



GLOBAL MINORITY RIGHTS NEWSLETTER

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SPECIAL RAPPOREUR

ON MINORITY ISSUES

Special Rapporteur on minority issues presents report to the Human Rights Council

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Fernand de Varennes, prepared a report for the 40th Session of the Human Rights Council on the work he has carried out since the previous report was issued last year. The report provides an overview of his activities. This includes two country visits to Botswana and Slovenia, as well as ongoing dialogue with Cameroon, India, Jordan, Kenya, Nepal, South Africa, Sudan, Syria, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu to whom he has requested to visit. The Special Rapporteur also indicates in the report that he has sent a total of 51 communications to governments, including letters of allegation and urgent action letters in connection with information about human rights violations perpetrated against national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities. The majority of these communications were sent to states in the Asia-Pacific, Europe, and Central Asia regions.

Raising awareness and the visibility of the human rights of minorities is an important element of the Special

Rapporteur's mandate. As a result, he has taken part in numerous conferences, seminars, meetings, and other awareness-raising events over the past year. These are detailed in the second section of the report.

The third section of the report discusses the continued work the Special Rapporteur has carried out on the topic of statelessness as a minority issue. He plans to convene a group of experts in order to prepare guidelines and good practices on how to tackle the root cause of statelessness.

The report also promotes the new [Minority Forum Info](#) website, created by the [Tom Lantos Institute](#) and the [Human Rights Consortium](#), in order to increase access to and the visibility of important documents of the United Nations Forum on Minority Issues. The website is a searchable, user-friendly resource for all actors working for the protection of minority rights.

Finally, the report provides an update on the 2018 Forum on Minority Issues, which was devoted to the topic of statelessness, as well as conclusions and recommendations based on the work carried out by the Special Rapporteur in the past year.

The report is available on the [website of the Special Rapporteur](#), as well as on [Minority Forum Info](#).

UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues makes a country visit to Spain

Fernand de Varennes, UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues, made a country visit to Spain from 14–25 January, 2019 in order to collect information on the situation of minorities in the country, as well as to identify good practices and areas for improvement.

The Special Rapporteur's visit focused on existing policies for the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities. In particular, he examined the issue of access to quality education, including in minority languages, as well as questions relating to freedom of religion, problems over inclusion and political participation, and the fight against intolerance and hate speech.

The Special Rapporteur included a strong gender perspective, and addressed issues faced by minority women and girls. He also gave attention to vulnerable minorities, such as the Roma, Muslims, and migrants.

During his visit, the Special Rapporteur visited various regions in the country, including Andalusia, Galicia, and the Basque country. He met with officials from different levels of government, as well as representatives of civil society and members of minority communities.

At the conclusion of his visit, on Friday 25 January 2019, the Special Rapporteur shared his preliminary findings and recommendations in a statement made at a news conference at the UNWTO, in Madrid.

The statement summarized his visit to Spain and discussed positive steps and developments made in the country regarding the human rights of minorities. De Varennes identified important cross-cutting themes, include disaggregated data, law enforcement and judicial authorities, the human rights framework, and racism, xenophobia, and hate speech. He also focused his statement on specific minority issues, such as the situation of Roma, minorities, language, and participation, as well as on the deaf community and the use of sign language.

The entire text of his statement is available here on the [website of the Special Rapporteur](#).

A press release about his official visit to Spain is also available [here](#).

UN Special Rapporteur publishes reports following country visits to Botswana and Slovenia

Country visits represent an official element of the work of the Special Rapporteur on minority issues. A country visit requires an official invitation from the relevant government. As part of a country visit, the Special Rapporteur travels to the country and meets with relevant national authorities, including government representatives responsible for minority issues, and members of legislative bodies and the judiciary; UN and other international agencies working in the country; civil society and non-governmental organizations; as well as with minority communities and organizations. The aim of a country visit is to evaluate minority issues in the country concerned, based on the Declaration of the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. Generally two country visits are conducted each year.

In 2018, Special Rapporteur Fernand de Varennes made country visits to Botswana and Slovenia. In early 2019, individual reports on each country were published based on the experience of each country visit. Each report discusses the general context with respect to minority issues, the legal and institutional framework, as well as positive steps and developments towards greater protection of the human rights of minorities. In addition, the reports evaluate challenges to and the implementation of minority rights and makes recommendations on specific issues such as education, political participation, landownership, disaggregated data, and access to health services.

The Botswana and Slovenia reports, as well as country reports from previous years are available on the [website of the Special Rapporteur](#), as well as on [Minority Forum Info](#).





Statement of the Special Rapporteur on International Mother Language Day

International Mother Language Day has been observed since 2000. In conjunction with International Mother Language Day 2019, United Nations Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Fernand de Varennes, issued a statement on the importance of this day for minorities.

“Language is for many one of the essential markers at the core of their identity. It is also a most uniquely human trait, the essential link to our past, the main bond for our cultures, and the essential tool to communicate and share knowledge, memory and history.

The International Mother Language Day on 21 February is observed every year since February 2000 and celebrates all of this and more. This year, celebrating linguistic diversity becomes even more meaningful with the launch on 1 February 2019 by the United Nations’ General Assembly of the International Year of Indigenous Languages.

The event is not simply a “cultural” event, since language issues also involve important human rights matters for both minorities and indigenous peoples beyond

linguistic and cultural matters. Language can also empower people, whereas the absence of education in minority and indigenous languages and the political instrumentalisation of language by state and non-state actors has been a contributing factor to exclusion, discrimination and even violence.

As part of the celebration of the richness and beauty of the world’s linguistic tapestry, it is essential to move away from the ideology that societies and states should only have one language to the exclusion of all others, and in particular when such a perception and practice clashes with the linguistic rights of minorities and indigenous peoples. International Mother Language Day is thus an opportunity to promote and celebrate linguistic and cultural diversity – and to recognise and protect all the human rights of minorities and indigenous peoples relating to language.

Language and education will also be the focus of the 12th Session of the United Nations’ Forum on Minority Issues to take place in Geneva in November 2019, and of the upcoming regional forums to be organised under my mandate as the UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues.”

More information about International Mother Language Day, as well as a statement by the Director-General of UNESCO, can be found on [UNESCO’s website](#).

OTHER

UNITED NATIONS

NEWS

OHCHR submits report to the Human Rights Council on the protection of the human rights of minorities

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) submitted a report to the Human Rights Council on developments in the work of United Nations human rights bodies and on specific strategies and activities adopted by the OHCHR in 2018 aimed at promoting the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities.

The 17-page report discusses activities, relevant visits, and global developments related to the human rights situation of minority groups. The report focuses on specific issues including: early warning mechanisms and protection of minorities, non-discrimination guarantees, the human rights situation of Roma communities, minority youth, empowerment and participation, religious minorities, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, minorities and migration, minorities and statelessness, linguistic rights, and human rights defenders.

Some of the activities and developments highlighted in the report included:

- An international fact-finding mission on Myanmar that found evidence of human rights violations against minorities;
- Promotion by the High Commissioner of the General Assembly's request that Member States draft a declaration on the promotion and the respect of the human rights of people of African descent;

- Observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;
- Advancement of the development of truth and reconciliation processes at the national and European levels to acknowledge the persecution and exclusion of Roma communities;
- Ensuring the participation of young people in decision-making mechanisms, and recognition of the fact that intersecting forms of discrimination affect the ability of young people from minority groups to participate in such processes;
- Comprehensive training and capacity-building of young people from minority communities through the OHCHR Minorities Fellowship Programme;
- Regional workshop in Tunis focusing on the role of young people of different faiths in the promotion of human rights in the Middle East and North Africa;
- Capacity-building activities for various stakeholders in Uganda on human rights indicators and approaches to data in the Sustainable Development Goals;
- Advocacy for the rights of migrants detained in Australian offshore processing centers;
- 11th session of the Forum on Minority Issues, which was focused on statelessness as a minority issue;
- Training workshop in Moldova for Russian-speaking minority journalists on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities;
- Regional human rights defenders security platform meeting in Central Asia.

The full report has been translated into all 6 official languages of the United Nations. It is available on the [website of the OHCHR](#).



18th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The 18th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) will take place from 22 April to 3 May, 2019 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, United States. The theme of the 18th session of the UNPFII is “Traditional knowledge: Generation, transmission and protection.”

The UNPFII is a high-level advisory body to the Economic and Social Council and was established in 2000 in order to address indigenous issues related to the six mandated areas: economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights. As part of its mandate, the UNPFII:

- Provides advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the Council, as well as to programmes, funds, and agencies of the United Nations;
- Raises awareness and promotes the integration

and coordination of activities related to indigenous issues within the UN system;

- Prepares and disseminates information on indigenous issues;
- Promotes respect and the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The agenda for the 18th session of the UNPFII provides for dialogue with indigenous peoples, Member States, and UN agencies, discussion on the session’s theme, as well as a review of the implementation of the six mandated areas listed above. In addition, regional dialogues will be held during the second week of the session with the participation of indigenous peoples, states, UN entities, and national human rights institutions.

NGOs with ECOSOC status and IPOs and academics that have participated at previous sessions of the UNPFII must register by 8 April 2019. New IPOs and academics participating for the first time must register by 25 March 2019. More information about registering for the session and about the UNPFII can be found on the [website of the Permanent Forum](#).

24th Session of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent

The 24th Session of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent was held from 25–29 March, 2019 in Geneva. The theme of the 24th Session was “Data for Racial Justice” The Working Group is currently gathering all available data to prepare a baseline report on the human rights situation of people of African descent. The report will serve as a tool to increase visibility, identify gaps, to form policies and actions to prevent and eradicate racism and discrimination towards people of African descent.

The 24th Session was therefore focused discussing available data on the human rights situation of people of African descent, the idea of “data for racial justice” in relation to people of African descent, reparations for racial justice, racial stereotypes, and about different ways in which data systems can impact visibility, justice, human rights, and the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

More information about the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent and about the 24th Session is available on [their website](#).

98th Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

The 98th Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination will take place in Geneva from April 23 to May 10, 2019. The Committee will review the reports of five States parties during the session: Andorra, Guatemala, Hungary, Lithuania, and Zambia.

Representatives of NGOs are invited to participate in the session as observers but will not be given the opportunity to speak during the Committee’s meetings with member state delegations. However, NGO representatives will have the chance to register for and attend informal meetings, at which they can present country-specific information on the member states being reviewed. NGOs may also request to participate in lunchtime briefings depending on the availability of Committee members.

In addition, the Committee welcomes alternative reports from NGOs in order to supplement its review of the five States parties. Alternative reports should be as specific, reliable, and objective as possible. NGO reports prepared by coalitions rather than individual NGOs are especially welcome.

More information about the session, as well as information for NGOs wishing to participate, is available on the [website of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights](#).

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination will review the reports of five States parties during the 98th session: Andorra, Guatemala, Hungary, Lithuania, and Zambia.

Call for written submissions to the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Dr. Ahmed Shaheed, is preparing a report on antisemitism, which will be submitted to the General Assembly in September 2019. The report is aimed at identifying existing and emerging obstacles to the enjoyment of the right to freedom of religion or belief and making recommendations on ways and means to overcome such obstacles. The Special Rapporteur invites all interested individuals and organizations, including experts, organizations working in the field of antisemitism, representatives of Jewish communities, policymakers, and academics, to provide written submissions to inform the development of the report.

All submissions are welcome, however, the Special Rapporteur is particularly interested in receiving: information on antisemitic incidents, information on laws and policies affecting the right to freedom of religion or belief of Jews, information on state responses to antisemitism, and best practices by non-state actors. All submission will be treated confidentially by the Special Rapporteur and will only be used for the preparation of this report.

Submissions can be sent to submissionsreligion@ohchr.org and srforb@gmail.com until 7 June, 2019. More information related to the call for written submissions can be found on the [website of the Special Rapporteur](#).

The Inclusion, Mobility and Multilingual Education Conference

UNESCO has announced that the 13th Language and Development Conference and the 6th Multilingual Education Conference will be held together in a single event in Bangkok, Thailand on 24–26 September, 2019. The conference will address issues of language, human mobility, multilingual education, and development. The overall aim of the conference is to provide a space for practitioners, NGO staff, researchers and government representatives to explore and exchange on issues of language, inclusion and mobility in education and development.

Online registration for the conference will be open from 1 May to 31 August, 2019. The registration fee is \$160/person for local participants and \$300/person for international participants. The fee covers the conference kit, access to all sessions, morning and afternoon refreshments, and buffet lunches for the three days of the conference. A limited number of scholarships are available for participants who are able to demonstrate their financial need and their ability to bring relevant expertise and diverse perspectives to the conference.

More information and updates about the conference are available on the [conference website](#).

UNESCO has announced that the 13th Language and Development Conference and the 6th Multilingual Education Conference will be held together in a single event in Bangkok, Thailand on 24–26 September, 2019.

REGIONAL

NEWS

OSCE publishes guidelines on national minorities and the media

Media and information and communication technologies are playing an ever greater role in modern society. Media and these technologies offer spaces for inclusive and pluralistic interaction and debate, which allow different groups to interact with each other, explore their identities, and voice diverse perspectives without fear. In turn, this helps to foster dialogue and mutual understanding, and to strengthen societal integration and reduce tensions. Conversely, abuse of the media and information and communication technologies can lead to the spread of misinformation and incite hatred towards various groups.

The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities has therefore published the “Tallinn Guidelines on National Minorities and the Media in the Digital Age” in order to foster the positive use of the media and information technologies to promote intercultural and pluralistic dialogue and debate. The Guidelines provide guidance on how to:

- Operationalize the right to freedom of expression in diverse societies and enable access to a wide range of media and information technologies without discrimination;
- Avoid hostility towards national minorities by refraining from and by countering hate speech, disinformation, propaganda or inflammatory discourse, within or across borders;
- Support and stimulate media and information technologies so that they can better cater for the linguistic, cultural and other needs and interests of national minorities; and
- Create and sustain a favourable environment for pluralistic debate in the digital age in which members of all groups in society can participate.

The Guidelines can be downloaded on the [website of the OSCE](#).

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights publishes annual report for 2018

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has published its annual report for 2018. The report provides a summary of key activities carried out by the OSCE ODIHR in 2018. In particular, the report details activities and developments related to elections, democratization, human rights, tolerance and non-discrimination, and human dimension meetings.

In relation to minority groups, the report discusses the under-reporting of hate crimes among minority populations, the under-representation of minorities in the justice system, raising awareness of discrimination and hate crimes faced by minorities, and building trust between minorities and police.

In addition, the report devotes an entire chapter to the ODIHR’s Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues (CPRSI). In 2018, the CPRSI continued to monitor the human rights situation of Roma and Sinti and worked to increase the participation of Roma and Sinti in public and social life. The CPRSI also published the [ODIHR’s Third Status Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan: For Roma, with Roma](#) to mark the 15th anniversary since the adoption of the “2003 OSCE Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area.”

The full report is available on the [website of the OSCE](#).



OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights issues call for submissions regarding incidents of hate crimes

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) publishes data on hate crimes every year. This data is based on hate crimes reported by governments, civil society, and international organizations in 57 participating states. In order to supplement official data submitted by states, the ODIHR is asking civil society groups to report incidents of hate crimes that took place during 2018.

Submissions should include details of the incident, such as the location, date, and indications that the incident was motivated by bias. Cases of discrimination and hate speech will not be considered. Submissions can be sent via email to tndinfo@odihr.pl. More information about submissions can be found in various languages on the [website of the ODIHR](#).

Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities publishes 4th opinions on Albania, Azerbaijan, Lithuania, and the Russian Federation

The Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities published four country opinions in the first quarter of 2019. The Advisory Committee opinions are part of the 4th monitoring cycle and detail the situation of national minorities in Albania, Azerbaijan, Lithuania and the Russian Federation.

The Advisory Committee is composed of 18 independent experts in the field of the protection of national minorities. The monitoring procedure entails the examination of State Reports and other sources of information, meetings with government representatives, consultations with members of minority communities, as well as interaction with other stakeholders.

The Advisory Committee has also received state reports from Germany, Slovakia, Cyprus, Finland, and Hungary, and has made visits to Finland and Serbia.

The opinions of the Advisory Committee on Armenia, Azerbaijan, Lithuania, and the Russian Federation, as well as all previous opinions on all Member States are available on the [website of the Advisory Committee](#).

Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages publishes 6th report on Germany

In conjunction with its May 2018 visit and dialogue with the German government, civil society, and representatives of linguistic minority communities, the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages has published its 6th report on Germany.

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is a European convention aimed at protecting and promoting the languages used by traditional minorities in member states. Germany's recognized regional and minority languages include Danish, Lower Sorbian, Upper Sorbian, North Frisian, Sater Frisian, Low German, and Romani.

In its report, the Committee of Experts praised several positive initiatives such as equal funding for minority language schools and the use of minority languages in the submission of administrative documents. At the same time, the report called for improvements in education in minority languages, as well as increased use of minority languages in the judicial and administrative fields. The report also called attention to the need for greater use of regional or minority languages in broadcast media.

The Committee of Expert's report is available on the [website of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages](#).

European Parliament issues resolution on the need for strategic EU framework for national Roma inclusion strategies

On February 12, 2019, the European Parliament adopted a resolution "On the need for a strengthened post-2020 Strategic EU Framework for National Roma Inclusion Strategies and stepping up the fight against anti-Gypsyism". The resolution focuses on measures necessary for improving the EU Roma Framework after 2020. These include ensuring a stronger emphasis on non-discrimination and anti-Gypsyism in national Roma integration strategies, and the meaningful involvement of Roma in the development and implementation of such strategies, addressing multiple and intersectional discrimination, and prioritizing Roma children in the implementation of national Roma integration strategies.

The resolution also calls upon member states to recognize anti-Gypsyism as a specific form of racism and to allocate national funding to measures for Roma inclusion and combating anti-Gypsyism. In addition, it underlines the need to include a truth, recognition, and reconciliation process in national strategies in order to build trust and highlight concrete cultural and structural measures supported by public funds.

The full text of the resolution is available on the [website of the European Parliament](#).

The resolution calls upon member states to recognize anti-Gypsyism as a specific form of racism and to allocate national funding to measures for Roma inclusion and combating anti-Gypsyism.



Court of Justice of the European Union rules that European Commission erred by refusing to register the European citizens' initiative aimed at improving the situation of national minority regions

Citizens of the European Union (EU) have the right to submit citizens' initiatives (ECI) to the European Commission inviting them to propose to the EU legislature that it adopt a legal act. Under the EU Treaty, such initiatives must be signed by at least one million EU citizens from at least a quarter of the Member States. Before beginning to collect the required number of signatures, organizers of an ECI must register it with the Commission. The Commission may refuse to register the ECI if its subject matter falls outside the Commission's powers to propose a legal act to the EU legislature.

In June 2013, several organizers proposed an ECI entitled "Cohesion policy for the quality of the regions and sustainability of the regional cultures." The main objective was to enable national minority regions to have access to support, preservation, and development measures in

order to prevent economic disadvantages compared with surrounding regions. The Commission refused to register the proposed ECI, stating that it fell outside its powers to propose a legal act to the EU legislature.

The organizers of the ECI appealed this decision to the Court of Justice of the European Union. The Court ruled that, when the Commission receives an application for registration of a proposed ECI, "it must confine itself to examining whether, from an objective point of view, the measures envisaged in the abstract could be adopted on the basis of the Treaties," thereby setting aside the earlier decision by the Commission.

The full text of the judgement of this case, *Balázs-Árpád and Attila Dabis v Commission*, is available on the [website of the Court of Justice](#).

Call for Participants: European Regional Forum on Minority Issues–Education, Language and the Human Rights of Minorities: Challenges and Opportunities

The European Regional Forum on Minority Issues–Education, Language and the Human Rights of Minorities: Challenges and Opportunities will take place on 6-7 May, 2019 in Brussels, Belgium. The European Regional Forum is part of an initiative by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on minority issues, Fernand de Varennes, to address education and the language of minorities as one of the four thematic priorities of his Human Rights Council mandate. The main aim of the Forum is to provide regional insights for the development of a set of guidelines or a technical handbook focusing on education in, and teaching of, minority languages.

The Forum is open to representatives of states, intergovernmental organizations, national human rights institutions, academics and experts on minority issues, representatives of minorities, and civil society organizations.

Individual participants must register at [this link](#) between 19 March and 15 April 2019.

All travel related-expenses, visas, accommodation and insurances are the responsibility of the participants. However, there is limited funding for a small number of participants, covering their travel, accommodation, subsistence and visas. If you require funding, please submit a request to regionalforum@tomlantosinstitute.hu. Participation at the European Regional Forum is limited to 300 individuals.

For more information, please visit the [website of the Tom Lantos Institute](#).

Call for Papers: Quotas in Higher Education–Histories and Controversies

The Nationalism Studies Program and Jewish Studies Program of the Central European University and the Tom Lantos Institute have issued a call for papers in conjunction with an international conference to examine the history of restrictive ethnic and racial quotas in the first half of the 20th Century and the emergence of affirmative action quotas decades later. The conference will take place from May 18-20, 2020 at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary.

The three-day conference will be divided into three sections. The first will examine the Hungarian context of the “*numerus clausus* law.” The second will examine explicit and “hidden” ethnic quotas as well as other restrictive policies on both sides of the Atlantic in the interwar period. The third will examine the reappearance of quota policies in the 1960s, often with the opposite purpose of encouraging greater participation of ethnic and racial minorities (and at times majorities) in higher education.

This call for papers is aimed at proposals on the historical origins of quotas; the moral, legal and political arguments developed by their supporters and opponents; the domestic and international debates surrounding anti-minority and pro-minority quotas; and the consequences, both intended and unintended, of their implementation. Of particular interest is the role played by the Hungarian “*numerus clausus*”, not only as a model for other restrictive quotas, but also as a touchstone in the larger debates about liberalism, the “Jewish Question”, and the “Refugee Question” in the interwar period.

The papers will be published in a peer-reviewed conference volume. Those interested should submit a paper abstract (300 words) and a one-paragraph bio to kissp@ceu.edu by May 15, 2019.

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights presents the results of its special follow-up mechanisms in 2018

In 2016, as part of efforts to make the Inter-American System of Human Rights (IASHR) more effective, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) established special mechanisms to follow up on the implementation of its recommendations. This represented an innovative development in the field of international human rights law. To date, the IACHR has established four special mechanisms: the Special Follow-Up Mechanism on the Ayotzinapa Case (MESA), the Working Group on the Implementation of Public Human Rights Policies in the Dominican Republic, the Special Follow-Up Mechanism for Nicaragua (MESENI), and the Special Follow-Up Team (ESE).

According to Paulo Abrão, the Executive Secretary of the IACHR, “the Commission seeks to help the countries in the region comply with their international obligations and implement its recommendations in light of Inter-American human rights norms and standards. The IACHR’s mechanisms for following up on its recommendations are a novel and effective way of achieving these ends.”

The IACHR believes that the special follow-up mechanisms provide a more holistic analysis of its decisions and recommendations, give the international community access to up-to-date information on the specific cases, create dialogue with the parties concerned, and help to reach effective solutions. An overview of the results achieved by these special follow-up mechanisms in 2018 was presented by the IACHR. More detailed information is available on the [IACHR’s website](#).

Launch of the Second Volume of the African Human Rights Yearbook

The African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights (African Court), the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (African Commission), and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (African Children’s Rights Committee) jointly initiated the African Human Rights Yearbook as a means of engaging with African scholars and other actors working on issues related to the adoption, application, interpretation and implementation of the human rights laws and norms of the African Union.

The first edition of the African Human Rights Yearbook was published in 2017. The second edition furthers the objective of the Yearbook and expands upon the scope of the first publication. The 2018 edition contains 21 articles, divided into three distinct sections. The first section contains academic articles on various aspects of the general human rights situation in Africa, with particular reference to the African human rights system, its norms and institutions. The second section is devoted to fighting corruption, the African Union’s central focus for 2018. 2018 was declared the ‘African Year of Anti-Corruption’ by the governments of the African Union, with the theme ‘Winning the Fight against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa’s Transformation’. Thus, the academic discussions found in this section of the Yearbook complement this focus of the African Union’s work in 2018. The third section of the 2018 Yearbook examines the case law of the three African Union human rights bodies: the African Court, the African Commission, and the African Children’s Rights Committee.

More information about the Yearbook and the launch of the second volume can be found [here](#).

New handbook co-edited by the Special Rapporteur on minority issues now available

Co-edited by Fernand de Varennes, the UN Special Rapporteur on minority issues, and Christie M. Gardiner, the Routledge Handbook on Human Rights in Asia examines the human rights situation in Asia and the challenges faced by the most vulnerable groups in the region. The Handbook discusses human rights violations and their underlying causes

in a range of contexts, and provides recommendations and justifications for reforms based on lessons learned from global, regional, and local initiatives. The book’s 23 chapters covers a wide range of issues and discusses human rights institutions and norms in Asia.

The Handbook is divided into 6 sections devoted to the following

topics: -Strengthening Human Rights Institutions -Participation and Exclusion -The Private Sector -Security and Conflict -Trafficking, Displacement, and Citizenship -Age, Identity, and Sexuality

More information about the Handbook, as well as options for purchasing it can be found on the website of Routledge.

UPCOMING

EVENTS

22 April to 3 May, 2019

New York, USA

18th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

23 April to 10 May, 2019

Geneva, Switzerland

98th Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

6-7 May, 2019

Brussels, Belgium

European Regional Forum on Minority Issues: Education, Language and the Human Rights of Minorities

6-7 June, 2019

Central European University, Budapest, Hungary

The Post-1989 Springtime of National Minorities? Minority Mobilization, Human Rights Activism and the Accommodation of Ethnocultural Diversity in Central, Eastern, and Southeast Europe

24-26 September, 2019

Bangkok, Thailand

Inclusion, Mobility and Multilingual Education Conference

The Tom Lantos Institute (TLI) is an independent human and minority rights organisation with a particular focus on Jewish and Roma communities, and on Hungarian and other ethnic or national, linguistic and religious minorities. It is a Budapest-based organisation with a multi-party Board of Trustees, an international Executive Committee, and Advisory Board. TLI operates internationally in terms of scope, funding, staff and partners. As a research and education platform, TLI aims to bridge the gaps between research and policy, norms and practice. TLI focuses on human rights and identity issues in general, and also works on three specific issue areas. These include: Jewish life and antisemitism; Roma rights and citizenship; and Hungarian minorities.

CONTACT US

The Global Minority Rights Newsletter is a publication of the Tom Lantos Institute that gathers recent information about normative developments, events, and other opportunities related to the institutional frameworks and mechanisms for the protection of the human rights of minorities.

The Newsletter is published quarterly and is available in electronic format.

For more information, or if you have any submissions or feedback, please contact Marcus Oda at marcus.oda@tomlantosinstitute.hu.

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