

On the Frontlines of Global Justice

Essex Human Rights Centre Clinic Annual Conference

📅 2 June 2026 | 🕒 2–5:30pm | 🌐 Hybrid (4.722 Senate Room, University of Essex)



AGENDA

1:45-2:00: coffee and welcome

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

2:10-3:20: presentation of 2025-26 Clinic projects

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

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)

3:20-3:30: Insights from ad hoc projects in recent years – Professor Carla Ferstman, Director, Essex Human Rights Centre

- The Role of Academic Freedom in the Promotion of Equality and Non-Discrimination in the Higher Education Sphere – Aula Abierta (2025-);
- 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) (2024);
- 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 (2019);
- Universal Periodic Review (Islamic Republic of Iran): Joint submission made by the family members of arbitrarily detained foreign and dual nationals (2019)

3:30-3:40: break

3:40-4:30: presentations from Clinic alumni

- Genta Suzuki, Gender Equality Bureau, Government of Japan
- Zeynep Baysar, Research Officer, Countering Islamophobia, Essex Law School/Human Rights Centre
- Adam Cripps, UK Civil Service
- Paddy Lawrance, Advisor, Human Rights Advocacy, Frontline AIDS
- Siân Posy, PhD Candidate, Sustainable Transitions, Essex Law School/Human Rights Centre
- Zuzanna Wojciak, Program Associate, Technologies, Threats and Opportunities, WITNESS

4:30-5:00: insights from current and former partner organisations

- Martin Bright, Editor-at-Large, Index on Censorship
- Dinushika Dissanayake, Deputy Regional Director for Europe, Amnesty International
- Allan Hogarth, Former Head of Advocacy and Programmes, Amnesty International UK

5:00-5:10: presentation of 2026-27 Clinic projects and new multi-year project (Right to Housing Unit, presented by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, Dr Koldo Casla)

Module-based projects:

- Project 1: Frontline AIDS – Challenging anti-rights movements in West Africa
- Project 2: Index on Censorship – Dissident strategies in response to growing illiberalism in the USA
- Project 3: Ceasefire – Seeking accountability for human rights breaches in Syria at the European Court of Human Rights

Multi-year projects:

- Project 4: UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention – Arbitrary Detention Redress Unit (ADRU)
- Project 5: Business and Human Rights Unit (BHRU)
- Project 6: UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing – Right to Housing Unit (RHU)

Other projects:

- Digital Verification Unit (Amnesty International)

5:10-5:15: closing remarks (Dr Sabina Garahan, HRC Clinic Director)

5:15-5:30: Q&A with the Clinic Director (optional)