

OPEN PEER REVIEW

# Comparative Analysis of “Standards for the Protection of Witnesses and Informants” in International Criminal Proceedings and the Possibility of Their Application in Iran

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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the sentence “witness protection is not merely a procedural formality but rather a necessary condition...”, the article employs normative language without defining operational indicators of “necessary condition.” The authors should clarify whether this claim is doctrinal, empirical, or theoretical and provide measurable criteria for evaluating necessity.

The abstract states that the study adopts a “descriptive–analytical method with a comparative approach.” However, the methodology section lacks detailed explanation of comparative methodology (functional comparison, doctrinal comparison, institutional comparison, or normative benchmarking). Please specify analytical criteria and comparison variables.

The section “The Concept of Witness and Informant in Criminal Proceedings” appropriately distinguishes the two concepts, yet the manuscript does not later apply this distinction analytically. The authors should demonstrate how differences between witnesses and informants affect legal protection standards throughout the comparative analysis.

In the statement “Conceptual ambiguity... may ultimately restrict the extent of protection available,” the claim appears empirical but lacks supporting evidence or case examples from Iranian practice. Either provide empirical illustration or clarify that the argument is doctrinal speculation.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the paragraph discussing ICTY and ICTR developments, the article explains their historical importance but does not justify why these tribunals were selected instead of other jurisdictions (e.g., domestic witness protection programs such as the U.S. WITSEC or EU frameworks). A methodological justification is required.

Before entering the section “Standards for Witness Protection in International Criminal Proceedings,” the article would benefit from a clearly articulated comparative analytical framework (e.g., institutional independence, procedural safeguards, psychosocial protection, enforcement mechanisms). Currently, comparison appears narrative rather than structured.

In the paragraph starting “In recent decades, witness and informant protection has emerged as one of the central issues...”, several ideas repeat arguments from the Introduction. Consider condensing overlapping discussions and moving theoretical propositions into a more systematic conceptual model.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

## 2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.