

---

**Note:** AAAS continues to monitor the developments related to COVID-19. All staff based at AAAS headquarters are working from home until at least June 1. AAAS conference facilities are closed, and all meetings through June 1 are canceled, postponed, or held remotely. The Coalition Secretariat will advise members of any future changes to the Coalition's calendar. Stay safe and well!

---

## COALITION CALENDAR

### **May 7: Call for Proposals for 2020 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference**

The call for proposals for the 2020 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference has been extended! Proposals are now due by May 7. [Read the call here](#) and submit a [proposal here](#). The Conference will take place October 22-23, 2020 at AAAS headquarters in Washington, DC.

### **May 28: Student Essay Competition**

Know an undergraduate or graduate student passionate about science and human rights? The Coalition's annual Student Essay Competition deadline has been extended to May 28. Winners will receive a year of membership in AAAS and a one-year subscription to *Science*, as well as a travel stipend to attend the October Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference. To learn more, visit <https://www.aaas.org/shr2020essay> and check out the [Rules and Regulations](#).

## COALITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### **Coalition Responds to COVID-19 Pandemic**

The AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition is sharing resources to help students, educators, activists and other audiences confront the urgent challenges raised by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. At its virtual Annual Meeting April 6-10, member organization the American Association of Geographers (AAG) included a breaking theme, "[Geographers respond to COVID-19](#)." With support from the Coalition, AAG organized a series of sessions highlighting the expertise and perspective of geographers on the pandemic and its medical, social, economic, political, cultural, and ethical implications. For more information on Coalition member activities and resources on the human rights issues raised by the pandemic, visit the Coalition [resource page](#).

### **UN Publishes General Comment on Science**

The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has now published its [General Comment on science and economic, social, and cultural rights](#). The Science and Human Rights Coalition Secretariat submitted feedback from Coalition members on a draft version of the document in February. Many thanks again to members for their contributions.

## ACTION ALERTS

### **Scholars at Risk Calls for Action to Release Dr. Ahmadreza Djalali**

On the fourth anniversary of Dr. Ahmadreza Djalali's arrest in Iran, Scholars at Risk (SAR) has called for his immediate release from Tehran's infamous Evin Prison. An Iranian-born resident of Sweden and scholar of disaster medicine, Dr. Djalali was arrested on a visit to Iran in April of 2016. He was convicted

of “corruption on earth” in 2017 and sentenced to death, allegedly for providing intelligence to Israel. However, Iranian authorities have never provided evidence to support these allegations. SAR notes that Dr. Djalali, who is in poor health, has not been provided with proper medical care and is at high risk should he develop COVID-19. For more information and to send a message calling for the Iranian government to release Dr. Djalali, [click here](#).

## **CALLS FOR INPUT**

### **May 1: Input for UN Report on Cultural Rights and Climate Change**

The UN Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights is seeking [input](#) for a report, which will be submitted to the UN General Assembly, on cultural rights and climate change. The report will address the threats posed by climate change to culture, heritage and the cultural rights guaranteed by international law, including the right to take part in cultural life without discrimination, the rights to artistic and scientific freedom, the right to enjoy and access cultural heritage, as well as the positive potential of culture, heritage, and traditional knowledge, and the enjoyment of cultural rights, to help avoid climate change and to adapt to the changes already in motion. Input is due May 1.

### **May 15: Input for UN Report on Ending Immigration Detention of Children**

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants is seeking [input](#) for a report, which will be submitted to the UN General Assembly, on ending immigration detention of children and providing adequate reception and care. Input from UN member states, national human rights institutions, UN agencies, civil society, academia, and other stakeholders is due May 15.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

### **April 30: Webinar: Data & Human Rights During the Pandemic**

On Thursday, April 30 at 11 AM EDT, The Digital Trade and Data Governance Hub will be hosting a webinar on “Data & Human Rights During the Pandemic.” Speakers will include Professor David Kaye, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, and Dr. Courtney Radsch, Advocacy Director at the Committee to Protect Journalists. Pre-registration is required and is [available here](#).

### **May 13: E-learning Course on Digital Security and Privacy**

Human Rights Education Associates is offering a four-week online course, “Digital Security and Privacy in the Post-COVID-19 Era,” from May 13 to June 9. Further information, including how to register, may be found [here](#).

### **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.

### **June 30: Nominations for 2021 AAAS Award for Scientific Freedom and Responsibility**

AAAS is [accepting nominations](#) for the AAAS Award for Scientific Freedom and Responsibility, which honors scientists, engineers, and their organizations whose exemplary actions have demonstrated scientific freedom and/or responsibility in challenging circumstances. The types of actions worthy of this award include: acting to protect the public's health, safety or welfare; focusing public attention on important potential impacts of science and technology on society by their responsible participation in

public policy debates; or providing an exemplary model in carrying out the social responsibilities of scientists and engineers or in defending the professional freedom of scientists and engineers. Nominations are due June 30.

### **July 1: Nominations for Edward O'Brien Human Rights Education Awards**

Human Rights Educators USA (HRE USA) is now accepting nominations for the Edward O'Brien Human Rights Education Awards. The awards are bestowed annually on one individual and one organization who have made significant contributions to human rights education in the United States. Any member of HRE USA or its organizational affiliates can submit a nomination. More information is [available here](#).

### **Job: Graduate Research Assistants, AI Now Institute**

The AI Now Institute, which produces interdisciplinary research on the social implications of artificial intelligence (AI) in four main areas (rights and liberties, labor and automation, bias and inclusion, and safety and critical infrastructure) [is seeking](#) graduate research assistants to support a range of research projects. Positions are available for this spring semester (now-May 2020), the summer (June-August 2020), and for the 2020-2021 academic year.

### **Opportunity: Scholars at Risk's Practitioners at Risk Program**

[Scholars at Risk](#) (SAR) is seeking to establish a new program to explore increased on-campus support for practitioners at risk. SAR's work arranging temporary positions for at-risk individuals focuses on university scholars and researchers but has always included a wide range of others targeted for their ideas, including journalists, writers, democracy/human rights advocates, lawyers, and artists. Information about this new "practitioners at risk" program is outlined [in this flyer](#), which describes the developing affinity group of individuals interested in supporting practitioners at risk, including through inviting them for short visits on campus. Among other activities, affinity group members may provide advice and pose questions about supporting practitioners at risk; seek review of candidates for positions on their campus; nominate candidates for any available temporary positions elsewhere; and apply for co-funding for temporary positions, whenever such funds might be available. SAR has initiated a listserv for all group members. To join the affinity group and listserv, fill out [this survey](#).

### **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**

### **Human Rights Groups Raise Concerns for LGBTQ Community in Wake of COVID-19**

Human Rights Campaign has issued an [assessment](#) of the healthcare and economic disparities faced by the LGBTQ community during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the US, the National LGBT Cancer Network, GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality, and other LGBTQ supportive groups are leading efforts to bring awareness to the unique health needs of LGBTQ people in the COVID-19 crisis. More than 100 LGBTQ-supportive organizations, including the Human Rights Campaign, joined in a call to healthcare providers and policymakers to make them aware of the community's needs.

### **Technology for Contact Tracing for COVID-19 Raises Privacy Concerns**

A recent [article](#) in *The Atlantic* examines the right to privacy with regard to technology used in contact tracing on cell phones, smartphones and other devices for healthcare monitoring during the COVID-19 pandemic. The article points out that such technology has been used in China, South Korea and Singapore as part of national strategies to curtail the pandemic. The article examines how these surveillance models may be applied elsewhere, including the US.

## **U.S. Scientific Societies Endorse Congressional Resolutions Condemning Anti-Asian Racism**

On April 22, fifty U.S. scientific and professional organizations, including AAAS, sent [a letter](#) expressing support for House and Senate resolutions that denounce hate crimes and other racially motivated incidents against Asian-Americans: “Our societies have been concerned by news reports that individuals of Asian ancestry are increasingly subject to stigma, physical attack, or suspicion due to the potential origins of the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. These actions are wrong and unacceptable for their racial overtones, their impact on societies and individuals, and run counter to the core values of the scientific community and the members we represent.” The letter was sent to the resolutions’ sponsors, Representative Grace Meng (D-NY) and Senators Kamala Harris (D-CA), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), and Mazie Hirono (D-HI).

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **Addressing Gender Bias and Other Rights in Artificial Intelligence and Automation**

A recent [article](#) in *OpenGlobalRights*, an online platform on human rights, examines gender bias in artificial intelligence (AI) and automation and ways to mitigate such bias. The article emphasizes that if AI and automation are not developed and applied in a gender-responsive way, they are likely to reproduce and reinforce existing gender stereotypes and discriminatory social norms. It points to existing human rights frameworks, such as the [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#), which could be applied to guide development of algorithms used in AI and other business practices to address gender bias.

In addition, a separate [article](#) in *OpenGlobalRights* highlights the importance of AI for legal and human rights professionals to assess the rights implications in the development of AI and broader knowledge-building networks, to increase collaboration across specialized fields, and to exchange lessons learned on practical implementation.

### **UN Guidelines for Avoiding Human Right Abuses in State-Mandated COVID-19 Restrictions**

Clément Nyaletsossi Voule, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, [called](#) on UN member states not to use state-of-emergency declarations during the COVID-19 crisis to impose wholesale restrictions on freedom of peaceful assembly and association. He [released a set of 10 guidelines](#) for governments and law enforcement agencies to follow to avoid human rights abuses.

### **UN Reschedules Meetings for Human Rights Review of Member States Due to COVID-19**

The Bureau of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations has [rescheduled](#) the 36<sup>th</sup> Session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group, originally scheduled to take place from May 4–15, 2020, to November 2–13, 2020, given the current situation with the spread of COVID-19 and the emergency measures that have been taken by affected countries worldwide, including the host country, Switzerland. The UPR involves a review of the human rights records of all UN member states. The review cycle is a four-and-half year period within which all UN member states’ human rights records are reviewed. The UPR Working Group convenes three two-week sessions per year, or 14 sessions over the course of an entire cycle. The 37<sup>th</sup> session of the UPR Working Group will thus be postponed to January

2021, to the dates currently envisaged for the 38th session of the UPR. All subsequent sessions of the UPR will be postponed accordingly, meaning that the last UPR session of the 3rd cycle will take place in January 2022.

## **NEW REPORTS AND RESOURCES**

### **UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights Issues COVID-19 Guidance**

The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has issued [guidance](#) for society, governments, communities, and individuals to ensure the measures taken to address the COVID-19 pandemic respect human rights, including economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights.

Separately, the UN issued a [report](#), *COVID-19 and Human Rights*, to further underscore the importance of preserving human rights in government responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **New Report Examines Rights to Privacy and Data Protection in Gov't COVID-19 Practices**

Access Now, a policy and advocacy organization for human rights, has issued a new [report](#), *Recommendations on Privacy and Data Protection in the Fight Against COVID-19*, to provide governments guidance for privacy and data protection in practices used in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The recommendations focus on three categories of measures that authorities have advanced around the world: (1) collection and use of health data, (2) tracking and geolocation, and (3) public-private partnerships. The recommendations aim to ensure that the rule of law and the rights to privacy and data protection are protected throughout the pandemic and in the future.

Separately, Access Now, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Privacy International, and numerous other human rights and civil society organizations issued a [joint statement](#) urging governments to show leadership in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic in a way that ensures any use of digital technologies to track and monitor individuals and populations is carried out strictly in line with human rights.

### **Human Rights Watch Issues Report on COVID-19 and Children's Rights**

A [report](#) by Human Rights Watch outlines key human rights risks to children related to the COVID-19 crisis and steps that governments should take to protect children's rights in the pandemic, mitigate its effects, and benefit children after the crisis is over.

### **Guidance to Employers for Protecting Migrant Workers in Wake of COVID-19**

The International Organization for Migration, an inter-governmental organization focused on migration, has issued a [report](#) to provide preliminary guidance to employers to enhance their response to the current health crisis brought on by COVID-19 and, in particular, to provide advice to establish effective protections for migrant workers in employer operations and supply chains.

### **Lesson Plan for Human Rights and Their Protection in the COVID-19 Pandemic**

As part of its human rights education program, *Speak Truth to Power*, the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights organization has issued a [new lesson plan](#) to educate students about the various mechanisms involved in mitigating a crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic and how human rights, such as the rights to health, an adequate standard of living, social security, and education, are affected. The lesson plan features Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization. The new plan offers educators online materials to incorporate into their curricula.

Publisher: AAAS Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law Program

Editor: Patricia Van Arnum

Associate Editor: Mary Cate Carroll

Contributors: Joel Ericson, Theresa Harris, Nate Weisenberg, Jessica Wyndham