



Inter-American Human Rights Network

Moving Beyond the Good, the Bad and the Ugly: What to Learn From International Human Rights Systems?

Inter-American Human Rights Network (IAHRN)¹ Workshop

29th – 30th January 2016

Human Rights Centre

Ghent University

Belgium

CALL FOR PAPERS

1. Overview

There has been a remarkable rise in the number of decisions issued by judicial and quasi-judicial human rights bodies at different levels, especially during the last two decades. In this context, the role of universal and regional human rights instruments and institutions has increased, and thus more debate on their roles and impact should take place. Although decisions can be found in all regions, and covering all aspects of rights, advances in jurisprudence need to be matched by on the ground action to ensure that all concerned authorities comply with judgments and ensure effective enforcement and enjoyment of rights.

The aim of this workshop is to look at international human rights bodies from a critical perspective and to examine which of their practices have contributed towards ensuring genuine respect for human rights; what good practices, strategies and actions to address violations of human rights could be copied from other jurisdictions; and which practices do not deserve to be repeated or copied.

A central focus of the discussion will be the analysis of and comparison between different human rights bodies, including their institutional and procedural dimensions; the exchange of 'good' and 'bad' experiences, however understood; and an examination of new ideas about how international human rights decisions may be implemented in ways that contribute towards better policies. In an effort to overcome obstacles in the implementation of decisions

¹ The [Inter-American Human Rights Network](http://interamericanhumanrights.org) (IAHRN) is an international scholarly initiative which seeks to examine the development and impact of the regional human rights system of the Americas. The network is funded by the Leverhulme Trust under its International Networks programme. For further information see the Network's website at <http://interamericanhumanrights.org>.

of human rights adjudicators, a second area of discussion will be the current, yet flawed, strategies. Similarly, future research and integrated approaches will also be considered.

This two-day workshop will combine dialogue on conceptual and empirical issues with discussion on strategies for promoting the implementation of international human rights decisions. The workshop will aim to: (1) identify and understand the way international human rights bodies currently promote or stand in the way of effective human rights protection; (2) determine what might be learned from international human rights bodies in specific contexts, with regard to specific groups of people and countries; (3) identify the key challenges and obstacles (formal and structural) to the full exercise of human rights; and (4) examine potential solutions (best practices, domestic and international) to better guarantee human rights.

2. Paper Themes

The workshop will be organised around papers commissioned by the Network and circulated in advance. The IAHRN is now inviting submissions related to any of the following topics and questions:

- (1) Lessons to be learned in implementing ground-breaking decisions on civil, political, economic and social rights.
- (2) Factors that affect the implementation of judgments, whether social, political, legal, economic, religious and cultural in character.
- (3) 'Good' and 'bad' experiences in implementing international human rights decisions.
- (4) 'Good' and 'bad' experiences in implementing international human rights decisions while working in collaboration with social movements, and national and international NGOs.
- (5) How is impact maximized and what strategies have been most effective in this regard?
- (6) To what extent do the decisions of human rights adjudicators have an effect upon the states and societies in which the violations occurred?
- (7) How broad an impact have judgments/decisions had and to what extent have they guaranteed that the rights of the most vulnerable people are protected? Do interventions of international adjudicators in human rights cases make a difference to the cause of mitigating inequality and fostering social justice?

3. Submission Instructions

Academics, judges, and practitioners from all regions of the world are invited to discuss opportunities for improving policies and outcomes through the implementation of international decisions and the use of rights, and to address the dilemmas in the context of

violence, discrimination, exclusion, inequality and/or economic constraints.

If you are interested in participating, please send a half page abstract of the paper you would plan to present to Clara.BurbanoHerrera@UGent.be and p.low@ucl.ac.uk as soon as possible, but no later than **Tuesday 3rd November 2015**. Along with your proposal, please include your name and title, institutional affiliation, and biographical statement (max. 200 words).

If your abstract is selected, you will be assigned a presentation slot for the workshop and your final paper will be due for submission by **Friday 15th January 2016**. Please note that all presenters must provide a full final draft in order to participate and that presenters are expected to attend the workshop for its full duration.

Papers may be submitted in English, Spanish or Portuguese; the working languages of the network. International attendees are invited to indicate any funding needs in their original submission as some limited funds may be available to cover transport costs to Belgium.

4. Logistical Information

The workshop will be held at Ghent University's Human Rights Centre on 29th and 30th January 2016. The provisional programme outline is as follows:

Friday 29 January

9:30 – 9:45 Welcome and Project Overview

9:45 – 11:00 Session 1: The Good and Repeatable

11.00 – 11.30. Coffee break.

11:30 – 12:45 Session 2: The Good and Repeatable (cont'd)

12:45 – 14:30. Lunch

14:30 – 15:45 Session 3: The Bad and Unrepeatable

15:45 – 17.00 Session 4: The Bad and Unrepeatable (cont'd)

20.00-22.00 Public Lecture (TBC): Human Rights Violations, Poverty and Discrimination - What Role for International Human Rights Bodies?

Saturday 30 January

9:30 – 10:45. Session 5: Dilemmas, Constraints, Opportunities and Challenges

10:45 – 11:15. Coffee break

11:15 – 12:30. Session 6: Dilemmas, Constraints, Opportunities and Challenges (cont'd)

12.30 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 15.30 Session 7: Concluding Reflections and Regional Comparisons

15:30 – 17:00. Network review meeting (for current and prospective IAHRN members)