

# The Politics of Institutional Reform in Sahelian Africa

*The Sahel Research Group,  
Center for African Studies and Department of Political Science*

21 February 2012  
Reitz Union room 286

## **Conference Program:**

- 8:00            *Coffee*
- 8:30            Welcome and Introduction: Leonardo A. Villalón, University of Florida
- 8:45 – 10:00    Mauritania: Zakaria ould Ahmed Salem, Université de Nouakchott  
Senegal\*: Ismaïla Madior Fall, Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar
- coffee break*
- 10:15 – 11:30   Burkina Faso: Augustin Loada, CGD and Université de Ouagadougou  
Niger: Mahaman Tidjani-Alou, LASDEL & Université Abdou Moumouni (in absentia)
- coffee break*
- 11:45 – 1:00    Chad: Lucien Toulou, Electoral Institute for Democracy in Africa (EISA-Tchad) (former)  
Mali\*: Moumouni Soumano, Université de Bamako
- Lunch Break*
- 2:30 – 4:00    Panel Discussion: The Resilience of Institutions in the Current Crisis

*\*Translation will be provided for presentations in French.*

This conference examines the question of whether the politics of creating and reforming institutions in the name of “democracy” have weakened or strengthened states across the African Sahel. It is composed of six paper presentations and a concluding roundtable discussion by distinguished political scientists regarding their respective countries: Mauritania, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad and Mali. The presentations highlight the politics of institutional reform in each country, analyzing its effects on the coherence of the state in the era of democratization.

*Sponsored by the Minerva Initiative grant to the University of Florida*

## Participants

**Zakaria ould Ahmed Salem** is a Professor of public law and political science at the University of Nouakchott, Mauritania. He holds a doctorate in political sciences from the Institute of Political Studies at Lyon, France. He is the author of numerous works on diverse topics, including the forthcoming book, *Prêcher dans le désert: Savoirs, violences et changement social en République Islamique de Mauritanie*. (Paris: Karthala) In 2010-2011 he was a Fulbright visiting professor at the University of Florida.

**Ismâïla Madior Fall** is a Professor of Law and political science at Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal, where he also serves as director of the *Centre de recherche, d'étude et de documentation sur les institutions et les législations africaines* (CREDILA). Professor Fall is a member of several research networks including the Network of African Constitutionalists headquartered in Johannesburg. He has published extensively in his areas of research include constitutionalism, the process of democratization in francophone African countries, elections and party system institutionalization.

**Augustin Loada** is a Professor of Public Law and political science at University of Ouagadougou, (Burkina Faso) since 1995 where he previously served as Dean of the Faculty of Law and Political Science. He is Director of le Centre pour la Gouvernance Démocratique (CGD). He was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at Boston University (USA) in 2000. He is the author of numerous works on such topics as elections in Burkina Faso, political regimes, good governance and decentralization.

**Mahaman Tidjani-Alou** holds a PhD in political science from the University of Bordeaux. He is currently professor of political science and dean of the faculty of economic and legal sciences at the University of Abdou Moumouni in Niamey. He is a senior researcher and co-founder of the Laboratoire d'Etudes et de Recherche sur les Dynamiques Sociales et le Développement Local (LASDEL), of which he served as director from 2001-2007. He has published widely on the state in Africa, on north-south cooperation, decentralisation, political elites, and development policies.

**Lucien Toulou** holds a PhD in political science from Science Po-University of Bordeaux IV (France). He taught political science at the Catholic University of Central Africa, Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 2000 to 2006. From 2009-2012 he served as Country Director for Chad for the Electoral Institute for Democracy in Africa (EISA). He is currently directing EISA's country office in Madagascar. He has authored articles and book chapters on issues related to elections and democratic governance in Africa.

**Moumouni Soumano** holds a Doctorate in Public Law from the Université Paris XIII. He teaches Law and Political Science at the University of Bamako (Mali). He is currently the Executive Director of the *Centre Malien pour le Dialogue Interpartis et la Démocratie* (CMDID) which aims to strengthen the capacity of political parties and the overall framework of democracy in Mali. He has diverse experience in capacity building for democratic institutions such as the National Assembly, electoral bodies and political parties. He is the author of numerous works.

**Leonardo A. Villalón** is associate professor of Political Science at the University of Florida. He is a former director of the Center for African Studies (2002-2011) and currently coordinates the Sahel Research Group. He is the PI on the Minerva Initiative grant which has made this conference possible. He has published various works on democracy, religion and politics and the state in Sahelian Africa.

**Mamadou Bodian, Daniel Eizenga, Ibrahim Yahya Ibrahim** are Minerva Initiative graduate student research assistants.