

COALITION CALENDAR

February 15: Say Hello at the AAAS Annual Meeting

Attending the AAAS Annual Meeting in Seattle? Stop by the AAAS Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law Program's presentation in the Expo on Saturday, February 15, 10:00-11:30 A.M., to meet staff from the Program and learn more about how you can get involved in the Science and Human Rights Coalition.

October 22-23: 2020 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference

Mark your calendars! The next AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference will take place October 22-23, 2020 at AAAS headquarters in Washington, DC. A call for proposals will be issued soon.

COALITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Greek Statistician to Appeal Convictions

This month Andreas Georgiou, former President of the Hellenic Statistical Authority, Greece's national statistical authority, will [appeal a 2017 civil court decision](#) that found him guilty of "simple" slander for publicly defending his agency's 2009 national deficit calculations, which have been repeatedly validated. A number of professional organizations, including the [American Statistical Association \(ASA\)](#), have defended Georgiou throughout his near decade of persecution. Two criminal investigations remain open.

Feb. 14: Draft General Comment on Science

The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has published a [Draft General Comment on science and economic, social, and cultural rights](#). That document can be [accessed here](#). The Committee is accepting public feedback until **February 14** and will post submissions on its website. The AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition Secretariat aims to share a joint document for Coalition members' consideration two weeks ahead of the deadline.

ACTION ALERTS

UN Experts Urge Chinese Gov't to Disclose Location of Uyghur Academic

UN human rights experts have [expressed](#) alarm at the situation of Tashpolat Tiyip, a Chinese academic of Uyghur origin and former President of Xinjiang University, who is in detention at an unknown location in China. Mr. Tiyip's whereabouts have been unknown since he was detained in 2017 while traveling to a conference in Germany. He has been reported to have been sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve after being convicted on charges of separatism. The UN experts have repeatedly expressed concerns about the situation of him and other detainees, who appear to be mainly members of the Uyghur community, and are held without or on unknown charges in a number of facilities in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. The UN experts have been in contact with the Government of China to clarify the fate and whereabouts of Mr. Tiyip and say they will continue to seek formal and official clarification on his situation and that of other detainees whose human rights may be violated.

CALLS FOR INPUT

Jan 31: UN Seeking Input on Human Rights, Big Data and AI

For a special report to the UN Human Rights Council, the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, is [seeking input](#) on acute and structural threats that new information technologies, such as Big Data, machine learning, and artificial intelligence (AI),

pose to rights to non-discrimination and racial equality human rights principles and standards. Submissions are due January 31, 2020.

Jan 31: UN Seeks Input on Access to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation

For a Special Report to the UN General Assembly to be presented in October 2020 on privatization, the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, is seeking input in a [questionnaire](#) from non-state actors on the role of the private sector and municipal authorities in providing access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Input is due by January 31, 2020.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Jan. 31: USPTO Accepting Applications for Patents for Humanity Awards Competition

The US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is [accepting applications](#) for the Patents for Humanity awards competition to recognize innovators who use game-changing technology to meet global humanitarian challenges. The program provides business incentives for reaching those in need: winners receive an acceleration certificate to expedite select proceedings at the USPTO, as well as public recognition of their work. Applications are due January 31, 2020.

Feb. 1: Nominations for IIE's Prize for Peace in the Middle East

The Institute of International Education (IEE) is accepting [nominations](#) for the Victor J. Goldberg Prize for Peace in the Middle East, which is given annually to recognize outstanding work being conducted jointly by two individuals, one Israeli Jew and one Arab Muslim, who are working together to advance the cause of peace in the Middle East. The deadline for submission is February 1, 2020.

Feb. 3: Journal of Academic Freedom Call for Papers

The *Journal of Academic Freedom* of the American Association of University Professors, a nonprofit membership association of faculty and other academic professionals, is [seeking](#) original, scholarly articles exploring the ways the many managerial techniques in use on campuses today affect academic freedom and democratic faculty governance for its next volume, to be published in the fall of 2020. Electronic submissions of no more than 8,000 words are due by February 3, 2020 and must include an abstract of about 150 words.

March 12-13: Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights Conference (Brussels)

The Academy of European Law is holding a [conference](#), *Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Human Rights*, on March 12-13, 2020 in Brussels, Belgium. The conference, which will be livestreamed, provides a space for legal debate on the current impact of AI on individual human rights, on its regulation, and on the application in practice of legal principles related to AI in line with the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

March 25-28: SAR Global Congress

Scholars at Risk (SAR) has opened registration for the [SAR Network 2020 Global Congress](#) to be held March 25-28, 2020 in Washington D.C. and Baltimore and convened in partnership with Johns Hopkins University and AAAS. The 2020 Global Congress theme, *Truth, Power & Society: The Promise of Higher Education in Challenging Times*, reflects three core roles of higher education: research and teaching leading to new insights and understanding, evidence-based contributions to public discourse and policy, and meaningful engagement with the broadest public good.

April 29-May 1: Nobel Prize Summit

The first-ever [Nobel Prize Summit](#), *Our Planet, Our Future*, will bring together Nobel Laureates and other world-renowned experts and leaders to advance new insights into global sustainable development and explore actions that need to be taken to ensure humanity's future on a prosperous, stable, and resilient planet. The

three-day summit will be held April 29 to May 1, 2020 at the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, with related events expected to be held at other institutions and venues throughout Washington, D.C.

May 2020: Call for Suggestions: GeOnG Forum on Humanitarian and Development Data

CartONG, a non-governmental organization specialized in information management, has launched an Open Call for Suggestions for the [GeOnG Forum](#) on Humanitarian and Development Data, which will take place from November 2 to 4, 2020 in Chambéry, France. Held every two years, GeOnG is dedicated to addressing issues related to data in the humanitarian and development sectors, including topics related to mapping, GIS, data collection and information management. The Open Call for Suggestions will remain open until the end of May 2020.

Job: March 15 Deadline: Director of Programs, University of Dayton Human Rights Center

The University of Dayton is [seeking](#) a Director of Programs for its Human Rights Center (HRC). The position will administer existing HRC programs and will be responsible for developing and cultivating new programmatic educational, research and experiential learning opportunities for students locally, nationally and internationally. The Director will lead on projects related to the intersections of business, science, technology and human rights, the UN Global Compact and University-wide engagement in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030. Applications are due March 15, 2020.

Job: Data Science Lead, IDinsight

IDinsight, a global advisory, data analytics, and research organization, is [seeking](#) a Data Science Lead to grow and build a data science team using tools to tackle pressing challenges, such as extreme poverty, infant mortality, food security, and climate change.

Job: Institute Associate, Center on Privacy & Technology, Georgetown University

Georgetown University is [seeking](#) an Institute Associate, Center on Privacy & Technology, Georgetown University Law Center. The Center on Privacy & Technology at Georgetown Law is a think tank focused on privacy and surveillance law and policy and the communities they affect. The Center is seeking an Institute Associate, which is a term position for 18 months, to provide policy analysis and research.

Opportunity: Student Advocacy Seminars (Scholars at Risk)

Scholars at Risk (SAR) is offering Student Advocacy Seminars to provide university and college students with the opportunity to develop human rights research and advocacy skills through direct engagement on behalf of threatened members of the global higher education community in cooperation with SAR's Academic Freedom Monitoring Project and Scholars in Prison Project. Student Advocacy Seminars are available to all SAR member institutions. SAR and Student Advocacy Coordinators at Roger Williams University assist faculty members and students to create an opportunity that fits their curricular needs and interests. Further information may be found [here](#).

SCIENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USA

Tech Employees Oppose Services Supporting Immigration-Enforcement Practices

A recent [report](#) by NPR's affiliate in Seattle outlines recent moves by individual employees or employee groups of technology companies opposing their companies' involvement in implementing contracts with the US government over services that support certain immigration-enforcement policies. The article provides examples of employee opposition from Tableau, a data-visualization company, Microsoft, Amazon, and Github, a subsidiary of Microsoft and software hosting platform.

EPA Union Workers Call for Bill of Rights to Protect Scientific Integrity

US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) unionized employees have drafted a [10-point Bill of Rights](#), asking the agency to recognize the need for scientific integrity, research into climate science, and the ability to enforce environmental laws without political interference. The Bill of Rights comes as the agency and the union, the American Federation of Government Employees, begin new contract negotiations. The Union for Concerned Scientists, a nonprofit science advocacy organization, is supporting the petition. The [move](#) for the Bill of Rights follows concerns raised by EPA employees that they have not been able to execute the mission of the EPA in light of policy changes and staffing reductions.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UN Human Rights Committee in Landmark Ruling on Human Rights and Climate Change

In the first decision by a UN human rights treaty body on a complaint by an individual seeking asylum protection from the effects of climate change, the UN Human Rights Committee has [ruled](#) that countries may not deport individuals who face climate change-induced conditions that violate the right to life. The case involved the Government of New Zealand and Ioane Teitiota, a man from the Pacific island of Kiribati, whose claim for protection as a climate refugee was denied by New Zealand. Although the UN Human Rights Committee agreed that the claim to protection by Mr. Teitiota be denied on grounds that he was not at imminent risk, the committee determined that people who flee the effects of climate change and natural disasters should not be returned to their country of origin if essential human rights would be at risk on return. UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, [highlighted](#) the importance of the ruling. “This is a landmark decision with potentially far-reaching implications for the international protection of displaced people in the context of climate change and disasters,” it said in a statement. “It also underscores the importance of countries taking action to prevent or mitigate against harms associated with climate change, which in future could otherwise force people to leave, triggering international obligations.”

Lawsuit Filed Against Tech Companies over Cobalt Mining Deaths, Injuries in DRC

International Rights Advocates, which promotes human rights and corporate accountability through legal advocacy and capacity building, has [filed](#) a federal class action lawsuit in the U.S. on behalf of 14 plaintiffs who are either guardians of children killed in tunnel or wall collapses while mining cobalt in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) or children who were maimed in such accidents. The lawsuit names Apple, Alphabet (parent company of Google), Dell, Microsoft, and Tesla as defendants. The lawsuit alleges that the companies “are knowingly benefiting from and providing substantial support” to the artisanal mining system in the DRC. A recent [analysis](#) of the case in *Forbes* outlines the legal and human rights implications.

Tech Company Executives Call for Regulation of AI at World Economic Forum

Several technology executives called for regulation of artificial intelligence (AI) at the World Economic Forum held in Davos, Switzerland earlier this month. IBM CEO Ginni Rometty [announced](#) the launch of IBM's Policy Lab, a new think tank within the company aimed at formulating policy initiatives around innovation, and highlighted IBM's "[precision regulation framework](#)" for AI. Google CEO Sundar Pichai [called](#) for AI regulation in a recent op-ed, and Microsoft President Brad Smith, also [speaking](#) at Davos, said the world "should not wait for the technology to mature" before regulating AI.

Ex-Google Executive Describes Difficulties in Company's Human Rights Program in China

In an [op-ed](#), Ross LaJeunesse, a candidate for the US Senate in Maine and former head of International Relations at Google, outlined his role to develop and implement the company's human rights program in China and what he said was a lack of commitment by the company to institute such a program, which caused him to leave the company. A recent [article](#) in the *Washington Post* further outlines the situation.

UN Recognizes Anniversary of UN Declaration of Rights of Peasants and Others in Rural Areas

A group of United Nations human rights experts issued a [joint statement](#) last month to mark the first anniversary of the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) by the UN General Assembly. UNDROP seeks to redress various forms of discrimination, systematic violations and historical disadvantage that have affected peasants and other people working in rural areas. The statement points out that these groups represent 80% of the world's hungry, 70% of those living in extreme poverty, and produce 80% of the world's food supply.

Case Study of Prosecuting Mass Atrocity Crimes in Uganda Examined

Justice Rapid Response, which provides experts to investigate crimes in conflict areas, provides a [case study](#) of its work in Uganda, which included the investigation of Thomas Kwoyelo, a former senior commander of the Lord's Resistance Army, who was indicted for war crimes and crimes against humanity on 93 counts that included murder, rape, sexual slavery, torture, enslavement, kidnapping and pillaging. Justice Rapid Response began building a prosecution case for sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) crimes in Uganda in 2018. The SGBV charges were added later to the original indictment and in order to gather evidence for these charges, and which required recording additional statements from victims and witnesses.

Australian Gov't Makes Proposals to Protect Human Rights in AI and Facial Recognition Use

Last month (December 2019), the Australian Human Rights Commission unveiled [draft proposals](#) to prevent discrimination driven by artificial intelligence and intrusive facial recognition. The discussion paper proposes federal legislation requiring individuals to be informed where AI is used in a decision that affects their human rights, a general rule that whoever deploys AI is legally liable for its use, and a tort of serious invasion of privacy that would extend outside the digital arena. It also suggests a "moratorium on the potentially harmful use of facial recognition technology in Australia" until there is a legal framework to safeguard human rights. The proposals come as human rights and privacy advocates [are calling](#) for greater transparency and tighter privacy safeguards over the use of a facial recognition system recently put into place by police in Victoria, Australia, which uses algorithms to measure features such as face width and the distance between nose, eyes and mouth for comparison to a database of known offenders.

Privacy Protection and Digital Human Rights Emerges as Leading Issues for 2020

A recent [article](#) in *Forbes* examines four leading issues with respect to privacy protection and technology, including the human right to privacy in a digital arena. The article cites comments by Microsoft President Brad Smith, who recently said privacy was a fundamental human right, and Apple's privacy policy, which calls privacy a human right.

NEW REPORTS AND RESOURCES

Access to Anesthesia as a Human Right Examined

The World Federation of Societies of Anesthesiologists put forth [opinion pieces](#) from its members that assert that access to anesthesia is a human right. One argument asserts that the global approach to achieve the United Nations' goals of universal health care should focus on the development of educational strategies, the provision of basic anesthetic agents and equipment, and involve international experts to educate and develop health services.

Harvard University Group Issues White Paper on Principled Artificial Intelligence

The Berkman Klein Center for the Internet & Society at Harvard University has issued a new [white paper](#), *Principled Artificial Intelligence: Mapping Consensus in Ethical and Rights-based Approaches to Principles for AI*, to advance the global dialogue for policymakers, advocates, scholars, and others working to maximize the benefits and minimize the harms of AI. The paper compares 36 prominent AI principles documents around eight key thematic trends: privacy, accountability, safety and security, transparency and explainability, fairness and non-discrimination, human control of technology, professional responsibility, and promotion of

human values. Underlying this “normative core,” the analysis examines 47 individual principles that make up the themes and details notable similarities and differences in interpretation.

Article Examines Sustainability Challenges and Opportunities in a Low-Carbon Economy

A recent [article](#) in *Science* examines the key sustainability challenges with moving toward a low-carbon economy in the supply of metals and minerals, including cobalt, copper, lithium, cadmium, and rare earth elements, which are needed for technologies such as solar photovoltaics, batteries, electric vehicle motors, wind turbines, fuel cells, and nuclear reactors. The article further proposes recommendations to make mining and metal processing more sustainable and efficient in order to limit environmental and public health impact and produce more universal and equitable benefits.

UN Expert Asserts the Right to Clean Air

The *Annals of Global Health* has published an [op-ed](#) by David R. Boyd, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment, and an Associate Professor at the Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability at the University of British Columbia in Canada, which asserts the human right to clean air. In the article, he asserts that clean air should be regarded as a fundamental human right, related to the rights of life, health, and a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment. He asserts that governments have clear, legally enforceable obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill their legal obligation to protect human rights from air pollution and outlined seven key steps. These include: establishing air quality monitoring networks; quantifying the main sources of air pollution; engaging and informing the public; enacting strong laws, regulations, and air quality standards; developing a national action plan to achieve the standards; allocating adequate resources to implement the plan; and evaluating progress to determine if there is any necessity for stronger actions.

New Report Examines Dam Construction and Community Impact

International Rivers, an organization focused on protecting rivers and the rights of communities that depend on them, has issued a [report](#), *Watered Down: How do Big Hydropower Companies Adhere to Social and Environmental Policies and Best Practices*, to examine dam construction and the related impact on surrounding communities. The report features seven in-depth case studies of dams at the final stages of completion to offer a rationale for companies to compete on their environmental and social track records rather solely on financial grounds.

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