

Courts In Crisis:

Maintaining the Rule of Law in Emergency Situations

Tornadoes

Straight line winds

Hurricanes

Floods

Fire

Earthquakes

Bombs

Acts of Terrorism

Pandemics

Good afternoon and welcome to the Courts in Crisis educational session. I am Jane Spencer Craney, a trial judge from Indiana, USA, and one of the Co-Chairs for this Conference!

Over the last two days, we have had many educational sessions on where women judges have come from, how we are doing now and what we can possibly expect in the next 25 years to come! Excellent substantive law sessions. This educational session is different. This is a more “practical” nuts and bolts kind of presentation. How do you maintain the Rule of Law in Emergency Situations? In other words, how do you do justice and keep a court running in emergency situations?

Disasters primarily come in three (3) forms:

Natural

Manmade

Terroristic Acts

We have an outstanding panel before you that have each survived at least one emergency disaster situation which involved the function of their courts as well as their personal lives.

Justice Sushila Karki of the Nepal Supreme Court was appointed in 2008 and has been the Acting Chief Justice of Nepal for the past several months. She was very recently officially declared the first woman Chief Justice in the history of Nepal. Please help me congratulate her!!! A lawyer since 1979, she has served in many legal capacities including Senior Advocate of the Nepal Bar Association, President of the Appeal Court Bar Association and college professor. Justice Karki survived the devastating Nepal earthquake of 2015 and will share her experiences with us today.

Judge Hellen Wasilwa is a Puisne Judge in Kenya which is an Employment and Labor Relations Court. She served as a Court Registrar and Magistrate prior to being appointed to the current bench and has a total of 26 years in one judicial capacity or another. Judge Wasilwa has completed many specialized training courses in labor relations and lectures at several law schools in Kenya. She will share the Kenyan experience with the terroristic mall shootings of 2015.

Judge Susan Criss of Galveston Texas, is a recently retired trial court judge who has presided over hundreds of cases in a 30 year judicial career which included many high profile and complex cases. In September of 2008, she had to deal with a “once in a century” hurricane which destroyed her own home, damaged the courthouse and obliterated many law practices in her county.

Judge Haemin Lee of Seoul, Korea is a District Court Judge in central South Korea and has written extensively on international commercial and investment law and arbitration. Judge Lee will speak about the Korean judicial experience with the recent ferry boat sinking case.

Judge Jane McMeeken of Christchurch, New Zealand has been a lawyer since 1984, worked in criminal, family and youth courts before being appointed to the bench of the Youth Court in 1999. She also presided over New Zealand’s only Youth Drug Court until her promotion to the Court of Appeals in 2012. She survived the devastating earthquake of 2012 and will share her personal and professional experiences with us.

Cathy Winter is the Director of Corporate Development for CourtCall, a business which serves courts and law practices by providing technology, telephonic and video conferencing abilities. She has worked with US and

international courts and governments focusing on disaster planning and continuity of operations plans for over 30 years.

Each of the panelists will share their personal and professional stories if dealing with emergencies, what “mission essential functions” are, Continuity of Operation Plans (COOP),