

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 Vandenbussche (Ghent University)

Opening

From 8:30	Welcome coffee
09:00 to 09:15	Welcome and introduction <i>Sébastien De Rey & Wannes Vandenbussche</i>
09:15 to 09:55	Keynote <i>Prue Vines</i> (University of New South Wales) <i>Robyn Carroll</i> (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 <i>Nadja Delbarre</i> (Ghent University)
10:15 to 10:35	Repairing Trust Between Individuals and Groups: The Effectiveness of Apologies in Interpersonal and Intergroup Contexts <i>Christopher P. Reinders Folmer</i> 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 <i>An-Sofie Claeys & Laurence Balliu</i> (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 <i>Nicola Brutti</i> (University of Padua)
12:00 to 12:20	Constitutional Limits of Court-Ordered Apologies: Between Restitution and Truthfulness <i>Christian Michael Schmidt</i> (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. Robbenolt (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 Ruitenberg-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