In the context of developing teaching and research cooperation between the University of Paris VIII and USC College, we announce a two-day collaborative conference focusing on the emerging field of “Global Justice.” By this term we refer to the body of interdisciplinary, international scholarship in fields as diverse as the social and human sciences, law, medicine and economics that considers the impact of conflicts on human and environmental rights, restorative justice, and the reach of international legal institutions.

This general frame falls into 4 more specific themes targeting:

- Environmental justice
- Human rights revisited
- The role of justice in post-conflict societies
- Constructing and re-constructing global justice

This multi-disciplinary event will be hosted by the Department of Political Science (USC College) and the Consulate général of France in Los Angeles, and sponsored by the USC Center for International Studies, the USC Shoah Foundation Institute, and the USC Levan Institute for Humanities and Ethics. We seek applications from scholars in any discipline.

The stakes of each theme can be roughly depicted as follows:

**Theme 1: Environmental justice:**
The constitution of “nature” as a cause that seems less and less dissociable from human matters, embedded in social, political and economic issues, echoes the rise of new responsibilities—judicial, moral, medical and scientific, political—that groups and individuals may (have to) endorse, and the development of public controversies and alerts launched by new “whistleblowers.” “Earth” has emerged as a key figure in the political game, at both national and international levels. Scandals around new risks and threats (global warming, pollution, threats to public health and security, radical climate change forcing populations to exile) have multiplied and captured the attention of various social actors. Case studies can be approached in various disciplinary perspectives in complementary ways, providing an empirical basis for the definition of a trans-disciplinary epistemology with which to seize such consequential issues.
Theme 2: Human rights revisited:
The more traditional theme of “human rights” requires renewed approaches to respond to recent and ongoing changes in social configurations: the increased complexity deriving from globalization, the rise of new groups seeking recognition in public arenas, the effects of new technologies of control and surveillance, the development of NGO and international governmental agencies. Contemporary mechanisms of social/legal categorization, sometimes leading to stigmatization, can operate according to various principles of division, which can also combine: gender, health/handicap, ethnicity or minority boundaries, levels of wealth (North versus South, on a global level), among others. Possible fields of research here include the analysis of the production of new public policies defining situations of discrimination/inequality and promoting equal opportunity practices, and the controversies developing around those policies, as well as the study of public confrontations regarding the need for new rights engendered by medical, scientific and technical innovations (bio-ethics issues, aging and health issues), for instance. The constitution and institutionalization of collective actors through struggles for new “rights,” transformations in power relations between groups, the consolidation or rearrangement of social hierarchies between them are potential themes for this session. With such questions, we address both important problems that have emerged in professional contexts, for example where positions devoted to the “management of diversity” have been created in many firms and organizations, and crucial contemporary challenges facing public policy makers.

Theme 3: The Role of Justice in Post-conflict Configurations:
The management of post-conflict situations is a bourgeoning field of activity both on the ground and within academia. This has happened in concert with the rise of international courts and quasi/extra-judicial institutions for the pacification and reconciliation of societies after war or instances of genocide. The goals of restorative justice have challenged the traditional roles of international governmental or non-governmental organizations, the impact and legitimacy of humanitarian groups, and the international intervention of powerful economic actors. Meanwhile, a whole range of new professions are emerging in constitution and consolidation, specializing in expertise and technology transfer, political/judicial institution building, peace keeping, etc.

We are particularly interested in discussing how new arenas of justice are shaped and institutionalized in such contexts and how they affect the evolution of post-conflict societies. Such arenas may take various institutional forms, sometimes combining a diversity of legal systems – more or less inclusive of rules and actors from the country where such entities are operating – and sometimes defined against a judicial model in the name of a need for forgiveness and national reunification.

Beyond the idea of a linear process of judicialization/legalization of politics and society we are willing to question, in a comparative way, the dynamics of change in the relationships between justice and politics here at work.

Theme 4: Constructing and Re-constructing Global Justice:
In post-conflict and post-colonial configurations, the history of traumatic events is being collectively re-written and reframed by a variety of participants (politicians, historians, journalists
and media professionals, members of the military, the judiciary, bureaucratic agencies at several –local, national and supranational- levels, etc.). Some of them possess enough institutional authority to conduct and implement effective “politics of memory,” reflecting and sometimes reactivating past conflicts between antagonistic social groups. Such politics participate in the making of an “official history,” both national and international, through social practices and sometimes struggles which assign present roles and powers by redefining (in words, images, or sounds) events and responsibilities. The construction of global justice is conceived here as embracing both material and symbolic practices of political communication. This field of study offers an occasion to question and refine existing models to analyze “political communication.” We are interested, for instance, in the way media channels and devices (including their most technical aspects, in which power relations are objectified) shape political languages alongside “conveying” them. In general, connections between the forms of discourses and their political effects should be explored in an historical and comparative perspective, linguistic evolutions expressing and fostering political transformations. Languages are simultaneously political tools and subject to policies; struggles around languages intrinsically carry a political dimension. New “communication technologies” simultaneously affect/reframe the ordinary ways of doing politics (in traditional democratic contexts as well as recent post-conflict configurations), the constitution and activity of media professionals and the definitions of what a “good political leader”/“a good citizen” should be and do.

ORGANIZATION OF THE EVENT:

We are seeking the participation of scholars in various disciplines of the humanities/social sciences/legal studies/economy. Applicants should send a one-page abstract, including their current position and institutional affiliation, before December 15, 2010. The conference will take the form of a workshop gathering 20 to 25 people, facilitating the continuity of discussions over the 2 days of the event. Participants are expected to attend all of the sessions composing the conference.

The first day will be devoted to the presentation and discussion of the selected papers. 4 sessions will successively take place, on each of the 4 themes identified above. Each participant will present the approach characterizing his/her work, connecting it to the more general debates in existence in his/her field of specialty and to comparable projects developed in his/her department/center/university. Some of the specific perspectives and the distinctive research (and possibly, teaching) programs offered in each institution will thus be exposed, confronted and debated, in order to identify both complementary and commonalities.

The second day will be more directly oriented towards the conception and organization of joint programs or exchanges, in various forms and at various levels. In the morning, the participants will break into smaller groups, corresponding to the 4 themes of the conference, to synthesize ideas and draw more general lessons from the discussions of the 1st day. 2 groups will gather simultaneously in separate rooms, allowing each participant to contribute to 2 different workshops. In the afternoon, all participants will form a plenary session. For each of the 4 breakout groups, a spokesperson will present the main conclusions previously reached in each
workshop, and the most promising areas of cooperation/the most relevant forms of cooperation will be collectively identified. A general discussion will follow.