

Symposium Apologies & Law: Intersections, Tensions, and Transformation

by INLAR – International Network for Law and Apology Research

Date: 23 April 2026, 9:00 to 18:00

Location: Faculty Board Room
Ghent University, Faculty of Law and Criminology
Voldersstraat 3, 9000 Ghent, Belgium

Chairs: Sébastien De Rey (University of Amsterdam & UCLouvain)
Wannes Vandebussche (Ghent University)

Opening

From 8:30 Welcome coffee

09:00 to 09:15 Welcome and introduction
Sébastien De Rey & Wannes Vandebussche

09:15 to 09:55 Keynote
Prue Vines (University of New South Wales)
Robyn Carroll (University of Western Australia)

Panel 1: Transformative Power of Apologies

09:55 to 10:15 The Weight of Apology: Law, Neuroscience, and the Fractals of Repair
Nadja Delbarre (Ghent University)

10:15 to 10:35 Repairing Trust Between Individuals and Groups: The Effectiveness of Apologies in Interpersonal and Intergroup Contexts
Christopher P. Reinders Folmer et al (University of Amsterdam)

10:35 to 10:55 The role of apologies in corporate crisis communication: Towards alignment between legal and reputational concerns
An-Sofie Claeys & Laurence Balliu (Ghent University)

10:55 to 11:15 Panel discussion

11:15 to 11:40 Coffee break

Panel 2: Apologies and Litigation

11:40 to 12:00 Apologies as Judicial Remedies: A Layered and Relational Approach
Nicola Brutti (University of Padua)

12:00 to 12:20 Constitutional Limits of Court-Ordered Apologies: Between Restitution and Truthfulness
Christian Michael Schmidt (Friedrich Alexander University)

12:20 to 12:40 Apologies as Justice. The Spanish Perspective
Albert Ruda (University of Girona)

12:40 to 13:00 Panel discussion

13:00 to 14:15 Lunch

Panel 3: Apologies and International Settings

14:15 to 14:35 Non-State Armed Group Apologies and Reparations for Civilian Casualties
Lesley Wexler & Jennifer K. Robbennolt (University of Illinois)

14:35 to 14:55 The role of apologies to respond to institutional/organizational harm
Gema Varona (University of the Basque Country)

14:55 to 15:15 Colonial Apologies in International Law: Symbolism, Silence, and the Struggle
for Reparative Justice
George Forji Amin (York St John University)

15:15 to 15:35 From Denial to Redress: State Apologies, Judicial Recognition, and
Transitional Justice in Iran
Majedeh Bozorgi (University of Salamanca)

15:35 to 15:55 Panel discussion

15:55 to 16:15 Coffee break

Panel 4: Apologies for Personal Injury

16:15 to 16:35 Using moral luck theory for an integrated explanation of apology mismatch
after personal injury
Peter Mascini (Erasmus University Rotterdam)
Femke Ruitenbeek-Bart (Free University of Amsterdam)

16:35 to 16:55 Recognition for relatives in personal injury cases: does the strict Dutch civil
law Affection Damage Compensation Act work?
Rianka Rijnhout (Utrecht University)
Kiliaan van Wees (Free University of Amsterdam)

16:55 to 17:15 Panel discussion

17:15 to 17:30 Closing remarks

17:30 to 17:35 Conference picture

17:35 to 18:30 Drinks

19:30 Speakers dinner