

## **Justice Eliezer Rivlin**

In keeping with its tradition of hosting international discourse, in December 2012, the University of Nairobi, interacted with Justice Eliezer Rivlin, former Deputy President of the Israeli Supreme Court on the interesting topic “Facing Special Challenges: The Supreme Court of Israel.” Justice Rivlin tracked the history of the Israeli constitution and pointed out some of the constitutional changes and challenges the country has gone through.

During the presentation, Justice Rivlin, took a thought-provoking approach where he compared and contrasted Israel’s and Kenya’s legal systems. He commended Kenya for doing away with the independence constitution and bringing into realization a new constitution; something that the state of Israel has been unable to realize.

Indeed he observed that it has not been easy for the state of Israel to develop a comprehensive constitution. He said that Israel was keen on protecting human dignity and liberty and the Israeli court has over the years played a leading role in ensuring that the rights of its citizens are upheld. The court has been seen as an activist court and has been criticized for this.

He described Kenya’s constitution as modern and liberal, and focused on ensuring that the judicial system plays a key role in implementing human rights and freedoms in Kenya. During the lecture, the Chief Justice/President, Supreme Court of Kenya, the Hon. Dr. Willy Mutunga and Prof. J. Otieno-Odek, Dean, School of Law gave commentaries.

Among those present during the lecture included, Prof. Jacob Kaimenyi, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs, University staff and students, members of the judiciary, and the general public .