



Center for International Human Rights (CIHR) **Activities for 2011-2012**

The Center for International Human Rights (CIHR) 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 at John Jay College 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, 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.

Here is a list of our activities for the 2011-2012 academic year:

Research Workshops

- October 7 & 8, 2011 – *Outsourcing Security: Private Military & Security Companies and the Quest for Accountability*
 - CIHR and the Institute for Criminal Justice Ethics at John Jay College organized a workshop to discuss the exponential growth of private military and security companies over the last past 25 years and the implications of such growth on security governance. These contractors provide basic logistics, feed and supply enlisted men and women, develop and direct sophisticated weapons systems, administer detention facilities and conduct interrogations, and provide personal security for the staff of intergovernmental as well as non-governmental organizations. If the privatization of security functions is here to stay (and this clearly seems to be the case), then the key tasks at hand are: (1) to understand the origins, causes and multiple manifestations of such outsourcing; and (2) to devise an effective regulatory framework that would be consistent with the exigencies of democratic control and would adhere to fundamental human rights and humanitarian law rules and standards.
 - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS:
 1. Prof. George Andreopoulos, Director, CIHR
 2. Dr. Andrew Alexandra, Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Applied Philosophy & Public Ethics at the University of Melbourne
 3. Mr. Doug Brooks, President of the International Stability Operations Association
 4. Ms. Aferdita Hakaj, Assistant Director, CIHR
 5. Mr. Marcus Hedahl, PhD Candidate in Ethics, Georgetown University
 6. Ms. Kristine Huskey, Director of the Anti-Torture Program, Physicians for Human Rights
 7. Prof. John Kleinig, Philosophy and Criminal Justice, John Jay College of Criminal Justice and the Graduate Center, CUNY
 8. Prof. Benjamin Perrin, Assistant Professor of Law, University of British Columbia
 9. Mr. José Gómez del Prado, Former Member of the UN Working Group on the Use of Mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination
 10. Prof. Allison Stanger, Russell Leng '60 Professor of International Politics and Economics and Chair of the Political Science Department at Middlebury College

11. Prof. Nigel White, School of Law at the University of Nottingham

- December 16 & 17, 2011 – *Migration and Security*
 - The CIHR, in collaboration with the Center for Security Studies of the Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection, organized a research workshop with the purpose of critically examining key political, economic and security developments influenced by migratory flows. The key themes addressed included the causes and consequences of migratory flows, the prospects for effective cross-border cooperation, the strengths and weaknesses of the relevant international, regional and domestic legal frameworks, and the challenges confronting the development of human rights-sensitive policies and practices on migration.
 - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS:
 1. Mr. Luigino Amorosa, Italian State Police, Central Directorate for Immigration and Border Police, Ministry of Interior
 2. Prof. George Andreopoulos, Director, CIHR
 3. Prof. Joaquin Arango, Complutense University of Madrid
 4. Prof. Rosemary Barberet, Sociology, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York
 5. Mr. Marco Borraccetti, Researcher & Lecturer, University of Bologna
 6. Ms. Katrine Camilleri, Director, Jesuits Refugee Service
 7. Mr. Bakir Dautbasic, Secretary General of the Ministry of Security, Bosnia & Herzegovina
 8. Ms. Kamelia Dimitrova, Research Fellow, Center for the Study of Democracy
 9. Prof. Dinni Gordon, PhD Program in Criminal Justice, City University of New York
 10. Prof. Maki Haberfeld, Police Science & Criminal Justice Administration, John Jay College of Criminal Justice and the Graduate Center, City University of New York
 11. Ms. Aferdita Hakaj, Assistant Director, CIHR
 12. Mr. Christian Mahr, Legal Officer, Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, United Nations
 13. Mr. Nikolaos Petropoulos, Police Major, KEMEA
 14. Mr. Max Adam Romero, Attorney at Sevilla Acoge, Spain
 15. Mr. Jeremy Travis, President, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York
 16. Prof. Michael Tsinisizelis, Dean of the University of Athens Law School, and Chairman of the Board of Directors, KEMEA
 17. Mr. Veselin Vuchkov, Deputy Minister of Interior
 18. Mr. Dimitrios Xenakis, Vice-Chairman, Board of Directors, KEMEA
 19. Superintendent Neville Xuereb, Malta Police Force

Seminars, Panel Discussions and Lectures

- Fall 2011 – Spring 2012: CIHR holds an annual Human Rights Seminar Series in co-sponsorship with the CUNY Ph.D./ M.A. Program in Political Science, which takes place at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. The seminar meets approximately once a month throughout the school year. Each academic year the Center for International Human Rights invites five to six renowned scholars and/or practitioners to address cutting-edge human rights topics including humanitarian law, economic rights, women's rights, and immigration.
 - The theme for the 2011-2012 series was *Assessing Compliance: The Role of Human Rights Monitoring Mechanisms*.
 - The purpose of this year's seminar was to study how monitoring mechanisms are utilized to assess compliance with international human rights norms and standards. This subject was chosen, as it was especially pertinent in light of the report submitted by the US government in the Fall of 2010 to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights as part of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) procedures of the UN Human Rights Council, and of the near completion of the first four-year cycle of the UPR process (2008-2011). In addition, the seminar explored how these monitoring mechanisms can be used more effectively for accountability and advocacy purposes. The seminar examined monitoring mechanisms of charter and treaty-based bodies, as well as extra-conventional mechanisms and the supplemental monitoring of nongovernmental organizations.
 - The presenters for the series were as follows:

- Thursday, October 20, 2011 – Justice Abdulai Sheikh Fofanah, High Court of Justice, Sierra Leone, Government Action in Monitoring Compliance with International Human Right Norms: The Sierra Leone Experience;
 - Thursday November 3, 201 – Elsa Stamatopoulou, Columbia University, School of International and Public Affairs Program; Former Chief of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues for the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, The Monitoring of Cultural Human Rights;
 - Thursday February 16, 2012 – Ron Russell, Executive Director of Epic Theater, Theater as a Tool for Civil Empowerment;
 - Thursday April 19, 2012 – Dr. Howard Stoffer, Senior Advisor to the UN Counter Terrorism Committee, Human Rights in the Work of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee.
- October 19, 2011 – *Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism, Secularism and Human Rights Panel Discussion*
 - Co-sponsored by CIHR and the Centre for Secular Space, London (CSS)
 - CSS’ mission is to oppose religious fundamentalism, amplify secular voices, and promote universality in human rights. Its goals are the following: (1) To change the public perception of fundamentalist groups, which are often seen as “authentic voices of religion”, and instead popularize the feminist definition of them as global political movements that use religion to promote systematic violence and discrimination; (2) To treat terrorism as a human rights violation and examine its links to fundamentalist movements; (3) To strengthen and promote feminist analyses of peace and security questions; and (4) To oppose a communal approach to public policy issues and the practice of devolving education and social services to “faith-based” organizations
 - Welcoming Remarks: Prof. George Andreopoulos, Director, CIHR
 - Moderator: Anissa Hélie (Algeria/US), Assistant Professor, Dept. of History at John Jay College and former Executive Director of Women Living Under Muslim Laws
 - Panelist: Sunila Abeysekera (Sri Lanka), leading global campaigner on women’s human rights
 - Panelist: Ariane Brunet (Canada), Coordinator of the Women’s Rights Programme at Rights and Democracy in Montreal
 - Panelist: Gita Sahgal (India/UK), prize-winning documentary film-maker, a member of Southall Black Sisters and a founding member of Women Against Fundamentalism
 - Panelist: Meredith Tax (US), novelist, historian, founder & chair of CARASA in New York and the International PEN Women’s Committee, and president of Women’s WORLD
- December 8, 2011 – *Technology & Human Rights: The Role of Information Technology & Social Networking Platforms in Mobilizing People to Advance the Cause of Human Rights & Social Justice*
 - This event was held in commemoration of the sixty fourth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
 - Welcoming Remarks: Prof. George Andreopoulos, Director of CIHR
 - Moderator: Aferdita Hakaj, Assistant Director of CIHR
 - Panelist Prof. Sylvia Maier, Assistant Prof./Faculty Fellow, New York University
 - Panelist: Shahram Hashemi, Board of Directors Executive Amnesty International
 - Panelist: Raja Althaibani, Human Rights & Media Advocate, WITNESS
 - Panelist: Sally Abdelghafar, Middle East social-empowerment Activist, Youth International Empowerment
- March 15, 2012 – *International Women’s Day Event Celebration – Connecting Girls, Inspiring Futures: Challenges and Prospects for Global Empowerment*
 - International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated to recognize the fact that securing peace and social progress and the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms require the active participation, equality, and development of women; and to acknowledge the contribution of women to the strengthening of international peace and security. Celebration of this event and a reflection of women's rights in the global arena are especially important in light of the recent creation of UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The UN designated theme for this year's IWD was: "Connecting Girls, Inspiring Futures."

- Women's political participation is a human right whose promotion in a sustained manner can contribute to good governance and to greater opportunities for empowerment. Moreover, greater participation of women in such processes acts as an incentive for the younger generation to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to become more actively engaged in transformational initiatives; initiatives that seek to ensure a more inclusive and just social order. In this context, Michelle Bachelet, the Executive Director of UN Women stated "We are bound by a common goal--to open the way for women to participate in all decisions affecting not only their own lives, but the development of our world, at the global, regional and local levels. By making full use of half the world's intelligence--the intelligence of women--we improve the chances of finding real and lasting solutions to the challenges that confront us."
- To contribute to this ongoing discussion, and consistent with the theme for this year's IWD, CIHR at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York organized an event to address the critical issue of women's participation in post-conflict peacebuilding processes. Participants were asked to address the following focal issues and questions: What are some of the main challenges confronting the younger generation of women? What can be done to enable young females to advance to the maximum of their potential, and contribute more effectively to public life? What kinds of initiatives, geared towards young females, are being developed to that effect in post-conflict societies? Who are the key stakeholders in these undertakings and how effective are they?
- This event brought together the following academic and non-governmental organizations' representatives:
 - Welcoming Remarks: Prof. George Andreopoulos, Director, CIHR
 - Moderator: Ms. Aferdita Hakaj, Assistant Director, CIHR
 - Panelist: Prof. Rosemary Barberet, Associate Professor of Sociology, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
 - Panelist: Ms. Barbara Borgese, Second Language English Teacher & Community Coordinator, The Brooklyn International High School
 - Panelist: Mr. Conor French, Chief Operating Officer/Chief Financial Officer, Indego Africa
 - Panelist: Ms. Qaterannada Rehan, Youth Participant, Seeds of Peace
- CIHR is currently in the process of publishing an IWD Report that will examine the evolution of young women's right to participation in the context of Kosovo, Liberia and Palestine.
- May 8, 2012 – *United Nations Reform, the Rule of Law and Counter-Terrorism: Panel Discussion*
 - Co-sponsored by CIHR and the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force on Protecting Human Rights While Countering Terrorism (CTITF Working Group)
 Chair: Anne-Christine Eriksson, Deputy Director UNHCR, New York
 Panelists:
 - Prof. George Andreopoulos, Political Science, City University of New York (CUNY) and Director, Center for International Human Rights, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
 - Edward J. Flynn, Senior Human Rights Officer, UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate
 - Ana Maria Salinas de Frias, Book co-editor & Professor of Public International Law, Málaga University, Spain
 - Dr. Katja Samuel, Book co-editor and Project Co-Director, Nottingham University, UK
 - Concluding remarks were made from the CTITF Working Group by Maarit Kohonen, Deputy to the Head of Office, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
- May 10, 2012 – *The Historical Memory Projects Invites Guest Speakers: Meet Virginia Ajxup, Juam Zapil & Pop No'j Maya Network*
 - Co-sponsored by the Historical Memory Project, CIHR, Humanities and Justice Major, International Master of Arts Degree Program in International Crime & Justice, International Criminal Justice Major, The Office of Graduate Studies, Gender Studies Major & Women's Center, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
 - Participants were part of a delegation representing the indigenous people of Guatemala at the Eleventh Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)
- June 7, 2012 – *John Jay College International Conference: Global Perspectives on Justice, Security & Human Rights.*
 - This event was organized by the CIHR and co-sponsored by the Center on Terrorism
 - *Panel 5: Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights*

- Chair: Prof. Peter Romaniuk, Political Science, John Jay College
- Prof. George Andreopoulos, Director, CIHR, Taking Human Rights Seriously? Assessing the United Nations Security Councils' Counter-Terrorist Policies and Practices
- Mr. Howard Stoffer, United Nations, New Paths for Counter-Terrorism at the United Nations
- Prof. Chuck Strozier, Center on Terrorism, John Jay College, Understanding Terrorism as a Guide to Counter-Terrorism

Outreach

- *Spotlight Human Rights* is a new initiative by Epic Theatre Ensemble, CIHR, in partnership with the Lark Play Development Center. The overarching goal is to bring together practitioners in the field of human rights with theatre artists, scholars, and students from NYC colleges and high schools, to collaborate on new plays and new scholarship that raises public awareness about the lives of international aid workers. This initiative is premised on the belief that art, and more specifically, theater is a powerful tool both for expressing the quest for human dignity and for advancing civic empowerment. Over the course of 12 months, four teams comprised of playwrights, practitioners, scholars, and students are assigned a priority question in the human rights field to explore and discuss. The playwrights and scholars are commissioned to create new work that tackles these questions, sharing their efforts throughout the creative process with their team. The initiative will culminate in a 5-day conference at John Jay College and nearby theatres and cultural organizations in Manhattan in Fall 2012. New plays will be presented to the public side by side with new scholarship, all followed by interactive workshops, fostering a diverse and multi-faceted community that has the potential to last far beyond the initiative's life-span, as well as generate new work that has a meaningful impact for human rights practitioners.
 - June 14, 2012 – *1st Step: Spotlight Human Rights Pre-Conference Event*
 - The Pre-Conference event featured a new play by Dominique Morisseau followed by a discussion of the play's focus on immigrant women facing situations of domestic violence.

Curricular Developments

- Fall 2012 Semester – *New Minor in Human Rights Studies*
 - The Human Rights Studies minor will introduce students to some of the key conceptual, ethical and methodological approaches to the study and practice of human rights. In particular, it will address key concepts, principles and norms, such as human dignity, non-discrimination, equality, due process, empowerment, human security, human development, and accountability; it will expose students to diverse disciplinary and methodological approaches to the study and practice of human rights from a domestic as well as an international perspective; it will familiarize students with the evolution of international human rights norms both in theory and in practice, the latter through the study of pivotal events in the history of human rights, such as the anti-slavery and anti-slave trade campaign, the Civil Rights Movement, the Campaign Against Apartheid, the transnational movement spawned by the Helsinki Final Act, and, more recently, the campaign to establish the International Criminal Court and the launching of the Millennium Development Goals; it will train students how to use the human rights framework in order to analyze and assess critical developments in key issue areas of global concern; and it will provide students with internship opportunities so as to hone their advocacy skills in addressing the challenges of an increasingly complex and interconnected world. This minor can be paired with all majors; examples would include Gender Studies, Global History, Humanities and Justice, International Criminal Justice, and Political Science.
 - Total Credits Required: 18
 - Required Course (1 – 3 credits): Political Science 320 International Human Rights
 - Elective Courses (15 credits from a series of selected courses)

Upcoming Event & Projects for 2012 -2013

CIHR is currently planning a series of events for next year on cutting edge issues in the field of international human rights. In particular, we plan to conduct further research workshops on *Migration and Security* (in collaboration with the Center for Security Studies of the Hellenic Ministry of Citizen Protection), on *United Nations Terrorism and Human Rights*, on *the Rule of Law in UN Peace Operations*, and on *Human Rights Issues Concerning the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Community*. We expect to produce monographs based on the presentations and deliberations of these workshops. Moreover, we will continue our outreach/awareness initiatives by organizing public events on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (December 2012), and on International Women's Day (March 2013). In addition, the Center welcomes the establishment of the new International Human Rights Club at John Jay College and looks forward to working very closely with it in the upcoming academic year. Last, but not least, we intend to build on the momentum generated by our collaborative undertakings both within, as well as outside the College, with other research centers, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Email Aferdita Hakaj at afhakaj@jjay.cuny.edu to be added to our list serve and be kept posted of developments with periodic updates. Please also feel free to check our website at: <http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/1869.php>