

# Human Rights at Home: International Law in U.S. Courts

## Conference Schedule

**Note: Schedule is subject to revision, please check back for updates and speakers as they are confirmed.**

### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9

**7:30 - 9:00 p.m.      Cocktail Reception** [Ponce de Leon Room, Georgian Terrace Hotel]

- Welcome, Ann Beeson, ACLU, & Ashley Barr, Carter Center
- Cultural resistance, Jaribu Hill
- Film Screenings

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10

**8:00 - 8:30 a.m.      Continental breakfast** [Allen Foyer, Carter Center]

**8:30 - 10:00          Opening Plenary: Why a Human Rights Framework in Domestic Advocacy? Why Now?** [Chapel]

Speakers in this session will discuss the benefits and pitfalls of utilizing a human rights framework in domestic litigation, organizing and policy advocacy.

Moderator:      Ann Beeson, ACLU, National Office

Panelists:        Anthony Romero, ACLU, National Office  
Harold Koh, Yale Law School  
Dorothy Thomas, Shaler-Adams Foundation  
Jaribu Hill, Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights  
Helen Duffy, Interights, London (invited)

**10:00 - 10:15          Break** [Allen Foyer]

**10:15 - 12:30        Plenary: Basic Human Rights Principles: Overview of Major Documents & Private Causes of Action** [Chapel]

This session will cover the distinctions between and significance of treaty and customary international law; signature, ratification and reservations. Presenters will describe the evolution of the major declarations and treaties, beginning with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and review procedural law issues challenges essential to successfully litigating human rights

cases.

Presenters: Michael Posner, Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights  
Catherine Powell, Fordham School of Law  
Beth Stephens, Rutgers University School of Law

**12:30 - 2:00 Lunch Plenary: Success Stories & Lessons Learned**  
[Chapel]

Moderator: Steve Shapiro, ACLU, National Office

- *Alien Tort Claims Act (ATCA) Litigation in U.S. Courts* (Paul Hoffman, Venice, CA)
- *Advancing the Rights of Women through the UN Special Rapporteur* (Deborah Labelle, Ann Arbor, MI)
- *Human Rights Standards in the South African Constitution* (Vincent Saldanha, Legal Resources Centre, South Africa) (invited)
- *Refugee Rights* (Elisa Massimino, Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights)

**AFTERNOON WORKSHOP SESSIONS**

**2:15 - 3:00 Plenary: EQUALITY & NON-DISCRIMINATION**  
[Chapel]

This 45-minute overview will cover the rights protected under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the International Covenant on Civil & Political Rights (ICCPR); the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC); and the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). [CEDAW will be addressed in greater depth in a separate session on Day 2.]

Presenters: Gay McDougall, International Human Rights Law Group (IHR LG)  
Martha Davis, Northeastern School of Law

**3:15 - 4:45 p.m. Practice Breakouts:**

- **Race Discrimination & Racial Equality**

Session leaders: Gay McDougall, International Human Rights Law Group (IHR LG)  
Theodore Shaw, NAACP Legal Defense Fund (invited)

- **Physical and Mental Disability**

Session leaders: Janet Lord, Landmine Survivors Network

- **Sexual Orientation & Transgender Issues**

Session leaders: Widney Brown, Human Rights Watch

- **Women & Children's Issues** [Ex. Dining Room]

Session leaders: Bernadine Dohrn, Northwestern University  
Children & Family Justice Center

- **Native American Rights** [Rotunda]

Session leaders: Andy Huff, Indian Law Resource Center

- **Human Rights in the U.S., Post 9-11** [Lower Allen Foyer]

Session leaders: Harold Koh, Yale Law School  
Michael Ratner, Center for Constitutional Rights  
(invited)  
Aarti Shahani/Shubash Kateel, Families for  
Freedom

**5:00 - 6:15 Concurrent Sessions [choose one]:**

- **Using Non US-Court and Regional Fora** [Cyprus Room]

This session will discuss the jurisprudence and venues other than U.S. courts, such as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the UN Human Rights Committee, and the European Court of Human Rights. Trainers will discuss the relative merits of their jurisprudence, accessing these fora, and explain how to initiate and navigate cases in them.

Moderator: Rick Wilson, Washington College of Law, American University

Presenters: Sandra Babcock, Minneapolis, MN  
Francisco Forrest Martin, Rights International  
Steven Watt, Center for Constitutional Rights

Respondent: José Zalaquett, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Organization of American States (invited)

- **Using International Law to Advance Public Policy** [Chapel]

This session will discuss successful and on-going campaigns for the implementation of human rights standards in city council ordinances and in federal legislation.

Presenters: Krishanti Dharmaraj, Womens' Institute for Leadership Development (WILD) for Human Rights  
Lenora Lapidus, ACLU, National Office  
Elisa Massimino, Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights

- **Documenting Human Rights Abuses**

This session will address the use of print, video and participatory means of documenting human rights abuses for use in organizing, public education and litigation.

Moderator: Dorothy Thomas, Shaler-Adams Foundation

Presenters: Mallika Dutt, Breakthrough (invited)  
Jamie Fellner, Human Rights Watch  
Fernando Garcia, Border Network for Human Rights (invited)

**6:30 p.m.** Buses leave from Allen Foyer, Carter Center, to Georgian Terrace Hotel

**7:30 - 9:30 Conference Banquet** [Grand Ballroom, Georgian Terrace Hotel]

Performance: Sarah Jones (invited)  
Keynote Speaker: Juan Méndez, Notre Dame Law School

**Sarah Jones** is a dynamic young playwright, poet, actor and activist. Her one-woman plays have won critical acclaim for their human and trenchant social commentary (*"Surface Transit"* (2000) (award for Best One Person Show, HBO Aspen Comedy Arts Festival)). Her most recent shows, *"Women Can't Wait"* and *"Waking the American Dream"* (about the immigrant experience in the United States since September 11) were commissioned by the international women's rights organization Equality Now and the National Immigration Forum, and have been performed to sold-out audiences. Jones successfully fought the FCC's censorship of her celebrated anti-misogynist song, *"Your Revolution."*

**Juan E. Méndez** is Director of the Center for Civil and Human Rights at Notre Dame Law School. A native of Argentina, Méndez has dedicated his legal career to the defense of human rights. As a result of his representation of political prisoners in the 1970s, the Argentinean military dictatorship detained and subjected him to torture and administrative detention for a year and a half. After his release from prison, Méndez moved to United States, where he has worked for 25 years in distinguished capacities as an advocate for human rights in the U.S. and abroad, including as General Counsel of Human Rights Watch. In October 1999 he joined Notre Dame as a professor of law and Director of the Center for Civil and Human Rights. He is a member and recent past Chair of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, a body of the Organization of American States.

## **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11**

**8:00-8:30 Continental Breakfast** [Allen Foyer, Carter Center]

**8:30-9:45 Plenary: Movement Lawyering: Working in the Context of Grassroots Campaigns** [Chapel]

This session will engage lawyers and activists in a discussion of effective strategies for human rights lawyering within a larger political strategy. How can litigation effectively further public education and grassroots organizing on a given issue? How can public education and grassroots organizing further litigation strategies? The session will address the tensions that often arise between community-based organizations, lawyers and their clients, and present case studies of effective collaborations between them.

Moderator: Ajamu Baraka, Amnesty International, Atlanta office

Presenters: Cathy Albisa, Center for Economic & Social Rights  
Cheri Honkala, Kensington Welfare Rights Union

Steve Hawkins, National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

Larry Marshall, Center for Wrongful Convictions,  
Northwestern University (invited)

**9:45-10:15 Domestic Human Rights Education and Networking Opportunities**

This brief plenary will provide information on networking and educational resources available to practitioners interested in domestic applications of human rights

Presenters: Gay McDougall, International Human Rights Law Group  
Loretta Ross, National Center for Human Rights Education  
Cynthia Soohoo, Columbia Institute for Human Rights/Bringing Human Rights Home Network

**10:15-10:30 Break**

**MORNING WORKSHOP SESSIONS**

**10:30-11:00 Practice Area Overviews**

The first 30 minutes of each track will provide in-depth training on the international laws relevant to the general practice area and review the fundamentals of bringing claims under them. Participants then move to practice breakouts to discuss legal and organizing strategies for enforcing the right in specific issue areas.

**A. Track One: CRIMINAL JUSTICE [Cyprus Room]**

**10:30-11:00 Overview:** Torture Conventions; Vienna Convention on Consular Relations; Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; Convention of the Elimination of Discrimination of All Forms Against Women; Convention on the Rights of the Child

Presenters: Jules Lobell, University of Pittsburgh School of Law  
Michael Posner, Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights

**11:00 - 12:30**

**Practice Area Breakouts:**

▪ **Prison Conditions**

Session leaders: Jamie Fellner, Human Rights Watch  
Deborah Labelle, Ann Arbor, MI

▪ **Juvenile Justice**

Session leaders: Bernadine Dohrn, Northwestern Children & Family Justice Center  
Van Jones, Ella Baker Center for Human Rights (invited)  
Rosemary Sarri, University of Michigan

▪ **Death Penalty**

Session leaders: Sandra Babcock, Minneapolis, MN  
Steve Hawkins, National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

**B. Track Two:**

**ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

**10:30 - 11:00**

**Overview:** Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Convention on Rights of the Child; Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Presenter: Cathy Albisa, Center for Economic & Social Rights  
Vincent Saldanha, Legal Resources Centre

**11:00 - 12:30**

**Practice Area Breakouts:**

▪ **Workers' Rights**

Session leaders: Chandra Bhatnagar, Asian American Legal Defense Fund  
Lucas Benitez, Imakolee Workers (invited)

▪ **Welfare, Housing & Adequate Living Standards in an Era of Devolution**

Session leaders: Cheri Honkala, Kensington Welfare Rights Union/Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign  
Cecilia Perry, AFSCME

▪ **Adequate Education**

Session leaders: Cathy Albisa, Center for Economic & Social Rights  
Ramona Ortega, Urban Justice Center

**12:30 - 2:30 Luncheon Plenary: Rap Session with Judges**

This session will engage sitting and former judges in a discussion of how the courts view international human rights claims. Judges will discuss reasons for resistance within the bench to international law and share their perspective on the prospects for change. Speakers will also discuss effective strategies for litigating human rights claims in U.S. courts and international tribunals.

Moderator: Alice Henkin, Aspen Institute

Hon. Stephen Breyer, U.S. Supreme Court (invited)  
Hon. Mary Schroeder, Chief Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit  
Hon. Patricia Wald, U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia (retired), Open Society Institute  
Hon. Myron Thompson, U.S. District Court, Middle District, Alabama (invited)  
Hon. Shirley Abrahamson, Chief Judge, Wisconsin Supreme Court (invited)

**AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS**

**2:45 - 3:30 Practice Area Overviews & Breakouts**

The first 45 minutes of each track will provide in-depth training on the international laws relevant to the general practice area and review the fundamentals of bringing claims under them. Participants then move to practice breakouts to discuss litigation and organizing strategies for enforcing the right in specific issue areas.

**A. Track One: RIGHTS OF NON-CITIZENS**

**2:45 - 3:30 Overview:** Alien Tort Claims Act; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; Vienna Convention on Consular Relations [Cyprus Room]

Presenter: Michael Ratner, Center for Constitutional Rights (invited)

**3:30 - 5:15 Practice Area Breakouts:**

- **Immigrant Labor**

Session leaders: Chandra Bhatnagar, Asian American  
Legal Defense Fund  
Chantoly Huq, Taxi Workers' Union  
(invited)

- **9-11 and Preventive Detention**

Session leaders: Shubash Kateel, Families for Freedom  
Steven Watt, Center for Constitutional  
Rights

- **Cases Involving Foreign Parties [ATCA]**

Session leaders: Paul Hoffman, Venice, CA  
Jenny Green, Center for Constitutional  
Rights  
Penny Venetis, Rutgers University Law  
School  
Gerry Weber, ACLU of Georgia

**B. Track Two: WOMEN'S RIGHTS**

**2:45 - 3:30**

**Overview:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of  
Discrimination Against Women; Convention on the Elimination of  
All Forms of Racial Discrimination; Torture Victims' Protection Act

Presenters: Lisa Crooms, Howard University Law School  
(invited)  
Martha Davis, Northeastern School of Law

**3:30 - 5:15**

**Practice Area Breakouts:**

- **Women's Labor & Child Care**

Session leaders: Martha Davis, Northeastern School of Law

- **Health & Reproductive Rights**

Moderator: Ali Miller, Columbia University School of  
Public Health

Session leaders: Dazon Dixon Diallo, SisterLove, Inc.

- **Violence Against Women**

Session leaders: Andrea Smith, Incite! Women of Color  
Against Violence  
Brenda Smith, American University



**5:30 - 7:15 Closing Reception**

[Carter Library and Museum]