Program News

Training Opportunity: Defending the Human Rights of Scientists
January 21, 2010, 2-5pm
Washington, DC

[insert SAR logo] Register to attend a training session being conducted by Scholars at Risk, in partnership with the AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition Welfare of Scientists Working Group. The training is aimed at equipping scientific associations to defend the human rights of scientists at home and around the world. Participants will learn procedures for evaluating requests for assistance from colleagues at-risk; effective response strategies; proven public and private advocacy techniques; quality alert-writing; and options for engaging key stakeholders. Register here.

Evidence of Destruction in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Case Study Report

"In response to reports of widespread violence targeting civilians in the area of Busurungi, Democratic Republic of Congo, in May of 2009, Human Rights Watch requested satellite imagery analysis of the area to support the efforts of the Congo Advocacy Coalition to increase civilian protection in the area. Due to the remoteness of the Busurungi area and security threats, visual documentation of atrocities is difficult to obtain, and extensive cloud cover in that region hinders satellite image acquisition. Over a period of several months, AAAS acquired and analyzed 100 square kilometers of cloud free satellite imagery, locating 1,494 destroyed structures as well as evidence of ongoing violence." Read report.

Serving Human Rights and Humanitarian Needs

"Just about any important work benefits from competent, objective data collection and skilled analysis. Humanitarian work is no exception. The need for solid research in the humanitarian realm has always been great, whether it's documenting human-rights violations, measuring child poverty, or planning response strategies to health emergencies in developing countries. Unfortunately, there are not enough job..."
opportunities in humanitarian work for scientists to meet this need. But such jobs, if you can get one, offer harrowing challenges and unique rewards, as the careers of Lars Bromley, Leonardo Menchini, and Rebecca Freeman Grais illustrate. Read more.

Science and Human Rights Coalition

Next Meeting: January 22, 2010 - Register Now!

Members, affiliates, and interested scientists, register now to attend the next meeting of the Coalition which is being held at AAAS Headquarters in Washington, DC on Friday, January 22 (8.30am-7:00pm).

Opening with a panel of experts to discuss the ethical and human rights challenges arising when scientific research takes place in a military context, the meeting will continue with sessions, working meetings, and trainings relevant to the application of human rights in the work of scientists and scientific associations. Sessions include: Hearing From Survivors of Human Rights Violations; The Right to the Benefits of Scientific Progress; Volunteer Programs of Scientific Associations; and Human Rights 101 for Scientists: Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. View the provisional agenda.

Working Group Update - Education and Information Resources

We are committed to bringing the scientific and human rights communities together through the creation of education and information resources. To that end, we began taking stock of the resources that already exist and synthesizing them in a way that we hope will serve both communities, and strengthen the work of the Coalition.

- With the assistance of SHRP intern, Jason Gordon, we have gathered and posted online a compilation of syllabi that illustrate how the subject of human rights is taught in the context of a variety of scientific disciplines.
- We have completed a series of cases that demonstrate what can be achieved when individual scientists partner with human rights organizations.
- With the assistance of Jason and fellow intern, Ellen Dupont, we have developed an annotated bibliography organized according to scientific discipline and relevant human rights. A more extensive searchable bibliography will be available later this fall.

Read more about the work of our group and how to join us in our efforts.

News from Coalition Members

On September 9, 2009, the Executive Board of the Society for a Science of Clinical Psychology (Division 12, Section III of the American Psychological Association) adopted a Statement Against Torture. In the Statement, the Board declares their “unequivocal condemnation of any involvement of psychologists in torture” and recommends “corrective action to hold all relevant parties accountable.” Read the full Statement.
Introducing our Members: American Society of Civil Engineers

"Founded in 1852, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) represents more than 147,000 members of the civil engineering profession worldwide, and is America's oldest national engineering society. ASCE's vision is to position engineers as global leaders building a better quality of life." Contributing towards this vision, ASCE has adopted several key policies, including a policy supporting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (2006), and another recognizing the role of engineers in addressing the challenges of sustainable development (2004). Read more.

From the Science Community

**DNA database debate at the Dana Centre looks at Science and the Law**
*Black Mental Health UK*
October 19, 2009

"The need to balance an individual's right to privacy with contentious Government plans to retain the genetic profiles of hundreds of thousands of innocent citizens on the national criminal DNA database [were] among the issues touched at [the] Science Museum's DANA centre debate. … While the use of DNA has been proven to assist in vindicating the innocent on death row in the USA, there are concerns from human rights groups on this side of the Atlantic that policing practices has resulted in Britain's DNA database criminalising whole communities." Read more.

From the Human Rights Community

**Children's Online Privacy**

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) commits governments to advancing children's rights to free expression, to access information through the medium of their choice, and to media content that is of social and cultural benefit. At the same time, new communication technologies have opened up the child's private world of play to marketers, and raised serious questions about offensive or harmful online content. To address these issues, a working group of Canadian Child and Youth Advocates, Privacy Commissioners and experts has developed a discussion paper on Children's Online Privacy to be released on November 20, coinciding with the 20th anniversary of the CRC.

From the UN
UNESCO Director-General Committed to "New Humanism"

Speaking on the day she was elected as the next Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova (Bulgaria) said: "Cultural diversity and inter-cultural dialogue contribute to the emergence of a new humanism that reconciles the global and the local, and teaches us anew how to build the world. ... For me, humanism means aspiring to peace, democracy, justice and human rights. For me, humanism means aspiring to tolerance, knowledge and cultural diversity. It is rooted in ethics and in social and economic responsibility. It comes into its own by extending assistance to the most vulnerable. It is at the heart of the commitment to struggle to face our greatest common challenges, particularly respect for the environment." Read more.

About the SHRP Newsletter

The Science & Human Rights Newsletter is issued bi-monthly by the AAAS Science and Human Rights Program. Through the newsletter we strive to keep scientists and human rights practitioners informed with news items, program updates, new resources, and upcoming events at the intersection of science and human rights. Submissions to the newsletter are welcome and can be made via our online form.

Please visit our website to learn more about our programs as well as our past accomplishments.

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