

Center for International Human Rights

Annual Report

2024-2025



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 2024-2025 academic year.

ANNUAL THEME

Academic Freedom and Human Rights

Each academic year, the CIHR identifies a theme around which we design research projects and organize events. The recent events on university campuses in the US and abroad have generated critical questions about the continuing relevance and resilience of academic freedom in the academy. Traditionally considered a defining feature of the academic universe, academic freedom is under attack on multiple fronts. Questions have been raised concerning its conceptual reach and, in particular, whether it should be confined to "freedom of inquiry and research and freedom of teaching within the university" or whether it can also encompass "freedom of extramural utterance and action" (as per the AAUP's 1915 Declaration). Questions have also been raised concerning the relation between university autonomy and academic freedom in light of the growing interventions by entities outside the academy (lawmakers and donors) and the impact of such interventions on institutional autonomy and shared governance. These queries also point to the broader issue of the university as a bearer of rights and responsibilities.

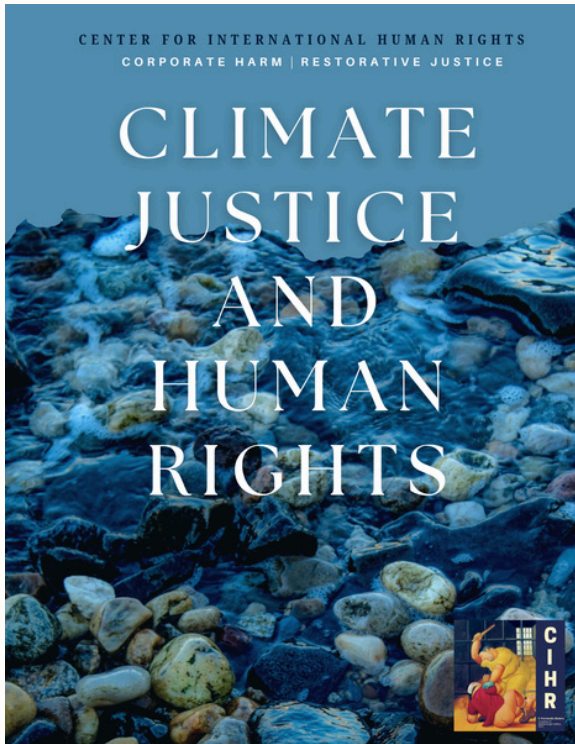
Our year-long focus on academic freedom and human rights will seek to address some of the following focal issues and questions:

- What is the relation between academic freedom and human rights?
- What does academic freedom entail for faculty? for students?
- What is the relation between academic freedom and university autonomy?
- What are the main challenges posed to university autonomy and shared governance by entities inside and outside the academy?
- The university as a bearer of rights and responsibilities-whose rights? whose responsibilities?
- How are challenges to academic freedom perceived and addressed in other countries?

RESEARCH & INITIATIVES

During the 2024-2025 academic year, our research has focused on two projects; (1) completing a CIHR Report on Climate Justice and Human Rights which will be posted on our website this fall; and (2) completing our book project on New Challenges-New Rights? which is based on the findings of a research workshop organized by the Center in 2022. Below you will find a description of the Climate Justice and Human Rights Report, and a table of contents of the New Challenges-New Rights manuscript that includes the abstracts of its chapters.

CLIMATE JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS



This report critically examines the concept and relevance of human rights and its interconnections with climate change, identifies the principles underscoring climate justice, examines key components of the corresponding legal framework as well as its mechanisms and processes in effectively addressing some of the main challenges confronting the climate justice agenda, explores the prospects for holding state and corporate actors accountable for their contributions to climate change, and suggests plausible pathways to advancing climate justice.

NEW CHALLENGES – NEW RIGHTS?

George Andreopoulos and Carsten Momsen: “Navigating a Turbulent Human Rights Landscape.”

Intro. Navigating a Turbulent Human Rights Landscape

Abstract The 21st century has seen an intensification of global challenges from the global ‘war on terror’ and climate change to pandemics and forced displacement. These evolving threats have prompted renewed debates about the relevance and resilience of the existing human rights framework. This chapter examines whether the challenges confronting the international community necessitate the creation of new rights or whether a more robust application and teleological interpretation of existing rights can adequately address these issues. Through a critical overview of key issue areas - the freedom of speech and of assembly in the context created by the social media; the evolving relation between security and human rights; biometric surveillance and human rights; economic inequality; corporate accountability and climate change; the reconfiguration of indigenous rights; and conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence- this chapter argues that, while the foundational principles of the human rights framework remain relevant, new rights may be required in certain cases to respond to the scope and scale of emerging global phenomena. The chapter concludes by advocating for a hybrid approach: revitalizing existing rights, while strategically articulating new rights to address the intersecting dimensions of structural injustice and vulnerability.

Alexander Heinze, University of Göttingen

“Making a Rioter: Social Media’s Role in Planning and Inciting Civil Unrest and Violent Protests”

Abstract Violent protests and riots are as old as their causes. And yet, the violent protests of today’s world have evolved and adapted to new technologies: boundaries between the public and private are elastic, distance is relative, hierarchy can be established quickly and movements coordinated effectively. In this Chapter, I will describe the role human rights protections play in criminalising violent protests and analyse whether and to what extent these protections need to adapt to new technologies. A comparative analysis will display different approaches to human rights protection within the criminalisation of violent protests. Of the two avenues that impact criminal liability for participating in violent protests – human rights protections and individual criminal responsibility – the Chapter focuses on the former. Under the assumption that vague criminal laws and the extensive interpretation create the risk of over-criminalising conduct in relation to protests that turned violent (an argument that will not be elaborated in the Chapter for space reasons), I will show through discourse analysis that human rights protections are a two-way street and often even enhance over-criminalisation. In a time of narratives, human rights have become a label competing with labels such as terrorism or rioting. In this setting, the rule of law applied by judges seems to be the only effective escape: either by re-writing the human rights narrative or by deconstructing the narrative altogether.

Anneke Petzsche, Humboldt Uni Berlin Law School

“Providing Security in the 21st Century: A Human Rights Challenge?”

Abstract This chapter examines the challenges facing states in providing security in the 21st century while protecting individual rights and freedoms, and asks whether the question of providing security is a human rights question. To answer this question, the author examines the concept of a universal right to security within a German and international legal framework. She finds that while the provision of security is a recognised state objective in Germany, the idea of a universal right to security is not explicitly recognised in either German or international law. However, the European Court of Justice in its 2014 Digital Rights judgment refers to an independent right to security, leaving the door slightly open for the development of such a right. The author takes a critical view of this, pointing out that the concept of such a universal right to security is problematic due to its vagueness and potential for abuse. Instead, she examines whether a doctrine of positive obligations could be an alternative solution, arguing that a narrow interpretation of positive obligations, which allows the demand for security to be made by reference to a specific right (such as the right to life), applied within a restrictive framework and respecting a strict principle of proportionality, could be a more effective approach to balancing security and human rights, albeit one that faces challenges in practice and offers only a first step towards more constraints.

Andrea Sandbrink, Freie University Berlin

From Sanctions to Solutions: A Justice-Oriented Approach to Criminal Climate Law

Abstract This chapter examines gaps in the international human rights framework in addressing climate change, including extraterritorial jurisdiction and corporate accountability. The chapter proposes the introduction of a corporate criminal climate change law as one way to expand the legal response to climate change. It emphasizes the need for true climate justice for all.

Matthias Wienroth, Univ. of Northumbria, Newcastle, UK

“(Un)knowing the Human in Biometric Surveillance: Thoughts on Uncertainty, Ignorance, and Rights.”

Abstract Biometric technologies, measuring physical and behavioural traits of individuals and groups, are increasingly central to safety and security in society, impacting on people and public life. These technologies produce, define, and prioritise certain knowledge about humans. As surveillance technologies, they collect data from individuals, but aggregate and analyse these data by creating categories of characteristics. These abstracted data are then re-applied to individuals. However, the underlying processes of making identities (knowable) – and what remains/becomes unknown – are not well understood by users, publics, policy makers, and thus remain heavily contested. This scoping chapter reflects on knowledge-making processes in biometric surveillance, and explores themes of uncertainty, expectations, and ignorance in such processes. The chapter presents a conceptual starting point for the discussion and development of biometric human rights.

Lucia Zedner, Professor All Souls College-Faculty of Law, University of Oxford

“Security, rights, and positive obligations to protect: Correlative duties or coercive license?”

Abstract The relationship between security and human rights is complex and interlinked. That complexity arises partly from the thorny question of how liberty is best secured, about which philosophers and political theorists have disagreed for millennia. At the risk of reductivism, the more prominent conceptions of liberty in contention today are negative and positive liberty. Negative liberty conceives of liberty as freedom from obstacles, restraints, or other interference. Whereas positive liberty stipulates the need to promote individual capacity for self-determination and to ensure the political conditions under which that capacity can be maximized in ways consistent with the dominion of others. Positive liberty requires active defence of fundamental rights against adverse interference, yet this requires state intervention and carries with it the risk of the overreach of state power.

Oscar Ugarteche

HUMAN RIGHTS, GROWING INEQUALITY, AND IFI LED ECONOMIC POLICIES

Abstract This chapter will review the theoretical object of economic policy, two objects of economic theory: Development and progress, followed by some paths taken outside the common interest, such as economic security, wars and migration; and some economic policy results, such as stagnation and income concentration. The explanation for how this Austrian-based theoretical approach became instrumentalised comes from a mistaken diagnosis by IFIs of what went wrong in the 1980s. It then presents Amartya Sen’s approach to economic theory as an alternative approach and concludes.

Alejandra Ancheita, Executive Director of ProDESC (The Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Project).

“Transnational collaboration to defend indigenous rights towards a truly ‘just’ energy transition.”

Abstract The chapter analyzes the case of the community of Unión Hidalgo, located in Southern Mexico. This community has been defending its land, territory and natural resources from an unlawful wind park, property of the transnational corporation Électricité de France (EDF). The chapter examines key steps in the defense of the land and territory of the community, both in Mexico and transnationally, while tackling the issues of climate change, a “just” energy transition and mandatory human rights due diligence regulations.

Laura Alexander and Brady DeSanti, University of Nebraska-Omaha

“Indigenizing University Spaces: A Case Study of Native American Student Activism, Human Rights, and Religious Freedom”

Abstract This essay examines a case of Native American student activism, in which student activists used conceptions of the human right to religious freedom and religious accommodation to change policies at a large educational institution. Student activists’ experiences demonstrate that even when initiatives succeed in protecting certain religious practices among Indigenous communities, the concept of religious freedom that informs U.S. law and institutional policies fails to honor many Native Americans’ religious understanding of the world and themselves. Scholars have increasingly recognized how the religious worldviews and practices of many communities, including and especially Indigenous communities, are not fully protected under a narrow, European-influenced concept of the right to religious freedom. In the United States, attorney and philosopher Vine Deloria, Jr. has shown how laws and especially courts have downplayed the role of place, and access to sacred places, in Native American religion. At the same time, Native American individuals and communities remain open to revealing of sacred power in new places, given past experiences of the sacred manifesting itself in specific places, and Native Americans in urban areas have often modified ceremonial and ritual practices to reflect an openness to the sacred in any place. In examining our chosen case study, we touch off from Deloria’s critique to show that constricting ideas about religion and religious freedom continue to negatively impact religious practices among Native American students in an urban institution. The work of student activists makes a difference, but progress toward a more expansive understanding of religious freedom remains slow.

Jelena Pia-Comella, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY

“Conflict-related sexual and gender-based crimes: a threat to gender equality and women’s rights”

Abstract Sexual and gender-based violence is rooted in systematic and systemic discrimination of human rights. The scope of analysis in this chapter will be narrowed down to the nexus between the violation of women’s rights, lack of gender equality and conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence and crimes against women, mainly because women and girls continue to be disproportionately affected by armed conflict. While recognizing that sexual and gender-based violence against women is still too present in times of peace, this chapter will focus on sexual and gender-based violence in times of armed conflict since these acts of violence are exacerbated during armed conflict and can lead to mass atrocity crimes such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. While key landmark benchmarks have been accomplished over the decades to equip international law to promote women’s rights and gender justice, mainly due to women’s groups and feminists’ activism, the prevalence of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence calls for a recalibration of gender-power dynamics and an elimination of the impunity gap for these heinous crimes.

Despite these accomplishments, international law remains limited in terms of its implementation and application of the broader gender scope. Furthermore, advocacy to remedy this gap continues to be siloed therefore making all prevention efforts fail. A set of recommendations as opportunities for further improvement will follow. The chapter concludes with some forward-looking reflections towards gender justice.

EVENTS ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

A Conversation on Palestine Protest, freedom of speech and criminal law in Germany

November 19, 2024

The Center hosted an engaging conversation with Professor Dr. Kai Ambos, a distinguished scholar of international and criminal law, centered on Palestine solidarity protests. The conversation series explored how Germany's legal system addresses freedom of speech, protest rights, and criminal law in politically sensitive contexts. Professor Dr. Ambos led an engaging and thoughtful dialogue among faculty, students, and colleagues about civil liberties, legal boundaries, and the global dimensions of justice.

Moderator: Carsten Momsen, PhD, Free University of Berlin

Carsten Momsen, PhD heads the Department of Comparative Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure Law, White Collar/ Economic and Environmental Criminal Law at Freie Universität Berlin. He is an ongoing visiting scholar at the Center for International Human Rights at John Jay College and holds a position as scholar in residence at New York Law School. He was also a visiting professor at the University of Toronto in 2016 and 2019. Dr. Momsen is a Founding Member and PI of the Berlin based "Einstein Center Digital Future" and a permanent member of the Program Committee of the international conference series "SADFE - Systematic Approaches on Digital Forensic Engineering".



Speaker: Prof. Dr. Kai Ambos, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen (Germany)

About the Speaker:

Professor of Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure, Comparative Law, International Criminal Law and Public International Law at the Faculty of Law of the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen (Germany). Director General of the Center for Studies of Latin American Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure (CEDPAL) at the University of Göttingen, Germany. Judge at the Provincial Court (Landgericht) of Göttingen, Germany, from March 2006 to February 2017 (currently on leave). Judge at the Kosovo Specialist Chambers, The Hague, Netherlands, since February 2017. Amicus curiae of the Peace Tribunal of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, Bogotá, Colombia. In addition, he is a permanent visiting professor at the Faculty of Law of the University of Lisbon, Portugal, since May 2021.



On September 17, 2018, Prof. Dr. Kai Ambos received the Carlos Lemos Simmonds Order, which is awarded by the Colombian Press Association and the German Embassy in Bogota. It rewards transparency, democracy, Colombian-German friendship, and social development in Colombia. The Order was presented in the Boyacá Hall of the National Capitol of Colombia.

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Universal Declaration of Human Rights Event Professional Associations and Academic Freedom

December 5, 2024

Our panel featured Professor Anthony F. Lang, Jr, Professor Kwadwo Appiagye-Atua, Professor Petra Roter, and Professor Nandini Ramanujam, with our very own Director Dr. George Andreopoulos serving as the moderator. Topics for discussion included the relationship between academic freedom and human rights, challenges to university autonomy and shared governance, and the global perspectives on academic freedom. This discussion is part of our year-long focus on "Academic Freedom and Human Rights," exploring the rights and responsibilities of universities, faculty, and students in navigating external and internal challenges.

Moderator: Dr. George Andreopoulos

Professor, John Jay College and the Graduate Center
Director, Center for International Human Rights



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About the Speakers:



Anthony F Lang, Jr (Tony) is a Professor of International Political Theory in the School of International Relations at the University of St Andrews. He is currently the editor of the Journal of International Political Theory. He has been active in the International Studies Association (ISA) serving as the President of the International Ethics section in 2003-2004 and Chair of the Academic Freedom Committee from 2016-2018. He researches and teaches on topics at the intersection of law, politics, and ethics at the global level. His list of publications can be found at: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/international-relations/people/al51>



Prof. Kwadwo Appiagyei-Atua is an Associate Professor at the School of Law, University of Ghana and Regional Director of the Africa Coalition for Academic Freedom (ACAF). A UNESCO Consultant on scientific freedom in Africa, he also serves on the board of the Global Observatory on Academic Freedom at Central European University in Vienna, Austria. Prof. Appiagyei-Atua is Ambassador for the Magna Charta Observatory at the University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy.

He is Chair of the Membership Rights Committee, University Teachers Association of Ghana at the University of Ghana Branch. He is a former member of the Academic Freedom Committee of the International Studies Association at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, CT, U.S.A.



Petra Roter (Ph.D., Cantab., UK) is a Professor of International Relations at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, and senior researcher at the Centre of International Relations at the Faculty of Social Sciences. She teaches courses on, among others, international protection of human rights, international protection of minorities, international relations, international conflict management, as well as the research seminar. She is the academic co-ordinator for the PhD programme in International Relations.

She is a national director of the European Master programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (Venice) and a member of the Scientific Board of the EURAC Institute for Minority Rights. She was elected in October 2024 for the third time as the President of the Advisory Committee (composed of 18 independent experts on minority rights) on the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. member of the Academic Freedom Committee of the International Studies Association at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, CT, U.S.A.



Professor Nandini Ramanujam is the Co-Director and Director of Programs of the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism at McGill University's Faculty of Law. She also directs the International Human Rights Internship Program as well as Independent Human Rights Internships Program. She is the McGill representative for the Scholars at Risk Network and served on the Steering Committee of the Scholars at Risk Network, Canada section from 2016-22.

Her research and teaching interests include Law and Development, Institutions and Governance, Economic Justice, Food Security and Food Safety, the role of civil society and the Fourth Estate (Media) in promotion of the rule of law, as well as the exploration of interconnections between field based human rights work and theoretical discourses. She is the co-editor with Frédéric Mégret of “Academic Freedom in a Plural World: Critical and Global Perspectives”, 2024, Central European Press. Open access: Available for Download hear: <https://ceupress.com/book/academic-freedom-plural-world>

Universities Under Pressure - 2025 Update of the Academic Freedom Index

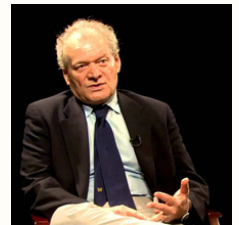
March 27, 2025



The Center for International Human Rights hosted Dr. Katrin Kinzelbach on Thursday, March 27, 2025, to present the latest **Academic Freedom Index (AFI) data**, published in March 2025. Her presentation covered the index methodology as well empirical trends. Among other points, she discussed how academic freedom develops when anti-pluralist parties gain power.

Moderator: Dr. George Andreopoulos

Professor, John Jay College and the Graduate Center, CUNY;
Director, Center for International Human Rights



Speaker: Dr. Katrin Kinzelbach

About the Speaker:

Dr. Katrin Kinzelbach is a professor of political science at Friedrich-Alexander-Universität (FAU) Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany, where she co-directs an interdisciplinary MA program in human rights. Together with partners, she initiated the Academic Freedom Index (AFI), which monitors the de facto realization of academic freedom around the world. Kinzelbach also served on the Academic Freedom Committee of the International Studies Association and on various selection committees to support scholars at risk.



Before joining FAU in 2019, she was associate director of the Global Public Policy Institute, a foreign policy think tank in Berlin. Prior still, Kinzelbach worked at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights in Vienna, Austria, and for the United Nations Development Programme in different duty stations around the world.

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- Master in Human Rights
- Minor in Human Rights



WATCH NOW

Academic Freedom, Free Speech, and Syllabi Design

April 23, 2005

Our final event of the academic year took place on April 23, 2025, with Dr. Clare Forstie, who presented **Academic Freedom, Free Speech, and Syllabi Design**. Their talk explored how academic freedom, central to many current conversations in higher education, manifests in the context of teaching. The session focused on syllabus design as a key expression of academic freedom in practice, examining how our personal, political, institutional, and disciplinary contexts shape both the syllabi we create and the broader craft of teaching.

Teaching in higher ed is a main focus of recent, and long-standing, conversations about academic freedom. In this session, we'll focus on syllabus design as a particular case of academic freedom that requires skillful navigation of competing audiences and purposes. We'll discuss how our individual, political, institutional, and disciplinary contexts inform the approaches we take to syllabus design and to the craft of teaching more broadly.

Speaker: Dr. Clare Forstie, Saint Paul College, Minnesota

About the Speaker:

Clare Forstie is the Dean of Academic Effectiveness and Innovation at Saint Paul College, where they lead initiatives focused on assessing and enhancing student learning, curriculum, and faculty and staff development. Clare's areas of leadership in teaching include inclusive and critical pedagogies, technology in education, and student and instructor well-being.



Their teaching, research, and writing address the complexities of queer and academic life through multiple critical lenses. Clare earned a PhD in sociology from Northwestern University in 2017 and has served in a variety of faculty and administrative roles across a range of higher education institutions.

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CONVERSATION SERIES

A Discussion with Justice Collective Founder and Coordinator Mitali Nagrecha

November 12, 2024

We spoke with Justice Collective Founder and Coordinator, Mitali Nagrecha for a discussion on their organization. Justice Collective is a Berlin-based European project to end society's reliance on policing and punishment. Justice Collective engages in advocacy, research, public education, and organizing to reveal and resist punishment as a tool of racism and economic injustice. Learn more about Justice Collective at www.justice-collective.org

Moderator: Andrea Sandbrink, Free University of Berlin

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.



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About Justice Collective:

Justice Collective is a Berlin-based project that acts:

- To reveal how governments punish, including in ways that target people experiencing poverty and inequality, people of racialized groups, and people making a life for themselves in new places;
- To build and connect international and internationalist movements — because while local contexts may differ, people in different places confront similar causes of carcerality; and;
- To end societies' increasing reliance on policing, punishment, and prisons. To build communities that choose justice over jails; care over carcerality.



Speaker: Mitali Nagrecha, J.D., Founder/Coordinator of Justice Collective

About the Speaker:

Mitali Nagrecha is the founder and coordinator of Justice Collective, a Berlin-based European project to end society's reliance on policing and punishment. Justice Collective engages in advocacy, research, public education, and organizing to reveal and resist punishment as a tool of racism and economic injustice. Prior to starting Justice Collective, Mitali launched the racism and punishment work at Fair Trials, a Brussels-based NGO, including publishing a primer on racial disparities in criminal sanctioning in Europe and writing in the press on the issue.



Prior to moving to Europe, Mitali was the founder and director of Harvard Law School's Criminal Justice Policy Program's Criminal Justice Debt Initiative. With her team, Mitali advocated against the racist practice of raising state revenue by charging people fees and fines in criminal cases. The Atlantic covered her work here. During her time at CJPP, Mitali published a number of reports and articles, including The Limits of Fairer Fines: Lessons from Germany. Mitali joined CJPP with over ten years of experience researching and advocating on policing and punishment. You can learn more about Mitali's work and publications here.

Mitali earned her B.A. at Cornell University and her J.D. cum laude from The University of Pennsylvania School of Law. She also served as a Fulbright Scholar in India.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EVENT

Conflict-Related Sex and Gender-Based Violence Crimes in celebration of International Women's Day

March 11, 2025



The Center for International Human Rights hosted its annual **International Women's Day Event** on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 to discuss Conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence/ crimes after 30 years of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (CRSGBC). Our panel featured Dr. Heidi Matthews, Assistant Professor at Osgood Hall Law School at York University in Toronto, Canada and Yasmin Ullah, Rohingya feminist, author, poet, and social justice activist and founder of the Rohingya Maïyafuñor Collaborative Network. Our moderator was Dr. Jana Arsovska, Associate Professor of Sociology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

Moderator: Dr. Jana Arsovska

Dr. Arsovska is an Associate Professor of Sociology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and faculty of the Program of Doctoral Study in Criminal Justice at The Graduate Center, CUNY. She is the current director of the Master of Arts Degree Program in International Crime & Justice and the Advanced Certificate in Transnational Organized Crime at the same College. Dr. Arsovska is a research associate at the Center for Cybercrime Studies; her research focuses on gender and transnational crime, human and drug trafficking, and cyber organized crime.



Dr. Arsovska is the co-PI of a National Institute of Justice grant that focuses on darknet drug markets. Over the years she has acted as a consultant for various organizations, including the World Bank, U.N.O.D.C, and DCAF. She has served as a lead instructor on transnational and cyber organized crime for numerous law enforcement training courses funded by the Bureau for Justice Assistance (BJA) and the Organization of American States (OAS).

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About the Speakers

Speaker: Dr. Heidi Matthews

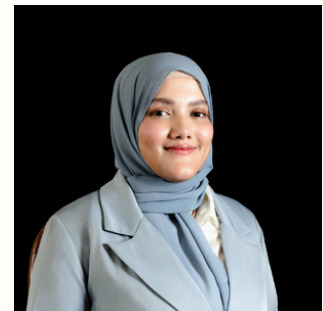
Dr. Heidi Matthews is Assistant Professor at Osgoode Hall Law School at York University in Toronto, Canada, where she researches and teaches in the areas of international and domestic criminal law, the law of war, international legal history and political theory, and law and sexuality. Her work theorizes contemporary shifts in the practice and discourse of the global legal regulation of political violence, with particular attention to history and gender, as well as political, critical and aesthetic theory.



Professor Matthews held a British Academy Newton International Fellowship at the SOAS School of Law, University of London. She served as a law clerk to the judges of the Appeals Chamber at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and as an intern at the Immediate Office of the Prosecutor at the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

Speaker: Yasmin Ullah

Yasmin Ullah is a Rohingya feminist, author, poet, and social justice activist. Born in Burma/Myanmar's Northern Arakan state, she fled to Thailand in 1995 and later resettled in Canada in 2011. She is the founder and executive director of the Rohingya Maïyafuñor Collaborative Network, a women-led organization advocating for Rohingya rights, SGBV, education, and trans-local solidarity. Previously, she served as President of the Rohingya Human Rights Network (2018-2020).



Her advocacy has contributed to genocide determinations in Canada and the U.S. Yasmin chairs ALTSEAN-Burma and serves on the boards of the US Campaign for Burma and Bridges MM-Myanmar Youth Dialogue. She has collaborated on projects with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights and the Montréal Holocaust Museum. Her published works include *I Am A Rohingya* and *Hafsa and the Magical Ring*. A 2023 UN Minority Fellow, she was named to the FemiList100 in 2021.

CIHR Team Visit to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

December 13, 2024



A group from the Center for International Human Rights (CIHR) visited UNHCR's New York Office on December 13, 2025. The group comprised of CIHR staff, undergraduate and graduate students from John Jay College, and doctoral students from the Graduate Center. The visit was organized with the assistance of Ms. Deanna Bitetti, Head of Communications and External Relations, and featured a briefing by Ms. Blanche Tax, Senior Policy Advisor in UNHCR's New York Office, covering humanitarian and emergencies portfolios, the Middle East and North Africa, and Southern Africa regions. Ms. Tax's briefing offered an overview of UNHCR's work and discussed the challenges of addressing the displacement crisis in Syria. The session was very informative and led to a series of thoughtful exchanges that kept our team engaged till the very end of our visit.

CIHR Team Visit to the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (UNCTED)

May 2, 2025



A group from CIHR visited the offices of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (UNCTED) on May 2, 2025. UNCTED is a Special Political Mission of the United Nations established in 2004 to assist the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in monitoring the implementation of resolutions related to counter-terrorism.

The group comprised of CIHR staff, undergraduate and graduate students from John Jay College, and doctoral students from the Graduate Center. Our team received briefings from Ms. Cecilia Naddeo, Ms. Nesrine Elmansouri and Ms. Lea Namouni about the history of UNCTED, the key UNSC resolutions that guide its work, and their experiences in addressing the challenges associated with the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism. The session was very informative and led to a series of thoughtful exchanges that kept our team engaged till the very end of our visit.

CO-SPONSORED EVENTS

THE MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN INTERNATIONAL CRIME & JUSTICE

invites you to a presentation on
**War Crime Investigations:
The Impact of Fake News**

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2024
1:40 PM - 2:50 PM
1.65 NEW BUILDING

IN-PERSON AND ON ZOOM
MEETING ID: 895 0395 1073 PASSCODE: 437418



Speaker: Vladimir Dzuro

Between 1983 and 1995, Mr. Vladimir Dzuro, used to work for the Police of the Czech Republic, initially the Violent Crime Section in Prague 10 and later at the National Central Bureau of INTERPOL in Prague. In 1994, Vladimir actively participated in the work of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the former Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) as the Chief of the UN Field Security in Sarajevo.

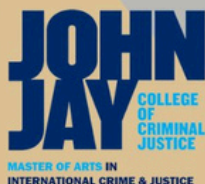
Since April 1995 (for almost 10 years), Vladimir held a position of an investigator at the Office of the Prosecutor in the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague, Holland. Subsequently, until March 2023, Vladimir worked as the Chief of the Headquarters Investigation Unit at the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services in New York. Currently, Vladimir delivers lectures to (as a freelancer) various groups of professionals, among other NATO Military Police, Czech Military Police, Defense Institute of International Legal Studies (DIILS), but also university students in the United States and in the Czech Republic.

Vladimir has received:

- Long Service Award from the United Nation's Secretary-General
- Medal for Service to International Justice from the ICTY Registrar
- Golden Linden Medal (highest departmental award) from the Minister of Defense of the Czech Republic
- Medal of Honor for permanent contribution to building and promoting the good name of the Police of the Czech Republic and Medal for long-term and extraordinary contribution to building safety and peace from the Czech Police President
- International Award from the Italian Diplomatic Academy in recognition of his contribution to the improvement of procedures in the application of justice and legality in the world

Vladimir Dzuro is also a co-author of the graphic novel based on real events **Demons of the Balkan War** (Grada Publishing 2022). Viktor Portel's film *The Investigator* is inspired by Vladimir's book *The Investigator*

Vladimir's unique personal testimony is provided in his bestselling book **The Investigator – Demons of the Balkan War** published in the Czech Republic by Grada Publishing 2017. Its English version was published in the United States by Potomac Books (University of Nebraska Press) in 2019.



The event is co-sponsored by the
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CO-SPONSORED EVENTS

THE MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN INTERNATIONAL CRIME & JUSTICE

INVITES YOU TO A PRESENTATION ON:

The Role of Human Rights in Ensuring a Country's Security: On Armenia's Example

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024 AT 1:40 PM - 2:50 PM
HAAREN HALL 6TH FLOOR, ROOM 636.17

SPEAKER **Dr. Arman Tatoyan**

Dr. Arman Tatoyan is a Professor at American University of Armenia and the Chair of the Master of Arts in Human Rights and Social Justice Program at the AUA College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Dr. Tatoyan was elected by the Parliament of Armenia for a period of 6 years as the Human Rights Defender (Ombudsman) of Armenia from 2016 to 2022. He was also the head of 3 international mandates under UN conventions: i) National [Torture] Preventive Mechanism (UN OPCAT); ii) Children's Rights under the CRC; iii) Rights of Persons with Disabilities under the UN CRPD.



He served as an Ad hoc Judge of the European Court of Human Rights (2016-2019) and an International Adviser of the Council of Europe (2013-2018). In 2019 Dr. Tatoyan was elected by the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers as a member of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) in respect of Armenia by serving two mandates in 2011-2013 and 2019-2023.

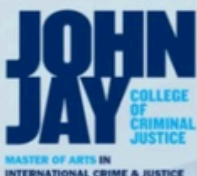
Prior to his election as the Human Rights Defender of Armenia, Dr. Tatoyan served as a Deputy Minister of Justice of Armenia (2013-2016) and a Deputy Representative (Deputy Agent) of Armenia before the European Court of Human Rights (2013 -2016). He also was the member of the international review team under UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).

Dr. Tatoyan holds an LL.M degree from the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) Law School - honoured with Distinguished Member Award of LL.M Class of 2013. He completed the UPenn Wharton Business School Executive Education Program for Lawyers. Arman Tatoyan holds LL.B and LL.M degrees from Yerevan State University Faculty of Law.

Dr. Tatoyan holds a Ph.D. in law and is a licensed advocate (License #2222).

Dr. Tatoyan has extensive professional experience in the Constitutional and the Cassation Courts, the General Prosecutor's Office of Armenia, as well as in civil society and international organizations (UN, OSCE, USAID, etc.).

**The event is co-sponsored by
IC&J MA, ICJ BA, CRJ Ph.D., HUMAN RIGHTS M.A.
PROGRAM, and MINOR IN HUMAN RIGHTS.**



CO-SPONSORED EVENTS

The Human Rights Hub at the CUNY Graduate Center
invites to a presentation on

Cities for CEDAW: From Promise to Commitment

Speaker: Dr. Malliga Och
Moderator: Dr. George Andreopoulos

On Friday, **April 25**, at **2:30 pm** EDT

via Zoom

[Event Link](#)



Dr. Malliga Och is associate professor of Politics Denison University. Her research focuses on women and politics in advanced industrialized countries as well as the localization of human rights in the United States. She is the coeditor of *The Right Women: Republican Activists, Candidates, and lawmakers* (Praeger Press 2018) and the editor of *Women and Politics: Global Lives in Focus* (ABC-CLIO 2023). Her research has appeared in varied academic outlets including *Politics & Gender*, the *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, and *The Journal of Human Rights Practice*. Her commentary and analysis have appeared in the *Conversation*, *UN Women Working Papers*, *Gender & Development*, *Ms Magazine*, *USA Today*, and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, among others. Beyond academia, she has advised the work of the Cities for CEDAW campaign, Political Parity, and the Reflective Democracy Campaign. Och received her Ph.D. in International Studies from the University of Denver in 2016.

Dr. George Andreopoulos is a Professor of Political Science and a member of the doctoral faculty of the Political Science and Criminal Justice programs at the CUNY Graduate School and University Center.

He is also the Director of the Center for International Human Rights. Professor Andreopoulos studied history, law, and international relations at the Universities of Chicago and Cambridge. Before coming to CUNY, he taught for several years at Yale University, where he was the founding Associate Director of the Orville Schell Center for International Human Rights. He has written extensively on international security, international human rights, and international humanitarian law issues.



Thank You!

In closing, we would like to gratefully acknowledge the following individuals who were part of the CIHR team during the 2024-2025 academic year and whose contributions made all the above activities possible:

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- Andrea Sandbrink
- Marizen Santos
- Maria Simonetti

Dr. George Andreopoulos

Director

Center for International Human Rights



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