

# HUMAN RIGHTS and FOREIGN POLICY

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22-24 June 2020 • London

7th Joint Human Rights Conference

Organized by:

Human Rights Consortium, University of London

Human Rights Section, International Studies Association (ISA)

Human Rights Section, American Political Science Association (APSA)

Standing Group on Human Rights and Transitional Justice, European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR)

We are pleased to announce that abstract submissions will open on 16 September for the seventh joint international conference on human rights, on the theme ***Human Rights and Foreign Policy***, to take place from 22 to 24 June 2020 at the University of London in Bloomsbury, London.

In light of geopolitical rebalancing of power, challenges to human rights from a number of quarters, and waning international support for human rights, the role of human rights in foreign policy requires urgent investigation. For human rights to thrive internationally, states need to support them not only domestically but also in their foreign policies, both in their bilateral relations and multilaterally. Yet, there is significant divergence of practice. Clear challenges appear in the policies of traditional supporters of human rights. This includes actions of the Trump administration on multiple fronts, as well as European states and the EU as a whole. European policy on refugees, for example, severely threatens basic international norms. And UK support for Saudi Arabia even as it carries on a murderous war in Yemen highlights hypocrisy.

Whereas a certain set of middle powers have traditionally been supporters of human rights internationally, and have explicitly incorporated human rights into their foreign policies, emerging powers in the developing world represent a much more diverse set of actors and perspectives on human rights and international institutions which, while providing opportunities for new kinds of engagement, also pose significant challenges.

Much of the work on human rights and foreign policy has focused on one state in particular – the United States – although there is increasing focus on the European Union, and there is clearly a need for much broader investigation and analysis, and broad-based comparative studies are scarce. Thus, an overarching question for the conference is: in 2020, what does foreign policy support for human rights look like?

Potential questions to be addressed during the conference include:

- Are the traditional supporters of human rights internationally changing their support?
- What opportunities and challenges does the emergence of new regional and global powers provide?
- What are the internal and external processes which drive state support (or not) for human rights internationally?
- What theoretical approaches best explain human rights foreign policies?
- How do material and ideational factors influence and shape human rights foreign policies?
- What role do emerging powers play in driving (or constraining) human rights internationally, and what are the similarities and differences between their positions?

- How do we situate international organisation actors like the European Union or the African Union which have some state-like characteristics internationally – or at least have such ambitions?
- What role might sub-state political actors play in supporting human rights internationally?
- How do transnational civil society networks affect state human rights foreign policies?
- Are there divergences between states' bilateral and multilateral human rights policies?
- Can we identify a state of the art in empirical research on human rights-related foreign policy?

We invite both individual paper and full panel proposals which address one or more of the above questions and other questions related to the theme; proposals for other issues related to human rights more generally may also be submitted. Each full panel proposal should include exactly 4 papers plus a chair and discussant. We will also consider roundtables, which should include four participants plus a chair. Please note that we intend to accept relatively few roundtables. Each roundtable proposal should indicate the importance of it being a roundtable rather than a panel and should be directly related to the theme of the conference.

In addition to traditional panels and plenary sessions, the organisers intend to explore less traditional forms of interaction and exchange, such as sessions intended to support teaching and PhD students. Please contact the organisers to discuss potential approaches.

The organisers will explore a variety of potential output mechanisms for work presented at the conference, including a special issue of the International Journal of Human Rights and an edited volume to be used for teaching, potentially in open access format.

**Submissions for abstracts will open on 16 September 2019. The conference website can be found here: <http://bit.ly/hrjc2020>.**

**The deadline for submissions is 11:59pm EST on Friday, 29 November 2019. Notification of acceptances will be sent by e-mail on Friday, 10 January 2020.**

Registration fees for the conference are as follows:

Type of Registration	Early (by 10 February)	Regular (by 25 May)	Late (by 14 June)
General	£180	£200	£230
Student	£100	£110	£125

**All individuals accepted on to the program will be expected to register for the conference by Monday, 10 February 2020.**

The conference will be hosted by the Human Rights Consortium, University of London, in Bloomsbury, one of the most beautiful and vibrant areas of central London.

This conference will be followed by the annual meeting of the Academic Council on the United Nations System, which will be held in London 25-27 June and which will mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations by examining the future of multilateralism. You can find more information here: <https://acuns.org>

Follow us on Twitter @HRjc2020 for updates.

Please direct any questions to the organisers at: [hrjc2020@humanrights.global](mailto:hrjc2020@humanrights.global)

Core Organizing Committee:

Corrine Lennox (Human Rights Consortium)  
 Kurt Mills (University of Dundee)  
 Damian Short (Human Rights Consortium)  
 Daniel Whelan (Hendrix College)

We look forward to welcoming you to London in 2020!