

# Human Rights Treaty Obligations and the U.S.: The Rocky Road to Rights

June 15, 2023

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

### Keynote Speaker:

**Margaret Satterthwaite:** Margaret Satterthwaite is the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers. She was appointed by the UN Human Rights Council in October 2022. She is a Professor of Clinical Law at New York University School of Law, where she directs the Global Justice Clinic and serves as a Faculty Director of the Robert and Helen Bernstein Institute for Human Rights and the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice. She has a BA in Writing, Literature, and Gender from the New School and an MA in Literature and Cultural Studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz. She graduated magna cum laude from the NYU School of Law. She has clerked on the U.S. Court of Appeals and the International Court of Justice. Over the course of her career, she has litigated in international and domestic fora, including the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. She served as the co-founder and director of Amnesty International USA's program to defend the human rights of those persecuted on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. She also worked with Street Law, Human Rights First, and the Haitian Truth and Justice Commission. She has also served as a human rights consultant and advising expert to the World Health Organization, the World Bank, and two UN Special Rapporteurs. She has been a member of the boards of directors of several human rights organizations, including Amnesty International USA, the Global Initiative on Economic and Social Rights, the International Service for Human Rights, and Digital Democracy.

#### *Introduction:*

**Jamil Dakwar:** Jamil Dakwar is the director of the American Civil Liberties Union's Human Rights Program (HRP). Mr. Dakwar advocates before the U.S. government on human rights issues, focusing specifically on the domestic implementation of U.S. human rights obligations. He serves as the ACLU's main representative to the United Nations and leads the ACLU's advocacy before regional and international bodies, including the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Prior to joining the ACLU in 2004, Mr. Dakwar worked at Human Rights Watch on issues of torture and detention in Egypt, Morocco, Israel, and the occupied Palestinian territory. He was a senior attorney with Adalah, a leading human rights group in Israel. He is a graduate of Tel Aviv University and NYU School of Law. Currently, Mr. Dakwar is an adjunct professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY), Bard College, and Hunter College.

### Session One:

#### *Panelists*

**Patty Ferguson-Bohnee:** Patty Ferguson-Bohnee is a Clinical Professor of Law and the Faculty Director of the Indian Legal Program at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University. She also serves as the Native Vote Election Protection Coordinator for the State of Arizona. She earned a bachelor's degree with honors in Native American Studies from Stanford University and a JD from Columbia University School of Law. She was a Fulbright Scholar to France and has clerked for the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals. Throughout her career, she has worked as an associate within the Indian Law and Tribal Relations Practice Group at Sacks Tierney P.A. in Phoenix, AZ, and has litigated complex

voting rights cases and drafted legislation on behalf of indigenous tribes. She has written and spoken extensively on topics such as Indian tribal recognition within the U.S., indigenous voting rights, and the effects of climate change on Indigenous peoples. She is a member of the Pointe-au-Chien Indian tribe.

**Pilar Herrero:** Pilar Herrero is a Senior Staff Attorney on the U.S. Human Rights team at the Center for Reproductive Rights, which uses international human rights law to strengthen domestic legal advocacy for reproductive freedom and to hold the U.S. accountable for human rights violations. She co-leads the Center's work on maternal health in the U.S., focusing on promoting racial/ethnic and gender justice through reproductive health. She holds a B.S. in biology and a JD from the University of Washington, as well as an LLM in international legal studies from NYU School of Law.

**Maryum Jordan:** Maryum Jordan is a Climate Justice Attorney at EarthRights International. She holds a BA in Anthropology from Harvard College and earned her JD from Harvard Law School in 2014. She previously served as counsel for the Special Litigation and Advocacy Project at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. She has engaged in international human rights litigation against large corporations, organizing with grassroots organizations and indigenous leaders in Peru and Ecuador, and worked to combat environmental racism within the United States.

**Ian Kysel:** Ian Kysel is an Assistant Clinical Professor of Law at Cornell Law School where he is the founder and director of the Transnational Disputes Clinic and a faculty member in the Migration and Human Rights Program. He is currently also serving as a Non-Resident Fellow at the Zolberg Institute on Migration and Mobility at the New School. He is a founder and director of the Migrant Rights Initiative and a founder of the Global Strategic Litigation Council for Refugee Rights. He holds a BA with high honors from Swarthmore College, and both JD magna cum laude and LLM. in Advocacy with distinction from Georgetown University Law Center. He has authored many published works on international migration, human rights law, and U.S. immigration policy. He has previously engaged in both domestic and international litigation while working with the ACLU, Human Rights Watch, and within the International Arbitration Group and Public International Law Practice at Shearman & Sterling.

#### *Moderator*

**Cynthia Soohoo:** Cynthia Soohoo (Cindy) is a Professor at Law at CUNY Law and Co-Director of the Human Rights and Gender Justice Clinic. She is an author and frequent commentator on reproductive rights and justice, women's human rights, and U.S. human rights advocacy. She has authored submissions to the U.S. Supreme Court, appellate courts and international forums on access to abortion, forced sterilization and criminalization of reproductive choices. From 2008-2011, she was the Director of the U.S. Legal Program at the Center for Reproductive Rights, where she managed U.S. litigation and state advocacy work. From 2001-2007, she was the Director of the U.S. Human Rights Program at Columbia Law School's Human Rights Institute and a supervising attorney with the law school's Human Rights Clinic. She is a cum laude graduation of Williams College and the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

## **Session Two:**

#### *Panelists*

**Margaret Huang:** Margaret Huang is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). She holds a BS. degree in Foreign Service from Georgetown University and a Master of International Affairs degree from Columbia University. Prior to her current role at SPLC, she served as a director for a number of human rights organizations, including Amnesty International USA,

the Rights Working Group, the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Human Rights, and the US program at Global Rights. She is the author of “Going Global: Appeals to International and Regional Human Rights Bodies,” a chapter within *Bringing Human Rights Home* by Praeger Publishers. She has worked with members of Congress to draft legislation and has advocated before UN human rights bodies and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

**Dr. Alisa Warren:** Dr. Alisa Warren is the Executive Director of the Missouri Commission on Human Rights and the current President of the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies (IAOHRA). She holds a BS degree, a Master of Public Administration degree, and a PhD in Applied Social Sciences in the area of Community Development and Social Disparities, all from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She has spoken as an expert on human rights and social justice across multiple media programs and at local, state, and national events. Over the past twenty years she has held numerous high-level positions within the Missouri state executive branch, including Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity and Director of the States’ Supplier Diversity Program. She has also served on a wide range of boards and committees within civil society, including the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Missouri State Advisory Council and the U.S. President’s Initiative on Race.

**Dr. Domenico Zipoli:** Dr. Domenico Zipoli is a Project Coordinator at the Geneva Human Rights Platform (GHRP) and a Research Fellow at the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights. He holds a PhD in International Human Rights Law from the University of Oslo, a Master of Laws (LLM) in International Human Rights Law from Lund University and a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) from the University of Exeter. As a PhD fellow at the Norwegian Center for Human Rights, he successfully defended his doctoral thesis: *The Power of Engagement: Assessing the Effectiveness of Cooperation between United Nations Human Rights Treaty Bodies and National Human Rights Institutions*. His research expertise is in connectivity among human rights mechanisms, and national strategies for monitoring and implementing international human rights obligations and recommendations. He is currently leading a research project which aims to contribute to better and more coordinated implementation, reporting and follow-up of international human rights recommendations through a global study on digital human rights tracking tools and databases. Additionally, through his role at the GHRP, he provides expert input to Geneva-based international orgs and coordinates projects, events, and trainings. He was previously a Research Assistant for the Academic Platform on Treaty Body Review 2020, a Research Trainee at the European Union’s Fundamental Rights Agency, and a Research Assistant at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.

#### *Respondent*

**Karen L. Stevens:** Karen L. Stevens currently serves as Policy Senior Counsel and Coordinator of the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division’s International Program. In this capacity, she works on the reporting and implementation of international human rights treaties and provides advice and technical assistance on domestic civil rights matters. Karen Stevens was a member of the United States delegations for the 2010 Universal Periodic Review and 2014 Convention on the Elimination of All Racial Discrimination and has represented the United States before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Since 2012, she has served as the U.S. National Point of Contact for Hate Crimes for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. She previously worked as Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General where she provided legal and policy advice on the drafting and enactment of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Hate Crimes Act. She has designed and conducted trainings on federal hate crimes laws and data collection for law enforcement, faith leaders and NGOs in several U.S. states and three countries in Europe and handled criminal appeals involving a racially motivated cross burning, human trafficking, and religious bias in the U.S. courts. Karen Stevens started her legal career as a clerk

for the Honorable David S. Tatel, at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. She is a graduate of the University of Michigan, and the University of Michigan Law School.

*Moderator*

**Lisa Reinsberg:** Lisa Reinsberg is the founder and Executive Director of the International Justice Resource Center, an adjunct professor at the University of San Francisco School of Law, and a Visiting Fellow with the Centre for Fundamental Rights at the Hertie School. She previously worked as an attorney with Prisoners' Legal Services of Massachusetts, a Rómulo Gallegos legal fellow with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and an advocate at the Cabrini Center for Immigrant Legal Assistance of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. As a Fulbright Fellow, she conducted research into Latin American NGOs' engagement with the Inter-American Commission and Court. She holds a BA from the University of California, San Diego, a JD from Georgetown University Law Center, and an LLM. from the University of California, Berkeley School of Law.