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## COALITION CALENDAR

### **April 8: Volunteer for the 2020 Conference Compendium!**

The Secretariat is currently looking for volunteers to contribute to a compendium that highlights the different sessions from the [2020 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference](#). All contributors will receive free registration for the 2021 Conference, be listed by name as compendium associate editors on the Coalition website, and be recognized on the AAAS Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights, and Law Program's social media channels. [Sign up here](#) by April 8. Reports will be due May 8.

### **April 23: Call for Proposals for the 2021 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference**

The annual AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference will take place online October 21-22, 2021. The call for proposals has just been released! The theme of this year's conference is *Urgent Responses, Emerging Challenges: Collaborations to Advance Human Rights*. The conference will highlight successful collaborations to address urgent human rights issues around the world, as well as emerging challenges that could benefit from the contributions of scientists, engineers, and health professionals working in partnership with human rights NGOs and frontline communities. Proposals from those whose human rights are being threatened and who urgently need a platform for their voices to be heard so that their human rights can be respected are especially welcomed. The deadline to submit a proposal is April 23. [More information here](#).

## COALITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

### **April 16: Call for Proposals Due for SPSSI Virtual Conference (Aug. 2-5, 2021)**

The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI) is calling for proposals for its virtual conference August 2–5, 2021, which has the theme, “Changing the System: Social Research and Action to Reshape the World We Live in.” SPSSI is inviting contributions that reframe the solutions to contemporary social issues or advance understanding of those issues. The contributions may take several forms: short recorded presentations, interactive small-group discussions, poster presentations, or a longer recorded presentation/symposium. The deadline for submitting a proposal is April 16. Further information may be found [here](#).

### **APA Adopts Resolution Integrating Human Rights in its Decision-Making**

The American Psychological Association (APA) adopted a [resolution](#) pledging to integrate its longstanding concerns for human rights and related initiatives into a framework that will underpin its decision-making. The resolution grew out of a [report](#) by the APA Task Force on Human Rights and builds upon an increased focus on human rights in APA's strategic plan and Ethics Code. The task force report, which was also accepted by the APA's governing Council of Representatives at its February meeting, defines human rights and delineates where psychology intersects with human rights. The report and resolution will serve as a roadmap for the association's human rights work going forward, said APA in a March 8, 2021 [statement](#).

### **ASA Condemns Greek Appeals Court Ruling against Andreas Georgiou**

The American Statistical Association (ASA) issued [a statement denouncing](#) the recent ruling of a Greek appeals court that found Andreas Georgiou, the former President of the Hellenic Statistical Authority, liable for slander. For a decade, Georgiou has faced legal proceedings, investigations, and prosecution for providing deficit and debt statistics of the Greek government, even though the accuracy of the data produced under

Georgiou's leadership have repeatedly been validated. ASA and its leadership have repeatedly spoken out to defend Georgiou. In the statement, ASA President Robert Santos observed, "Persecuting a scientific government official for doing his job with rigor and integrity to produce official statistics is deeply concerning." ASA President Ron Wasserstein added, "We urge Greece to end its now 10-year persecution of Georgiou and fully exonerate him, thereby signaling Greece's commitment to accurate and ethical government statistics."

### **Recordings from 2020 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference**

Recordings of 20 sessions from the 2020 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference are now available on the AAAS [YouTube channel](#). Recently added videos include [Student Advocacy for Imprisoned Scientists](#), [The Physical Sciences, Human Rights, and the SDGs](#), and [Engaging Scientific Association Leadership in Human Rights Issues](#).

### **COVID-19 & Human Rights Resources**

The COVID-19 and human rights [resources page](#) on the Coalition website features resources on [protections for whistleblowers](#), government actions that are [restricting civil rights](#), and more. Please feel free to share additional resources you have found helpful or information about what your organization is doing to respond to the pandemic.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

### **April 11: Job: Campaigner at Center for International Environmental Law**

The Center for International Environmental Law, based in Washington D.C., is seeking a Campaigner to support its People, Land & Resource Program's work defending civil society space and the right to participation in environmental decision-making worldwide. This role will focus particularly on expanding the right to remedy for communities affected by development projects and defending and expanding civil society and indigenous peoples' right to participate effectively in decisions that affect their communities, their environment, and their rights. Applications are due April 11. Further information may be found [here](#).

### **April 12 and 16: International Law & COVID-19 Symposium**

The University of Miami School of Law International and Graduate Law Programs and Human Rights Clinic, in collaboration with the Human Rights Society, Health Law Association, and the University of Miami's *International and Comparative Law Review*, will hold *The International Law and COVID-19 Symposium* on April 12 and 16 (via Zoom). The symposium will focus on intersections of COVID-19 with human rights and public health, including state obligations toward vulnerable populations, rights restrictions to protect public health, environmental aspects, reactions by international and regional human rights bodies, and public health responses. Further information may be found [here](#).

### **May 21: Call for Submissions: APA's Technology, Mind, and Society Conference**

The American Psychological Association (APA) is calling for papers for a virtual conference, *Technology, Mind, and Society*, which will be held November 3-5. The conference will bring together scientists, industry leaders, practitioners, students, and policy-makers to explore the critical role psychology plays in the design, use, adoption, and impact of technology and artificial intelligence, including the ethical and policy questions concerning the opportunities and challenges arising from human-technology interactions. The deadline for submissions is May 21. Further information may be found [here](#).

### **Job: Doctors Without Borders: Mental Health Activity Manager**

Doctors Without Borders is seeking clinical psychologists to serve as Mental Health Activity Managers to provide technical expertise and consultation to national staff on the set-up, implementation and/or evaluation of culturally and socially appropriate psychosocial interventions. The programs would be directed to people suffering from post-traumatic stress related to a conflict situation or natural disaster, victims of sexual

violence, or people being treated for HIV/AIDS and/or tuberculosis. Mental Health Activity Managers will recruit, train, and supervise locally hired mental health workers and adapt tools to local cultural needs/contexts and to changing circumstances in the field. Further information may be found [here](#).

## **SCIENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USA**

### **UN Human Rights Experts Raise Concerns Over Petrochemical Projects in Louisiana**

UN human rights experts [have raised](#) serious concerns about further industrialization from petrochemical plants in African-American communities of St. James Parish, Louisiana, where residents have been disproportionately affected by a high incidence of cancer. In 2018, the local government approved plans for a new plastics site by Formosa Plastics Group in what would be one of the world's largest plastics facilities and also approved plans for new methanol complexes by YCI Methanol One and South Louisiana Methanol. Calling it "a form of environmental racism," the UN human rights experts said that the construction of the new petrochemical complexes will exacerbate environmental pollution and the disproportionate adverse effect on the rights to life, the right to an adequate standard of living, and the right to health of African-American communities. They also expressed concerns at possible violations of the cultural rights of the affected African-American communities in the area, where at least four ancestral burial grounds of enslaved Africans are at serious risk of destruction by the construction of the plastics facilities.

### **National Academy of Medicine Urges Black Americans to Get the COVID-19 Vaccine**

A recent [op-ed](#) in *The New York Times*, [signed](#) by 60 Black members of the National Academy of Medicine, is urging Black Americans to get vaccinated against COVID-19. The editorial cites both the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black communities and misinformation on social media about COVID-19 vaccines that has further contributed to mistrust in health institutions and dissuaded Black Americans from being vaccinated.

### **AI Workforce Diversity Key in Addressing Racial Inequality in US Healthcare**

A recent [op-ed](#) in *The Lancet Digital Health* cites the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) in revealing existing biases to motivate societal change and correct disparities in healthcare. The piece notes the need to increase diversity in the workforce that develops healthcare algorithms for AI to overcome these healthcare disparities.

### **Diversity, STEM Initiatives Focus on Scientists with Disabilities**

A recent [article](#) in *Science* describes an internship program (Entry Point!) by AAAS for undergraduate and graduate students with disabilities in science, engineering, mathematics, and computer science. First launched in 1996, the goal of the program is to discover and develop scientific talent among people with disabilities and increase their representation in the scientific workforce. Highly qualified STEM majors with outstanding academic records are placed in companies, agencies, and universities that partner with Entry Point! Eighty-five percent of the program's alumni have been or are current working scientists and engineers. The article further describes other diversity initiatives by AAAS, industry, and other organizations to provide opportunities for scientists with disabilities.

### **Better Scientific Mentorship, Particularly for Women, Is Needed, Says Recent Article**

A recent [op-ed](#) in *Scientific American* examines the structure of scientific mentorship overall and the role of scientific mentorship in reducing bias in the STEM community. It points to a 2019 report by the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine that asserted that STEM mentoring does not, on average, follow best practices, and that scientific mentorship is highly variable within academic institutions and typically does not have formal oversight for how professors manage their students. The report provides suggestions for more productive mentoring, including nine major recommendations that center on transparency and accountability. These recommendations include structured feedback systems between mentors and mentees, evidence-based methods for assessing quality mentorship, and integration of

mentorship quality into tenure and promotion. The article says that effective scientific mentorship has been particularly lacking for women, and that gender equity initiatives are needed.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### UN, WHO, Human Rights Groups Seek Equitable COVID-19 Vaccine Access

Addressing the equitable distribution of vaccines against the coronavirus at a meeting of the UN Security Council in mid-February, UN Secretary-General António Guterres [proposed](#) the creation of an emergency task force by the G20 countries to prepare and help implement a global immunization plan. The meeting was organized to discuss the role of the UN Security Council, UN member states, and the United Nations in ensuring that vaccines are made available equitably in places affected by conflict and insecurity. He proposed that such a task force should include all countries with a capacity to develop vaccines or to produce them if licenses are available, as well as the World Health Organization (WHO), relevant technical organizations and international financial institutions.

Separately, UN human rights experts issued a [Joint Guidance Note](#) to call for equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines for migrants and their families. The human rights experts are urging States to provide equitable access to COVID-19 vaccination to all migrants regardless of nationality, migration status or other prohibited ground of discrimination, and reminded States of their international obligations on the right to health and non-discrimination. The guidance note provides recommendations to integrate migrants into national COVID-19 prevention and response plans and policies.

WHO [provided an update](#) on COVID-19 vaccines delivered through COVAX, a global mechanism for equitable COVID-19 vaccine access and distribution to middle- and low-income countries. WHO says it is facing production and export barriers to increasing vaccine distribution and is calling on four approaches to address these barriers: waiver of intellectual property rights, partnerships, technology transfer, and additional training. Separately, Amnesty International [launched](#) a global campaign in mid-March calling for universal access to COVID-19 vaccines.

### UN Calls for International Support to Combat Human Rights Abuses in Myanmar

In response to the ongoing violence against civilian protestors in Myanmar following a takeover by the country's military on February 1, the UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Alice Wairimu Nderitu, and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, issued a [statement](#) on March 28 to condemn the Myanmar military's widespread, lethal, and increasingly systematic attacks against peaceful protestors, as well as other serious violations of human rights since it seized power. They are calling on the UN Security Council to take further steps and for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the wider international community to act promptly to uphold the responsibility to protect the people of Myanmar from atrocity crimes. They also urged all parties, including defecting officials, police and military officers, to cooperate with international mechanisms, including the International Criminal Court and the Human Rights Council's Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar in fighting impunity.

Their comments follow a [statement](#) on March 27 by UN Secretary-General António Guterres in which he said that "the continuing military crackdown...is unacceptable and demands a firm, unified and resolute international response." He added that the civil disobedience movement is responding with "powerful weapons of peace" and called for the world "to respond in kind with and for the people of Myanmar."

Tom Andrews, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, issued a [statement](#) on March 25 calling on UN member states, including ASEAN countries, the European Union, the U.S., and China, to hold an emergency summit of all stakeholders, including the duly elected illegally deposed parliamentarians who make up the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (Myanmar's elected government). He had earlier communicated in a March 11 [statement](#) that a growing body of reporting

indicates that the military's security forces are committing acts of murder, imprisonment, persecution and other crimes as part of a coordinated campaign directed against the civilian population in a widespread and systematic manner with the knowledge of the junta's leadership, thereby likely meeting the legal threshold for crimes against humanity.

The International Human Rights Network of Academies and Scholarly Societies has released [a statement](#) expressing grave concerns about security forces' excessive use of force against peaceful protestors and targeting of health workers, students, scholars, and academic institutions.

### **Human Rights Experts Seek Action on Impact from Japan's Fukushima Nuclear Disaster**

On the tenth anniversary of Japan's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant disaster, UN human rights experts [say](#) that contaminated water still remaining at the plant poses major environmental and human rights risks and any decision to discharge it into the Pacific Ocean is not an acceptable solution. The UN experts said discharging contaminated water into the Pacific would be a failure to uphold human rights, including the human rights of children by exposing them to further risks inside and outside Japan. In addition, they say that more than 40,000 Fukushima citizens remain evacuees, yet the government does not acknowledge them as internally displaced persons (IDPs), thereby making financial, housing, medical, and other support not available or limited to them. The UN experts are calling on Japanese authorities to intensify their efforts at preventing risks and protecting the affected population, including children, from adverse effects of radiation exposure in accordance with their international human rights obligations.

### **UN Committee Issues Legal Guidance on Children's Rights in a Digital Environment**

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child [published a legal guidance note](#) on how States should protect children's rights with regard to the digital environment. The guidance note is the result of a two-year consultation with States parties, inter-governmental organizations, civil society, national human rights institutions, and children. Over 700 children and young people between nine and 22 years old from 27 countries were asked how digital technology impacts their rights, and what actions they want to see taken to protect them. The Committee, made up of 18 individual experts, recommends that States take robust legislative and administrative measures to protect children from harmful and misleading content. The guidance also says that children should be protected from all forms of violence that happens in the digital environment, including child trafficking, gender-based violence, cyber-aggression, cyber-attacks and information warfare.

### **UN Says Equality in Engineering Crucial to Achieving Sustainable Development Goals**

The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and partners have issued a [report](#), *Engineering for Sustainable Development: Delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals*, in line with World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development, which was observed March 4. The study highlights currently insufficient engineering capacities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, an internationally agreed-to blueprint for achieving peace, prosperity and a sustainable environment, as well as the lack of diversity in the field. "Engineering is one of the keys to the sustainable development of our societies, and to activate its full potential, the world needs more engineers and more equality," said Audrey Azoulay, the UNESCO Director-General, in a March 3 statement. UNESCO notes that women have been historically underrepresented in engineering, making up only 10% to 20% of workers.

### **Human Rights Experts Urge Reversal of Voting Ban for Those with Cognitive Disabilities**

The UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities [joined](#) with the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in characterizing a recent ruling by the European Court of Human Rights that allows for a voting ban on people "who lacked the required level of mental skills" as a "disappointing setback." They said that they hope that the decision is temporary, and that the Grand Chamber of the Court will have an opportunity to re-consider the case. The UN experts said the Court had too readily accepted

governmental restrictions that only people with the requisite ‘mental skills’ could vote. “Simply put, this does not accord with modern scientific understandings of human decision-making, including during elections,” they said.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS BACKGROUNDEERS**

### **Experts Raise Human Rights Concerns for Muslim Uyghurs in China**

UN human rights experts have [raised](#) serious concerns about the alleged detention and forced labor of Muslim Uyghurs in China. They are calling for unhindered access to the country to conduct fact-finding missions and are urging global and domestic companies to closely scrutinize their supply chains. Several experts appointed by the UN Human Rights Council said they had received information that connected more than 150 domestic Chinese and foreign domiciled companies to serious allegations of human rights abuses against Uyghur workers. The UN experts have written to the government of China as well as to private businesses, both inside and outside of China, which may be implicated in the alleged abuses. They have also written to governments of 13 countries where the businesses are domiciled or headquartered to emphasize the obligations of home States under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights to ensure that businesses under their territory and/or jurisdiction respect all human rights throughout their operations.

## **NEW REPORTS AND RESOURCES**

### ***Lancet* Article Examines COVID-19, Structural Racism, and Migrant Health in Canada**

A recent [article](#) in *The Lancet* examines COVID-19, structural racism, and migrant health in Canada and the need for federal and provincial governments in Canada to affirm, through policy and actions, migrants’ human rights to healthcare during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. The article asserts that healthcare must be accessible and safe for all, including universal health coverage for all residents (regardless of immigration status), and be culturally and linguistically appropriate. The article also asserts that labor and immigration policy interventions are also needed globally to address precarious conditions for migrants and affirm their human and labor rights, which are closely connected.

### ***Forced Migration Review* Issue on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support**

The March 2021 [issue](#) of *Forced Migration Review* features 15 articles that explore the importance of mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and the challenges inherent in this field, debate MHPSS initiatives and their application in different contexts, and advocate for strengthened collaboration, commitment, and new ways of thinking. The issue also has a feature relating to data and displacement to discuss recent advances in gathering and using data, the challenges that remain, and new approaches, including in the face of pandemic-imposed restrictions. Another feature on missing migrants explores initiatives to improve data gathering and sharing, identification of remains, and assistance for families.

### **Health and Human Rights Violations in U.S. Immigration Detention Centers**

Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) has issued [a report](#) examining health and human rights violations in U.S. immigration detention centers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis, published in January, was conducted by PHR staff and Harvard Medical School faculty and students to document conditions experienced by people recently released from U.S. immigration detention based on interviews conducted between July and October 2020. The study found that efforts of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to inform people about COVID-19 were limited and inconsistent, social distancing was not widely practiced, and almost half of detainees did not have access to soap or hand sanitizers during parts of their detention.

### **Resources from the University Alliance for Refugees and At-Risk Migrants**

Rutgers Global, an initiative of Rutgers University, co-hosted a [video meeting](#) with the University Alliance for Refugees and At-Risk Migrants (UARRM), Student Voices for Refugees (SVR), the Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for U.S. undergraduate and graduate students to learn about trends in refugee higher education access. The meeting

introduced students to ways that they can get involved as advocates for increasing educational opportunities and in creating more accessible, welcoming, and inclusive campuses for refugees living in and outside of the U.S. UARRM also issued a [report](#), *Walking the Talk*, to provide case studies on how university communities can foster higher education opportunities for refugee students and scholars.

### **Scholars at Risk Launches “Free to Think” Podcast Series**

Scholars at Risk has launched its [Free to Think podcast series](#) featuring conversation with thoughtful and inspiring individuals whose research, teaching, or expression falls at the intersection of power and ideas and who have had the courage to seek truth and speak truth, often at great risk, as well as with those who support them and share their stories. Two episodes released thus far respectively feature Peter Biar Ajak, scholar, civil society leader, and democracy advocate from South Sudan, who as a child was one of the “Lost Boys” of Sudan, who were displaced by the civil war and endured treacherous journeys to refugee camps, and Marcia Ross and Jeff Kaufman, the team behind *Nasrin*, a new film about Nasrin Sotoudeh, an Iranian human rights attorney.

### **UN Report Examines the Right to Safe and Sufficient Water**

David R. Boyd, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment, has issued a [report](#) on the human rights obligations relating to safe and sufficient water, which he describes as one of the substantive components of the right to a safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment. The report describes the causes and consequences of the global water crisis, focusing on the negative impacts of water pollution, water scarcity, and water-related disasters on the enjoyment of many human rights with disproportionate effects upon vulnerable and marginalized groups. The report provides a seven-step process for States to employ a rights-based approach to water governance as well as recommendations for actions. The report also outlines rights-related responsibilities for businesses.

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