

The Investigating Core International Crimes course was developed to address a critical need to strengthen regional capacity to investigate and prosecute these crimes, as identified at the PacificJust Network Meeting in October 2024. Led by the Asia Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (APR2P) and the Justice and Accountability Network Australia (JANA), the course brought together participants - including prosecutors and investigators from Vanuatu, Fiji, Samoa, PNG, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands and Nauru in March 2025 - for four days of intensive training, delivered by both academics and practitioners.

Participants were introduced to the legal and procedural frameworks surrounding core international crimes, with a focus on international law, evidence collection, case studies, and regional cooperation.

The program was structured around four key modules:

1. Introduction to Core International Crimes: Introduced foundational concepts of international law, the sources of international law, states' international legal obligations, and the areas of international law relevant to core international crime prosecutions. It also covered the definition of core international crimes.
2. Evidence: Focused on the unique aspects of evidence in core international crime investigations. It covered physical evidence, including on-site investigations, and documentary evidence, as well as testimonial evidence, including expert evidence, eyewitness testimony, insider evidence, and interview or interrogation of the suspect/accused. The module also addressed witness management and building cases, including linkage evidence, low-level perpetrators, and senior leaders.
3. Case Studies: Provided practical application of the concepts, principles and techniques in the investigation of core international crimes through the analysis of case studies.
4. Cooperation and Collaboration: Covered alternative prosecution avenues, asset recovery, support networks, mutual legal assistance (MLA), and international mechanisms for sharing information and evidence³.

This course is a tangible expression of the Asia-Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protects core mission to prevent atrocity crimes by:

- Building the capacity of regional actors to investigate and prosecute these crimes, thereby strengthening the rule of law and accountability.
- Fostering a deeper understanding of the legal frameworks and practical skills necessary to address core international crimes effectively.
- Promoting regional cooperation and collaboration in the pursuit of justice and accountability.
- Contributing to the development of a more robust and effective regional response to atrocity crimes, in line with the principles of the Responsibility to Protect.