
Note: AAAS continues to monitor the developments related to COVID-19. All staff based at AAAS headquarters are working from home. AAAS conference facilities are closed, and all meetings through December 31 are held remotely, postponed, or canceled. The Coalition Secretariat will advise members of any future changes to the Coalition’s calendar. Stay safe and well!

COALITION CALENDAR

Dec. 10: Human Rights Day

December 10 is Human Rights Day. This year’s theme, as designated by the United Nations, is “Recover Better – Stand Up for Human Rights.” [On its website](#), the UN emphasizes “the need to build back better by ensuring Human Rights are central to recovery efforts. We will reach our common global goals only if we are able to create equal opportunities for all, address the failures exposed and exploited by COVID-19, and apply human rights standards to tackle entrenched, systematic, and intergenerational inequalities, exclusion and discrimination.”

Coalition members – please send us achievements and activities we can highlight on our website and social media as part of the day. To mark Human Rights Day, AAAS will also be hosting a Facebook Live event on [Using AI for Human Rights Applications](#). For more information on the Responsible AI Facebook Live series, sponsored by Hitachi, [click here](#).

COALITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

2020 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference

The annual AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference, held online October 22-23, brought together human rights activists, scholars, members of scientific associations, and students from around the world. The conference featured 47 different speakers and received a record 527 registrants; attendees hailed from almost 30 different countries. Recordings of the sessions are available [on the conference website](#) for registrants through the end of November. The videos will also soon be available to all on the AAAS YouTube channel.

APS Updates Its Criteria to Include Police Conduct in Choice of Meeting Locations

The American Physical Society (APS) [has updated](#) its criteria for the selection of future venues for its scientific meetings. Cities in which APS meetings might be held will be asked to report demographic statistics on police use of force, policies on strangleholds and other restraint methods, and the status of independent investigations into instances of deaths while in custody, among other issues. According to Susan Gardner (University of Kentucky), Chair of the APS Committee on Scientific Meetings, the change was primarily in response to a proposal to the Committee by Philip Phillips and Michael Weissman, both at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, based on letters they had published in [Science \(June 19, 2020\)](#) and [Physics Today \(July 2020\)](#). The committee also considered other factors, including discussions at a recent APS webinar “[From Passion to Action](#)” featuring APS President-Elect S. James Gates, Jr.

“The Human Right to Science. Discuss it. Explore it. Enjoy it.”

On November 10, World Science Day for Peace and Development, AAAS Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law Program Director Jessica Wyndham participated in webinar on the [human right to science](#) organized by [Science for Democracy](#). More information is [available here](#).

COVID-19 & Human Rights Resources

The Coalition Secretariat continues to update the COVID-19 and human rights [resources page](#) on the Coalition website. Please feel free to share additional resources you have found helpful, or information about what your organization is doing to respond to the pandemic. In addition, we continue to share video interviews from our [Responding to COVID-19: Science and Human Rights](#) series. All of the videos can be watched on [AAAS' YouTube channel](#).

CALLS FOR INPUT

Nov. 30: Call for Input: UN Human Rights Report: Child Rights & Sustainable Development

The UN Human Rights Office is seeking input for a report on children's rights and the UN Sustainable Development Goals to be presented to the High Level Political Forum of the UN in 2021. The report will highlight risks and challenges to children's rights and good practices toward addressing them in relation to sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Submitters are requested to address the most urgent challenges and noteworthy good practices in this regard. Deadline for submission is November 30, and further information may be found [here](#).

Dec. 4: Call for Input for UN Report on Systemic Racism and Human Rights

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is [seeking input](#) for a report on systemic racism and violations of international human rights law against Africans and people of African descent by law enforcement agencies, especially those incidents that resulted in the death of George Floyd and other Africans and people of African descent, as a means of accountability and redress for victims. It is seeking information from all States, including independent governmental entities, as well as UN entities, inter-governmental and regional organizations, civil society and non-governmental organizations and all other relevant stakeholders. The deadline for submission is December 4 and further information may be found [here](#).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Jobs: November 29: Right to Education Initiative

The Right to Education Initiative (RTE), a global human rights organization focusing on the right to education, is seeking applicants for several positions with applications due November 29. Further information may be found for the following positions: (1) a [part-time Program Officer](#) to work on the right to public education and the involvement of non-State actors; (2) [Program Manager on Early Childhood Education](#); and (3) a [part-time Communications Manager](#).

November 30: Earth Refuge: Call for Papers on Climate Migration

Earth Refuge, a think tank focused on the legal aspects of climate migration, will officially launch on December 14, and is calling for papers, think pieces, and insights from legal experts, environmentalists, and others with experience or interest in this field to build its archive. The deadline for submission is November 30, and further information may be found [here](#).

Job: Microsoft's Justice Reform Initiative

Microsoft is seeking a program manager in its Justice Reform Initiative, which uses data and technology to advance racial equity in the criminal justice system and advance community-centric policing strategies, alternatives to arrest, and fairer prosecution. The role involves developing a strategic plan and execution strategy for launching a grant-based program to accelerate progress using data and technology in the service of justice reform and collaborating with external, community-based organizations on social good technology

and cash grants, which may include capacity building or specific projects. Further information may be found [here](#).

Dec. 26: Job: UConn: Professors for Environmental and Human Interactions Program

The University of Connecticut's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is [seeking applications](#) for four positions at the level of Assistant Professor as part of a cluster hire in its Environment and Human Interactions program. The university is also [seeking applications](#) for two additional appointments at the Associate or Full Professor level as part of this program. The program involves scholars on a range of subjects, including but not limited to pollution, water supply, climate change, policy, and society's response.

Opportunity: ISPP's Twinning Program for Threatened Scholars

The International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP) is seeking applications to participate in its new Twinning Program, which has been set up to facilitate scholarly collaborations between threatened political psychologists and program partners. These collaborations can offer the opportunity for scholars under threat to continue their academic activities, maintain and advance their careers, and integrate into the international political psychology community. ISPP sets up partnerships based on a match in scholarly interests. Further information may be found [here](#).

SCIENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USA

AAAS Addresses Ways to Increase Diversity and Inclusion in Science

AAAS addressed the issue of systemic racism in science and ways to increase diversity and make the scientific enterprise more inclusive through two recent initiatives. The 2020 AAAS Science and Technology Policy Forum, held virtually October 13 and 14, [featured a range of speakers](#) that provided perspective and guidance on the systemic approaches that institutions can take to make the scientific enterprise more inclusive and diverse. The forum addressed the intertwined crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and systemic racism and how they affect science and policy. Speakers at the forum also offered suggestions for concrete actions that research and educational institutions can take to dismantle systemic racism in science and achieve greater diversity, such as through better ways to encourage and work with STEM students, improvements in the grant process, and more professional development opportunities.

Separately, AAAS [released two parts of a draft plan](#) that directs the organization to strengthen its advocacy on behalf of diversity, equity, and inclusion while examining its own demographics and related policies. AAAS' "Addressing Systemic Racism in the Sciences" plans were developed by AAAS CEO Sudip Parikh and AAAS leadership after discussions inside and outside the association. AAAS issued a [report](#) that provides a baseline accounting of diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender within the organization. The second part of the draft plan, released in September, discusses how AAAS programs and initiatives can help increase diversity and equity throughout the scientific enterprise. The third part of the AAAS plan, which looks at diversity within the AAAS staff, will be shared in late 2020.

Human Rights Watch's Priorities for Next Administration on Human Rights in the U.S.

Human Rights Watch outlined 11 areas in human rights that the next U.S. President and Administration should prioritize. The [list of priorities](#) include multiple measures in the following areas: (1) poverty and inequality; (2) racial justice; (3) the criminal legal system; (4) women's rights; (5) immigration and border policy; (6) LGBT rights; (7) technology and human rights; (8) the environment and human rights; (9) children's rights; (10) workers' rights; and (11) rights of older people and people with disabilities.

Human Rights Groups Oppose California Measure for Ride-Share and Delivery Drivers

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International issued a [joint statement](#) expressing concern over the passage of Proposition 22, a ballot initiative that was approved by a majority of voters in California in the November 3 election, which permits companies to continue treating app-based ride-share and delivery drivers as

independent contractors rather than employees. The groups say that the measure will “undermine the rights of workers for app-based companies in the state [California] and set a dangerous precedent across the United States and globally.” The groups say that Prop 22 denies these workers essential labor protections, such as guaranteed sick pay and compensation for work-related injury or illness, places new obstacles in protecting the right of app-based workers to organize in the future, and undervalues the minimum wage to be paid to these workers.

Article Examines the Minnesota Model for Human Rights

An [article](#) in OpenGlobalRights, an online discussion forum on human rights, examines The “[Minnesota Model for Human Rights Research](#),” which promotes long-term partnerships between academics and human rights practitioners with an aim of knowledge production that simultaneously protects and advances human rights. The article highlights six major lessons learned to serve as a guide for collaborative human rights research and practice projects.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UNESCO, WHO and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Call for “Open Science”

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) issued a [joint declaration](#) late last month calling for “open science.” In their [joint statement](#), the groups said that “[t]he COVID-19 epidemic demonstrates the urgent need to strengthen scientific cooperation and to guarantee the fundamental right of universal access to scientific progress and its applications. ‘Open science’ describes the free access to scientific publications, data and infrastructure, as well as to open source software, educational resources, and other products such as tests or vaccines.” They added, “open science also promotes confidence in science at a time when rumors and misinformation are proliferating to the point of becoming an ‘infodemic.’”

UN Experts Stress Human Rights in Access to COVID-19 Vaccines, Treatments

A group of UN experts [are calling](#) on States, civil society organizations, and academics to prioritize access to COVID-19 vaccines and treatments to ensure scientific progress benefits all in line with international human rights principles. “All efforts to prevent, treat and contain COVID-19 must be based on the bedrock human-rights based principles of international solidarity, cooperation and assistance,” they said in a [joint statement](#). “There is no room for nationalism or profitability in decision-making about access to vaccines, essential tests and treatments, and all other medical goods, services and supplies that are at the heart of the right to the highest attainable standard of health for all.” The statement was issued by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, the UN Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to development, and an independent expert on human rights.

UN Secretary-General Emphasizes Science and Human Rights in Addressing COVID-19

UN Secretary-General António Guterres, in [comments](#) at the World Health Summit late last month organized by the World Health Organization, emphasized the importance of science and human rights in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and access to healthcare overall. “Global health and emergency response systems have been tested and found wanting,” he said. “Access to health is a human right denied to billions of people around the world. Universal Health Coverage is the path to high-quality, equitable, affordable healthcare. Strong public health systems and emergency preparedness are essential steps to greater resilience.” He added that “if we follow the science, and demonstrate unity and solidarity, we can overcome the pandemic.”

UN Calls for Increased Cyber Controls to Combat Human Trafficking Amid COVID-19

A UN committee is [calling on](#) social media platforms to use Big Data and artificial intelligence to help eliminate trafficking of women and girls amid an increase in online efforts to recruit potential victims during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women reported that countries have seen a global rise in trafficking via social media, the dark web, and messaging platforms in recent months. The Committee is calling on social media and messaging companies to set up relevant controls to reduce the risk of exposing women and girls to trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Iranian Physicist, Engineer, and Human Rights Advocate Released from Prison

On October 7, physicist, engineer, and human rights advocate Narges Mohammadi [was released](#) from prison in Iran after serving more than five years of a 10-year sentence on spurious national security charges. Ms. Mohammadi is well-known for her efforts to promote and protect the rights of women, prisoners of conscience, minority communities, and other vulnerable groups and has been involved in efforts to promote free and fair elections and abolish the death penalty in her country. According to Iranian media, her case was included in a recently passed law allowing for the reduction of certain prison sentences.

UN Expert Reports on Human Rights and Digital Technologies

A recent [article](#) in *The Guardian* examines a recent UN report on racism and digital rights. The article elaborates on a [report](#) issued in June at the 44th Session of the UN's Human Rights Council from the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, E. Tendayi Achiume. The report analyzes different forms of racial discrimination in the design and use of emerging digital technologies, including the structural and institutional dimensions of this discrimination. The report also outlines the human rights obligations of States and the responsibility of corporations to combat this discrimination.

Article Examines Human Rights and Facial Recognition Technology in Scientific Research

A recent [article](#) in *Nature* examines a move by scientists and human rights activists to have the scientific community take a stronger position against research that uses facial recognition technology in studies that may have been conducted without subjects' informed consent. Scientists and human rights groups are asking scientists, journals, and research institutes to re-evaluate how they collect and distribute facial recognition datasets and to rethink the ethics of their own studies.

Article Highlights Three Scientists Who Became Political Dissenters, Human Rights Advocates

A recent [article](#) in *Scientific American* highlights the stories of three scientists who became human rights advocates and political dissenters: Tuna Altinel, a Turkish mathematician; Azat Miftakhov, a mathematics graduate student in Russia; and Imad Barghouthi, a Palestinian astrophysicist.

NEW REPORTS AND RESOURCES

***Lancet* Article Provides Historical View of Medical Racism and Violence in the U.S.**

A recent [article](#) in the medical journal *The Lancet* provides a historical perspective on medical racism and violence in the U.S. The authors assert that while public health research has shown that racism is a fundamental determinant of health outcomes and disparities, racist policy and practice have also played a role in the history of medical research and healthcare practices in the U.S.

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