

**MAKING A CASE FOR TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE IN PREDICTING FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLIANCE AND THE DURATION OF POST-CIVIL  
WAR PEACE**

**By**

**Mumo Nzau**

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## Abstract

For long, the discourse on civil war, its causes, management and the conditions for peace featured less strongly in the empirical mainstream of the field. Nonetheless, over the past decade or so, several empirically nuanced works offered varied explanations on various aspects of intra-state conflicts in an attempt to account for conditions under which the peace that follows such devastating episodes succeeds or otherwise fails. Despite these gains, both theoretical and empirical puzzles persist; more so those to do with the delicate transitional phases that immediately follow major civil wars. Informed by four main theoretical premises emerging from this literature; this study set out to contribute to this debate by undertaking a two-stage examination of the effect of transitional justice (TJ) on post-civil war human rights (HR) compliance and duration of peace. To this end, a time-series cross-national dataset for the period 1970-2006 was utilized in testing two broad sets of hypotheses on this relationship. The findings support the general hypothetical contention that TJ has a likely positive impact on human rights compliance as well as less likelihood of civil war recurrence. More specifically however, the findings exhibited stronger support for the *legalist* argument (mainly on trials and lustration policies); while presenting “mixed findings” for the *emotional psychology* approach; with more empirical support for amnesties and reparations, but much less in support for truth-telling processes. Nonetheless, *pragmatic* and/or *holistic* propositions for combination(s) of both restorative and retributive TJ mechanisms appeared to enjoy much less empirical support. However, the findings did support the *credible commitments* argument pointing to higher HR compliance effect associated with states’ signing and ratification the Rome Statute as well a positive effect of the same on post-civil war peace durations.