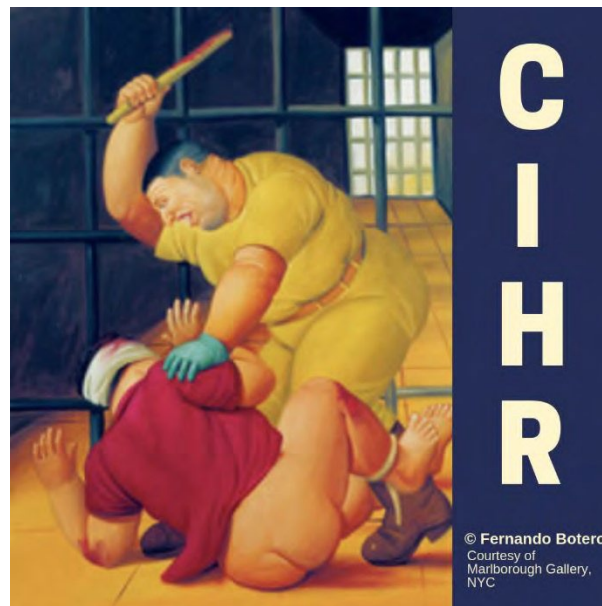


Center for International Human Rights (CIHR) Annual Report 2023-2024



The Center for International Human Rights (CIHR) at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY, was established with a mandate to study the main challenges to the promotion and protection of internationally recognized human rights norms; analyze and assess the interactions between human rights violations and international crimes; investigate genocide historically and in the contemporary world; and devise educational programs aimed at increasing public awareness of these norms. The CIHR focuses on a critical examination of long-standing and emerging issues on the human rights agenda, as well as on equipping our students with the necessary background and experience to pursue their interests in human rights scholarship and advocacy. The Center regularly conducts research workshops, seminars (including panel discussions and lectures) and develops outreach programs. The workshops focus on cutting edge issues and bring together experts in the field to present and discuss their work and usually result in publications as books or special issues in scholarly journals. In addition, the CIHR is

consistently looking for innovative outreach/awareness activities to actively involve the college community, as well as the broader public, on important human rights issues.

The following report outlines our activities for the 2023– 2024 academic year.

Annual Theme

Each academic year, the CIHR identifies a theme around which we design research projects and organize events. For this academic year, the Center has decided to turn its attention to *Climate Justice*, that is the impact of climate change on the principles of fairness and environmental justice. During the 2023- 2024 academic year, the Center for International Human Rights has critically examined some of the main challenges facing climate change, trying to determine what existing laws and human rights protections are in place to address climate justice, and whether we need to implement new regulations to fill the gaps. With the help of experts from multiple backgrounds, in a series of events the Center has discussed supply chain laws, the connection between corruption and climate change, climate change litigation, and environmental displacement. As climate change continues to pose significant threats to human beings and all other forms of life on earth, it is imperative to examine the intersections between human rights and climate protection. Recognizing that climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable populations, including women, children, indigenous peoples and other marginalized communities, underscores the fact that the protection of human rights is inseparable from addressing the effects of climate change and, more specifically, from ensuring robust mechanisms and processes of accountability for all entities whose acts and omissions contribute to climate change. The quest for climate justice has become a fundamental world order issue.

Research and Initiatives

The CIHR continued its collaboration with the Department of Comparative Criminal Law, Criminal Procedural Law and Corporate Criminal Law - Department of Law at the Free University of Berlin that began in 2020, and led to the research workshop on the Transatlantic Forum theme "New Challenges-New Rights?" during the academic year 2022-2023. During the new semester, speakers from the workshop have continued to work on their papers, aiming to publish a book by the end of 2024. A description of the initiative, and the program of the research workshop, can be found in the following section.

Project Description: *Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the rights universe has grown exponentially and the rights discourse has been mainstreamed into key issue areas of social and political life to such an extent that several analysts have argued that human rights “have attained the status of a lingua franca of global moral discourse” (Beitz and Goodin, 2009). Yet, despite their discursive success, human rights have been confronted with a series of challenges. Some of these challenges are the result of the widely held belief that human rights are part and parcel of the liberal international order. The end of the cold war was to signal the triumph of liberal democracy, human rights, and international cooperation to address common threats.*

Yet, as subsequent developments were to demonstrate, the Cold War was not replaced by some neat new world order: civil strife and ethnic cleansing erupted in several states; the structural adjustment programs of international financial institutions failed and some semi-peripheral and poor states pushed back against neoliberal policy strictures; and growing numbers of people, displaced by war, climate change, political corruption, and the overall erosion of decent life prospects, sought a better life through migration. This is by no means an exhaustive list. The human rights community has been rather slow in addressing the above mentioned challenges, as well as those posed by new developments in the Biosciences and in Artificial Intelligence (AI); developments that have raised the stakes for effective responses to their potentially adverse human rights implications.

The purpose of this forum is to examine these challenges, their growing intersections, and critically discuss the capacity of the human rights discourse to provide effective and sustainable responses. Some of the key focal issues and questions to be addressed include:

- *What are the strengths and weaknesses of human rights advocacy approaches in addressing security and subsistence-related violations?*
- *What can the human rights discourse learn from other social justice-related discourses, whether secular or religious?*
- *What are the main human rights issues that developments in the Biosciences and AI raise?*
- *Does the rising interference of private entities (software companies et al) in governmental decision-making processes require a new adjustment of human rights addressees?*
- *Do we need new rights, or a reconceptualization of existing rights?*
- *If new rights are needed, in which areas are they needed and why?*

The second research initiative of the CIHR is an ongoing project initiated during the 2020-2021 academic year that focuses on human rights abuses in the Philippines. Working in conjunction with local human rights NGO Karapatan, our team of research assistants, led by visiting scholar Dr. Nerve V. Macaspac and Dr. George Andreopoulos, has been working on a project relating to the shrinkage of civic space in the Philippines during the years of the Duterte Administration. There are three guiding principles that underpin this project: (1) a commitment to upholding the international legal framework; (2) an emphasis on the experiences of and lessons learnt by human rights defenders; and (3) the centrality of democratic civic space.

We continue to seek funding for this project and we expect to publish some preliminary findings during the next academic year.

Lectures : **30 Years of the Constitution: Rule of Law & Justice.**

A lecture by H.E. Mr. Xavier Espot Zamora, Head of Government, Principality of Andorra
September 21, 2023 Moot Court

An event featuring the Prime Minister of Andorra, who discussed the main accomplishments and key challenges facing the country.

Moderator:

- Jelena Pia-Comella, Adjunct Lecturer, Department of Political Science, John Jay College of Criminal Justice and Visiting Scholar, CIHR.

Co-sponsors:

- Master of Arts in International Crime & Justice
- Political Science Department, John Jay College
- Bachelor of Arts in International Criminal Justice
- The IC&J Club
- The Office of the Provost

About the Speaker



Xavier Espot Zamora is the eighth Head of Government of the Principality of Andorra. Born in 1979 in Escaldes-Engordany, he holds a degree and a master's degree in law from ESADE and a degree in humanities from Ramon Llull University. He began his political career in November 2011, as Secretary of State for Justice and Home Affairs. In July 2012 he was appointed Minister of Justice and Home

Affairs and in 2016 also took over the Social Affairs portfolio. Prior to initiating his political career, Xavier Espot Zamora served as a judge at the Court of First Instance attached to the Civil Section as well as to the Minor Section. He was previously judicial secretary to the Court of First Instance.

The National Strategy for Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Catalonia

A lecture by Tania Verge, Minister of Equality and Feminisms of the Government of the Catalonia

March 12, 2024 Room L2.84

An event organized in collaboration with the Delegation of the Government of Catalonia that addressed its approach to advancing reproductive rights and the main challenges that these efforts have faced.

Co-sponsors:

- Master of Arts in International Crime & Justice
- Bachelor of Arts in International Criminal Justice
- The Gender Studies Program
- The Office of the Provost

About the Speaker



Tània Verge is the Minister of Equality and Feminisms of the Government of Catalonia. Prior to her appointment in May 2021, she was a feminist activist and Full Professor of Politics and Gender at Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona), where she also led the Equality Unit between 2014 and 2021. Her research has focused on how institutions are patterned through gender and on resistance to the adoption and implementation of equality policies. She has advised national institutions and international organizations on gender sensitizing initiatives and feminist redesign, including the Council of Europe, the European Institute for Gender Equality, the Parliament of Catalonia, and the Catalan Ombudsman

Theme Events

Corporate Accountability in Climate Change

November 14, 2023

A panel discussion featuring different experts, about supply chain laws, the connection between corruption and climate change, and climate change litigation.

Moderator: Carsten Momsen-Free University of Berlin

Co-sponsors:

- Master of Arts in International Crime & Justice

About the speakers



Randall S. Abate is the Assistant Dean for Environmental Law Studies and a Professorial Lecturer in Law at The George Washington University Law School. Prior to joining GW Law in July 2022, he held full-time law teaching positions for three decades at six U.S. law schools. From 2018-2022, he served as the inaugural Rechnitz Family and Urban Coast Institute Endowed Chair in Marine and Environmental Law and Policy, a Professor in the Department of Political Science, and the Director of the Institute for Global Understanding at

Monmouth University in New Jersey. With a primary focus on climate change law and justice, Dean Abate has lectured and taught courses in over 25 countries on six continents and has published six books and about 40 law journal articles and book chapters. He holds a B.A. from the University of Rochester and a J.D. and M.S.L. (Environmental Law and Policy) from Vermont Law School.



Dr Julia Hörnig advises clients on compliance issues concerning Supply Chain Due Diligence, customs law and foreign trade and represents clients in administrative and judicial proceedings. She has experience in supply chains and transport, with a particular focus on sustainability and thematic overlaps to foreign trade. Julia Hörnig is admitted to the Bar of Belgium (EU-List) and is a fully qualified lawyer in Germany. She obtained her PhD in International Transport Law and was an Assistant Professor at the

Erasmus University in Rotterdam for sustainable shipping and transport law. She researched and published on sustainable supply chains and circular economy-based legal solutions. Julia Hörnig is also the host of a podcast that deals with human and environmental rights issues in the (maritime) supply chain.



Laura Duarte Reyes is a Legal Advisor at the European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR), where she specializes in business and human rights and climate justice. Ms. Duarte Reyes studied law at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Bogotá, Colombia, as well as human rights and multilevel governance at the Università degli Studi di Padova, Italy. Before joining

the ECCHR, she worked at the OAS Mission to Support the Colombian Peace Process (MAPP) and as a legal advisor to the Colombian government for the implementation of public policies and public-private partnerships in the education, transport and housing sectors.



David Hess is the Everett E. Berg Professor of Business Administration and Professor of Business Law at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan. He has a PhD in Management from The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, and a JD from the University of Iowa College of Law. He is currently co-President of the Global Business and Human Rights Scholars Association. Professor Hess is the Law, Public Policy, and Business Ethics Section Editor for the Journal of Business Ethics, and he

serves on the editorial boards of the American Business Law Journal, Business Ethics Quarterly, and the Business and Human Rights Journal. He has conducted research on the use of non-financial reporting by corporations; efforts to combat corruption in international business; the link between corruption and business and human rights; human rights due diligence; modern slavery in global supply chains; the use of corporate monitors in criminal settlements; and the role of compliance and ethics programs in creating more ethical corporate cultures.

About the Moderator



Carsten Momsen is a tenured full professor for “Comparative Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Corporate and Environmental Criminal Law at the “Freie Universität Berlin”. He is affiliated as an ongoing visiting scholar at the Center for International Human Rights at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University New York (CUNY) and as “Scholar in Residence” at New York Law School. He is also a visiting professor at the University of Toronto Law School and is elected as “UNA-Europa Chair” at KU Leuven and works

part-time as a criminal defense attorney, especially in appellate and white-collar criminal law cases.

Climate Change and Environmental Displacement

March 24, 2024

As part of the Center theme of the year, this panel discussion, featuring experts from different backgrounds, addressed one of the main issues caused by climate change.

Moderator:

- Andrea Sandbrink , Free University of Berlin
- Dr. Carsten Momsen, Free University of Berlin

Co-sponsors:

- Master of Arts in International Crime and Justice
- Bachelor of Arts in International Criminal Justice

About the Speakers



Dr. Madeline Garlick is Chief of the Protection Policy and Legal Advice Section in the Division of International Protection at UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva. She has served with the UN in Brussels, Iraq, Kenya, Cyprus, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She teaches on an occasional basis at Sciences Po, Paris, and the Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford University. She is qualified as a barrister and solicitor in Victoria, Australia



Dr. Chidiebere E.X. Ikejamba’s work focuses on Climate & Environment and encompasses a number of issues, including Energy Usage & Access, Agriculture & Food Security, Waste Management, Healthcare, Migration, Economic & Rural Development, and Climate Education. Prior to joining Camber, Chidiebere worked for the Climate & Environment sector. He has designed and implemented strategies and applicable development models to assist multiple organizations in expanding into new markets and regions. A solutions-and results oriented individual, Chidiebere is

passionate about sustainability and optimizes resources and people to maximize short- and long-term value and impact.



Jocelyn Perry is the senior advocate and program manager of the climate displacement program at Refugees International. She has over a decade of experience working in advocacy, policymaking, research, and direct service on climate change and with displaced populations. Most recently, Jocelyn managed a research theme on migration, urbanization, and climate change at the University of Pennsylvania’s global public policy hub, connecting research with policymakers and practitioners. She also served as a Fulbright Public Policy Fellow with the Government of Malawi, working for their Department of Refugees and in Dzaleka Refugee Camp..



Dr Nicodemus Nyandiko is a senior research fellow and serves as the chairperson of the Department of Disaster Management and Sustainable Development at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kenya. He holds a Ph.D. in Disaster Management and Sustainable Development. His research interest spans over 20 years and focuses on food security, climate change, disaster risk reduction, and climate mobility. He is a member of the Africa Science and Technology Advisory Group for DRR. Dr Nicodemus is the current Co-Chair of the Climate Mobility Africa Research

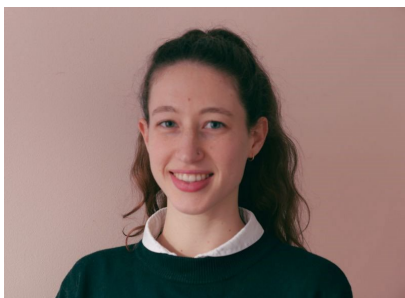
Network. In 2022, Dr Nicodemus was appointed to join the Platform on Disaster Displacement’s Advisory Committee.



Dr. Chiara Scissa holds a Ph.D. in Law from the Institute of Law, Politics, and Development (DIRPOLIS) at Sant’Anna School of Advanced Studies, specializing in disaster displacement in international refugee law and EU asylum law. Currently, she’s cooperating with Sant’Anna School in the development of the first ever Italian project on climate change and migration. In 2022, Dr. Scissa was appointed by UNHCR as an Expert in International Protection and Human Rights at the Territorial Commission for the Recognition of International Protection under the Ministry of Interior

to determine the need for, and if so, to provide, international and national protection statuses to claimants in Italy.

About the moderator



Andrea Sandbrink is a PhD student at the Department of Law of the Free University of Berlin. Her thesis is on corporate climate crimes and the legal mechanisms of attributing climate change to transnational organizations. Her research interests include human rights and the interconnection between climate change, climate justice and human rights. Prior to her PhD, she completed her law studies at Free University of Berlin and the Diego Portales University in Santiago, Chile.

Conversation Series and the CIHR Annual Events

The United Nations and Human Rights: 75 years since the Universal Declaration

October 25th, 2023

A conversation with Dr. Leonardo Castilho about the evolution of the UN human rights system.

Co-sponsor:

- Master of Arts in International Crime & Justice

About the speaker



After working for human rights NGOs in his hometown of Rio de Janeiro, Dr. Leonardo Castilho joined the United Nations in 2005 and since then has worked for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), serving in a number of positions in New York, Geneva, and in Latin America, including Brazil, Guatemala, Chile, Panama, but also covering a number of countries on missions. He began his university studies in Law and International Relations at PUC-Rio, graduated from Sciences-Po Paris, with a Master's degree in International Affairs / International Development, and later obtained a Master of Studies in

International Human Rights Law from Oxford University. He also obtained a Ph.D. degree in International Relations / Political Science from the Graduate Institute for International and Development Studies (magna cum laude) with a thesis entitled "Spreading the word abroad about democracy at home: new democracies and their support of human rights." Leonardo is currently on leave from OHCHR.

Respect for Human Rights in Spain: A critical analysis from an international law perspective

A conversation with
Dr. Mirentxu Jordana Santiago February 27th, 2024

A conversation about the situation of Human Rights in Spain, during which Dr. Mirentxu Jordana Santiago discussed the latest report on the subject.

Moderator:

- George Andreopoulos

Co-sponsors:

- Master of Arts in International Crime & Justice
- Political Science Department

About the speaker



Mirentxu Jordana holds a PhD in International Relations and European Integration from the University Autònoma de Barcelona. She graduated in law from the University Autònoma de Barcelona and a master's in European Integration at the University Institute of European Studies of UAB. Currently, she combines her research and lecturing in Public International Law and European Union Law at the University of Girona in both undergraduate and postgraduate studies. Her research focuses on international judicial cooperation

in criminal matters, Justice and Home Affairs agencies of the European Union, migration, and human rights

About the moderator



George Andreopoulos is a Professor of Political Science and Criminal Justice at John College of Criminal Justice and at the Graduate Center, CUNY, and the founding Director of the CIHR at John Jay College. Before coming to CUNY, he taught for several years at Yale University, where he was also the Founding Associate Director of the Orville H. Schell, Jr. Center for International Human Rights. He has written extensively on international organizations, international human rights, and international humanitarian law issues. He is past President of the Interdisciplinary Studies Section (IDSS) of the International Studies Association (ISA) and past President of the Human Rights Section of the American Political Science Association (APSA).

The CIHR continued its long-standing tradition of holding events in celebration of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in December and International Women’s Day (IWD) in March.

The Human Rights Council in times of crisis: Some reflections

December 5th, 2023

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), was adopted on December 10, 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly and is the foundation of International Human Rights Law. In this event we reflect on the accomplishments and challenges facing the Human Rights Council.

Moderator:

- George Andreopoulos

Co-sponsors:

- The Political Science Department,
- Master of Arts in International Crime & Justice
- Bachelor of Arts in International Criminal Justice
- Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes

About the speaker



Ambassador Federico Villegas is a lawyer and career diplomat who entered the foreign service of Argentina with honors in 1993. He has been the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva since March 2020. During 2022, he was the President of the Human Rights Council. Before that, he was Ambassador of Argentina in Mozambique, where he opened the Embassy of Argentina. In Argentina, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he was first desk officer for disarmament, chemical weapons, and international security issues (1993–1995) and then twice as Director General of Human Rights (2005–2007 and 2012–2015). He coordinated the project with the OHCHR to elaborate the first National Plan against Discrimination. He was also Alternate Representative to the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C. (1995–2003), in charge of human rights, cooperation for development, and civil society issues. Mr. Villegas holds a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies, cum laude, from Georgetown University (1998).

Women as Agents of Atrocity Prevention

March 5th, 2024

A discussion with Dr. Karen Smith, addressing the leadership role of women in atrocity prevention.

Moderator:

- Jelena Pia-Comella

Co-sponsors:

- Master of Arts in International Crime & Justice
- Bachelor of Arts in International Criminal Justice
- Gender Studies Program
- Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes

About the speaker



Karen Smith (PhD, Stellenbosch University, South Africa, 2005) is a South African International Relations (IR) scholar currently based at Leiden University in the Netherlands. Previously, she taught at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Her research centers on challenging Eurocentrism in IR and exploring contributions from the global South, particularly Africa, to the theory and practice of IR. She is co-editor of the volume *International Relations from the Global South: Doing IR Differently* (with Arlene Tickner, Routledge, 2021) and co-author (with Pinar Bilgin) of *Thinking Globally About World Politics: Beyond Global IR* (Palgrave, forthcoming 2024).

Karen served as assistant secretary general and special adviser on the responsibility to protect to the United Nations secretary-general from 2019 to 2021, is a board member of the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, and a member of the Africa Working Group of the Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes (GAAMAC).

About the moderator



Ms. Pia-Comella is an adjunct lecturer at John Jay College of Criminal Justice; an adjunct assistant professor at Hofstra University, as well as a faculty member of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). She is also consulting with the Global Action Against Mass Atrocity Crimes (GAAMAC). Starting her career in 1996 as a diplomat representing Andorra at the United Nations, Canada, and the United States, she was part of the team that created the foreign policy of her country. She served in different capacities for civil society organizations as well as an

adviser on gender, peace, and security issues for the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie. Ms. Pia- Comella is the President of the Board of Directors of SOS-Torture/ Burundi and board member and treasurer of the Global Justice Center

Co-Hosted and Co-Sponsored Events

Analyzing Organized Crime: A conversation with Professor Klaus von Lampe

September 18th, 2023

Organized by the Master of Arts in International Crime and Justice at John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Speaker:

- Dr. Klaus von Lampe, Berlin School of Economics and Law

A presentation on Robotics, AI, and Criminal Law

November 6th, 2023

Organized by the Master of Arts in International Crime and Justice at John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Speaker:

- Kamil Mamak, postdoctoral researcher at RADAR, University of Helsinki , assistant professor at the Department of Criminal Law at the Jagellonian University in Cracow, Poland

Bookstrap Justice: The search of Mexico's disappeared

January 31, 2024

Organized by the Bachelor of Arts in International Criminal Justice at John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Speaker & Author:

- Janice Gallagher, Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science, Rutgers University

Let's talk about the Israel-Palestine Conflict

March 19, 2024

Organized by the Pi Sigma Alpha Club at John Jay

Speakers:

- Dr. George Andreopoulos, Professor, John Jay College and the Graduate Center, and Director of the Center for International Human Rights
- Dr. Ervand Abrahamian, Professor Emeritus, Baruch College and the Graduate Center

Critical Perspectives on Human Rights Conference

April 17-19, 2024

Organized by the Human Rights Forum at the City College of New York-CUNY

The conference aimed to explore the contested legacy of human rights in increasingly uncertain times. The panelists addressed a variety of critical issue areas, including justice and accountability, democracy and human rights, anti-trafficking laws, activism and literature and human rights narratives among others.

In closing, we would like to gratefully acknowledge the following individuals who were part of the CIHR team during the 2023-2024 academic year and whose contributions made all the above activities possible:

- Martina Bizzotti
- Joya Ferrell\
- Malak Harb
- Carsten Momsen, Ph.D.
- Jelen Pia-Comella
- Andrea Sandbrink
- Marizen Santos
- Rina Yamamoto

Dr. George Andreopoulos Director, CIHR