



University of Essex



# ESSEX

## HOME OF HUMAN RIGHTS



## Stepping up to the challenge

In the twenty-first century a range of global challenges which are unprecedented, in scale and complexity, threaten stability, peace, justice and equality.



A great movement of people forced out of their homes through conflict, discrimination and poverty is causing extreme human suffering. Our rights and systems of government are being challenged by advancing computational technologies with the potential to disrupt democracy. Human trafficking and modern slavery remain an unacceptable part of life. Across the globe, and in almost every region, inequality is increasing, permeating every aspect of daily life and affecting fundamental rights of access to justice, health and education. All of these issues challenge our understanding of what it means to be human in a rapidly changing and often hostile world.

addressing these global challenges with comprehensive intellectual rigour and a practical focus to our work.

### Advancing human rights

We seek to deepen understanding of the complex realities of contemporary threats to human rights, as well as harnessing opportunities to advance the realisation of universal human rights locally and globally. At Essex, promoting human rights and social justice includes patrolling the sharp edge of human interaction, deepening our understanding of universally shared rights, freedoms and the values that make us human, putting theory into action, and providing a training ground for the human rights advocates and defenders of the future.

### A broader understanding

At the University of Essex we believe solutions to enduring and emerging human rights problems need to be based on a broader understanding, not just of human rights law but of legal, social, political, economic, technological and environmental perspectives. Home to one of the world's oldest human rights centres, we are uniquely placed to deliver this, through our scholarly and practitioner communities,

We are keen to work with partners across the world who share our commitment to making the world a better place.

PROFESSOR ANTHONY FORSTER  
VICE-CHANCELLOR

In 2010 Essex received a Queen's Anniversary Prize for advancing human rights across the globe

# THE ESSEX HUMAN RIGHTS ECO SYSTEM

Our quality and breadth of expertise, commitment to putting theory into action and support for training the next generation of scholars and activists, makes us a world leader in the field of human rights research, practice and education.

## Working together

Interdisciplinary interaction between world-class researchers, policymakers and activists lies at the heart of addressing the most pressing issues.

## Expertise

We have over 100 scholars from 11 academic disciplines working on human rights, giving us a unique set of interdisciplinary expertise.

## Theory into practice

We are committed to putting theory into practice: our work encompasses civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, in times of peace, instability, and in conflict and post-conflict environments.

## Global profile

The world turns to our University for training and support. We advise the United Nations (UN), governments and international organisations like Amnesty International. Our alumni advance rights around the world through their advocacy.

## Pioneering education

We integrate theory and practice into education at undergraduate, postgraduate and professional development levels. Our students can apply what they have learned through internships and placements in leading human rights organisations.



## Research

We apply our intellectual expertise to address enduring and emerging human rights issues which impact daily life.

- Our business and human rights research helps protect communities affected by poor human rights practices of corporations.
- We lead the UK's most comprehensive study analysing the human rights and democratic implications of big data, artificial intelligence and new technologies.
- We have established centres committed to protecting the rights of distinct groups including prisoners, migrants and refugees.
- Our Essex Autonomy Project advances the rights of people with disabilities.

Photo credit: Detail of Marcelo Brodsky, from Buena Memoria, 1st year, 6th division, Class Photo, 1967, 1996, © Marcelo Brodsky. Image © ESCALA



## Practice

Stepping out of the classroom and into the field working with the global community is in our DNA.

- Our lawyers have a long-term commitment to litigating at the European Court of Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.
- Our Transitional Justice Network works with governments and civil society to achieve sustainable peace and seek reparation after conflict.
- We protect refugee rights by advising and training local, national and international bodies.
- We help the human rights community set global standards through capacity building, workshops and expert meetings.



## Education

We're the 'go-to' global training ground for the next generation of human rights practitioners.

- We host one of the world's first taught postgraduate degrees in human rights law and have just launched a new international humanitarian law degree.
- We offer a suite of interdisciplinary and practice-focused undergraduate and taught postgraduate degrees and PhDs.
- We are home to a multidisciplinary Essex summer school which attracts delegates from around the world.
- We have graduates from over 100 countries - many in senior positions at global human rights organisations.
- We have a tradition of training, hosting and supporting UN independent experts.

## How we came to be home to human rights

In 1983 the world was divided by the Cold War, and apartheid in South Africa cruelly denied millions of people their basic human rights. Impatient for change and committed to making the world a better place, our academics founded the Centre for International Human Rights Law.

We had already launched our *LLM International Human Rights Law* – the first degree of its kind in the UK and one of the first in the world – the year before and quickly established ourselves as a leader in the protection and promotion of human rights.

### Creating a multidisciplinary centre

By 1990 the world was a different place and our academic community responded by forging a multidisciplinary alliance in a new Human Rights Centre and launching our *MA Theory and Practice of Human Rights*.

Over the last 30 years the impact of our interdisciplinary approach has ensured we are globally-recognised for our theoretical work that translates into practice. Today, members of our Human Rights Centre each bring fresh approaches to the theory, education and practice of human rights from disciplines including law, philosophy,

### In the post-Cold War era the world saw

*“a recovery of the spirit and even the idealism of the early days of the United Nations, a conviction that the world could make real progress towards genuine commitment to advancing standards and improving lives.”*

PROFESSOR KEVIN BOYLE, 1943-2010,  
A FOUNDING FATHER OF OUR  
HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE

sociology, computer science, politics, economics, criminology and the arts. In 2010 our commitment to human rights was recognised by Her Majesty The Queen with a Queen's Anniversary Prize.

### Some milestones in brief

1982	1983	1990	1997	2007	2010	2016
LLM INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW LAUNCHED	CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW FOUNDED	CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW BECOMES HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE	NELSON MANDELA VISITS OUR UNIVERSITY WITH GRAÇA MACHEL	STUDENTS FIRST 'CHALK THE STEPS' WITH UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS	ESSEX AWARDED QUEEN'S ANNIVERSARY PRIZE	LANDMARK STUDY OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND BIG DATA LAUNCHED

**“This is a very famous university that has been involved in the fight for human rights around the world”**

NELSON MANDELA,  
ON CAMPUS IN 1997

## Putting theory into practice

Our scholarly community has never only been content with the pursuit of academic excellence. Our academics strive to find solutions for real-world problems.

We have pioneered putting theory into practice by litigating, serving with international organisations, advising NGOs and governments, and providing consultancy and training.

### Shaping the Mandela Rules

Our detention experts helped shape universal standards for the way prisoners are treated across the world.

In 2015 the UN adopted an updated set of international standards. The Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners – now known as the Nelson Mandela Rules – had not been updated since they were drafted in 1957.

Professor Lorna McGregor and the late Professor Sir Nigel Rodley (opposite), working with Penal Reform International, played a critical role. Taking a new approach, they brought international experts together for two meetings at which they collectively made concrete proposals to review the Nelson Mandela Rules in line with developments in human rights and criminal justice. Of their recommendations, 62% were fully incorporated with a further 13.5% partly incorporated.

Olivia Rope, Policy and Programme Manager at Penal Reform International, said: “The first two Essex papers were instrumental in our advocacy work to ensure that the Rules were updated in line with human rights standards. Their impact is clear with many of the proposals reflected in the Nelson Mandela Rules.”



*“With their drive, their talent and the tools that we give them, our students are going to change the world.”*

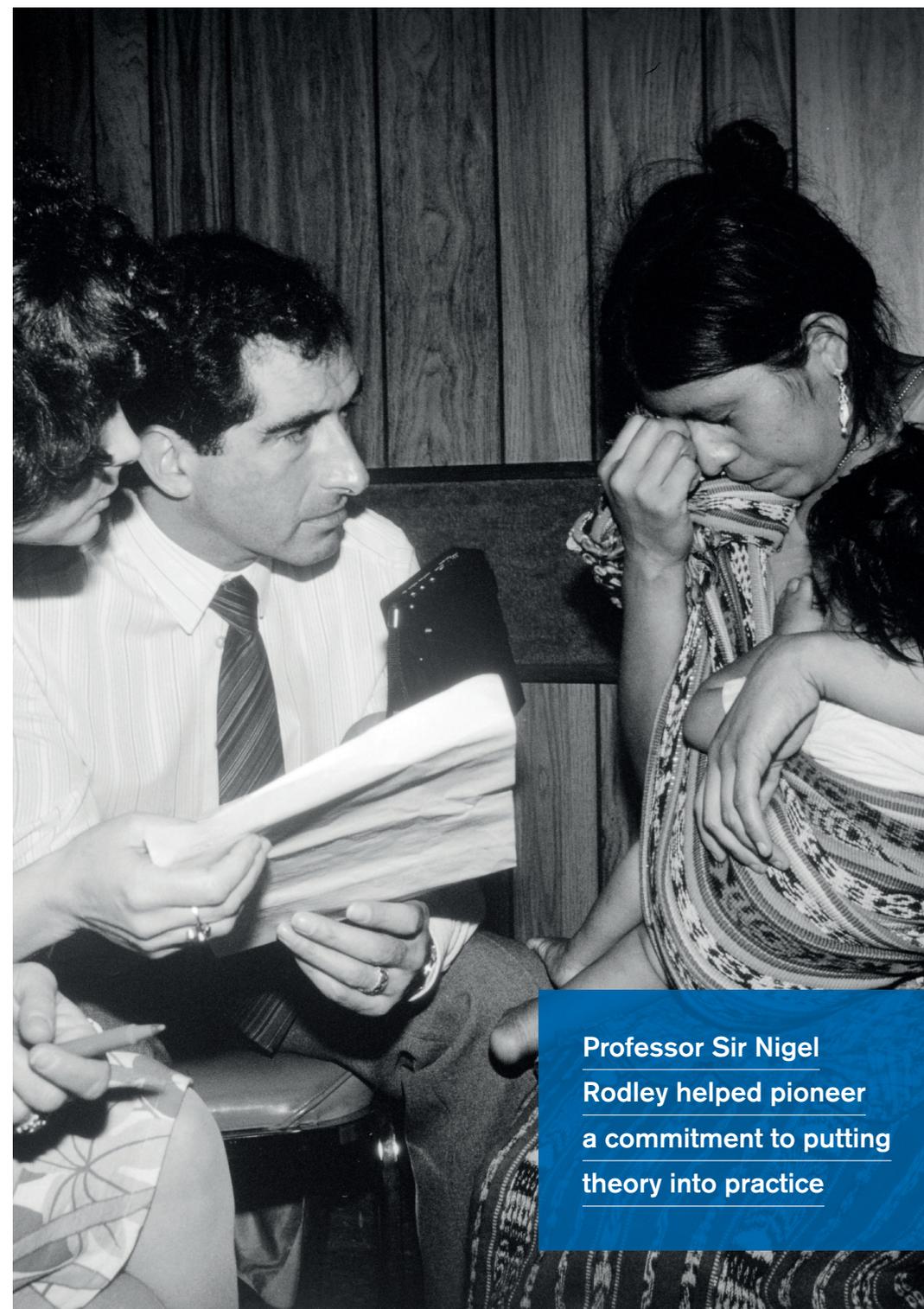
DR PATRICIA PALACIOS ZULOAGA,  
HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE CLINIC DIRECTOR

### Human Rights Centre Clinic

We aim to instil in students our commitment to practice and our Clinic provides the perfect training ground. Postgraduates work on projects, with partners like Amnesty International. Students have:

- Digitally verified images of violations captured on phones, helping to document atrocities.
- Provided indicators to measure Colombian state compliance with economic, social and cultural rights.
- Directly informed a UN report on freedom of religion and measures taken in the name of national security.

© Jean-Marie Simon/Amnesty International



**Professor Sir Nigel Rodley helped pioneer a commitment to putting theory into practice**

# SHAPING GLOBAL DEBATES ON MENTAL HEALTH

We all like feeling we can take decisions for ourselves, but this ideal of self-determination, sometimes known as autonomy, can often come under pressure.

## Shaping global debates on our rights

If you're living with a serious psychiatric illness, a brain injury, a disability or deteriorating physical health, supporting and preserving your autonomy can become incredibly complex for those responsible for your care.

Doctors, nurses, social workers and service users plus lawyers and policymakers are collaborating with our academics from the Essex Autonomy Project (EAP) to find ways to protect personal autonomy in these difficult circumstances.

This is having an impact on the legal framework in the UK and beyond while also helping frontline staff deal with complex situations.

## Respecting autonomy, providing the right support

This interdisciplinary work includes looking at compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This international treaty is seen as a vital step towards realising the right of disabled people to be treated as full and equal citizens.

Members of the EAP team supported the UK Ministry of Justice's review of the Mental Capacity Act's compliance with the UN Convention. The EAP was then asked to assess compliance across the UK's three jurisdictions of England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland - collaborating with



*"We're finding ourselves shaping the global discussion on mental health reform. There is an international debate happening about law reform and how to achieve compliance with the UN Convention and we're helping people chart a course through the issues they are facing."*

PROFESSOR WAYNE MARTIN, DIRECTOR OF EAP

experts from Edinburgh Napier University, leading law firms and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

Professor Wayne Martin said: "We brought people around the table, people with very differing views, and helped bring clarity to the issues and encouraged a consensus to emerge."

The EAP was initially funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and now receives funding from the Economic and Social Research Council, Wellcome Trust and the British Academy.

[▶ \[HTTPS://AUTONOMY.ESSEX.AC.UK/\]\(https://autonomy.essex.ac.uk/\)](https://autonomy.essex.ac.uk/)



ESSEX FACTS

3

DECADES

OF CUTTING-EDGE ACADEMIC AND POLICY RESEARCH ADDRESSING A RANGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

# THE HUMAN COST OF DOING BUSINESS

From gold mines polluting rivers used by communities to child labour in the fashion supply chain, in today's globalised world the products we buy may support human rights abuses. Essex experts are at the forefront of improving business accountability.

The Essex Business and Human Rights Project (EBHR) brings experts from various disciplines together to provide companies, governments and human rights campaigners around the world with practical advice on protecting human rights.

## Human rights in global supply chains

Modern supply chains are hugely complex. They can involve hundreds of companies operating around the world under very different legal regimes.

Abuses in supply chains range from low wages and workplace discrimination, slavery, child labour and unsafe conditions, to complicity in war crimes.

Which companies can be held accountable? What responsibilities do companies have when they enter into contracts with suppliers?

Dr Anil Yilmaz-Vastardis and Professor Sheldon Leader provide ground-breaking legal guidance for businesses, governments, and human rights lawyers and campaigners. Several of our recommendations have been submitted in a current case before the German courts.

## Our impact

- We analysed Afghanistan's draft mining law on behalf of Global Witness. Our advice informed the revisions to the government's bill.
- We reported on the potential liabilities of the Shell Group parent company and its Nigerian



*"Our work bridges the gap between the law and the economic and social realities of global production networks, providing practical guidance grounded in existing legal principles."*

DR ANIL YILMAZ-VASTARDIS, ESSEX BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT

subsidiary for oil spills in the Niger Delta, providing Shell investors with the questions they should ask about the situation.

- We trained members of Uganda's parliament to obtain human rights protection undertakings from companies in extractive industries applying for concessions.
- Together with Amnesty International UK we negotiated the first legally binding Human Rights Undertaking governing an international investment: BP's operation of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline.

► [WWW.ESEX.AC.UK/EBHR](http://WWW.ESEX.AC.UK/EBHR)



## ESSEX FACTS

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POSTGRADUATE COURSE IN INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW IN THE UK WAS LAUNCHED BY ESSEX IN 1982

# HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The twenty-first century has heralded a fourth industrial revolution underpinned by digital technologies, artificial intelligence and the generation of massive amounts of personal data. But who is using our data? And could it be a force for good?

How the world responds to this new technological age is right at the cutting-edge of global human rights interests.

Our Human Rights, Big Data and Technology Project, launched in 2015, is the first major project to explore how we secure human rights in this digital world.

## The pros and cons

We research whether big data, smart technology and artificial intelligence offer gains for human rights. For example, by helping to direct health services to marginalised groups, respond more effectively to humanitarian crisis and support the right of persons with disabilities to live independently in the community.

However, our research shows that uses of big data, smart technology and artificial intelligence can also pose serious risks to human rights, including, but not only, privacy. Already these technologies are used to predict who is more likely to commit a crime – even before it's happened – threatening the right to liberty.

The human rights consequences of the use of big data, smart technology and artificial intelligence are pervasive, but not fully understood. We are working to understand how we can ensure that technology can be harnessed to protect rights, while at the same time protecting against negative human rights implications.



*"By tracking and monitoring our behaviour and activities, smartphones build a digital profile of shockingly intimate information about our personal lives."*

VIVIAN NG AND CATHERINE KENT,  
WRITING FOR THE CONVERSATION

## Our multidisciplinary team of 37 researchers have led the debate:

- Our work was presented at key conferences in India, Ireland, Mexico, Switzerland and Canada.
- Our researchers regularly speak at key meetings and contribute to expert consultations at the UN.
- We made evidence submissions to the Home Affairs Select Committee, the Science and Technology Committee on Algorithms in Decision-Making and the Select Committee on Artificial Intelligence.

The Human Rights, Big Data and Technology Project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.  
▶ [WWW.HRBDT.AC.UK](http://WWW.HRBDT.AC.UK)

## ESSEX FACTS

TOP  
25

FOR RESEARCH QUALITY  
IN THE TIMES AND THE  
SUNDAY TIMES GOOD  
UNIVERSITY GUIDE 2018

## Exposing new perspectives

Working with Essex graduates while at REDRESS and at the International Bar Association exposed Professor Lorna McGregor to our commitment to theory and practice long before she joined our community. She explains why Essex is uniquely-placed to tackle the challenges facing human rights.

"Every day, the news is filled with human rights stories: over-crowding and unsafe prisons; the situation faced by refugees and internally-displaced people; the effects of austerity policies; and the far-reaching consequences of big data and artificial intelligence.

"These stories sit alongside pushback and a dismissal of the importance of human rights."

### The challenge ahead

"Our challenge is to protect the international human rights law framework and ensure states and businesses meet their obligations, not only by enacting laws but by embedding human rights within their policies and practices.

"We must demonstrate the centrality of human rights to resolving problems and to each individual and community's everyday life."

### The Essex approach

"At Essex, we're working hard to be part of bringing about change, at an international, national and local level.

"Linking the theory and practice of human rights has always been extremely important to me. When I decided to become a full-time academic Essex was the obvious choice. It gave me the chance to work with so many of the international leaders in human rights, taking exactly that approach.

"Our human rights team in the School of Law continues to grow and is matched by a depth and range of human rights expertise across so many departments. For a university, I think that is unparalleled."

### An enlightening experience

"Working in interdisciplinary teams, such as the ESRC-funded Human Rights and Big Data Technology Project, is incredibly enlightening, exciting and challenging. I am constantly exposed to critical and innovative thinking and new perspectives.

"The law alone is not enough to address the human rights problems we face today. For me, our interdisciplinary environment is the stand-out feature of Essex."

Professor McGregor is Director of our Human Rights Centre, Principal Investigator on our pioneering ESRC Human Rights, Big Data and Technology Project, and has served as a Commissioner on the Equality and Human Rights Commission.



**"The law alone is not enough to address the human rights problems we face today"**

**LORNA MCGREGOR, DIRECTOR OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE**

# STRIVING TO END INEQUALITY

Queues at food banks, young people unable to buy a home, and lower life expectancy in post-industrial towns are signals that inequalities of wealth and opportunity between classes, regions and generations persist. Ours is a community committed to changing that.

## Influencing the UK agenda

Professor Paul Hunt is one of nine experts appointed by Scotland's First Minister to a new Advisory Group on Human Rights Leadership aiming to ensure human rights, equality and dignity are placed at the heart of public policy.



*"Social rights have the potential to emancipate and empower disadvantaged individuals and communities. Today, they have currency in many countries, but not in these islands where they are shamefully and inexcusably neglected. One of my responsibilities is to ensure social rights are taken seriously."*

PROFESSOR PAUL HUNT

## Closing pay gaps

For almost three decades researchers at our world-leading Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) have collected data on social and economic

circumstances, attitudes, behaviours and health, providing policymakers with essential evidence of changing lives.

Our studies revealed the intricate complexities of pay gaps helping to establish a framework for reporting gender pay gaps.

The findings by Dr Malcolm Brynin and Dr Simonetta Longhi, which looked at ethnicity and disability as well as gender pay gaps, were published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

An examination of the findings by The Institute for Employment Studies resulted in a number of recommendations including the need for employers to improve equality monitoring, and better guidance for employers on analysing and presenting pay gap information.

Sue Coe, Programme Head at the Equality and Human Rights Commission, said: "The causes of pay gaps are complex. ISER has been instrumental in helping us to pinpoint the key drivers and size of the gender, disability and race pay gaps which we hope will in turn kick start action plans to close them."

ISER is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

► [WWW.ISER.ESSEX.AC.UK](http://WWW.ISER.ESSEX.AC.UK)



## ESSEX FACTS

OVER  
**100,000**

PEOPLE FROM 40,000 HOUSEHOLDS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO OUR LONGITUDINAL HOUSEHOLD PANEL STUDY UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY – ONE OF THE LARGEST SUCH STUDIES IN THE WORLD

# PROTECTING RIGHTS AT HOME

The fire in the Grenfell tower block is a national tragedy with devastating repercussions for its residents and neighbouring communities. It is also a vivid illustration of the real-world impact of complex issues of accountability, complaints handling, the state's role in ensuring welfare and safety, cuts to local authority budgets, and public service decision-making.

It is an illustration of the importance of administrative justice and its relevance to people and their ability to challenge government and other public bodies.

## What is administrative justice?

At its core, administrative justice is about how government and public bodies treat people, the correctness of their decisions, the fairness of their procedures and the opportunities for redress when things go wrong.

Administrative justice directly affects more people than either the criminal or civil justice systems. It is critical to the protection of fundamental rights with respect to issues of everyday importance such as housing, education, health care, immigration, planning, social security and taxation.

## Shaping research and policy

Essex is home to the UK Administrative Justice Institute (UKAJI) – a national community of researchers and professionals who seek to ensure that policy making is based on sound empirical evidence in order to uphold fairness, equality and human rights.

UKAJI develops and uses research to understand how the many systems of administrative justice operate, how people experience those systems and the implications of reforms.



*“Research in administrative justice is not well coordinated; essential data on how things are working is unavailable or inaccessible; and research does not always have the real-world impact it should. Our work is changing that.”*

PROFESSOR MAURICE SUNKIN, PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR, UKAJI

The austerity agenda, reforms to the justice system, developments in the use of new technologies and constitutional changes such as devolution make the landscape more challenging than ever. In 2018 UKAJI published its research roadmap showing how research can provide solutions and Principal Investigator Professor Maurice Sunkin was appointed a QC *Honoris Causa* by Her Majesty The Queen.

The first phase of the UKAJI was funded by the Nuffield Foundation and a follow-on phase is funded by the University of Essex.

► [HTTPS://UKAJI.ORG/](https://ukaji.org/)

## ESSEX FACTS

# 3

UN SPECIAL  
RAPPORTEURS  
HAVE BEEN  
BASED AT ESSEX  
SINCE 1993

TELL THE  
TRUTH  
GRENFELL

## Standing on the shoulders of giants

Dr Ahmed Shaheed, UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, was drawn to human rights after seeing his country, the Maldives, torn apart by political repression and social exclusion. Here, he explains why Essex is so important in the global fight for human rights.

"The Essex Human Rights Centre has a global reputation for expertise in the full range of human rights, working on international, national and community level challenges and cutting-edge research.

"Its interdisciplinary approach to human rights and the focus on theory and practice are key features that make Essex very attractive to a UN Special Rapporteur whose roles include not only stating and developing international standards, but also supporting their understanding, implementation and review, in a diversity of political, economic, social and cultural contexts.

"According to a fellow UN expert, Essex is 'the capital of UN Special Rapporteurs' due to its reputation for supporting the work of UN special procedures mandates on human rights and I wanted to call on that expertise when I took up the UN mandate to monitor the human rights situation in Iran from 2011-2016.

"Thanks to the excellent support from my colleagues, our collaboration has left a lasting impact on the promotion of human rights in Iran."

### Our distinguished team

"It is an honour and humbling experience working with such a distinguished team of experts at Essex and I have drawn inspiration from their outstanding achievements that have impacted my UN work. There are also synergies between my work for the UN and some of their own practice - covering themes such as refugees, justice, detention, and humanitarian law.

"The Human Rights Centre's work is focused on addressing a range of urgent challenges and I am impressed by the response of my Essex colleagues to the current global 'pushback' on human rights.

"There is a determination to scale up all our efforts to rise up to this important challenge, which truly reveals their deep commitment to the human rights cause and the depth and breadth of their expertise. Here at Essex, I get to stand on the shoulders of giants."



**"It is an honour and humbling experience working with such a distinguished team of experts at Essex"**

DR AHMED SHAHEED,  
UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR

# JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS

Ending half a century of civil war hasn't come easily for Colombia, but it's one of several countries where the road to justice has been influenced by the work of our experts.

Our Essex Transitional Justice Network (ETJN) seeks to help countries around the globe to successfully establish peace after conflict by influencing their understanding of how they can establish a framework for truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition.



*"It is not possible to move away from conflict or repression and pave the way for peace and human rights without listening to and acknowledging the suffering and harm caused to victims, and without addressing the root causes of conflict or repression."*

PROFESSOR CLARA SANDOVAL

Iraq, Colombia and the Central African Republic are just some of the countries we have been trying to help navigate this process.

It was on this principle that the ETJN was founded. Today we use research, consultancy and education to help states and other actors deal with the legacy of mass atrocities. At Essex we know this process is complex, long and requires interdisciplinary and creative solutions.

## Our role in the story of Colombia

Our lawyers have advised Colombia's Ministry of Justice and collaborated with civil society organisations on securing accountability for third party actors such as CEOs, politicians and trade unions who funded, supported or promoted those committing crimes.

Colombia still has some way to go before sustainable peace is secured. Our researchers continue to influence the implementation of accountability of third party actors involved in serious international crimes like torture, enforced disappearances and internal displacement.



*"Successful transition in the country should take due account of the responsibility and role played by everybody, including CEOs, politicians and trade unions who funded, supported or protected those committing crimes over more than 50 years of armed conflict."*

PROFESSOR SABINE MICHALOWSKI



ESSEX FACTS

TOP  
50

IN THE WORLD FOR LAW  
IN THE TIMES HIGHER  
EDUCATION WORLD  
RANKINGS 2018

# DEFENDING RIGHTS IN CONFLICT

As shockingly demonstrated by conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Syria and Yemen, war has devastating consequences for civilian populations, and there is a concrete push to ensure respect for international laws, and accountability for those accused of committing international crimes.

We have one of the largest groups of international humanitarian law experts in the academic world. True to the Essex spirit of combining theory and practice, they have worked in the field in conflict areas around the world, including Libya, Burundi, Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, South Sudan, Liberia and Palestine.

Our humanitarian law team engage regularly with all those involved in conflict, working hard to ensure respect for the law. They have provided training, workshops and collaborated in a range of projects with military training schools, human rights NGOs in conflict zones, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the UN.

## Our impact:

- *The Practitioners' Guide to Human Rights Law in Armed Conflict* - by Dr Daragh Murray and co-edited by a group including Professors Françoise Hampson and Noam Lubell – is the first comprehensive, practical guide to the application of human rights law in the context of armed conflict, and provides armed forces with concrete guidance for specific operational situations.
- Professor Noam Lubell is leading a Geneva Academy project in partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross, to produce a new set of international guidelines for conducting investigations into violations during armed conflict.
- Professor Françoise Hampson is a member of the Commission of Inquiry on Burundi, established by the UN Human Rights Council in 2016.
- Visiting Fellow Colonel Charles Garraway was appointed by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to join the UN's Group of Eminent Experts on Yemen.
- Dr Gus Waschefort provides training on international humanitarian law and international human rights law in armed conflict to a range of groups, including the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission.



*"By demonstrating a commitment to the rule of law, the armed forces publicly demonstrate their integrity and professionalism."*

DR DARAGH MURRAY (LEFT) AND PROFESSOR NOAM LUBELL WRITING FOR THE CONVERSATION

## ESSEX FACTS

# 47

THE NUMBER OF TEAMS FROM FIVE CONTINENTS THAT A TEAM OF ESSEX STUDENTS BEAT TO WIN THE JEAN-PICTET INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW COMPETITION 2018

# COLONIALISM CONTINUES

Suicide rates in northern aboriginal communities in Canada are off the scale and Native Americans are the poorest ethnic group in the US. The erosion of their lands, forced assimilation and even the risk of poisoning from extractive projects are the realities for indigenous North Americans.

It's a life one researcher argues is "ongoing colonialism," and it's a global issue. Professor Colin Samson has documented the lives of indigenous people for 30 years, living with communities in Canada and the US, and visiting Tanzania, Namibia, Guyana and Japan. He has opposed the erosion of land rights, working with groups fighting resource extraction projects at the Sioux Standing Rock reservation in the US and the Canadian Labrador-Quebec peninsula.

## It's time to listen

Professor Samson argues even countries hailed as upholding rights do not set an example fit for the 21st century: "Indigenous people in Canada must sign over ownership of their lands to be granted rights to them. Even before they ratify a land claims agreement, the land is simply taken from them." He believes states must honour their own laws and instigate open and equal dialogue.

"In the 19th century the US signed two treaties with the Lakota Sioux guaranteeing them particular lands. Despite this, those lands have been eroded and in 2017 a Presidential executive order allowed the Dakota Access Pipeline project to go ahead, ignoring calls, from the US's own Interior Department, for an environmental review. If a state does not even attend to the minimum respect for the rule of law I don't think you can classify it as a democracy. It's time the tables were turned, there's a lot to learn from indigenous people."



*"Indigenous people have long, enduring histories and cultures based on the land. They are divided into different tribal groups, language groups and cultural groups. The common denominator is colonialism."*

PROFESSOR COLIN SAMSON



*"If you want to implement human rights around the world you are simply going to fail if you don't have a basic level of cultural sensitivity in operating across cultures."*

PROFESSOR ANDREW CANESSA, ANTHROPOLOGIST WHO HAS BEEN STUDYING THE PEOPLE OF HIGHLAND BOLIVIA FOR OVER 25 YEARS

## ESSEX FACTS

OVER  
100

SCHOLARS FROM 11 ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES WORKING ON HUMAN RIGHTS

## Connecting harm, rights and justice

Professor Nigel South, Director of our Centre for Criminology, received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Society of Criminology in 2013. He explains how Essex contributes to debates around rights.

"In the early 1990s criminology was 'discovering' human rights. At the time my own work focused on policing and on drugs.

"First, I was interested in how private contracting of criminal justice system services, such as policing, prisons and surveillance, raised issues related to civil liberties.

"My other interest was 'drugs'. Some legal substances are more harmful than illegal ones which led me to question how societies, and governments, classify drugs and why, and explore matters such as choice, morals, law and importantly rights and the concept of harm."

### Understanding harm

"In the 1980s I was fortunate to work with some of the pioneers of what was called 'harm minimisation' or 'harm reduction' and I applied this to my own work on drugs.

"Providing clean syringes has reduced transmission of disease and police increasingly recognise they cannot 'solve' drugs problems but can reduce the harm caused.

"Harm reduction brings together public health and human rights and its wonderful to see this work championed today at Essex by Dr Julie Hannah and our International Centre on Human Rights and Drug Policy."

### Harm and the environment

"In criminology and sociology we also use the concept of harm to describe behaviours and consequences that are not illegal but are damaging, such as global warming and causes of environmental degradation.

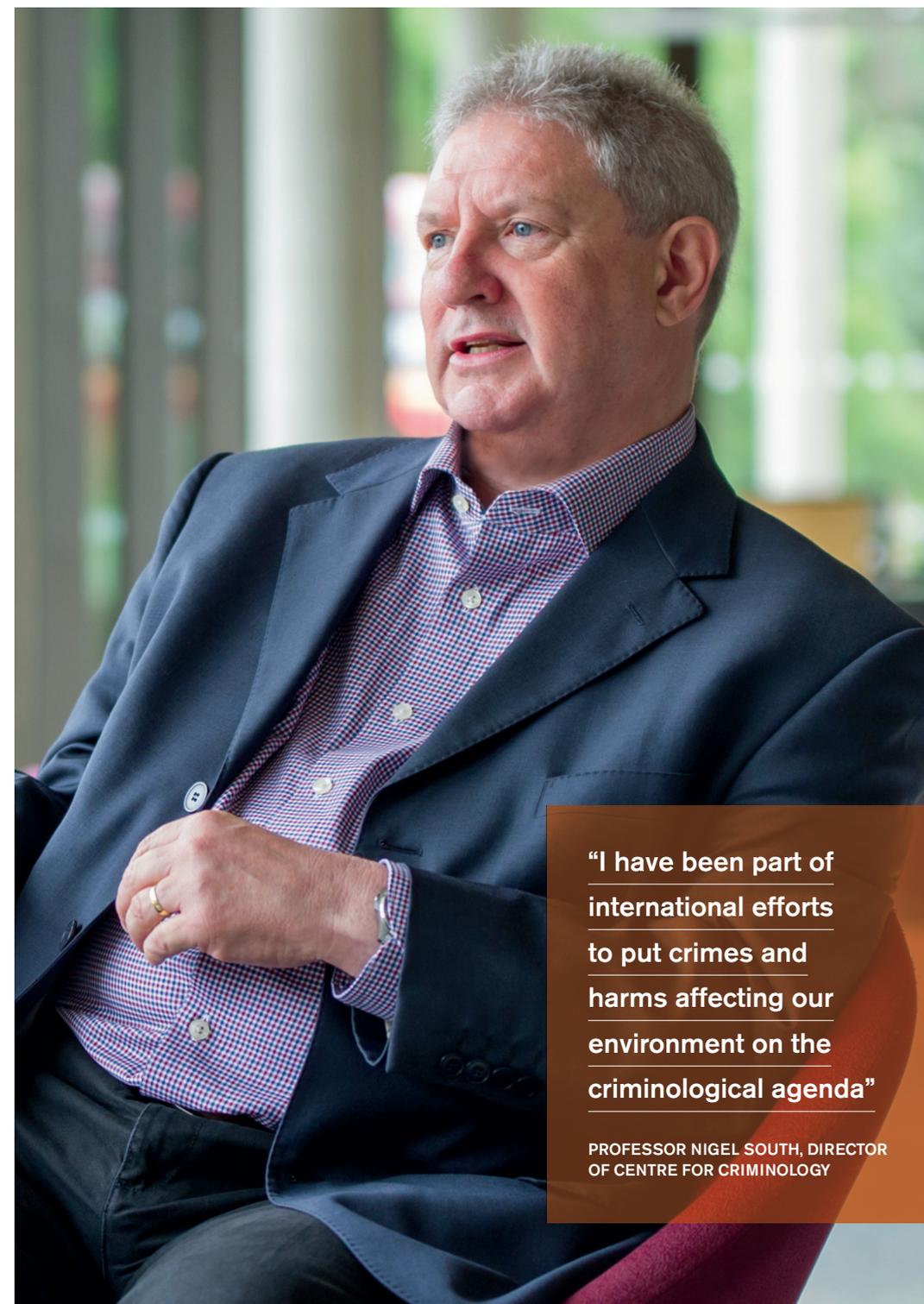
"I have been part of international efforts to put crimes and harms affecting our environment on the criminological agenda.

"I have worked to engage criminology with ideas like ecocide, environmental rights, justice and victimisation, and more recently have applied these ideas particularly to countries of the global south.

"In the 'greening of criminology', while we have not lost sight of legal definitions of rights, or what is included in international conventions, we combine them with concepts such as social justice."

### Proudly combining human rights and sociology

"Our Department of Sociology has always had strengths in research and education relevant to human rights. So many of my colleagues have made very significant contributions to debates and research on human rights and indigenous peoples, gender, sexuality, punishment, and promoting social rights."



**"I have been part of international efforts to put crimes and harms affecting our environment on the criminological agenda"**

PROFESSOR NIGEL SOUTH, DIRECTOR OF CENTRE FOR CRIMINOLOGY



## AN ALTERNATE VIEW

A child contemplates the silhouette of a bicycle, an artistic expression of the sorrow experienced by an artist activist who lost 350 comrades during Argentina's last dictatorship.

Fernando Traverso's ghostly bikes around the city of Rosario exemplify the power of art to document and remember; a power well-recognised by our human rights community.

### Art in transitional justice

Our researchers in literature, film and theatre studies, acting, and art history are exploring how art can assist the recognition of past injustices, aid remembrance and psychological reparation after conflict, unrest and atrocities.

They are showing how art can document violations with emotional impact and how art gives voice to victims to tell their story and provide a public platform to restore dignity.

### Satire on the streets of London

Essex playwright and creative producer Anney Lax challenged the devastating impact of the arms trade through a street theatre production.

*Arming the World*, scheduled to coincide with the world's largest arms fair, Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) in London, saw a fictional arms trade team stage a catwalk show of new weaponry.

Anney said: "*Arming the World* doesn't unilaterally condemn military intervention or the role of the armed forces. It asks the public to consider how their taxes support the sales of weapons being used to sustain conflict, not solve it."



*"The arts work with and develop symbolic forms crucial for our understanding of who we are, what our place in society is, who we might be and what our societies could be."*

PROFESSOR SANJA BAHUN

### Our Latin American connection

Our Essex Collection of Art from Latin America (ESCALA) is crucial to our education and research.

Writing in 1967, former Essex professor Jean Franco noted that artists are often at the forefront of change. Today artists responding to local issues are able to share their work globally, shining a light on human rights issues as a call to action or to solidarity.

ESCALA was founded in 1993. Using an object-based learning approach, we use it to stimulate interdisciplinary discussions.

Our artworks reveal the need and right of humans to create, and the power of their creations to respond to the plight of their fellow humans and to offer an alternative lens for exploring entrenched and complex situations.

### ESSEX FACTS

OVER

750

ESCALA ARTWORKS FROM THE  
1960s TO THE PRESENT-DAY

# WORKING WITH REFUGEES

No one can have escaped the disturbing images of people risking their lives in a desperate bid to flee persecution and armed conflict.

In 2015, 24 people were forced to leave their homes every minute; there are now thought to be over 65 million people across the world who are of concern to the UNHCR – the United Nations Refugee Agency.

It is an issue Essex researchers are tackling head-on – from using their expertise to defend the rights of asylum seekers to providing advice on improving conditions in refugee camps.

Professor Geoff Gilbert is an expert in international refugee law and has worked with the UNHCR for decades. His work has focused on guaranteeing international protection for those of concern to the UNHCR through promoting their human rights, upholding the rule of law, enhancing good governance and facilitating the UN to 'deliver as one'.



*"On the global refugee crisis Essex has played a very important role...nowhere better is international refugee law taught."*

ANTÓNIO GUTERRES, UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

Professor Gilbert said: "Our LL.M and MA graduates are working across the world in all displacement crises to guarantee the protection of individuals."

## Building new lives

Professor Renos Papadopoulos, is the Director of our Centre for Trauma, Asylum and Refugees, which examines the reality of being a refugee. His team has been involved in assessing conditions, and suggesting improvements, particularly psychosocial support, at refugee camps in Sudan, Yemen, Kenya, and Sierra Leone.

Writing for The Conversation, Professor Papadopoulos said: "It's important to recognise refugees are entitled to protection. This is their right and their survival should not depend on the benevolence of others. We have to grasp the complexities of the situation. Blaming others, or passively hoping for the best, are no longer an option."

Dr Renee Luthra and Dr Carlos Gigoux, from our new Centre for Migration Studies, are investigating the difficulties faced by refugees and asylum seekers when they arrive in the UK – looking at issues such as resettlement and integration policies and the role of community organisations and local authorities in supporting their rights. Working with community organisations and academics in the UK and abroad, their aim is to improve the lives of refugees and asylum seekers by suggesting ways of overcoming the challenges and barriers they face in their new home.



## ESSEX FACTS

# 1

THE ONLY UK UNIVERSITY TO HAVE A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE UN REFUGEE AGENCY (UNHCR)

## Essex is a 'go-to' global training ground

Essex has forged a reputation as a centre of excellence for the world's human rights community to turn to for support, advice and education.

### The Essex summer school

In 2014 we launched our pioneering Human Rights and Research Methods Summer School - one of the first of its kind in the world - which attracts postgraduates, researchers and professionals

It provides essential training in using the qualitative and quantitative methods needed to make robust human rights assertions, covering how to design projects with optimal impact, ensuring methods meet ethical standards and interviewing techniques for victims.



*"Human rights methods have not been integrated and addressed in any kind of systematic way in the NGO world so this summer school really closes a gap."*

PROFESSOR MARGARET SATTERTHWAITE,  
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

### Supporting independent experts

UN experts, Special Rapporteurs and working groups play a crucial role in promoting and monitoring human rights. At Essex:

- Our researchers have served as **Special Rapporteurs**.
- We are active members of **UN working groups**.
- Our graduates are **UN independent experts**.
- We are home to the current **Special Rapporteur on the Freedom of Religion and Belief**.
- We support the research of the current **Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health**.

### Consultancy

Our experts provide advice and training to a range of national and international governmental agencies including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Ministry of Defence, Council of Europe and the British Council.

NGOs too, such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the International Committee of the Red Cross, have turned to us for advice, as has the UN.



**"Education has an essential role in understanding the complex set of reasons why so many peoples' human rights are at risk around the world."**

DR ANDREW FAGAN, CO-DIRECTOR OF  
POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

## The next generation

We are committed to producing the next generations of human rights pioneers. Our success is evident today as the baton has been handed over to new scholars and practitioners.

The world's future is increasingly shaped by our graduates who, as Professor Kevin Boyle, a founding father of our Human Rights Centre, said in 2007 "are everywhere. The range of their careers is astonishing. Their achievements... strengthen[ing] the reputation of the Essex programme as one of the best in the world."



*"I had not the least notion just how profoundly that year at Essex would change my life, opening a whole world of possibilities for engaging international human rights law as an instrument for countering human degradation but also for meeting human needs and aspirations."*

IAN SEIDERMAN (LLM INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW), LEGAL AND POLICY DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS

### Graduate stories

**PROFESSOR CEPHAS LUMINA** (LLM *International Human Rights Law*) of the Nelson Mandela Law School, University of Fort Hare, is the former UN independent expert on the effects of foreign debt and is on the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. In 2012, his new Guiding Principles on Foreign Debt and Human Rights were endorsed by the UN.

**RICKY GUNAWAN** (MA *Theory and Practice of Human Rights*) is Director of the Community Legal Aid Institute in Jakarta where he provides free legal services to poor and marginalized groups. He specialises in access to justice, law reform, fair trial, torture, death penalty, right to health, human rights and HIV, and drugs policy.

**LOUISE FINER** (LLM *International Human Rights Law*) is Senior Policy Officer and National Preventive Mechanism Coordinator at HM Inspectorate of Prisons providing policy and human rights advice and contributing to parliamentary and policy processes relating to the treatment and conditions of detainees.

**MAGDALENA SEPÚLVEDA CARMONA** (LLM *International Human Rights Law*) is Senior Research Associate at the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development and former UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights.





## A simple act, a poignant reminder

To mark international Human Rights Day our students do something which has come to exemplify the need for every individual and every state to protect human rights.

As a symbol of the vulnerability and persistence of human rights, our students 'chalk the steps' of our iconic 1960s Colchester Campus with the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Written in different languages and left to be eroded over time, the words never completely disappear. They remain, a visual



**“In the field of human rights  
Essex has carved out  
a very special and really  
important reputation”**

RT HON SIR KEIR STARMER  
KCB QC MP

reminder that we must all protect universal human rights before being reaffirmed the following year by a new group of students.

Without all our support human rights will fade, like the chalk on our steps and without them we are defenceless against injustice, inequality and unfair treatment.

**Please join us as we strive for a better world**  
[www.essex.ac.uk/humanrightsresearch](http://www.essex.ac.uk/humanrightsresearch)