

COALITION CALENDAR

Upcoming International Days: November 10 & December 10

There are two upcoming International Days related to science and human rights: November 10 is World Science Day for Peace and Development, and December 10 is International Human Rights Day. If your organization is holding an event to mark either of these days, please let us know! We would be happy to share information about your activities in this newsletter and on social media.

COALITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

2021 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference: Thank You!

Thank you to the presenters, participants, and everyone who worked behind the scenes on the Coalition's annual conference last week! 229 people attended the conference from 19 countries. If you registered and would like to watch the recordings of any of the sessions, you can do so by [logging in to the conference website](#).

ASA's Special Issue of CHANCE Magazine on Statistics and Data Science for Good

CHANCE, a quarterly publication of the American Statistical Association (ASA), is featuring a special issue focused on data and statistics for the public good and collaborations and innovations that have been sparked by partnerships between pro bono institutions and social impact partners. Including work led by Statistics Without Borders and DataKind, the issue features projects involving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Further information may be found [here](#).

CALLS FOR INPUT

Nov 3: UN Report on AI and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities is seeking input for a report on artificial intelligence (AI) and the rights of persons with disabilities. The report will be presented to the UN Human Rights Council in March 2022 and will examine the effect of new technologies involving AI, machine learning, and automated decision making on persons with disabilities. Input is due November 3, and further information may be found [here](#).

Nov. 30: UN Report on Climate Change Impacts and Human Rights

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is seeking input on the adverse impact of climate change on the human rights of people in vulnerable situations. Input is due November 30, and further information may be found [here](#).

Dec. 31: Call for Input: UN Reports on Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water

The UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation is seeking input for two reports: (1) the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation of indigenous peoples, which will be presented to the UN Human Rights Council in September 2022; and (2) the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation of people living in impoverished rural areas, which will be presented to the UN General Assembly in October 2022. Input is due by December 31, and further information may be found [here](#).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Nov 6: Online Lecture on Climate Change in Human Rights Courts

The European Federation of Academies of Sciences and Humanities is hosting an online interactive lecture on November 6 on “Climate Change in Human Rights Courts: Overcoming Procedural Hurdles in Transboundary Environmental Cases.” The lecture will feature Professor Helen Keller, Chair for Public Law, European and Public International Law at the University of Zurich, former member of the UN Human Rights Committee, and former Judge at the European Court of Human Rights. A panel discussion will be held after Professor Keller’s lecture followed by a Q&A session. Further information may be found [here](#).

Nov. 7 & 14: Applications Due: Jobs at the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre

The Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, a global organization focused on business and human rights, is seeking applicants for two positions. The first position is for a Program Director to lead expert international teams on global thematic programs on: workers’ rights in global supply chains; responsible natural resource use and a just transition; and accountable digital technologies with emphasis on protection of civic freedoms and human rights defenders, corporate legal accountability, and gender and racial justice. [Applications](#) are due November 7.

The second position is for Head of KnowTheChain and Investor Strategy to lead the center’s work on forced labor in global supply chains through the center’s flagship investor benchmark, KnowTheChain, and to drive the center’s investor strategy. The successful candidate will also lead and support the center’s global team in integrating investor strategies into programs on: labor rights in supply chains; just transition to clean energy; and technology and rights. [Applications](#) are due November 14.

Nov 12: Job: Assistive Technology Specialist

Disability Rights DC at University Legal Services, a not-for-profit public interest legal services agency, is seeking an Assistive Technology Specialist to provide direct support to persons with disabilities of all ages and their families, particularly in the use of a wide variety of assistive technology devices. Applications are due November 12, and further information may be found [here](#).

Jan 1: Call for Papers: Special Issue on Psychology and Human Rights

The International Journal of Psychology is calling for abstracts for proposed articles for a special issue on recent theoretical, methodological, empirical, and practical advances in the psychology of human rights. Articles should evaluate conceptual models and applications of psychology and human rights (including evidence-based practices) that have been implemented in different contexts and new directions in research. Topics may include, but are not limited to: the human rights of indigenous peoples; human rights in legal, mental health, penal and/or detention systems; human rights in national security and defense, military and civic behavior and in displaced populations. Abstracts for a proposed paper are due January 1, 2022, and further information may be found [here](#).

Jan 31: American University’s 2022 Human Rights Essay Award Competition

The Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at American University Washington College of Law is accepting submissions for the upcoming 2022 Human Rights Essay Award Competition. American University Washington College of Law will award two winners—one for submissions in English and one for submissions in Spanish—with a full scholarship to complete the Certificate of Attendance or Diploma in the 2022 Program of Advanced Studies on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, which will take place from May 30 to June 17, 2022. The topic of the 2022 Award is “Climate Change and Human Rights: Impacts, Responsibilities, and Opportunities.” Submissions are due January 31, 2022, and further information may be found [here](#).

Feb. 15: Call for Papers: *Forced Migration Review*

The journal *Forced Migration Review* is seeking articles for an issue, to be published in July 2022, which will focus on voice and representation and response and accountability as it relates to policy and practices stemming from forced migration and displacement. Articles are due February 15, 2022, and further information may be found [here](#).

SCIENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USA

Human Rights, Science Part of US National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality

The Biden-Harris Administration [released](#) the first-ever National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality, which includes human rights and science and technology as key priorities. The Strategy was developed by the White House Gender Policy Council, which is charged with leading the development of a vision and agenda to advance gender equity and equality in domestic and foreign policy. The strategy identifies 10 interconnected priorities: (1) economic security; (2) gender-based violence; (3) health; (4) education; (5) justice and immigration; (6) human rights and equality under the law; (7) security and humanitarian relief; (8) climate change; (9) science and technology; and (10) democracy, participation, and leadership. These priorities are inherently linked and must be tackled in concert. The strategy also adopts an intersectional approach that considers the barriers and challenges faced by those who experience intersecting and compounding forms of discrimination and bias related to gender, race, and other factors, including sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, disability, age, and socioeconomic status.

White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council Member on Poverty & Climate Change

A recent [op-ed in Nature](#) examines the dual impact of poverty and climate change as illustrated by the aftermath of Hurricane Ida on residents of Louisiana. The author, Catherine Coleman Flowers, Vice Chair of the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council, Founding Director of the Center for Rural Enterprise and Environmental Justice and a speaker at the [Coalition's January 2017 conference](#), points out that that the most severe harms from climate change fall disproportionately on underserved communities that are the least able to prepare for, and recover from, heat waves, poor air quality, flooding and other impacts.

Science Article Presents Data, Impact of Mass Incarceration on Families

A recent [article](#) in *Science* examines the effects of mass incarceration on families and concludes that changes in social and criminal justice policy are required to mitigate its harmful impact. In the authors' view, 2023 marks the 50th anniversary of mass incarceration, and the article provides a review and impact assessment. The authors present new data showing how common family member incarceration is, how much more common it is for certain cohorts, and how unequally distributed it is. The article also highlights how poorly, on average, families were faring before experiencing the incarceration of a family member and provides recent evidence on the effects of family member incarceration. The article also examines limitations of existing research, the need for better data in this area, and some preliminary policy suggestions.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UN-Secretary General Urges Action on Climate Change Ahead of Climate Conference

UN Secretary-General António Guterres [called](#) for action on climate change at a UN high-level meeting, "Delivering Climate Action—for People, Planet and Prosperity," which was held in New York late this month. His comments were made as world leaders will meet at the 2021 Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow, Scotland, from October 31 to November 12. "We are still on track for a global temperature rise of 2.7 °C," he said. "A far cry from the 1.5 °C target to which the world agreed under the Paris Agreement. A target that science tells us is the only sustainable pathway for our world. And one that is entirely achievable. If we can reduce [global] emissions by 45 percent compared to 2010 levels this decade. If we can achieve global net-zero by 2050. And if world leaders arrive in Glasgow with bold, ambitious and verifiable 2030 targets, and new, concrete policies to reverse this disaster."

UN Human Rights Council Endorses Human Right to a Clean, Healthy Environment

The UN Human Rights Council has [recognized](#) that having a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is a human right. In resolution 48/13, the Council called on States around the world to work together and with other partners to implement this right, a point underscored by Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, in a statement before the Council. The High Commissioner described the triple planetary threats of climate change, pollution, and nature loss as the single greatest human rights challenge of our era. The new resolution acknowledges the damage inflicted by climate change and environmental destruction on millions of people globally and underscores that the most vulnerable segments of the population are more acutely impacted. The issue will now go to the UN General Assembly in New York for further consideration. Through a second resolution (48/14), the Council also increased its focus on the human rights impacts of climate change by establishing a Special Rapporteur dedicated specifically to that issue.

UN Expert Stresses the Right to Science in the Context of Toxic Substances

Marcos Orellana, the UN Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes, [emphasized](#) the importance of following the science with respect to exposure to toxic substances and to safeguard against disinformation about scientific evidence on hazardous substances in comments made before the UN Human Rights Council last month. "The right to science implies an enabling environment where scientific freedoms may be realized and where governments promote and support scientific research on toxic substances that endanger public health and the environment," Orellana said. He presented a [report](#), "Right to Science in the Context of Toxic Substances," to the Council last month.

UN Human Rights Committee Makes Landmark Ruling on Indigenous People's Rights

In a landmark decision, the UN Human Rights Committee [found](#) that Paraguay's failure to prevent and control the toxic contamination of traditional lands, due to the intensive use of pesticides by nearby commercial farms, violates the indigenous community's rights and sense of "home." This is the Committee's first decision to affirm that, in the case of indigenous people, the notion of "home" should be understood within the context of the special relationship between them and their territories, including their livestock, crops, and their way of life such as hunting, foraging and fishing. The Committee's decision follows a complaint filed by the elected community leader and a teacher at the community school, on behalf of all the 201 Ava Guarani people of the Campo Agua'e indigenous community in the country's eastern district of Curuguaty.

UN Expert Addresses Racism, Surveillance Technology in Immigration Enforcement

The UN Human Rights Council [held](#) an interactive dialogue with the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, and started a general debate on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance. The UN expert presented two reports to the Council: (1) a thematic report on racial and xenophobic discrimination and the use of digital technologies in border and immigration enforcement and (2) another report on combatting the glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism, and other practices that contribute to fueling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. A key finding from the first report was that Governments and non-State actors were developing and deploying new surveillance technologies in immigration enforcement with little regard for the human rights abuses, racially discriminatory structures, and experimental risks engendered by such technologies. In the second report, the UN expert said that the COVID-19 pandemic had contributed to anti-Semitic, racist, and xenophobic hate speech, conspiracies, and public rhetoric and urged States address these issues in their COVID-19 responses and recovery plans.

UN Child Rights Committee Rules on Cross-Border Responsibilities in Climate Change

In a historic ruling on the harmful effects of climate change on children's rights, the UN Child Rights Committee (CRC) [found](#) that a State party can be held responsible for the negative impact of its carbon emissions on the rights of children both within and outside its territory. CRC published its ruling—the first such ruling by an international body, according to the UN— after examining a petition filed by 16 children from 12 countries against Argentina, Brazil, France, Germany, and Turkey in 2019.

Machine Learning Effective in Identifying Travelers for COVID-19 Testing in Greece

A recent [editorial](#) in *Nature* describes the s launch by Greek authorities of a system that uses a machine-learning algorithm to determine which travelers entering the country should be tested for COVID-19. The authors explain that machine learning was found to be more effective at identifying asymptomatic people than was random testing or testing based on a traveler's country of origin. According to the researchers' analysis, during the peak tourist season, the system detected two to four times more infected travelers than did random testing.

New Rules in Mexico Limit Criticism of National Council on Science and Technology

[Reporting](#) by the Associated Press says that Mexico's National Council on Science and Technology has issued a new set of rules telling employees and outside researchers to avoid negative opinions or commentaries about the body, thereby raising concerns over academic freedom. The union representing workers at the Council confirmed the new rules had been sent out on September 30. The new rules follow criticism from researchers in Mexico and abroad that alleged that academics and members of a scientific advisory board had misallocated \$2.5 million in funding. Members of the advisory board, created to promote scientific discussion, dispute that charge and said the board had operated under the Council's rules.

Two UK-Based Unions Cite Racial Bias in Uber's Driver-Verification System

[BBC News reports](#) that two unions in the UK are taking legal action against Uber by claiming that software used to verify drivers' identity is racially biased and that the company unfairly dismissed drivers. The Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain backed an employment tribunal claim for indirect racial discrimination on behalf of one of its members who was terminated following a facial verification error. It follows a decision by the App Drivers & Couriers Union earlier this year to bring two employment tribunal cases against Uber over the company's facial recognition system. Uber uses a driver-verification system to verify drivers' identity as a means to stop drivers from sharing accounts, a practice that can be used to circumvent criminal record checks.

NEW REPORTS AND RESOURCES

Article Examines Privacy, Access, and Equity in Digital Contact-Tracing Apps

A recent [article](#) in *Science* examines the use of smartphone-based digital contact-tracing apps, including exposure notification apps used during the COVID-19 pandemic, and related issues of privacy and access, particularly for low-income or marginalized communities. The authors emphasize the importance to use and build digital tools that support healthcare policy that protect rights, health, and safety, but also that enables greater healthcare equity.

Webinar: Human Rights-Based Responses to the Persecution of Scientists and Scholars

The Committee on Human Rights (CHR) of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine recently held an online discussion to reflect on historical attacks against members of the scientific and academic community and to consider ways in which the scientific community can help promote and protect the rights of their colleagues. Participating were legal scholar [Professor Philippe Sands](#) of University College London and CHR member [Dr. Michael Katz](#), Senior Vice President Emeritus of the March of Dimes Foundation and Professor Emeritus of Pediatrics and Professor Emeritus of Public Health at Columbia University. The video may be found [here](#).

UN Report on Environmental Justice, the Climate Crisis and People of African Descent

The UN Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent has issued a [report](#) that provides guidance on how to effectively address environmental injustice, racial disparities, unequal protection, and the unique impact of the climate crisis and environmental racism on people of African descent.

Resource Kit: Hosting Afghan Students and Scholars

The American Council on Education, the Institute of International Education, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, and the Association of American Universities have issued a [resource kit](#) on hosting Afghan students and scholars. The resource kit includes a checklist of steps to ensure that necessary structures and support networks are in place to welcome students and scholars, along with key questions to help institutions assess their options and readiness to host. It provides information to help campus leaders make decisions about capacity, as well as concrete action items for senior international officers and others charged with implementation.

PEOPLE

Congratulations to Dr. Safiya Noble!

Dr. Safiya Noble, a member of the AAAS Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility, was recently named a 2021 MacArthur Foundation Fellow. More information is available via the [University of California Los Angeles](#) and the [New York Times](#).

Human Rights Data Analysis Group Awarded Rafto Prize

The Rafto Foundation, an international human rights organization, has [awarded the Rafto Prize](#), given for distinguished work for human rights and democracy, to the [Human Rights Data Analysis Group](#) (HRDAG), a non-profit organization that applies data science to the analysis of human rights violations. The award ceremony will take place in Bergen, Norway, on November 14. HRDAG spoke at the [AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference in 2019](#) in a discussion on a machine-learning model used to predict which counties in Mexico have the highest probability of unreported hidden graves.

Former Director of AAAS Science and Human Rights Program Featured in California Magazine

[Eric Stover](#), Faculty Director of the Human Rights Center and Adjunct Professor of Law and Public Health at the University of California, Berkeley, and the former Director of the AAAS Science and Human Rights Program, the program that merged with the AAAS Scientific Freedom, Responsibility and Law Program to become the current Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law Program, was [recently featured](#) in the Cal Alumni Association magazine for his life-long work in human rights.

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