



Phenomenal Women International Women's Day 2020

'...Now you understand
 Just why my head's not bowed.
 I don't shout or jump about
 Or have to talk really loud.
 When you see me passing,
 It ought to make you proud.
 I say,
 It's in the click of my heels,
 The bend of my hair,
 the palm of my hand,
 The need for my care.
 'Cause I'm a woman
 Phenomenally.
 Phenomenal woman,
 That's me'.

Phenomenal Woman © Maya Angelou



Maya Angelou 1978 (Photo Credit: AP Photos)



Toufah Jallow (Photo Credit: Mustapha K. Darboe) / Sophia Akuffo (Photo Credit: haguetaalks.com)

(Left) Toufah Jallow is the 23-year-old former beauty queen, who inspired Gambia's MeToo

Movement, after accusing ex Gambian dictator, Yahya Jammeh of rape. In October 2019 Toufah recounted her ordeal before Gambia's Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC). Toufah's courage saw her quickly embraced. Young activists created an #IamToufah hashtag and peacefully marched the streets of Gambia's capital, Banjul, calling for an end to the silence on rape. She is changing the narrative of the conservative Muslim country, which is highly patriarchal. By speaking out about her encounter with the exiled Jammeh, Toufah challenged a culture of silence, shame and stigma often associated with sexual abuse. To build on her own difficult experience she has created the Toufah Foundation to assist women and girls in Gambia to fight against sexual violence.

(Right) Sophia Akuffo was Chief Justice of Ghana from June 2017 until December 2019. She served on the Supreme Court of Ghana from 1995 and retired as Chief Justice. She was among the first judges to be elected to the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights in 2006, serving two terms on the Court, and as its first Vice President and later as President. Sophia Akuffo trained as a lawyer under Nana Akufo Addo, Ghana's current president. She later obtained an LLM at Harvard University. She has been a member of the Governing Committee of the Commonwealth Judicial Education Institute, and the Chairperson of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Task Force.

During her swearing in as Chief Justice, she acknowledged the support she's received from various Presidents of Ghana (irrespective of political party) from her appointment to the Supreme Court by President Rawlings, to her appointment as Chief Justice by President Akufo-Addo.

**As this is an AFLA platform, we would normally not feature its Executive Director. However last year when we published our inaugural list of phenomenal women, we received many messages that AFLA's ED should have been included.*



Evelyn A. Ankumah

Evelyn A. Ankumah is the Founding Executive Director of Africa Legal Aid (AFLA). She is a Lawyer with practical and academic legal experience in North America, Europe and Africa. She is credited for having developed AFLA into a leading voice in rights and accountability, and for spearheading contribution of African perspectives to international criminal justice. Ankumah was selected by U.K. based Power List Magazine in 2014, as one of 25 Africans who have most significantly contributed to improving the African continent.

Evelyn Ankumah first entered the 'international scene' at age 17, when she won an essay competition in her native Ghana obtaining an AFS (American Field Service) scholarship for a cultural exchange program to The Netherlands. She later obtained a Juris Doctor (JD) degree from William Mitchell College of Law, St. Paul, Minnesota in 1988, and was Visiting Research Scholar at the Maastricht University in 1990, and from 1993-1995.

She has monitored the work of the International Criminal Court (ICC) since its inception and has appraised and published the Court's judgments. ICC defence lawyers credit Evelyn Ankumah for having provided a voice, and platform for defence counsels, notably, at the 13th Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the ICC (ASP). This, it is said, provided impetus to the creation of the International Criminal Court Bar Association in 2016, and its institutional recognition by the ASP.

Evelyn Ankumah penned the first book on the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (1996) and is one of the often-quoted authors on the African human rights system.



Sanji Monageng (Photo Credit: Women Economic Forum) / Jane Adong Anywar (Photo Credit: Uganda Law Reform Commission)

(Left) Sanji Monageng is a former Judge of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and was First Vice President of the Court from 2012-2015, and President of the Appeals Chamber in 2014 and 2015. She previously served as an expert High Court Judge in the Kingdom of Swaziland, under the auspices of the Commonwealth Secretariat. Prior to that, she was Judge of the High Court of The Gambia and head of its criminal division. Judge Monageng was a member of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights from 2003 to 2009 and served as Chair of the Commission from 2007 until 2009. She was the founding Chief Executive Officer of the Law Society of Botswana and served in this capacity for many years. She has expertise in women and children's rights, indigenous peoples, and communities. She is a member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.

(Right) Jane Adong was the first African female appointed to lead and prosecute genocide and crimes against humanity cases before the very successful UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. She was Field Counsel for victims in the case of Dominic Ongwen at the International Criminal Court. In February 2016, she was appointed Commissioner of the Uganda Law Reform Commission. She was a founding member of the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) in Uganda. Jane Adong was also the Legal Monitor for the Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice in

Uganda. Following her death in December 2019, Paolina Massidda, Principal Counsel of the Office of the Public Counsel for Victims at the ICC said: 'Ms Adong – a prominent Ugandan lawyer – was part of the Office's team representing victims. In that capacity she greatly contributed to have the voices of victims heard and their views and concerns presented before the ICC ... For the past four years, she has been the important link between counsel in The Hague and victims in the field. She was a brilliant legal mind, with an excellent academic background and courage to speak in favor of the most vulnerable'.



Rianne Letschert (Photo Credit: Maastricht University) / Janet Nosworthy (Photo Credit: Special Tribunal for Lebanon)

(Left) Rianne Letschert is the Rector Magnificus of the Maastricht University. Appointed in September 2016 at age 40, she is the youngest woman ever to hold the position of Rector Magnificus in The Netherlands. She studied International Law at Tilburg University, the University of Amsterdam and the University of Montpellier, and later obtained her PhD at Tilburg University. She served as a Visiting Research Fellow at the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law at the University of Cambridge, and Research Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge, where she was offered a lifelong membership. She was appointed professor of victimology and international law at Tilburg University in 2011. She is an expert consultant on victim issues for the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. In 2019 Rianne Letschert was elected top woman of the year and was praised for her combination of authentic leadership and academic depth.

(Right) Janet Nosworthy is a Judge at the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. She served as a Prosecutor in the Jamaican Resident Magistrate's Court from 1972 to 1978. She was Crown Counsel prosecuting for the State of Antigua in its Supreme Court from 1978 to 1981. She also served as Appeals Counsel in the Eastern Caribbean Court of Appeal. Judge Nosworthy served as an Ad Litem Judge at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia from 2005 to 2009.



Shamila Batohi (*Photo Credit: National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa*) / Leila Sadat (*Photo Credit: Washington University School of Law*)

(Left) Shamila Batohi was appointed National Director of Public Prosecutions in South Africa in 2018 by President Cyril Ramaphosa. She is the first female to hold this position and has described her appointment as a historic moment for women in the country.

She began her career as a junior prosecutor in the Chatsworth Magistrate’s Court in 1986 and rose to the level of Director of Public Prosecutions in KwaZulu-Natal from 2002 to 2009. In 1995 she was appointed by President Nelson Mandela to be part of a high-level team to investigate apartheid-era hit squad activities. She served as a Senior Legal Adviser to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court from 2009 to 2018.

(Right) Leila Sadat is the James Carr Professor of International Criminal Law and Director of the Whitney R. Harris World Law Institute at Washington University School of Law. She is widely considered one of the leading international legal experts on crimes against humanity and is an Adviser to the ICC Prosecutor on Crimes against Humanity. She is the initiator and Chair of the Crimes against Humanity Initiative, and led the drafting of the proposed International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Humanity.

She is a member of the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations and the American Law Institute.



Betty Murungi (*Photocredit: IIT*) / Gabrielle Louise McIntyre (*Photo Credit: diplomatmagazine.eu*)

(Left) Betty Kaari Murungi is a Kenyan human rights activist and lawyer, and has practiced at national, regional and international levels. She was a consultant and legal advisor on gender-related crimes at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Betty Murungi has worked in Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Northern Uganda and South Sudan. She served for a short period as Vice Chairperson and Commissioner to the Kenya Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission, and as the Africa Representative on the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims at the International Criminal Court (2010-2013). In 2003, she received the Kenya National Honour of the Moran of the Burning Spear for her efforts in human rights activism. She was awarded the International Peace Advocate Award by the Cardozo Law School, New York in 2005. She has served on the boards of several rights organizations both nationally and internationally including the Kenyan Human Rights Commission, the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) in Kenya, and the Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice. She is a co-founder of Urgent Action Fund-Africa where she served as Director for eight years.

In 2018, she was appointed by the President of the UN Human Rights Council as a board member of the Commission of Inquiry on Protests in Occupied Palestinian Territory.

(Right) Gabrielle Louise McIntyre is an international legal practitioner and current Chairperson of the Truth, Reconciliation and National Unity Commission of Seychelles having been appointed to the position by the President of Seychelles in 2019. She previously served as the Chef de Cabinet and Principal Legal Advisor to the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMCT). She has served as the Chef de Cabinet and Principal Legal Advisor to four successive Presidents of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

She was appointed Chair of the Advisory Committee to the Sarajevo Information Centre on the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in 2018.

She is the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice.

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