



HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTE



NATIONAL LAW CENTER  
ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY



## ENGAGING WITH UN SPECIAL PROCEDURES TO ADVANCE U.S. SOCIAL JUSTICE

FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 2016  
9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

### CO-SPONSORS:

Columbia Law School Human Rights Institute  
American Civil Liberties Union  
National Economic and Social Rights Initiative  
Center for Reproductive Rights  
National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty

### HOST:

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP  
4 Times Square, New York, NY

### AGENDA

**9:00 – 9:30 A.M. – REGISTRATION AND COFFEE**

**9:30 – 9:45 A.M. – WELCOMING REMARKS**

- Risa Kaufman, Executive Director, Columbia Law School Human Rights Institute

**9:45 – 10:30 A.M. – INTRODUCTORY KEYNOTE REMARKS**

- Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, and Executive Director, Canada Without Poverty

Introduced by: Cathy Albisa, Executive Director, National Economic and Social Rights Initiative

## **10:30 – 11:20 A.M. SESSION I: OVERVIEW OF THE UN SPECIAL PROCEDURES MECHANISM**

*This introductory panel will provide an overview of the UN Special Procedures mechanism, including its history, functions, and relative advantages and challenges.*

Panelists:

- Ted Piccone, Senior Fellow, Brookings Institute
- Madeleine Sinclair, New York Office Director and Legal Counsel, International Service for Human Rights
- Rob Robinson, Leadership Committee, Take Back the Land movement; staff volunteer, National Economic and Social Rights Initiative

Moderator: Rebecca Brown, Director of Global Advocacy, Center for Reproductive Rights

## **11:20 – 11:30 A.M. BREAK**

## **11:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M. SESSION II. STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT**

*Panelists in this session will discuss strategies for effective engagement with the Special Procedures mechanism, including formal methods of communications, thematic reports, and country visits, as well as the more informal methods of academic engagement and informal country visits. This session will also explore the ways in which the U.S. government engages with the mechanism.*

Panelists:

- Deena Hurwitz, Visiting Professor of Law, Interim Director, International Human Rights Law Clinic, American University Washington College of Law (AY 2015-2016)
- Amol Mehra, Director, International Corporate Accountability Roundtable
- Justin Hansford, Assistant Professor of Law, Saint Louis University School of Law; Co-Chair, Human Rights Committee for the Society of American Law Teachers
- Thea Gelbspan, Membership and Solidarity Director, ESCR-Net
- Amanda Jessen, Foreign Affairs Officer, U.S. Department of State

Moderator: June Zeitlin, Director of Human Rights Policy, The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

## **1:00 – 1:15 P.M. BREAK**

## **1:15 – 2:15 P.M. LUNCH & KEYNOTE CONVERSATION**

*In this keynote conversation, the UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment will reflect on challenges and opportunities related to advocacy with the UN Special Procedures, including complementarity with the UN treaty bodies, the UPR, and the IACHR; federalism challenges; and implementation and follow-up.*

Conversation between:

- Juan Mendez, UN Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and
- Steven Watt, Senior Staff Attorney, ACLU Human Rights Program

Introduced by: JoAnn Ward, Associate Director, Columbia Law School Human Rights Institute's Human Rights in the U.S. Project

**2:15 – 2:30 P.M. BREAK**

**2:30 – 3:45 P.M. SESSION III. LEVERAGING SUCCESSES AND IMPACT**

*Participants on this panel will explore ways in which advocates have successfully leveraged engagement with the UN Special Procedures to advance state, local, and national level advocacy on discrete issues, including through policy advocacy, engagement with the Inter-American system, and media and communications. The session will explore the particular importance of partnership with communities in developing advocacy strategies and leveraging the impact of UN engagement.*

**Panelists:**

- Amy Fettig, Associate Director, ACLU National Prison Project
- Colin Bailey, Executive Director, The Environmental Justice Coalition for Water
- Eric Tars, Senior Attorney, National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty
- Katrina Anderson, Interim Director, U.S. Human Rights and Foreign Policy, Center for Reproductive Rights

Moderator: Cindy Soohoo, Director, Human Rights and Gender Justice Clinic, City University of New York Law School

**3:45 – 4:00 P.M. CLOSING REMARKS**

- Ejim Dike, Executive Director, U.S. Human Rights Network

**INFORMATION REGARDING NEW YORK CLE CREDITS:** Columbia Law School has been certified by the New York State Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Board as an Accredited Provider of CLE programs. Under New York State CLE regulations, this live non-transitional CLE Program will provide 5.5 credit hours that can be applied toward the Areas of Professional Practice requirement. CLE credit is awarded only to New York attorneys for full attendance of the Program in its entirety. Attorneys attending only part of a Program are not eligible for partial credit for it, although they are most welcome to attend it. Attendance is determined by an attorney's sign-in and sign-out, as shown in the Conference registers. On sign-out, attorneys should also submit their completed Evaluation Form, provided at the conference. Please note the NYS Certificates of Attendance will be sent to the email address as it appears in the register unless otherwise noted there.

Persons seeking a hardship scholarship should register using the online form and then separately complete their registration by submitting a scholarship request, no later than May 31, 2016, to Randi Aho (randi.aho@law.columbia.edu). Requests, which will be answered, should detail in a few sentences the basis of the applicant's need and the background to his or her interest. Please understand that without a complete scholarship request, the applicant may be notified that the scholarship registration has been cancelled.