

On the Frontlines of Global Justice

Essex Human Rights Centre Clinic Annual Conference

📅 3 June 2025 | 🕒 2–5pm | 🌐 Hybrid (STEM 3.1, University of Essex)



AGENDA

2:00-2:10: introduction to the Essex HRC Clinic (Dr Sabina Garahan, Clinic Director)

2:10-2:50: presentation of 2024-25 Clinic projects

Module-based projects:

- Project 1: Amnesty International – Understanding the impact and outcomes of strategic litigation in the home state of transnational corporations
- Project 2: Center for Justice Governance and Environmental Action (CJGEA) – Environmental rights for a just energy transition in Kenya
- Project 3: Global Survivors Fund – Reparations Praxis Hub
- Project 4: Survival International – International human rights of uncontacted tribes/peoples
- Project 5: WIEGO – Making ILO Convention 189 real for domestic workers in the Caribbean

Multi-year projects:

- Project 6: UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention – Arbitrary Detention Redress Unit (ADRU)

Other projects:

- Digital Verification Unit (Amnesty International)

2:50-3:20: insights from current and former partner organisations

- Sophie Grig, Asia Campaigns Director, Survival International
- Fernando Ribeiro Delgado, Strategic Litigation Programme Lead, ESCR-Net
- Dr Matthew Gillett, Vice-Chair Rapporteur, UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention

3:20-3:30: break

3:30-4:30: presentations from Clinic alumni

- Ricardo Villalobos Fontalvo, Coordinator of Research and International Advocacy, Aula Abierta, Venezuela
- Nataly Santana Sánchez, Head of the Department of Follow-Up of International Treaties on Gender Equality, Ministry of Women of the Dominican Republic
- Noura Shawki, Regional Legal Adviser for the ICRC, Cairo
- Zuzanna Wójciak, Program Consultant, WITNESS
- Vanessa Topp, PhD candidate at Essex Human Rights Centre

4:30-4:45: presentation of 2025-26 Clinic projects and new multi-year project (BHRU)

Module-based projects:

- Project 1: Amnesty International – Resisting foreign agent laws and the shrinking of civic space
- Project 2: Lancet Commission on Global Gun Violence and Health – Tackling online and influencer glamorisation of gun violence
- Project 3: International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) – International accountability for incommunicado detention in China
- Project 4: Adequate Housing Clinic (Universidad Iberoamericana) and Indigenous Peoples' Rights Clinic (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)) – Recovering the indigenous city: the right to adequate housing and lands of indigenous peoples in Mexico City

- Project 5: Index on Censorship – Investigating the weaponisation of travel bans by authoritarian regimes

Multi-year projects:

- Project 6: UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention – Arbitrary Detention Redress Unit (ADRU)
- Project 7: RAID (Rights and Accountability in Development) – Business and Human Rights Unit (BHRU)

Other projects:

- Digital Verification Unit (Amnesty International)

4:45-4:55: presentation of ad hoc projects (Professor Carla Ferstman, Director, Essex Human Rights Centre)

- Combatting sexual exploitation and abuse within the United Nations – UN Office of the Special Coordinator on Improving the UN Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OSCSEA)
- Criminalisation of NGO activities in Member States of the Council of Europe, particularly in the context of humanitarian efforts targeting refugees and other migrants – Council of Europe Expert Council on NGO Law
- The Role of Academic Freedom in the Promotion of Equality and Non-Discrimination in the Higher Education Sphere – Aula Abierta

4:55-5:00: closing remarks (Dr Sabina Garahan, Clinic Director)

5:00-5:30: Q&A with the Clinic Director (optional)