

Call for Papers

Global Human Rights at Risk? Challenges, Prospects, and Reforms

6th and 7th June 2019

The Hague, Netherlands (Campus Den Haag of Leiden University)

Abstract Submission Deadline: November 15, 2018 (17:00, Central European Time)

Email: globalhumanrights@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Organizers:

Dr Salvador Santino F. Regilme Jr. (Leiden Institute for History)

Dr Irene Hadiprayitno (Leiden Institute for Area Studies)

This multidisciplinary seminar aims to examine key debates and perspectives arising from various contemporary challenges to international human rights and emancipatory politics. First, the seminar examines whether, and if so, how the apparently declining influence of the West, the rise of authoritarianism, and increasing material inequality within and between nations could impact the legitimacy and effectiveness of international human rights. Second, the seminar invites new and radical perspectives that aim to reinvent the future of transnational human rights norms and human dignity — its substantive content, ethical assumptions, as well as its representative global and national institutions. Third, the seminar brings together leading and promising scholars in conversation with human rights practitioners in an effort to bring a dynamic and fruitful debate that bridges theory and practice. We hope to be able to attract paper presenters from a diverse set of expertise and professional experience on human rights — ranging from the humanities, social sciences, and human rights practice. We welcome paper proposals that reflect the variety of perspectives on human rights scholarship and practice, especially those that deal with theoretical and practical issues about human rights in the Global South. The following key questions represent some but not all of the plausible themes that we seek to address:

- What are some of the most serious and key challenges affecting the legitimacy and effectiveness of international human rights norms?
- What are the plausible causes of the rise of illiberal and authoritarian discourses in the global and national mainstream public spheres? How and in what ways do these discourses and challenges relate to international human rights norms?
- What are the key limitations and milestones of post-Second World War international human rights norms — particularly in terms of its conceptual basis, historical appreciation, and normative underpinnings?
- What constitutes a human rights violation or abuse, as dictated by contemporary international human rights regime? How and in what ways do these conceptions promote interests of some actors while undermining others?
- How and in what ways does the current human rights regime systematically exclude the contributions of actors from the Global South in the establishment thereof?
- Does the contemporary international human rights regime need a radical reform? If so, what constitutes radical reform?

While this conference welcomes paper proposals that are relevant to those aforementioned themes, the panel particularly also encourages contributions that address the following topics, with a particular focus on the Global South (country case studies, regional focus, or transnational overview):

- Causes and consequences of the rise of authoritarianism
- State repression: extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances
- Transnational human rights activism: strategies and challenges
- Asian contributions to the formation of the global human rights regime
- Effectiveness and legitimacy of national human rights institutions
- Inequality and socio-economic rights
- Human rights theories, philosophy, and histories of human rights activism in the Global South
- Climate change and human rights
- Multinational corporations and their impacts to human rights
- Transitional justice and human rights
- Education and human rights
- The emergence of rising powers and the international human rights regime
- Food security and human rights
- Human rights activism and innovations: strategies and tactics
- Intersectionality and human rights
- Global justice and the economy
- Consolidation and regression of democracies worldwide and its relationship to human rights
- Historical perspectives on human rights from the Global South

This two-day conference will be held in The Hague — the political capital of the Netherlands and a multicultural city that hosts many important international organizations including the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice. We hope that the conference would be a starting point towards building an international network of scholars and practitioners interested in rethinking emancipatory politics and human rights during these very challenging times. We expect to publish an edited volume or a special issue in an academic journal based on the paper contributions from this conference.

Please submit your proposed abstract (maximum of 350 words) and a short biographical note (maximum of 150 words) with your contact details in PDF attached to the email. Proposals can be sent on or before 15th November 2018, 17:00 CET to globalhumanrights@hum.leidenuniv.nl. We can provide travel expense support for accepted paper presenters from a minority group and/or systematically underprivileged backgrounds. If that is the case, then please write a short justification note for your request for travel support. Due to very limited funds, we are unable to accommodate all requests for travel support of accepted participants, but funding applications will be assessed based on compelling financial need and the potential to increase the analytic coverage of the conference. This conference is supported by Leiden University's Global Interactions Grant.