

BEYOND BYSTANDER



MONITORING HUMAN RIGHTS
IN CONFLICT ZONES

INAUGURAL SENATOR JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN
CONFERENCE AND LECTURE SERIES ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICE

#UConnBeyondBystander

UConn STAMFORD



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BEYOND BYSTANDER: MONITORING HUMAN RIGHTS IN CONFLICT ZONES

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT, STAMFORD CAMPUS

MARCH 27, 2015

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SCHEDULE

- 8:00AM – 8:30AM **Continental Breakfast & Welcome**
by Dr. Emma Gilligan, *Human Rights Institute Director*
- 8:30AM – 10:00AM **From Citizens to Satellites: Monitoring “On the Ground”**
- 10:00AM – 10:30AM **Coffee Break**
- 10:30AM – 12:00PM **Reporting Conflict in the New Media Environment**
- 12:00PM – 1:00PM **Lunch**
- 1:00PM – 2:15PM **Keynote Lecture: Navanethem Pillay**
former High Commissioner for Human Rights
introduction by Dr. Amii Omara-Otunnu, *UNESCO Chair*
- 2:15PM – 4:00PM **Keynote Panel: From Monitoring To Action**
- 4:00PM – 4:30PM **Closing Remarks**
facilitated by Dr. Glenn Mitoma, *Thomas J. Dodd Research Center Director*
- 4:30PM – 5:30PM **Closing Reception**

CONFERENCE RATIONALE

THIS INAUGURAL LIEBERMAN CONFERENCE BRINGS TOGETHER SCHOLARS AND PRACTITIONERS TO DISCUSS THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF MONITORING HUMAN RIGHTS IN CONFLICT ZONES. WHETHER BORN OF THE CHAOS OF THE BATTLEFIELD, DELIBERATE EFFORTS AT CONCEALMENT, OR THE LACUNA OF TRAUMA, THE “FOG OF WAR” CHALLENGES THOSE WHO WOULD KNOW AND SHOW THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO DEVELOP NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND TECHNIQUES OF DOCUMENTATION AND NARRATION. TRANSFORMING SUCH TESTIMONIAL FROM PASSIVE WITNESS TO ACTIVE PROTECTION IS AN EVEN GREATER—AND MORE ESSENTIAL—CHALLENGE. BY DRAWING ON THE EXPERTISE OF SCHOLARS IN THE HUMANITIES, SOCIAL SCIENCES, AND LAW, AND THE EXPERIENCE OF OFFICIALS, ADVOCATES AND ARTISTS, WE INTEND TO INTERROGATE THE CURRENT STATE OF THE ART IN INVESTIGATING, VERIFYING, QUANTIFYING, ANALYZING, AGGREGATING, DISPLAYING, PLOTTING, REPRESENTING, AND DISSEMINATING KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CONDITIONS OF CONFLICT.

PANEL DESCRIPTIONS

FROM CITIZENS TO SATELLITES: MONITORING HUMAN RIGHTS “ON THE GROUND”

8:30AM – 10:00AM

New technologies and techniques have created new opportunities to know and show what is happening in conflict zones. The increased access to mobile devices to create and gather information, the dissemination of geographic information systems and other analytics to parse and display data, and widespread use social and online media spaces to distribute reporting, have empowered “citizen journalists” to monitor conditions in their communities. Each of our panelists have, in different contexts and in different ways, sought to realize the potential of these developments and we welcome their discussion of the promise, challenge, and limitations of this form of human rights monitoring.

- **Raja Althaibani**, *Middle East and North Africa Program Coordinator, WITNESS*
- **Akshaya Kumar**, *Sudan and South Sudan Policy Analyst, Enough Project*
- **Abdel-Rahman El Mahdi**, *President, SUDIA (Sudan Development Initiative)*
- Chair: **Kerry Bystrom**, *Associate Professor of English and Human Rights, Bard College Berlin*

REPORTING CONFLICT IN THE NEW MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

10:30AM – 12:00PM

Long one of the most important, prestigious, and dangerous positions, the “war correspondent” is both more essential and more at risk than ever. Faced with shrinking budgets and increasingly vulnerable to violence on all sides, professional journalists must navigate political and public pressures on the one side and confusion and chaos on the other. Reporters, whether employed by traditional news outfits or not, are also taking advantage of new outlets and formats for their work, reaching a fragmented audience in various ways. Based on their extensive experience and expertise, our panelists will consider the impact of the recent changes in the technological, economic, and political environment on journalists as they work to report on conflicts around the world.

- **Anne Bennett**, *Executive Director, Hironelle USA: Media for Peace and Human Dignity*
- **Richard Pendry**, *Center for Journalism, University of Kent*
- **Joel Simon**, *Executive Director, Committee to Protect Journalists*
- Chair: **John Stoehr**, *Managing Editor, Washington Spectator; Fellow at the Yale Journalism Initiative, Yale University*

FROM MONITORING TO ACTION 2:15PM – 4:00PM

Whether faced with a flood or a trickle of information about a conflict situation, officials and activists must decide what to do and when to do it. While conflicts never simply explode without prelude, they are by definition complex and develop rapidly in unpredictable ways. For monitoring to be effective, it must provide the kind of information that can form the basis for an appropriate response. In this keynote panel, our distinguished speakers will discuss how the work of monitoring translates into action—or inaction—on the part of governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations. As critical decision-makers whose work has affected the lives of thousands of people around the world, our panelists will reflect on their experiences on moving beyond bystander in moments of crisis.

- **Yakin Ertürk**, *Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic*
- **Emily Martinez**, *Director of Human Rights Initiative, Open Society Foundations*
- **Tom Porteous**, *Deputy Program Director, Human Rights Watch*
- Chair: **Molly Land**, *Professor of Law and Human Rights, University of Connecticut*



SPEAKER BIOS

RAJA ALTHAIBANI is Program Manager for the Middle East and North Africa at WITNESS. Raja joined WITNESS, an international human rights organization, after working on-the-ground in Yemen covering the revolution as a media stringer and freelance photographer for international media. As a proud Yemeni American, she combines expertise in the Middle East and background in journalism, research and criminal justice to lead WITNESS' work throughout the conflict areas in the MENA region. Specifically, she trains and supports lawyers and human rights activists to ensure that the video they risk their personal safety to collect can be used to draw the world's attention to human rights violations and, eventually, secure justice.

ANNE BENNETT is the Executive Director of Hirondele USA, a non-profit organization that supports local news and information in countries emerging from conflict or faced with humanitarian crises. She is also a Senior Fellow at the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative. Bennett has worked in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan and South Sudan with Foundation Hirondele, creating and managing independent, public interest radio stations. She served as a Consultant for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Office in Geneva from 2001 to 2006. She is a founding Board Member of Media Matters

for Women, a media start up using Bluetooth to engage and inform women in West Africa. She graduated from University of California with a degree in History and holds an MA in International History and Politics from the Graduate Institute of International Studies, University of Geneva.

KERRY BYSTROM is Associate Professor of English and Human Rights at Bard College and Associate Dean of Bard College Berlin. She has published widely in journals including *Humanity* and *Interventions* and co-edited, with Glenn Mitoma, a special issue of the *Journal of Human Rights*, on "Humanitarianism and Responsibility." Current research interests include digital humanitarianism, conceptions of global citizenship, and transitional justice.

ABDEL-RAHMAN EL MAHDI is a professional international development practitioner with over 15 years of experience in the field. His experience is mostly anchored in North and Sub-Saharan Africa where he has served in multiple senior positions and consultancy assignments with both national and international organizations. El Mahdi is the founder and managing director of the Sudanese non-governmental organization SUDIA (Sudanese Development Initiative), an NGO originally founded in the diaspora in the late 1990s. Through his work at SUDIA he has accumulated a great deal of applied

knowledge and experience in thematic areas such as peacebuilding, civil society, media development, and human rights.

El Mahdi is strongly invested in innovative applications of ICT and new technologies for addressing some of the pressing socio-economic, peacebuilding and governance challenges facing countries such as Sudan. Such technologies and approaches include the use of mobile phones and SMS in peacebuilding and water governance issues; foresight and futures technologies for bringing diverse groups together and finding common ground; and tagging and tracking systems that help government institutions ensure subsidies (bread, gas, etc.) go to the neediest.

YAKIN ERTÜRK received a Ph.D. in Development Sociology from Cornell University in 1980. She served as a faculty member at the Department of Sociology, Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey (Sept. 1986 – Oct. 2010). In addition to her academic career she has worked for various national and international agencies on rural development and women in development projects (1986 – 2003). She also undertook numerous international assignments, including: Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) in Santa Domingo, Dominican Republic (Oct. 1997 – Feb. 1999); Director of The Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) at UN Headquarters in New York

(March 1999 – Oct. 2001); UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women (SRVAW) (2003 – 2009); member of the Council of Europe, Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) (2009 – 2013); member of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry of the June 2010 events in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan (Oct. 2010 – April 2011); member of the International Independent Commission of Inquiry on Syrian Arab Republic of the UN Human Rights Council (Sept. 12, 2011 – March 23, 2012). In her capacity as the SRVAW she undertook 17 country visits at the invitation of the governments concerned. She is the founding chair (2013) and currently a member of the board for the Migration and Asylum Research Center (IGAM).

AKSHAYA KUMAR is the Sudan and South Sudan Policy Analyst for the Enough Project and an adjunct professor at Georgetown University School of Law. She also manages the Satellite Sentinel Project's report production and research. Previously, Akshaya was a Law Fellow at the Public International Law and Policy Group, or PILPG, where she served as a legal adviser to the government of the Republic of South Sudan. Akshaya has also worked in South Sudan as a population based researcher for UNHCR and the ILO and also spent time in Uganda working for a local access to justice organization. While in law school, Akshaya interned with the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for

the former Yugoslavia, UN Women and the International Committee of the Red Cross's legal delegation to the United Nations. Akshaya holds a JD from Columbia Law School, an LLM with distinction in Human Rights, Conflict, and Justice from the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies and a BA from the George Washington University's Elliott School. Akshaya is originally from Chennai in South India and speaks Arabic, Hindi, Tamil, Spanish and French.

MOLLY LAND is a Professor of Law and Human Rights at the University of Connecticut School of Law and Human Rights Institute. Her research focuses on the intersection of human rights, technology, science, and innovation. Her most recent scholarship considers the effect of new technologies on human rights fact-finding, advocacy, and enforcement as well as the relationship between innovation systems and the international human right to benefit from scientific progress. She has authored several human rights reports, including a report for the World Bank on the role of new technologies in promoting human rights, and she is currently a member of the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility with the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

EMILY MARTINEZ is the director of the Open Society Human Rights Initiative. Previously, she established and directed four global grant-making programs on disability rights, LGBTI rights, the rights of criminal defendants, and the right to information. Prior to moving to Washington, DC, Martinez was the director of the Open Society Human Rights and Governance Grants Program in Budapest, where she helped promote the development of human rights and accountability groups in Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union. As the program's founding director, she developed expertise on a broad range of fundamental human rights issues in that region, as well as civil society's role in promoting rule of law and accountability in governance. Martinez holds an MA in Human Rights from the University of Essex. She also graduated from Georgetown University in Washington, DC, with a BS in International Affairs and Developmental Economics.

RICHARD PENDRY is a lecturer in broadcast at the University of Kent's Centre for Journalism, which is rated number one in the UK among journalism schools. He is writing a Ph.D. thesis on reporting practices in areas of conflict, and is currently investigating how reporting of the Syrian conflict has been outsourced to freelancers and Syrians themselves. In the 1990's, he was a member of the agency Frontline News Television, which specialized in conflict reporting. He also makes documentaries.

NAVANETHEM PILLAY The appointment of Navanethem (Navi) Pillay as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights was approved by the General Assembly on July 28, 2008 and she assumed her functions in September 2008. On May 24, 2012, the United Nations General Assembly extended her mandate for a further two years. Ms. Pillay, a South African national, was the first woman to start a law practice in her home province of Natal in 1967. Over the next few years, she acted as a defense attorney for anti-apartheid activists, exposing torture, and helping establish key rights for prisoners on Robben Island. She also worked as a lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and later was appointed Vice-President of the Council of the University of Durban Westville. In 1995, after the end of apartheid, Ms. Pillay was appointed as acting judge on the South African High Court, and in the same year was elected by the United Nations General Assembly to be a judge on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, where she served a total of eight years, the last four (1999 – 2003) as President. She played a critical role in the ICTR's groundbreaking jurisprudence on rape as genocide, as well as on issues of freedom of speech and hate propaganda. In 2003, she was elected as a judge to the International Criminal Court in The Hague, where she remained until August 2008. In South Africa, as a member of the Women's National Coalition, she contributed to the inclusion of an equality clause in the country's Constitution that prohibits

discrimination on grounds of race, religion and sexual orientation. She co-founded Equality Now, an international women's rights organization, and has been involved with other organizations working on issues relating to children, detainees, victims of torture and of domestic violence, and a range of economic, social and cultural rights. Ms. Pillay received a BA and a LLB from Natal University South Africa. She also holds a Master of Law and a Doctorate of Juridical Science from Harvard University. She was born in 1941, and has two daughters.

TOM PORTEOUS is the Deputy Program Director at Human Rights Watch and is based in Washington DC. He joined Human Rights Watch in 2006 as the London director responsible for communications and advocacy in the United Kingdom. Porteous has a background in journalism, diplomacy, and UN peacekeeping. In the 1980s and early 1990s he was a freelance correspondent for The Guardian newspaper, the BBC, and other media, first in Cairo and later in Berlin, Algeria, and Morocco. He worked for UN peacekeeping operations in Somalia and Liberia in 1994 and 1995 and later for the African Service of the BBC. He also served as a conflict management adviser for Africa in the UK's Foreign Office from 2001 to 2003. He is the author of *Britain in Africa*, published by Zed Books.

JOEL SIMON Since his appointment as Executive Director of the Committee to Protect Journalists in 2006, Joel Simon has led the organization through a period of expansion. Under his guidance, CPJ launched the Global Campaign Against Impunity, and established a Journalist Assistance program. He spearheaded CPJ's efforts to defend press freedom in the digital space and has led and participated in CPJ missions around the world, from Argentina to Zimbabwe. Under his leadership, CPJ has been honored with the prestigious Thomas J. Dodd Prize in International Justice and Human Rights and a News & Documentary Emmy for its work in defense of press freedom. Simon has written widely on press freedom issues for publications including *Slate*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, *The New York Review of Books*, *World Policy Journal*, *Asahi Shimbun*, and *The Times of India*. His analysis of press freedom issues is featured regularly in major media, including The New York Times, Washington Post, NPR, BBC and CNN. Having joined CPJ in 1997 as Americas Program Coordinator, Simon became Deputy Director in 2000 and was chosen to head the organization in 2006. As a journalist in Latin America, Simon covered the Guatemalan civil war, the Zapatista uprising in Southern Mexico, the debate over the North American Free Trade Agreement, and the economic turmoil in Cuba following the collapse of the Soviet Union. A graduate of Amherst College and Stanford University,

he is the author of *Endangered Mexico: An Environment on the Edge* (Sierra Club Books, 1997). *Censorship: Inside the Global Battle for Media Freedom*, was published in 2014 by Columbia University Press.

JOHN STOEHR is the Managing Editor of *The Washington Spectator*, a national bulletin of news, politics and public affairs. He is a lecturer in political science at Yale where he teaches a course on the classics of campaign reporting. He is a fellow at the Yale Journalism Initiative and at Yale's Ezra Stiles College. He has written for *The American Prospect*, *Al Jazeera America*, *Reuters*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, *New Statesman*, *The Guardian*, and *Los Angeles Review of Books*, among many others. From 2009-2012, he was the editor of the *New Haven Advocate*, the alternative newsweekly of the Elm City. He has been selected three times for the NEA's Arts Journalism Institutes. In 2009, he received one of the Lilly Scholarships in Religion for Journalists. He also helps edit the *New Haven Review*. He lives with his family in New Haven.

LIEBERMAN LECTURE SERIES

Through this conference and lecture series, UConn will continue the work of Senator Joseph I. Lieberman, who has long championed global human rights issues, and will make his hometown of Stamford an important new center of reflection, engagement and exchange on human rights practice. “I have always believed that the protection of human rights is our national responsibility not only within the United States, but that human rights should also be at the forefront of our foreign policy,” Sen. Lieberman said. “I am confident this conference and lecture series will help make that possible in the years ahead and that it will continue to build up the Stamford campus of UConn.”

SUPPORT

Point72 Asset Management is a family office managing the assets of its founder, Steven A. Cohen, and some employees. The firm primarily invests in discretionary long/short equities and makes significant quantitative and macro investments. It is headquartered in Stamford, Connecticut, and has offices in New York, Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Singapore.

“Senator Lieberman was a tireless champion for human rights, as well as the state of Connecticut and the city of Stamford, during his 24-year tenure in the United States Senate,” said Doug Haynes, President of Point72 Asset Management, “We are pleased to honor his leadership and advance the cause of human rights by sponsoring UConn’s Stamford-based Senator Joseph I. Lieberman Conference and Lecture Series on Human Rights Practice.”

SENATOR LIEBERMAN

Now Senior Counsel at the law firm of Kasowitz, Benson, Torres, and Friedman in New York, Joseph I. Lieberman was for 24 years a member of the U.S. Senate from Connecticut. At the end of his service in January 2013, he was Chairman of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and a senior member of the Armed Services Committee. Through both Committee positions, he became a leader in protecting the security of the American people and supporting American international leadership. Senator Lieberman is known as a national leader who works across party lines to get things done and who speaks his conscience regardless of the political consequences. Before his election to the Senate in 1988, Senator Lieberman served 10 years in the Connecticut State Senate and 6 years as Connecticut’s Attorney General. In 2000 he was the Democratic candidate for Vice President of the United States.

Senator Lieberman is married to Hadassah Freilich Lieberman. Together they have four children and 10 grandchildren.

HUMAN RIGHTS at UCONN

UConn designated human rights as a university priority in 2001, and restated its commitment in 2014 by identifying “Human Diversity, Disparity, and Rights” as an area for strategic academic emphasis in its new academic plan.

THOMAS J. DODD RESEARCH CENTER

The University-wide effort to develop a comprehensive public and academic program in human rights began in 1995 with the dedication of the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center. Known as the “Dodd Human Rights Year,” 1995-1996 saw an international conference examining the events surrounding the Holocaust and Nuremberg Trials, programming dedicated to human rights violations in Latin America, Tibet, and Cambodia, rights of the disabled in North America, the internment of Japanese-Americans during the Second World War, and the plight of African Americans involved in the Tuskegee Study. Currently, the Dodd Center hosts the Raymond & Beverly Sackler Distinguished Lecture Series, designed to bring internationally renowned speakers to the University of Connecticut campus to discuss human rights issues; advance human rights education in Connecticut schools through its K-12 initiative; and recognize leaders in the advancement of human rights worldwide through the Thomas J. Dodd Prize in International Justice and Human Rights

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTE

Since 2003, the Human Rights Institute (HRI) has served as the intellectual hub of the University’s human rights program. Founded by Gladstein Chair of Human Rights Richard A. Wilson and currently led by Associate Professor of History Emma Gilligan, HRI is organized around joint faculty appointments made in partnership with the Departments of Anthropology, Economics, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology, and the Schools of Law and Business. The University of Connecticut Human Rights Institute currently runs one of the largest undergraduate majors and minors in human rights, offers a Graduate Certificate in Human Rights, and sponsors three thematic research clusters centered on health and human rights, humanitarianism and economic and social rights. As a university wide program, the Institute advances human rights teaching across all University of Connecticut colleges and schools and pursues novel and critical approaches to human rights scholarship and pedagogy. With an aim to educate well-rounded scholars with an informed understanding of human rights, HRI promotes interdisciplinary scholarship and provides experiential learning for our students. The Institute encourages engaged discussion and academic research on the advantages and limitations of human rights discourse and practice.

UNESCO CHAIR & INSTITUTE OF COMPARATIVE HUMAN RIGHTS

In 2001, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) awarded the University the first UNESCO Chair in Human Rights in the United States. The award, a mark of international distinction, was based on a proposal developed by Associate Professor of History Amii Omara-Otunnu, and recognized the various strategic partnerships the University had made with South African institutions. Dr. Omara-Otunnu was named the first Chair-holder and founded the UNESCO Chair & Institute of Comparative Human Rights. The UNESCO Chair & Institute of Comparative Human Rights adopts an inclusive approach that seeks to bridge the gap between human rights ideals, theories and practices, and to promote international understanding based on a culture of human rights, peace, democratic pluralism, and tolerance. The UNESCO Chair & Institute hosts an annual international human rights conference, intergenerational youth leadership forums, the Student Ambassadors for Human Rights program, and special events and speakers on human rights.

LIEBERMAN CHAIR INITIATIVE

To honor his leadership for human rights and to educate future generations of students to continue that work, UConn envisions establishing, alongside this conference and lecture series, a Joseph I. Lieberman Chair in Human Rights Practice at UConn Stamford.

The holder of the Lieberman Chair would be jointly appointed to the Human Rights Institute at UConn Storrs and UConn Stamford. The Lieberman Chair would lead a collaborative initiative to develop new methods for fostering human rights compliance both at home and abroad. Building on the proximity of UConn Stamford to the United Nations and leading international non-governmental organizations in the New York area, the Lieberman Chair would forge new relationships between scholars, students, and human rights practitioners.

Through the Lieberman Chair and the Lieberman Conference and Lecture Series, UConn hopes to perpetuate the work of a champion of human rights and make Stamford a global center of human rights education and advocacy.



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