



Commission on Legal Pluralism

www.commission-on-legal-pluralism.com

Irvine, 9 February 2017

Re: Statement regarding Muslim ban US government and impact on biannual conference in Syracuse, NY

Dear all,

The executive Body of the Commission on Legal Pluralism is highly concerned with the recent Executive Order of the United States Government barring citizens from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen entry for 90 days into the United States. We are profoundly opposed to policies or measures that target groups on the basis of their religion, race, sexual orientation, or any other discriminatory grounds, and that exclude certain scholars from fora for academic cooperation and exchange.

We are considering the consequences of the travel ban for our course and conference in August in Syracuse, New York. We need to stand strong with our Muslim brothers and sisters and thus are considering various options including the relocation of the conference to outside the United States to ensure open access. At the same time, we need to stand united with our US-based colleagues at a time when the freedom of speech and academic freedoms are under threat in the US and when research work on topics within our field – indigenous peoples, natural resource management, etc. – is more important than ever. Moving conferences away from US soil may only insulate researchers in the US and will have no positive effect on US policy.

The situation with regard to the travel ban is changing daily, which makes it hard to plan. We have thus decided to monitor the situation carefully and to make a final decision in the beginning of March. If we were to decide to move ahead with the conference as planned, in Syracuse, NY, we will then postpone the deadline for paper submission to the end of March.

Yours sincerely,

Janine Ubink (President), Yüksel Sezgin, Melanie Wiber, Betram Turner, Marc Simon Thomas, Keebet von Benda-Beckmann, Dik Roth, Gordon Woodman, Anne Griffiths, Maarten Bavinck, Giselle Corradi, Markus Weilenmann, Carolien Jacobs, Waheeda Amien