COALITION CALENDAR

October 17-19: 2022 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference
Registration will open next week for the 2022 AAAS Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference! This year's event will be held in hybrid format, with attendees able to participate virtually or in person at AAAS headquarters in Washington, DC. Look for an email from the Coalition Secretariat with more information soon.

Do you need financial support to attend the conference? Please fill out this brief application by **September 14**.

COALITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

2022-23 Coalition FutureGen Scholars Named
Congratulations to the 2022-23 SciTech and Human Rights FutureGen Scholars! Below are the names of the recipients, their college/university, and their projects:

- Amber Mundy (Virginia Commonwealth University): East Marshall Street Well Project: Crania and Mandible DNA Sequencing
- Hana Kamran and Julia Bauer (Davidson College): D4: Data-Driven Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion at Davidson College
- Zainub Dhanani (Stanford University School of Medicine): Disability Equity and Inclusion in Healthcare and Medical Education

A more detailed article on the Scholars and their goals for the coming year will be published in the coming weeks.

2021 Conference Compendium Available
Couldn't attend the 2021 Science, Technology and Human Rights Conference, or want to catch up on a session you missed? Read summaries and watch recordings here. Many thanks to editor Gabriel Velez and associate editors Sarah Adkins-Jablonsky, Kelly Bohrer, Vicki Breting-Garcia, and Kris Poduska for contributing to this resource.

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 READING

Director of AAAS SEA Change Emphasizes Need for Greater Diversity in STEM

A recent essay in a special section, "The Next 75 Years of Science Policy," in *Issues in Science and Technology*, a quarterly journal of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine and Arizona State University, says that making science more inclusive and diverse has not received the attention it urgently needs. The author, Shirley Malcom, Director of AAAS SEA Change, an initiative that seeks to advance institutional transformation in support of diversity, equity, and inclusion, especially in colleges and universities, says that to remain a leader in innovation, the U.S. must diversify its science, engineering, and technology workforce. She stresses that the U.S. faces new technological and geopolitical challenges, but the limiting factor is a human one. She highlights that women and people who are Black, Hispanic or Latino, and American Indian or Alaska Native remain consistently underrepresented in STEM fields for reasons that are manifold, complex, and structural, and efforts have been insufficient to address the roots of these issues. She explains that in science policy circles, the human resources challenge of research rarely receives the attention it urgently needs and deserves for the U.S. to remain a leader in advancing the next generation of science.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Sept 1: Webinar: The Targeting of Scientists and Public Health Professionals

The U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Committee on Human Rights is organizing a fall webinar series on the threats and attacks faced by scientists and health professionals during the pandemic. The series will examine issues such as government censorship and violence against health workers and explore the implications for freedom of expression, the right to information, and other internationally protected human rights. The first webinar, The Targeting of Scientists and Public Health Professionals, takes place on September 1 from 2:30-4:15pm ET. You can register for the webinar here.

Sept 8: Thriving Earth Exchange Community Science Fellows & Job Opening

The American Geophysical Union (AGU) is seeking Community Science Fellows in 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. Community Science Fellows are committed volunteers who facilitate and lead collaborative, co-developed community science projects that produce on-the-ground impact in local communities. Applications are due September 8, and further information may be found here.

AGU is also seeking a Director for Thriving Earth Exchange. The Director has a broad range of budgetary, operational, and leadership responsibilities. Further information may be found here.

SCIENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USA

Health Researchers Speak to Challenges, Issues in Conducting Studies Post-*Roe* Overturn

A recent article in *Nature* explains how scientists and reproductive-health researchers are conducting studies to evaluate how individuals are affected by the U.S. Supreme Court decision in late June to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. The article points out that in many cases, this means developing ways to partner with communities to collect sensitive information and to ensure that studies are as useful as possible, particularly to people concerned about their pregnancies. The article also points out that the shifting legal landscape has complicated how reproductive-health researchers conduct their studies.

Physicians for Human Rights Files Amicus Brief To Support Ending Border Removals
Earlier this month, Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) filed an amicus brief with a federal appeals court to present public health evidence in support of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) efforts to rescind Title 42 border expulsions, which refer to removals by the U.S. government of persons who have recently been in a country where a communicable disease was present. The policy was enacted in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, but since then, the Biden Administration has sought to end its use. PHR filed the amicus brief in support of the CDC's proposed rescission of Title 42, following a May 2022 district court ruling that prohibited the repeal of Title 42 from taking effect. The district court ruling followed a case filed by 20 states, which argued that an expected increase in the number of asylum seekers being released from U.S. border custody upon Title 42 being halted would harm them financially due to increased educational and other social services costs. PHR's brief presents information that rescinding Title 42 removals supports public health interests and that Title 42 removals were used as an immigration control measure and did not respect the right of individuals to seek asylum or meet U.S. obligations under domestic and international law. According to PHR, since the policy was enacted in March 2020, the U.S. government has used Title 42 to expel asylum seekers and other migrants almost two million times.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UN Formally Recognizes Human Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment
The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet issued a statement to strongly support the decision by the UN General Assembly to recognize the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and she called for urgent action to make it a reality globally. Late last month, the UN General Assembly voted to recognize the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment based on a draft resolution by five UN member states (Costa Rica, the Maldives, Morocco, Slovenia, and Switzerland) following the adoption of similar text adopted in October 2021 by the UN Human Rights Council. "…[T]he recognition of the right to a healthy environment should lead to constitutional and legislative improvements at the regional, national, and sub-national levels, with positive implications for air quality, safe and sufficient water, healthy soil, sustainably produced food, green energy, climate change, biodiversity and the regulation of toxic substances," said David R. Boyd, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment, in a statement supporting the decision.

Facebook's Parent Company Meta Publishes First Annual Human Rights Report
Meta, the parent company of Facebook, released last month its first annual Human Rights Report, covering 2020 and 2021, which details how the company is addressing potential human rights concerns stemming from its products, policies, or business practices. Certain human rights groups, including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, have criticized the company and the report for failing to adequately address key human rights concerns around content moderation, hate speech, and misinformation.

Misuse of Digital ID Systems in Afghanistan Raises Human Rights Concerns
A recent article by the Thomson Reuters Foundation reports that individuals in Afghanistan, including former government officials, judges, police, and human rights activists, fear being tracked with digital ID and data systems. Like other poor nations, Afghanistan digitalized its data in recent years with funding and expertise from the World Bank, U.S., European Union, and the United Nations' refugee and food programs. One digital ID system holds personal and biometric data, including a person's name, ID number, place and date of birth, gender, marital status, religion, ethnicity, language, profession, iris scans, fingerprints, and a photograph. The ID is needed to access services, jobs, and to vote, but it also exposes vulnerable ethnic groups and people who worked in government or with foreign agencies.

UN Experts Seek More Protection for Human Rights Defenders in Colombia

UN experts are calling on the Colombian government to do more to protect human rights defenders who raise concerns about business projects, particularly in land-intensive industries, in Colombia. The experts drew attention to Pedro Jose Velasco Tumiña, an Indigenous Misak defender who has been receiving threats for almost a year. Since July 2021, members of the Misak and Nasa Indigenous peoples and *campesino* communities have held protests in the Cauca Department on land used for pine and eucalyptus crops and owned by the Irish packaging company Smurfit-Kappa. Protesters have denounced the negative impacts of Smurfit-Kappa's use of land in the country on human rights and the environment and are advocating for implementation of land-reform measures under Colombia's 2016 Peace Agreement. The Indigenous communities assert their right to reclaim land owned by Smurfit-Kappa in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Poland's Role in Helping Ukrainian Scientists; Ukrainian War's Impact on Global Science

A recent article in *Issues in Science and Technology* features an interview with Jerzy Duszyński, the President of the Polish Academy of Sciences, who talks about his country's efforts to help scientists from neighboring Ukraine and what the future may hold for both Ukrainian and global science. A separate article in *Nature* discusses seven ways in which the war in Ukraine is affecting research now and potentially in the future, including the impact on scientific research in Ukraine, Russia, and globally, and the impact in particular scientific areas, such as physics, space science, Arctic science, energy, climate science and sustainable development.

NEW REPORTS AND RESOURCES

New Report Examines Academic Freedom During COVID-19 Pandemic

The Global Observatory on Academic Freedom, a project supported by the Open Society University Network, a group of higher education institutions, has issued a new report, *Changing Understandings of Academic Freedom in the World at a Time of Pandemic*. The report identifies, analyzes, and explains major recent evolutions in the understanding of academic freedom globally, whether expressed in legal, regulatory, and policy moves or in intellectual developments, including declines in democratic practices and academic freedom.

Best Practices to Prevent and Reduce Violence Against Healthcare

The International Council of Nurses, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Hospital Federation, and the World Medical Association have issued a joint report, *Violence Against Health Care: Current Practices to Prevent, Reduce or Mitigate Violence Against Health Care*. The report identifies good practices to prevent, reduce or mitigate incidents against healthcare institutions and workers. The report shows a higher frequency of incidents after the coronavirus pandemic started, which negatively impacted a wide range of healthcare services from emergency care to programmatic preventive activities. It documents practical solutions initiated by health entities to tackle violence at a community level in the areas of security, safer work environments, care for staff's mental health and well-being, and gaps in communication and coordination.

New Report Highlights Myanmar's Move to Mass Surveillance Practices

A recent news report from Article 19, an organization supporting freedom of speech and the right to know, examines the use of closed-circuit television (CCTV) in Myanmar to build so-called "smart cities," referring to the use of digital technologies to facilitate and enhance public service delivery, and its potential use in mass surveillance. The report points out smart city infrastructure paves the way for biometric surveillance technologies such as facial recognition, automated number-plate recognition, and emotion recognition, technologies that can be used to subject individuals and communities to discriminatory policing. The report points out that a lack of data protection laws in Myanmar means that

the collection, use, and storage of data is not regulated, and as such, individuals do not have transparency on the information governments and third parties hold about them or how they use it.