

COALITION CALENDAR

Feb. 22, 2018: The Right to Enjoy Scientific Progress and the Freedom Indispensable for Scientific Research, United Nations

While the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is in the process of developing a draft General Comment on the right to science, as articulated in Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the “Associazione Luca Coscioni,” in cooperation with AAAS and the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations will host a panel discussion with experts (including Jessica Wyndham) to elaborate on developments of the scientific and legal aspects of the right to science and its link to human rights. The session will be streamed on the UN Web TV channel, <http://webtv.un.org/live/>.

July 12-13, 2018: Human Rights and Campus Culture

Save the date for the next Coalition meeting.

COALITION ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Human Rights in STEM Education Coalition Meeting

Recordings of the January 25-26 Coalition meeting are now available online and can be found [here](#). An article about the Coalition meeting can be found [here](#).

ASA and AMS Issues Joint Statement Regarding Voting Districts and Gerrymandering

On January 24, 2018, the American Statistical Association and the Council of the American Mathematical Society [released a joint statement](#) to inform discussions and planning around the drawing of voting districts as the 2020 census approaches. The statement is organized around the following three facts: (1) existing requirements on districts do not prevent gerrymandering; (2) it has become easier to design district plans that favor partisan outcomes with greater confidence; and (3) modern mathematical, statistical, and computing methods can identify district plans that favor partisan outcomes. This marks the first time in recent history the two organizations have issued a joint statement of broad interest to the American public.

LSA Adopts Statement on Climate Change and Human Language

The Linguistic Society of America (LSA) [issued a statement](#) supporting efforts to mitigate language loss resulting from climate change and global warming. LSA is especially concerned about the efforts of accelerating climate change on the survival and distribution of endangered languages and dialects.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Feb. 26, 2018: Call for Abstracts, APHA’s 2018 Annual Meeting & Expo

The Human Rights Forum of the American Public Health Association (APHA) has extended the deadline for their [call for abstracts for the APHA’s Annual Meeting](#) occurring November 10-14, 2018, in San Diego, California. The goal of the Human Rights Forum is to advance the idea that human rights are an essential foundation of public health and to mainstream human rights in all spheres of public health practice. The new deadline is February 26, 2018.

Feb. 28, 2018: Call for Input, Submissions from Indigenous Peoples

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is [calling for submissions](#) from indigenous peoples to inform the study being carried out by the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The study will focus on the theme of free, prior and informed consent.

March 5, 2018: Director of Human Rights Practice, University of Chicago

The Pozen Family Center for Human Rights at the University of Chicago is inviting applications for its new [Director of Human Rights Practice](#) position. The Director of Human Rights Practice will establish a problem-based Human Rights Laboratory designed to engage students (undergraduate and graduate) in offering solutions to real world human rights problems. This is a three-year position.

July 1, 2018: Global Mental Health, Trauma and Recovery Certificate Program

The Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma and Harvard Medical School Department of Global and Continuing Education accredit an exciting [6-month certificate program](#) in Global Mental Health: Trauma and Recovery. The first two weeks (Nov. 4-16, 2018) of the program will take place in Italy and the following six months (November 2018 to May 2019) will continue online.

CALLS FOR ACTION

UN Rights Experts Urge Iran to Annul Death Sentence

United Nations human rights experts have [repeated their urgent call to Iran](#) to annul the death sentence against Iranian academic Ahmadreza Djalali amid reports that his latest legal attempt to challenge the sentence has been rejected. The Scholars at Risk Network has issued [calls for action](#) on his behalf.

Scientists and Physicians Raise Concerns Over Arrests in Turkey

Eleven members of the Turkish Medical Association, including its president, Raşit Tükel, were arrested in early-morning raids, [according to a February 6, 2018 report in Nature](#). Using the slogan that war is a matter of public health, the association had called for a halt to the Turkish army's cross-border assault on military units of Syrian Kurds that was launched on January 20, 2018. Physicians for Human Rights has issued a [call for action](#) to help support members of the Turkish Medical Association.

SCIENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE USA

NASA Scientist Researching Mission to Mars Sentenced to 7.5 Years in Turkey

Serkan Golge, a Turkish-American research scientist at NASA in Houston, Texas, [was sentenced](#) earlier this month in Turkey to 7.5 years in prison on terrorism charges. Golge, a dual citizen who had been studying the effects of radiation on astronauts, was arrested in a crackdown that followed Turkey's 2016 attempted military coup. In a [press briefing](#) on February 8, 2018, a US Secretary of State spokesperson said, "the United States is deeply concerned by the February 8th conviction without credible evidence of US citizen Serkan Golge for being a member of a terror organization." In a later [press briefing](#) with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu on February 16, 2018, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said; "With regard to Serkan Golge, we believe his release through the appeals process would be both just and appropriate."

UN Raises Concerns Over US Gov't Handling of Scientist's Editorial

Baskut Tuncak, the UN Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes, [directed](#) a letter to Lamar Smith (R-TX), chairman of the Committee on Science, Space and Technology in the US House of Representatives, and Andy Biggs (R-AZ), chair of the Subcommittee on Environment of that committee, to "express deep concern" that a scientist was being "intimidated" for a contribution to a scientific journal. The matter concerns Linda Birnbaum, Director of the US National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, over [an editorial](#) that she co-authored in *PLOS Biology*, a peer-reviewed journal, which appeared in a special issue on US policies regulating chemicals. The editorial concludes with the following statement: "Closing the gap between evidence and policy will require that engaged citizens, both scientists and nonscientists, work to ensure our government officials pass health-protective policies based on the best available scientific evidence." The Congressmen sent [a letter](#) on January 17, 2018 to the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Acting

Secretary Eric Hargan asserting that the editorial may violate ant-lobbying measures by government employees and also sent [a letter](#) to HHS Inspector General Daniel Levinson requesting that the matter be further investigated. The UN Special Rapporteur said that “encouraging citizen engagement... does not articulate a certain policy outcome. Rather it promotes fundamental human rights, including the right to take part in the conduct of public affairs...”

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Parliamentarians Call for Release of Detained Students in Iran

[Iranian lawmakers and academics have written](#) to Iran’s President Hassan Rouhani and the country’s head of the judiciary Sadegh Larijani calling for the immediate release of students detained during protest in a number of Iranian cities in December and early January. Neither the intelligence ministry nor the judicial authorities have released the names of detainees. Anecdotal accounts put the number of university students jailed at between 90 and 140 out of a possible of 3,700 arrests in total.

Australian Project to Embed Human Rights in New Technology

The Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) is undertaking a major effort to ensure [human rights are embedded within new technologies](#). The Commission said it would look at “innovative ways” to make sure human rights are protected as technology advances. The AHRC intends to hold a conference in the middle of the year that will bring together “leading thinkers, technology and human rights experts” to discuss the impact new technologies are having on human rights. It will also publish an issues paper to kick off a consultation period in the middle of the year.

Marine Scientist Wins Pew Award to Study Gender, Human Rights and Fisheries

[Sangeeta Mangubhai](#), Director of the Wildlife Conservation Society Fiji, is one of eight scientists awarded the [International Marine Pew Fellowship Award](#), which recognizes scientists and experts in marine conservation and supports them with a three-year fellowship. With the award, [she will explore ideas and ways](#) to improve the inclusion of gender and human rights into coastal fisheries management for improved food security and livelihoods for local communities. She will also use a social-science approach to investigate how global fisheries policies account for small-scale fishers in the western Pacific Ocean.

NEW REPORTS AND RESOURCES

Human Right to Water in the US Examined in New Primer

The Program on Human Rights and the Global Economy within the Northeastern University School of Law [released a primer](#) for lawyers and community leaders on the human right to water within the United States. The authors point to a series of events—the long-term drought in California, mass water shutoffs in Detroit, Michigan, the contamination of the public water supply in Flint, Michigan, and the standoff over the Dakota Access Pipeline—that have brought increased public attention to these issues. The primer clarifies the sources of the human right to water, provides some of the obstacles to realizing this right, examines several high-profile water disputes, some of which have involved a human rights framework as part of an overall strategy to resolve the issue, and examines future uses of the human right to water in legal and policy advocacy within the US.

Framework Principles on Human Rights and the Environment

On March 2, John H. Knox, UN Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, will present [Framework Principles on Human Rights and the Environment](#) to the Human Rights Council. The report puts forth 16 framework principles that set out basic obligations of states under human rights law as they relate to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The framework principles and commentary provide a basis for understanding and implementing human rights obligations relating to the environment.

Briefing: Human Rights Due Diligence in the Chemical Industry

The Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, a UK-based non-profit organization, has released a [briefing](#) to provide insight into some of the core human rights challenges and opportunities for the chemical industry. It was developed in collaboration with the UN Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes, [Baskut Tuncak](#).

Guidelines for Psychologists Working with Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the UK

The British Psychological Society's Presidential Taskforce on Refugees and Asylum Seekers released [new guidelines](#) for psychologists supporting refugees and asylum seekers and supporting the institutions and communities of which they form part. The guidelines offer direction on supporting different client groups such as adults, families and children, young people and unaccompanied minors. The new guidelines can be read [here](#).

PEOPLE

Human Rights at the AAAS Annual Meeting

Coalition member Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach (AAG) spoke about the Coalition at a workshop at the AAAS Annual Meeting, which was held Feb. 15 to 19 in Austin, Texas. The workshop, [Science and Technology for Human Rights: Opportunities to Make an Impact](#), informed participants of opportunities to build partnerships with human rights organizations through the Coalition as well as the AAAS On-call Scientists initiative and other pro bono service organizations for scientists, engineers and health professionals.

Publisher: AAAS Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law Program

Editor: Patricia Van Arnum

Associate Editor: Mary Cate Carroll

Contributors: Joel Ericson, Theresa Harris, Jessica Wyndham