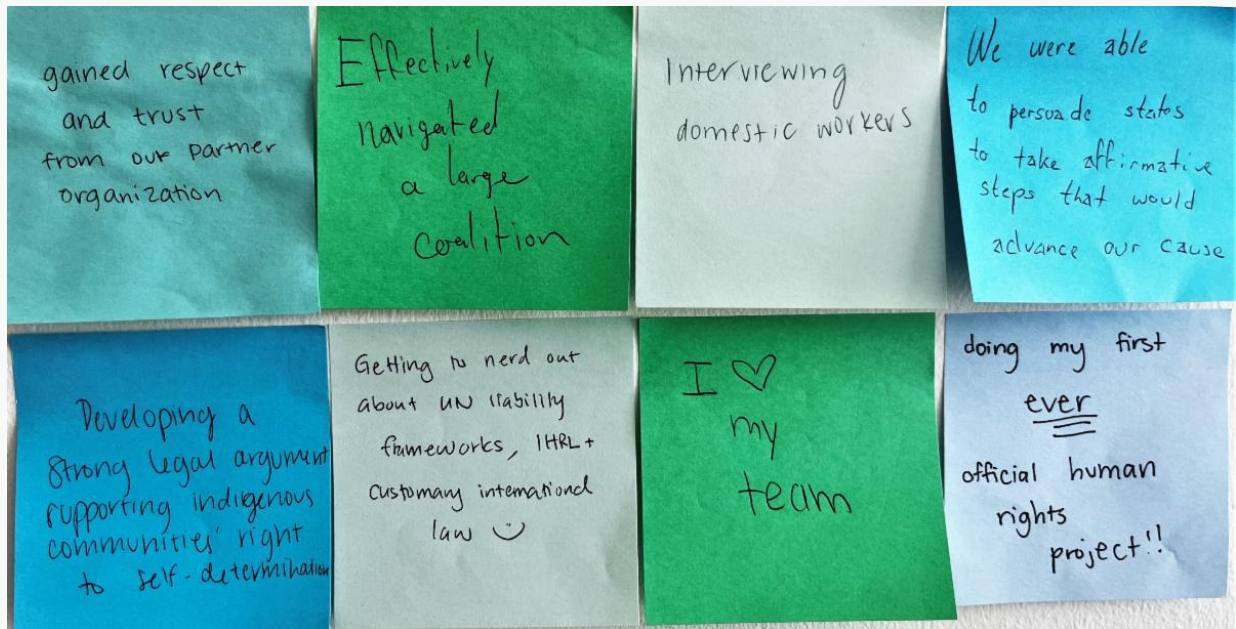




Recent News from the International Human Rights Clinic



Student Highlights from the Spring 2023 Term

Dear friends,

At the end of May, we **celebrated graduation** with the class of 2023. We had the pleasure of meeting families and loved ones, cheering as diplomas were awarded, and sharing one last hug or some final words of wisdom before our students—now alumni!—launch their careers. Our pride over everything they have accomplished, and our joy in anticipating what they will achieve in the future, was tangible.

If the past semester is any guide, they will pursue work that makes an impact, and form friendships that provide support and levity. Throughout the spring, our teams traveled to Costa Rica and France, New York and Virginia, and many places in between, to meet with colleagues and partners, present reports to states parties, and engage in advocacy with stakeholders. Our clinical projects addressed a wide range of issues, from nuclear weapons and killer robots, to indigenous rights and enforced disappearances, to corporate accountability and reparations. We hosted several major events including a panel on the human rights impact of the recent earthquakes in northwest Syria, a talk with the team who secured a jury verdict in U.S. federal court against a Haitian mayor for torture and extrajudicial killings of political opponents, and a conversation about the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights with its Deputy Executive Secretary.

We're already looking ahead to an exciting fall semester filled with new faces, clinical projects, events, and classes. But first, we wish you a productive and rejuvenating summer!

All the best,
Aminta, Anna, Bea, Bonnie, Kelsey, Salma, Sanjana, and Susan
The International Human Rights Clinic Team

Clinical Project Highlights

Seeking Accountability for Harmful
Business Practices in the Seafood Supply
Chain



In May, Clinic partner Bloom (France) **launched a report** on human rights abuses in the tuna industry. The report, **Canned Brutality**, describes endemic abuses in the tuna supply chain, including forced labor, slavery, and trafficking of workers. The Clinic provided legal advice, research, and drafting support for the report, which analyzes corporate failures and shortcomings in the EU's import control scheme. A clinical team traveled to **France** over spring break to collaborate directly with Bloom on this project.



Recommending New Guidelines for Reporting on TPNW Victim Assistance, Environmental Remediation

The Clinic published a **new report** in May regarding reporting guidelines for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Reporting on treaty implementation promotes monitoring and accountability, encourages the exchange of information and expertise, and facilitates assistance between states parties. The team provided a close analysis of precedent under other disarmament treaties and made recommendations for adapting it for reporting on victim assistance, environmental remediation, and international cooperation and assistance under the TPNW. The team's supervisor presented their publication to TPNW states parties, which are considering a new format for reporting in the lead up to their annual meeting in November.

Advancing Legal Frameworks for Enforced Disappearances

A paper co-authored by the Clinic and Jimena Reyes, the Americas Director at the International Federation for Human Rights, was presented at a May **symposium** on the evidentiary regimes of UN Treaty Bodies held in Ghent, Belgium. The paper describes how obstacles to accountability for enforced disappearances are even more profound in contexts of extreme violence and widespread impunity, and where non-State actors such as drug cartels and organized criminal groups perpetrate the abuse. The article considers how the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances should determine when a disappearance perpetrated by non-State actors constitutes an enforced disappearance.

Advocating for Remedies to the UN Special Rapporteur on Truth, Justice & Reparations

In March, a clinic team advocating for remedies for lead poisoned Roma communities in Kosovo **contributed** to the UN Special Rapporteur on Truth, Justice and Reparations' forthcoming thematic report on best practices in financing reparations around the world. The team analyzed lessons from the UN's own failed efforts to adequately finance remedies for UN-caused harms, drawing on the Clinic's work in Haiti and Kosovo stretching back to 2019. The team also co-authored a paper examining the lead poisoning as a case study of environmental racism against Roma people, which was presented at a Critical Romani Studies conference at Central European University in June.



In April, a clinical team advocating for a treaty to regulate international trade in law enforcement equipment **responded** to a call for inputs from a different UN Special Rapporteur – on torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment – to inform her upcoming report on the relationship between law enforcement equipment and torture and other ill-treatment. Drawing on comparative and international trade law research, the Clinic illustrated how a treaty could advance transparency in trade through common standards. The Clinic also collaborated with its partners in the civil society Torture-Free Trade Network to make a joint submission from 57 organizations highlighting the urgent need for a Torture-Free Trade Treaty.

Supporting Indigenous Self-Determination in Mexico

The Clinic initiated a new clinical project this spring supporting the Colectivo Emancipaciones, a group of community lawyers in Mexico who work with indigenous communities in the state of Michoacán. A student team developed legal argumentation to feed into a petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights aimed at upholding indigenous communities' right to self-determination. We were grateful for the assistance of HLS SJD student Angel Cabrera Silva, who is also a member of the Colectivo.



Campaigning to Stop Killer Robots

In February, a clinical team attended a **global meeting** of the Stop Killer Robots campaign in San José, Costa Rica. The Clinic has worked closely with the campaign for many years to advocate for a new treaty that would include prohibitions and regulations on autonomous weapons systems. At a government-hosted meeting, the Clinic presented the findings of a **report** we released last semester on these issues.

Event Highlights

Syrian Voices from the 2023 Earthquake: Emergency Responses and Long-Term Impact

On February 28, 2023, the Clinic **hosted a panel discussion** on the impact of and emergency response to the recent earthquakes in northwest Syria. In conversation with IHRC's Bonnie Docherty, the panel, which included an eyewitness, first responder, and advocates, illuminated the situation on the ground and explained what is needed to move forward. The Clinic is grateful to the panelists for sharing their stories, insights, and expertise to help raise awareness

Co-Sponsored Events

Global Contest
between
Democracy and
Autocracy: Less
Dire than It
Seems |
February 2023

*A co sponsored event
with the Human Rights*


of the devastating situation affecting this community. A full recording of the conversation is [available here](#).

SYRIAN VOICES FROM THE 2023 EARTHQUAKE
Emergency Responses & Long-Term Impact

A conversation with:
Mohammed Assi, Syrian earthquake survivor
Abdulkarim Ekzayez, General Secretary - Syrian British Medical Society
Alexandra Tarzikhan, Meet a Refugee platform
Ammar Al-Selmo, Syria Civil Defence

Moderated by Bonnie Docherty, HLS International Human Rights Clinic

FEB 28
12:15PM
HARVARD LAW
WCC B015
Lunch will be provided.



HARVARD LAW SCHOOL | INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CLINIC | ACCPI | MENALSA

Program (HRP) featuring former Human Rights Watch Executive Director Kenneth Roth. A video of the event is [available here](#).

From Trauma to Hope in the Gaza Strip | February 2023

A co sponsored event with PLSMW' discussing mental health services and current developments in Gaza. More details including speaker information [here](#).

Resurgence of Māori Law: The Constitutional Transformation Movement in Aotearoa New Zealand



On March 30, 2023, the Clinic welcomed [Erin Matariki Carr](#) (Ngāi Tūhoe and Ngāti Awa), a lawyer, scholar, and activist working at the forefront of constitutional transformation in Aotearoa New Zealand for a discussion on the resurgence and role of Māori law in that transformation.

Litigating Human Rights in U.S. Courts: Discussion with Haitian Human Rights Defenders



On the heels of a landmark jury verdict in Boston against a Haitian mayor sued for torture and extrajudicial killings, the Clinic and [Advocates](#) hosted the Haitian human rights defenders and their lawyers who brought the case. The event was a unique opportunity to celebrate a hard-won victory in [Boniface v. Viliena](#) that followed a 15-year legal battle, and to reflect on the human rights violations and challenges facing the plaintiffs along the way. The event concluded to [jubilant news](#) that federal authorities had arrested the mayor, adding another layer of accountability.

Litigating Palestinian Rights in the Israeli Supreme Court: Legitimation or Resistance? | February 2023

A co sponsored event with PLSMW featuring [Rabea Eghbariah](#), SJD candidate at Harvard Law School. More details [here](#).

Legacy and Renewal: Exploring the Past and Future of the Inter-American Commission

The Clinic welcomed [Mr. Jorge Meza Flores](#), Deputy Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) for a conversation about the past impact of the Commission's work and how it deals with emerging human rights issues of today.

Profiles & Spotlights

Clinician Spotlight: Anna Crowe, Bea Lindstrom, and Aminta Ossom speak at the Human Rights Clinicians Conference

In March, clinicians Anna Crowe, Bea Lindstrom, and Aminta Ossom traveled to Charlottesville, VA to participate in the 2023 International Human Rights Clinicians' Conference hosted by the University of Virginia. Crowe and Lindstrom spoke on the panel, "Innovations in Clinical Human Rights Pedagogy and Practice" and Ossom spoke on "Anti-Racism and Anti-Colonial Clinical Practice." [Read more.](#)

IHRC clinicians were also thrilled to re-connect with HLS and Clinic alumni now working as human rights clinicians. We look forward to hosting the annual conference in Cambridge next spring, kicking off a series of events to celebrate the Clinic's 20th anniversary across the 2024-25 academic year.



Left to Right (back row): Angel Cabrera Silva SJD Candidate, Kelsey Jost-Creegan JD'17, Catherine Cooper JD'14

Left to right (front): Tamara Ezer JD'01, Nelson Camilo Sánchez León LLM'07, Aminta Ossom, Lindsey Bailey JD'18, Anna Crowe, Bea Lindstrom

Alumni Spotlight: Samantha Lint Finds Windows for Justice When Every Door Has Closed

During her time at HLS, Samantha Lint, JD '20 was an active member of the human rights community on campus. Three years after her graduation from Harvard Law School, Lint is a part of a team



building, and winning, some of the most creative and complicated human rights lawsuits in the United States. [Read more.](#)

We're also thrilled to share two other Clinic Alumni Profiles from Harvard Law Today:

[Jason Gelbort JD'13](#) & [Lauren Herman JD'13](#)

Clinician Commentary & News

2023 Religion and Foreign Policy: Just Society Workshop

Susan Farbstein at *The Council on Foreign Relations* | May 2023

Susan Farbstein spoke at the Just Society Workshop hosted by the Council on Foreign Relations in New York about where the human rights movement has been successful through collaboration and where it has fallen behind, including in advancing diversity and equity internally within human rights organizations. A recording of the panel can be found [here](#).



Cluster Munitions Convention Offers Roadmap for New Autonomous Weapons Treaty

Bonnie Docherty in *Just Security* | May 2023

May 30, 2023 marked the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the 10th of autonomous weapons systems (AWS) being raised at the UN. In a new piece for *Just Security*, Docherty argues that proponents of an AWS treaty should look to the successful cluster munition convention negotiating process for inspiration and guidance. [Read more.](#)



Reflections on Iraq 2003: Witnessing History, Documenting Civilian Harm

Bonnie Docherty | May 2023

On May 12, 2003, Docherty arrived in Baghdad with a Human Rights Watch team sent to document civilian casualties. Twenty years later, she reflects on her time in Iraq at a historical moment, the stories of individual civilians, and the mission as "a guide for increasing civilian protection in the future." [Read more.](#)



Defending Waste Pickers' Livelihoods: Lessons from Litigation in Latin America

Aminta Ossom, *Law & Informality Insights* | March 2023

Waste pickers have won several legal actions in Latin America over the past two decades. Ossom draws advocacy lessons from three emblematic

cases in the “Law & Informality Insights” series published by Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). [Read more.](#)



Latin America and Caribbean Nations Rally Against Autonomous Weapons Systems

Bonnie Docherty with co-author Mary Wareham, *Just Security* | March 2023

Docherty and Wareham on the importance of the February 2023 Belén [Communiqué](#) and the urgent need to start drafting new legally binding rules to prevent the automation of killing. [Read more.](#)



Harvard Law Today Spotlight: Holding the United Nations Accountable

Comment by Bea Lindstrom, *Harvard Law Today* | March 2023

A Harvard Law Today feature of Lindstrom and her clinical students' work seeking justice for lead-poisoned Roma and holding the UN accountable. [Read more.](#)



Implementation and Innovation: Humanitarian Disarmament in 2023

Bonnie Docherty, *Forum on the Arms Trade* | February 2023

Docherty writes about upcoming opportunities to build momentum for humanitarian disarmament in the "Looking Ahead 2023" series by the Forum on the Arms Trade. [Read more.](#)



Comings & Goings

Senior Clinical Instructor [Salma Waheedi](#) has been appointed Executive Director of the HLS Program on Law and Society in the Muslim World. Congratulations Salma! We will miss her at the Clinic but are so glad she will remain at the law school and look forward to continuing to work with Salma in her new role.

[Sanjana Nayak](#) joined us as our new Program Assistant at the start of the spring term. A graduate of Rutgers University-New Brunswick, she has prior experience in the public health and education non-profit space. We're thrilled to have her on our team!

Shout out to our newly elected student leaders for the 2023-2024 academic year!

Congratulations to all of our past and present IHRC students taking on these roles! (And apologies to anyone we inadvertently missed!)

Victoria Abut, President of LAMBDA

Adriana Bones, President of Women's Law Association

Ariq Hatibie, Co-Editor in Chief (EIC) of Human Rights Journal

Apsara Iyer, EIC of Harvard Law Review

Jacquelyn Kantack, Co-EIC of National Security Journal
Julia Lee, Co-EIC of International Law Journal
Zoe Shamis, Vice President of Advocates
Jake Soria, Co-President of Advocates
Ariel Talbert, President of Black Law Students Association
Hina Uddin, Co-President of Advocates



Congrats!

**Visit our
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