In early 2006, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights called for more detailed research into the relevant international standards and national and international practices concerning the role of victims in criminal proceedings. In response to this call and the increased attention paid to victims at international criminal institutions, this study explores the role of victims in international criminal proceedings.

As such, the aim of this study is threefold: (i) to describe, explain and clarify the procedural role afforded to victims in international criminal proceedings; (ii) to evaluate whether the current approaches to victim participation in international criminal proceedings are consistent with human rights standards; and (iii) to determine the proper scope and content of victim participation in international criminal proceedings. To structure the analysis, the framework focuses on two central concepts, namely the unique characteristics of international criminal proceedings and human rights standards.

Broken up into two main parts, the first part of the study covers criminal law theories and the current role afforded to victims in domestic jurisdictions. It further examines the development of their procedural rights both domestically and internationally. The second part of the study then deals exclusively with international criminal justice institutions and the participatory rights afforded to victims therein. Using two case studies, one on the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia and the other on the International Criminal Court, the research highlights how these courts have approached the issue of victim participation. The study concludes with general recommendations.

It is hoped that the findings of this study may contribute to a better understanding of competing rights within international criminal justice and that they provide those involved in the shaping of international criminal justice a means through which to view the participatory rights of victims.
Procedural Justice?

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