

COALITION CALENDAR

October 17-19: 2022 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference

Plans for the 2022 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference are moving ahead! We have an exciting agenda planned for this year, with sessions focusing on the human right to science, connecting engineering and human rights in undergraduate education, and much more. The conference will be held in hybrid format, with attendees able to participate virtually or in person at AAAS headquarters in Washington, DC. Registration will open in August. For the latest updates, please visit <https://www.aaas.org/coalition/conference/2022>.

COALITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Update on Coalition FutureGen Scholars

Thank you to all who applied for the 2022-23 [SciTech and Human Rights FutureGen Scholars](#) program. This year's applications are currently being reviewed by the Coalition's Steering Committee, and the winners will be announced in August. If you are interested in serving as a mentor for one of the FutureGen Scholars, please contact us. Mentors advise Scholars on how to carry out their projects successfully and support their professional development.

Human Rights at Your Organization's Annual Meeting? Let Us Know!

Does your association have sessions or other activities at its annual meeting related to human rights? Please reply to this message and let the Secretariat know. We are happy to highlight these events in this newsletter.

APA (Division 48), Other Groups Call on APA To Recognize Victims of Torture

In recognition of the 25th anniversary of the United Nations International Day in Support of Torture Victims, the Executive Committee of the [Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, and Violence: Peace Psychology Division \(Division 48\)](#), part of the American Psychological Association (APA), is [calling on the APA](#) to issue a public apology to prisoners detained by the U.S. government at Guantánamo Bay and other sites who were subjected to physical and psychological abuse. The Committee noted that APA's leadership apologized to its membership and to psychologists worldwide in 2015 for not adequately defending the profession's fundamental ethical principles but did not issue a public apology to the prisoners. The Committee said that an apology, along with making regular donations to organizations that provide support to torture victims, would be consistent with the association's "recent centering of its commitment to protecting and advancing human rights." Several other divisions of the APA have endorsed the Committee's recommendation, including Coalition member the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, as well as other groups, including Amnesty International USA and Physicians for Human Rights.

CALLS FOR INPUT

Aug. 31: UN Seeking Input on Mental Health and Human Rights

The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is seeking input on joint guidance being developed by the OHCHR and the World Health Organization that aims to be a resource for countries considering legislative measures to support the transformation of mental health systems in line with international human rights law. The guidance seeks to encourage the adoption of laws that promote and protect the human rights of persons interacting with mental health services, support

equality and non-discrimination, and promote reforms in other areas crucial for well-being and good mental health. Input is due August 31, and further information may be found [here](#).

Sept. 15: UN Seeking Input on Human Rights in Universal Health Coverage

OHCHR is conducting research on human rights-based pathways to achieving universal health coverage and is seeking input on: (1) examples of promising practices and criteria for implementing human rights-based approaches to universal health coverage; (2) examples of approaches to universal health coverage that have not worked and why they have not worked; and (3) research and promising practices for financing universal health coverage, particularly in resource-poor settings. Input is due September 15, and further information may be found [here](#).

WHAT WE'RE LISTENING TO

Podcast: Diverse Clinical Trials: Why Aren't We There Yet?

Color Code, a podcast produced by STAT, an online publication providing analysis of biopharmaceutical and life sciences news and healthcare policy, recently [aired an episode](#) to examine the need to increase diversity in clinical trials. The episode features Robert Winn, Director of the Virginia Commonwealth University Massey Cancer Center, who discusses his role in connecting with the local community and educating the public about clinical trials, and Jonathan Jackson, Executive Director of the Community Access, Recruitment, and Engagement Research Center at Massachusetts General Hospital and an Assistant Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School, who discusses the barriers to achieving more diverse clinical trials and what needs to be done to address this issue.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Job: Director, American Geophysical Union, Thriving Earth Exchange

The American Geophysical Union, composed of Earth and space scientists, advocates, and experts, is seeking a Director of its Thriving Earth Exchange, which seeks to advance community solutions through collaboration of scientists, community leads, and sponsors to solve local challenges related to natural resources, climate change, and natural hazards. The Director of the Thriving Earth Exchange has a broad range of budgetary, operational, and leadership responsibilities. Further information may be found [here](#).

SCIENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USA

Scientific, Human Rights Groups Respond to Overturning of *Roe v. Wade*

Scientific and human rights groups are reacting to the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* on June 24, which overturned *Roe v. Wade*, eliminating the constitutional right to an abortion and handing decisions about abortion access to state legislators. Below is a selection of news stories and statements on the consequences and ethical issues faced by doctors and other scientists; the human rights context and impacts of abortion restrictions for different populations; and reactions to the decision itself.

- **National Academies of Science and Medicine:** [U.S. Decision to Overturn *Roe v. Wade* Could Worsen Reproductive Health in U.S., Exacerbate Health Inequities](#) (June 24, 2022)
- **Human Rights Watch:** [US: Abortion Access is a Human Right](#) (June 24, 2022)
- **Physicians for Human Rights (PHR):** [Irreparable Harms for Patients and Health Workers: PHR Statement on *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*](#) (June 24, 2022)
- **United Nations:** [Statement by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet on U.S. Supreme Court Ruling on *Dobbs v Jackson Women's Health Organization*](#) (June 24, 2022)
- **United Nations:** [Joint Web Statement by UN Human Rights Experts on Supreme Court Decision to Strike Down *Roe v. Wade*](#) (June 24, 2022)
- **United Nations:** [USA: UN Experts Denounce Supreme Court Decision to Strike Down *Roe v. Wade*, Urge Action to Mitigate Consequences](#) (June 24, 2022)

- **National Public Radio:** [For Doctors, Abortion Restrictions Create an 'Impossible Choice' When Providing Care](#) (June 24, 2022)
- **Science:** [For Scientists, Roe's End Raises Concerns about Personal Safety and Professional Choices](#) (July 1, 2022)

Study Examines Racial and Ethnic Disparities in U.S. Life Expectancies

A recent [study](#) in *The Lancet* that analyzed life expectancies in 3,110 U.S. counties over 20 years showed that life expectancy for Americans rose slightly over the period, to 79.1 years in 2019, but persistent and widespread disparities remained between different racial and ethnic groups. The national analysis included American Indian/Alaska Natives and Asian/Pacific Islanders, groups sometimes left out of life-expectancy analyses due to the difficulty in acquiring their data because of small population sizes and misclassification of racial and ethnic groups on death certificates. The study attempted to correct for such misclassifications and small sample sizes using estimates based on work to validate death certificates and other statistical modeling techniques. The authors emphasize that local-level data are crucial to address the root causes of poor health and early death and health disparities among disadvantaged groups. An [article](#) in *STAT* summarized the results, which showed that Native American and Alaska Native populations saw no increase in life expectancy in the two decades preceding the COVID pandemic, living 73.1 years on average in 2019, nearly six years less than white Americans.

Article Examines U.S., Int'l Efforts in Assisting Threatened Scholars, Researchers

The American Association of Colleges and Universities recently published an [article](#) authored by leadership of the Institute of International Education (IIE) to highlight the history and recent work of the IIE in assisting threatened scholars by providing them with academic placements and the opportunity to continue their work. In 2021, IIE's Scholar Rescue Fund (SRF) received more applications than any year in the program's history, reflecting in part greater levels of need arising in Afghanistan. The authors detail that in 2022, more assistance is required in Ukraine following Russia's invasion of the country, which has resulted in the mass displacement of Ukrainian professors and researchers and a crackdown on dissenting scholars and civil society actors inside Russia. The article describes the work of the IIE–SRF in assisting scholars in these and other countries and examples of U.S.-based universities' participation in the program.

Epidemiologist Explains Methods to Account for Structural Racism in Health Research

A recent [article](#) in *Science* features an interview with Paris Adkins-Jackson, a health equity researcher and Assistant Professor in the Departments of Epidemiology and Sociomedical Sciences in the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, who, with other researchers, published a [guide](#) in 2021 for measuring structural racism for epidemiologists and other researchers. A key issue for health researchers is how to measure structural racism—the racism built into societal systems including housing, work, and healthcare—in different places and systems. Dr. Adkins-Jackson spoke at a recent workshop on structural racism and social inequity of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine and explained how methodologies from anthropology and social sciences can inform research on health and of the value of applying mixed methods, using both qualitative tools, such as interviews and focus groups, and quantitative methods.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UN Stresses Human Right to Science in Addressing Environmental Crises

The United Nations General Assembly [convened](#) a “Moment for Nature” debate earlier this month to examine the interconnected environmental threats hampering efforts to achieve sustainable development and to address what UN Secretary-General António Guterres [called](#) the “triple crisis” of climate disruption, biodiversity loss, and pollution. Prior to the meeting, Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, [stressed](#) that a human rights-based approach to environmental crises

can close the gap between environmental commitments and the often-unrealized action needed to meet them. She said that this approach “emphasizes the need to guarantee meaningful and informed participation and to ensure all people benefit from science and its applications.” The “Moment for Nature” debate corresponds with negotiations on a UN General Assembly resolution on the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment. “I urge you to adopt this resolution, a powerful signal that the nations of the world acknowledge the simple truth that our human rights are intrinsically bound to the health of our shared environment,” said Bachelet. In late July, the UN General Assembly is expected to vote on the [draft resolution](#), which follows the adoption of similar text in October 2021 by the UN Human Rights Council. An [interview](#) with David Boyd, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment, explains the importance of recognizing this right and its impact globally.

Russian Scientist Facing Treason Charges Dies in Custody

Russian scientist Dmitry Kolker, Director of the Laboratory of Quantum Optics at Novosibirsk State University, who was detained under charges of treason by Russia’s Federal Security Service, died while in custody earlier this month, drawing strong criticism from a group of scientists at the Russian Academy of Sciences. Kolker was accused of leaking state secrets to China, a charge contested by his supporters who say that that optics lectures Kolker gave in China, from which charges resulted, included no classified information. A recent [article](#) in *Science* examines his case and other instances in which scientists in Russia have come under investigation by Russian security services.

UN Raises Concerns of Unilateral Sanctions in Scientific Research & Academic Freedom

UN human rights experts [have raised](#) concerns over unilateral sanctions in scientific and academic research and publishing after reports that academic research submitted by authors from sanctioned countries is being disqualified. The experts said they received information on sanction-induced impediments to academic freedom and the right to benefit from scientific progress and its applications. These impediments included “sanction clauses,” referring to restrictions in the review and publication procedures of research conducted and submitted to international journals by authors and scholars from sanctioned countries. The UN experts [have communicated](#) their concerns to the U.S. government and to several publishing companies and are calling on publishing houses and scientific journal boards to refrain from over-complying with existing sanction regimes.

UN Human Rights Council to Meet in 2023 on Science’s Contribution to Human Rights

The United Nations Human Rights Council [decided](#) earlier this month that the Social Forum, an annual meeting convened by the Council for open and interactive dialogue between civil society, representatives of UN member states, and intergovernmental organizations on a theme chosen by the Council, would meet for two working days in 2023 in Geneva to discuss the contribution of science, technology, and innovation to the promotion of human rights.

NEW REPORTS AND RESOURCES

Education Under Attack 2022 Report Released

The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack has issued a new [report](#), *Education Under Attack 2022*, which examines attacks on schools, universities, their students, and staff in 2020 and 2021. The report notes that in 2020 and 2021, there were more than 5,000 reported attacks on education and incidents of military use of schools and universities, harming more than 9,000 students and educators in at least 85 countries. On average, six attacks on education or incidents of military use occurred each day.

Engineering for Change: Templates for Site Planning of Refugee Camps

Engineering for Change (E4C), which is focused on preparing, educating, and activating the international engineering workforce to improve the quality of life of vulnerable populations globally, provided an [update](#) on a project with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for developing a package of

templates for mapping and planning refugee camp sites. E4C worked with UNHCR to operationalize five drawings and six documents that constitute the organization's basic package of settlement planning templates.

Article Makes Case for Integrating Social Justice Concepts in Engineering Education

The National Academy of Engineering posted an [article](#), "Invisible Bridges Engineering for Equity: Factors and Aspirations," which outlines the importance, benefits, and challenges of integrating social justice concepts in engineering education. The article says that while educators have risen to the task with education interventions, community-building approaches, and design initiatives that incorporate social justice concepts, much progress is still needed to integrate these concepts into the mainstream understanding of engineering practitioners. The article also underscores the importance of creating greater diversity among engineering students, where women and minorities are now underrepresented.

NYU Research Primer Examines Human Rights Implications of Digital ID Systems

The Center for Human Rights and Global Justice at the New York University School of Law has issued a [primer](#) on the role of the World Bank and global networks in promoting digital identification systems, often with biometric components (digital ID), and the related human rights implications. The primer explains that these digital ID systems create an "economic identity" of individuals through the use of biometric technologies to facilitate economic transactions and private sector service delivery while also bringing new, poorer, individuals into formal economies. Unlike traditional systems of civil registration, such as birth registration, the report explains that this new model of economic identity commonly sidesteps difficult questions about the legal status of those it registers and the rights associated with that status.

UN Issues Updated Istanbul Protocol as a Manual for Investigating and Documenting Torture

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has issued a [revised edition](#) of the *Istanbul Protocol*, a manual that outlines the effective investigation and documentation of torture and other cruel, degrading, or inhuman treatment and punishment. Using multi-sectoral engagement, specialized global expertise, and practical experiences of law, health, and human rights professionals in the field, including members of United Nations anti-torture mechanisms, the updated edition seeks to fortify the implementation of international norms and preventive tools to assist survivors of torture worldwide.

Red Cross-Partnered Organization Releases Data Playbook to Support Larger Goals

The Solferino Academy, which partners with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to support the work of the IFRC, has released a [Data Playbook](#) to help organizations understand and meet responsible data goals. The Data Playbook consists of 120 exercises, games, scenarios, slides, and checklists to assist organizations in their data journey. The social learning content is designed for teams to have discussions and activities across the data lifecycle in short 30-minute to 1-hour sessions.

Policy Paper Examines Role of Social Media in Causing & Preventing Mass Atrocities

The Stimson Center, a Washington D.C.-based research institute, has issued a [policy paper](#), "Social Media Misinformation and the Prevention of Political Instability and Mass Atrocities." The report examines how social media misinformation can worsen political instability and legitimize mass atrocities and proposes customized recommendations to key stakeholders, including NGOs, civil society organizations, researchers, governments, multilateral organizations, and social media/media groups, on how those respective groups can support atrocity prevention.

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