the Crown and County Courts (a part-time judge) with authority to sit in criminal, civil and family law jurisdictions. In later years, he appeared as a defence advocate at both the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha.

Judge Morrison was appointed Queen's Counsel in 2001 and a Circuit judge (full-time) in 2004. He teaches international criminal and human rights law and has done so world-wide, also attending, and contributing to, many conferences and seminars. In 2007, he was appointed a Commander of the British Empire for services to international law. In 2008 he was elected as a Master of the Bench of Grays Inn and a Senior Judge of the Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus. In 2009 he was appointed as a Judge of the Special Tribunal for the Lebanon but was transferred to the ICTY in the same year to replace a judge who resigned.

*Abstract:* Judge Morrison will explore the nature of the principle of complementarity under Article 17 of the Rome Statute. The purpose of the International Criminal Court is to maintain, rather than dilute, State sovereignty and enhance national jurisdictions with reference to the core crimes dealt with by the Rome Statute. This purpose is exemplified by complementarity, providing that the Court cannot exercise jurisdiction unless the State concerned is 'unable' or 'unwilling' to investigate or properly prosecute the alleged offences. The scope and limitation of the principle under Article 17(1) and the criteria under Article 17(3) will be examined. The applicable principles will be illustrated with reference to the early experiences and practice of the ICC system, including the pending trials in the Kenya and Libya situations. In particular, he will consider the procedural and substantive issues arising from challenges to the jurisdiction of the Court under Article 19 of the Statute with



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special reference to the Libya situation. He will also analyse the question of jurisdiction over senior state officials under Article 27 of the Statute with reference to the Darfur situation.

In addition, Judge Morrison will address certain core procedural protections provided for accused persons and principles of fair trial under the Rome Statute, including: the primacy of the presumption of innocence, the standard of proof of 'beyond a reasonable doubt', the principles of non-retroactivity and *non bis in idem*, the default position of public hearings, the provision of competent and (where necessary) complimentary legal counsel, the right to silence and the rule against self-incrimination. In connecting this architecture to the position of acceding States, he will explore the need for States to examine and, if necessary, amend and improve national substantive and procedural law to facilitate the trial of international crimes at the national level in accordance with the standards of fairness provided by the Rome Statute. By complying with their obligations under international law, States can benefit from the principal aim of the Statute to promote high standards at the national level and develop the capacity of national judicial systems to adjudicate the most serious crimes. In this respect, he will set out the limitations on what the Court can accomplish as a matter of practical reality due to capacity and resource constraints.

### Mrs Silvana Arbia

*Biography:* Mrs Silvana Arbia (Italy) was elected on 28 February 2008 as the ICC Registrar for a five-year term. Mrs Arbia exercises her functions under the authority of the President of the Court. Mrs Arbia has extensive experience in international law, criminal law, and the judicial management aspects of international criminal law. Prior to joining the ICC, she was the Chief of Prosecutions at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), before which she was a Senior Trial Attorney and Acting Chief of Prosecutions in the Office of the Prosecutor, and led the prosecution of important cases before the ICTR. Furthermore, Ms Arbia participated in the drafting of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court as a member of Italian delegation at the 1998 Diplomatic Conference in Rome. Mrs Arbia holds a Laurea in Law from Padua University, specialising in European Union law, and is a professional judge in Italy. She has published several essays and books on human rights and children's rights.

*Abstract:* The International Criminal Court's ability to exercise its jurisdiction over genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes acts as an important deterrent of the commission of such crimes in the territories of its States Parties. Furthermore, due to its complementary nature, the ICC will only act in cases where States Parties are unwilling or unable to do so; therefore, the main responsibility to investigate and prosecute these crimes remains with States. The growing number of cases and situations before the ICC shows that it is a functioning and much-needed central player in the field of international justice. Last year, the Court's first-ever trial concluded with the first verdict issued. The achievements of the



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Court has been welcomed by the international community at large and, in particular, by its Assembly of States Parties.

It is important for States Parties to enact adequate legislation harmonising national legal systems with the Rome Statute. Implementing legislation forms the foundation for domestic trials of international crimes and is thus linked to the fundamental principle of complementarity. In creating the ICC, the Rome Statute also created a larger system of international justice which actively involves States, international and regional organisations and other relevant actors. The Court relies upon the mandatory cooperation of its States Parties to ensure the execution of judicial decisions and orders such as arrests or the tracking of suspects' assets. In addition, States Parties can enter into voluntary agreements in areas such as relocation of witnesses or enforcement of sentences.

Whilst the Armenian process of ratification has not yet been completed, there are important roles that non-States Parties can play in relation to the ICC. For example, qualified nationals of non-States Parties can act as counsel before the Court, thus allowing for a mutually beneficial dialogue between the Armenian legal professions and the ICC.

### **Panel Three: The Rome Statute and the Judicial System of Armenia**

#### Dr Vladimir Vardanyan

*Biography* Dr Vladimir Vardanyan (Armenia) holds a bachelor's degree in jurisprudence from Yerevan State University (2000). In 2005, he defended his doctoral thesis in international law (entitled 'The Foundation of State Responsibility for Genocide') at Yerevan State University. Since 2006, Dr Vardanyan has headed the International Treaties Department of the Legal Advisory Service of Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia. He is also a lecturer in law at Yerevan State University and the Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) University. Dr Vardanyan is the author of more than twenty articles in Armenian and Russian concerning international law and the constitutional law of Armenia. Dr Vardanyan is a member of the International Association of Genocide Scholars, the International Society for Military Law and the Law of War, the Board of Editors of All-Russian journal *Pravovaya Iniciativa* and the Centre of International and Comparative Law of Armenia.

*Abstract* In his presentation, Dr Vardanyan will address the legal obstacles concerning ratification of the Rome Statute by the Republic of Armenia. He will focus upon the principal legal findings contained in the decision of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia concerning the provisions of the Rome Statute. He will consider the advantages and disadvantages of a putative amendment of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia making special provision for the ICC. He will also consider the conditions for



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ratification of the ICC Statute by the Republic of Armenia as well as the specific constitutional issue of the power of presidential pardon.

Dr Artur Ghambaryan

*Biography* Dr Artur Ghambaryan is the head of the Department of the Legal Support and European Integration of the General Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Armenia. In 2001, he graduated from Yerevan State University with a bachelor of laws and in 2003 with a master of laws (LL.M.) in jurisprudence. In 2012, he defended his doctoral thesis in law entitled 'The Constitutional Foundations of Justice in the Republic of Armenia' at the Russian-Armenian (Slavonic) State University.

Dr Taron Simonyan

*Biography* Taron Simonyan (Armenia) was awarded a doctorate in law from Yerevan State University, defending his thesis ('The development features of unstable and transitional social systems and their statehood: a synergetic approach') in 2012. Since 2010, he has been a lecturer in law at the Yerevan State University Faculty of Law. He is the author of several articles concerning the theoretical problems of statehood and law as well as public international law. He has been a practising advocate in the Republic of Armenia since 2010. In the same year, he co-founded the International and Comparative Law Centre of Armenia with other young scholars and has been its Director since 2012. Since 2008 he has been a member of the Bar Association of the RA, and since 2012 – the Executive Director.

**Panel Four: Ratification of the Rome Statute: Benefits and Risks**

Mr Nicholas Koumjian

*Biography:* Mr Nicholas Koumjian (United States of America) is an international criminal law specialist in private practice as an attorney in the law firm of 'Geragos and Geragos' in Los Angeles, representing defendants and victims before the International Criminal Court. He worked as a prosecutor for twenty years in Los Angeles and since 2000 has worked in various international criminal tribunals. He was a prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and later at the State Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina. He headed the UN-staffed Serious Crimes Unit in East Timor and was Principal Trial Attorney at the Special Court for Sierra Leone in the trial of Liberian President Charles Taylor. He was also director of a US-funded human rights programme in Colombia, working on anti-corruption initiatives in Central and Eastern Europe.



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*Abstract:* Mr Koumjian will analyse the question of ratification from the perspective of one with a dozen years experience working in several different international and hybrid tribunals. Drawing upon his experiences as a prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), Special Panels for Serious Crimes (East Timor), the War Crimes section of the State Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and as defence counsel and victims' representative at the International Criminal Court, he will reflect upon the developments in international criminal justice over the last two decades, accomplishments and short-fallings and the key challenges going forward. Mr Koumjian will discuss the interplay of legal, political and practical dynamics on the evolving development of international criminal justice.

Against this background, he will identify the choices faced by small countries in determining the extent to which they will relinquish aspects of their own national sovereignty over crimes committed within their borders or by their own nationals in order to promote an international criminal justice system above national interests. He will discuss the potential opportunities to advance Armenia's interests and project its strategic priorities, particularly given the historical context of the Armenian Genocide, the massacres perpetrated in the early 1990s and the experiences of the Republic of Armenia since independence and the current geopolitical situation of the country. Mr Koumjian will raise the question Armenia's accession to the International Criminal Court poses an historic opportunity or danger to the national interest.

### Dr Armen Harutyunyan

*Biography:* Dr Armen Harutyunyan (Armenia) is the current Regional Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Central Asia since February 2011. He holds law degrees from Yerevan State University, the Institute of State and Law of the Academy of USSR and the Academy of Public Administration of the Russian Federation. From 1989 until 2002 he lectured in law at Yerevan State University and from 1997 he was a legal advisor to the Constitutional Court. In 2003, he was the second nominee of the Government of the Republic of Armenia to serve as a judge at the European Court of Human Rights. In the constitutional reform of 2005, he was a representative of former President Robert Kocharian. On 17 February 2006, Dr Harutyunyan was the first person to be elected by the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia to a six-year term as the first-ever Human Rights Ombudsman of Armenia. In April 2008, Dr Harutyunyan in his capacity as Ombudsman produced a report in which he cast doubt upon the official theory concerning the use of force against anti-government protestors supporting the defeated candidate Levon Ter-Petrosyan in the disputed 2008 presidential election.

*Abstract:* Dr Harutyunyan will examine the implications of ratification of the Statute of the International Criminal Court for the legal and constitutional systems of the Republic of Armenia. In particular, he will examine the potential consequences for the judicial system



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concerning the adjudication of the international crimes of aggression, war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide that are already proscribed under Chapter 33 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia. Pursuant to the principle of complementarity under Article 17(1) of the ICC Statute, he will assess the ‘ability’ and ‘willingness’ of the judicial system of the Republic of Armenia to adjudicate these crimes in conformity with the standards of fairness and judicial neutrality demanded by the ICC system. He will consider the potential changes that could result from ratification of the ICC Statute for the improvement of national standards of fair trial and human rights.

Drawing upon his experience as a former Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Armenia, he will comment on the likelihood of ratification in light of the legal and political factors engaged. He will consider whether ratification would play a beneficial or detrimental role in the development of the Republic of Armenia and, in particular, the practical steps that could be taken to prepare the legal professions and governmental authorities for the post-ratification demands. He will examine the ‘Artsakh factor’ in terms of the role of the ‘frozen conflict’ with the Republic of Azerbaijan in the question of ratification. He will also touch upon the ‘Russian factor’, considering whether ratification would affect the most important alliance of the Republic of Armenia with the Russian Federation in light of the policy of the latter to not ratify the Statute. Finally, he will comment upon the ‘judicial culture’ of the Republic of Armenia and assess how it could be integrated into the international judicial culture in light of the experiences of Armenia as a member of the Council of Europe and as a party to the European Convention on Human Rights.

### Dr Arman Sarvarian

*Biography* From September 2011, Dr Sarvarian (United Kingdom and Armenia) has been lecturer in law at the University of Surrey. His expertise is in public international law, particularly international procedural law, the law of international responsibility, territorial dispute resolution and the law on the use of force. He holds an LL.B. from the School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London), an LL.M. in public international law from the University of Cambridge and a Ph.D. in public international law from University College London. In 2011, he defended his doctoral thesis ('Professional Ethics at the International Bar') under the supervision of Professor Philippe Sands QC. His thesis, which concerns common ethical standards for counsel appearing before international courts and tribunals (including the ICC), will be published in September 2012 as a monograph by Oxford University Press. He has written six articles published in prestigious legal journals on public international law, including the *European Journal of International Law*, *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, *The Law and Practice of International Courts and Tribunals* and *European Journal of Human Rights*. He is a member of the English Bar, the International Bar Association Task Force on Counsel Ethics in International Arbitration and the International Law Association Committee on the Use of Force.



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*Abstract* Dr Sarvarian will examine the benefits and dangers of the putative ratification of the Statute of the International Criminal Court from the perspective of the Republic of Armenia. The central question of his presentation is whether ratification by the Republic of Armenia would be beneficial at the national and international levels. In this respect, in the context of the experiences of the Court in its first decade of existence, he will analyse the potential consequences of ratification in the military, political, judicial and diplomatic spheres. In particular, he will consider the key geopolitical problems of the Republic of Armenia: the ongoing territorial dispute and potential armed conflict concerning Artsakh, the campaign for recognition of the Armenian (as well as Assyrian and Pontic Greek) Genocide and the continuing development of the Republic of Armenia as a relatively new State. He will analyse the potential jurisdictional issues connected to the Artsakh dispute, the implications of ratification for the alliance between the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation (e.g. - cooperation between Armenia and the ICC concerning the hypothetical surrender of Russian nationals in Armenian jurisdiction) and the 'Azerbaijan factor' in terms of the balance of international obligations between the two enemy States. He will examine the key ICC situations in Libya, Kenya, Darfur and Georgia as signposts for the putative participation of the Republic of Armenia in the ICC system. Moreover, he will assess the important factor of the relations of the Republic of Armenia with the European Union and the Russian Federation as they relate to the fundamental question of ratification.

### Dr Yegishe Kirakosyan

*Biography* Since January 2012, Dr Kirakosyan has served as a Deputy Justice Minister of the Republic of Armenia. He is also the co-founder of the International and Comparative Law Centre of Armenia. Since 2011, Dr Kirakosyan has lectured in public international law at the American University of Armenia. He holds a bachelor degree in jurisprudence (2002) and a master's degree (2004) from Yerevan State University as well as a master of laws in international legal studies from Georgetown University (2010).

In 2006, he defended a doctoral thesis in international law entitled 'Custom in Contemporary International Law'. Subsequently, he served as an assistant to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and lectured at the Department of European and International Law of Yerevan State University. He has published more than ten articles in national and international journals. In 2009, his doctoral thesis was published as a monograph. He is a member of the Armenian Association of International Law, American Association of International Law, Russian Association of International Law and American Association of International Law.