

CAHRnews

Centre for Applied Human Rights newsletter

Dear Friends,

This is the Centre for Applied Human Rights' (CAHR) first bi-annual newsletter, reflecting the Centre's achievements in 2013. Over the past year CAHR has hosted four workshops and secured two research grants. Its staff and fellows have received awards recognizing their work; it has expanded its work in collaboration with NGOs in Egypt; and found new, creative ways of engaging the local community and visiting fellows in human rights through arts.

I am particularly excited to present to you the Special Issue on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) published in the *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, as well as two books published by CAHR's Artist in Residence in collaboration with local schools and visiting HRDs.

I hope that you will take an interest in CAHR's work, share it with anyone else with an interest in human rights and stay in touch with us.

Sanna Eriksson
Centre Co-ordinator
CAHR

Publications

Journal of Human Rights Practice Special Issue: Protecting HRDs

On the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, CAHR along with Amnesty International and the Human Rights and Social Justice Research Institute of London Metropolitan University co-edited a Special Issue on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders for the *Journal of Human Rights Practice* in November 2013. This ground-breaking Special Issue brings together reflections from practitioners and human rights defenders around the world on the risks involved in human rights work and the strategies and tactics used to protect human rights defenders.

Human Rights and Participatory Art

CAHR's Artist in Residence [Juliana Mensah](#) has published two books resulting from participatory arts workshops held as part of a [Leverhulme Trust](#) residency. *Chocolate Factory* is a book of short stories inspired by the theme chocolate and human rights. The stories in the anthology are the shortlisted entries from a competition for youth delivered in conjunction with Amnesty International and Stairwell Books and run as part of the [York Human Rights City](#) network's Chocolate and Human Rights festival in October 2013. On 23 January 2014 the book was launched at the Fair Trade Schools awards evening, which included a reading by one of the winning young authors. The second book, *Defending Writes*, is a collection of narratives by human rights defenders on the Protective Fellowship Scheme for Human Rights Defenders at Risk in 2012-2013. The work was created during participatory arts workshops held between January and May 2013.



Left, Competition Winner Tom Haygarth with Juliana Mensah; Right, 'Defending Writes'

Developing Legal Aid for Refugees in Egypt

How can the human rights programming concretely improve the lives of the marginalised? How can lawyers work to protect rights that aren't even recognised in domestic law? As the co-founder and vice-chairman of the [Egyptian Foundation for Refugee Rights \(EFRR\)](#), [Martin Jones](#) has been struggling to find answers to these questions. The answers to these questions have become even more important as EFRR has recently become the largest provider of legal services to refugees in the Global South, with a staff of more than 100, and as the number of refugees in Egypt has nearly doubled (and is set to double again in the next 18 months). Amidst all the attention to developments in Egypt we often forget the plight of the 200,000 refugees. Martin's work with EFRR, and its dedicated staff, provides an ideal opportunity to develop new models of legal aid and understandings of the dynamic of legal empowerment.

Rights in Action

Transformative Justice in Tunisia and Egypt

CAHR is delighted to have secured a three year grant from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to study transformative justice in Tunisia and Egypt. The large, interview-based study will document local priorities for change and analyse whether transitional justice can address the broad original demands of the revolutions (bread, freedom and dignity), rather than simply a narrow range of civil and political rights concerns. The research will be led by CAHR in collaboration with the Institute for Gender and Women's Studies at the American University in Cairo (AUC) and has a capacity building component. [Professor Paul Gready](#), the lead researcher on the project, said "This is a terrific opportunity for CAHR to profile its research on transitional justice and in North Africa. It epitomises our interest in collaborative, inter-disciplinary and practice-led research."



Cairo: Can transitional justice address the demands of the revolution?

Strengthening the Security of Human Rights Defenders at Risk

CAHR is launching a three-year international research project analysing the security management practices of human rights defenders at risk and examining how these practices intersect with protection initiatives conducted on their behalf by protection-oriented actors, in particular, civil society networks of HRDs. [Dr Alice Nah](#) is the lead investigator for this project. The intended outcomes of the project are to enable HRDs at risk as well as their supporters (in particular, civil society practitioners, law- and policy-makers, intergovernmental officials, and donors) to use this knowledge and understanding in ways that strengthen the overall security of HRDs in different contexts around the world.

University Teaching Scholarship for Research on Human Rights Defenders at Risk

CAHR is pleased to announce a three-year University Teaching Scholarship for a full-time doctoral student planning to conduct research on the security and protection of human rights defenders at risk.

The scholarship comprises a UK/EU fee waiver and a stipend of £7,000. Students must begin their studies on 1 October 2014. Overseas stu-

dents are welcome to apply, but would need to bear the cost of the difference in fees. The Scholarship holder will teach for up to 50 hours a year on CAHR's innovative online distance learning programme, *Defending Human Rights*.

The deadline for applications is 30 April 2014. For information on the application process see york.ac.uk/cahr/news/2014/uts-scholarship.

CAHR Workshops in 2013

Human Rights Defenders at Risk:

From 15-17 May 2013, CAHR together with the Human Rights and Social Justice Research Institute at London Metropolitan University and Amnesty International organized a research workshop bringing together around 40 human rights defenders, practitioners and academic scholars to discuss the development of research on human rights defenders. Through panel presentations and structured exercises, participants outlined research gaps and highlighted ways in which a collaborative research agenda could be strengthened.

Legal Empowerment in Transitions:

CAHR organized a two-day workshop on 'Legal Empowerment in Transitions' in late June 2013 that brought together some 30 scholars and practitioners working on access to justice, transitional justice, and peace-building in fragile and conflict affected situations to discuss the potential added value of legal empowerment thinking and programming during post-conflict and post-authoritarian transitions. The aim was to examine whether and how legal empowerment might be linked to larger processes of state-building, peace-building, and justice sector reform. The workshop was organised by [Lars Waldorf](#) and generously funded by the University of York's Research Priming Fund. Initial outputs include a special issue of the *International Journal*

of Human Rights (late 2014) and a chapter by Lars in an edited volume titled *International Law and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy* (Routledge, 2015).

Translating Freedom:

From 1-3 July 2013, CAHR hosted the final event funded by an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHCR) network grant on the theme of 'Translating Freedom'. In this final workshop, organised by professor Paul Gready, three main themes were addressed: vernacularising human rights and law; marginalised groups in times of transition; and translating ethics: documenting the past. Speakers at the York workshop included academics from Northern Ireland, South Africa and the USA and a range of NGOs (International Centre for Transitional Justice, Videre est Credere, Committee on the Administration of Justice, Swiss Peace Foundation, South African History Archive). Two ideas for new research projects emerged from the workshop, the first on 'Representation in Transition' and the second entitled 'Archives and Dealing with the Past: Truth,

Denial and Challenging Flawed Remedies in Transitional Contexts'.

Cities as Sanctuary: Under the auspices of the York Human Rights City network (UK) and the Human Rights Cities project (The Netherlands), CAHR and Utrecht University hosted a 2 day workshop on Cities as Sanctuary on 9-10 July 2013. The aim of the workshop was to discuss best practice and challenges, and develop a research agenda, relating to the role of cities and local authorities in providing protection to two specific groups: 1) international human rights defenders; and 2) asylum seekers and refugees. The workshop was opened by the Lord Mayor of York, Councillor Julie Gunnell, and was attended by academics, NGO staff and personnel from local authorities across Yorkshire. Presentations were given on initiatives including the new EU Shelter City initiative for human rights defenders; the City of Sanctuary movement for asylum seekers and refugees in the UK and the International Cities of Refuge Network for writers and artists.



Translating Freedom: Paul Gready and Simon Robins

Awards

UN award for research conducted by CAHR staff

A project aimed at helping residents of a township in Mozambique to 'future proof' their community against climate change, in which CAHR played a key role, has been recognised by the United Nations. The UN declared the Public Private People Partnerships for Climate Compatible Development (4PCCD) project one of the 2013 Lighthouse Activities under its Momentum for Change initiative.

The project enabled residents in the informal settlements in Maputo to devise a blueprint for local development under climate change. Community representatives have now started negotiations with government institutions and the private sector to implement the proposals. [Dr Jonathan Ensor](#) said: "It is wonderful news that the project has been recognised and we are privileged to have played a part in its genesis. The project has demonstrated both the capacity of the poorest local citizens to play a central role in local planning and their resourcefulness in 'future proofing' their neighbourhood against climate change. This project illustrates how respecting the rights of the world's poorest people is a critical step in ensuring they can respond to climate change."



Oxfam Novib / PEN International award for Protective Fellows

[Dina Meza](#) from Honduras and [Abdiaziz Abdinur Ibrahim](#) from Somalia were two of three journalists awarded the prestigious [Oxfam Novib/PEN International free expression award](#) in The Hague on 16 January 2014. Dina was a visiting fellow on the CAHR's Protective Fellowship Scheme for Human Rights Defenders at Risk in spring 2013. Abdiaziz Abdinur Ibrahim joined the Scheme for a 6-month fellowship in October 2013. Both journalists work in extremely difficult environments facing risks and direct threats for writing on and defending human rights.



Abdiaziz Abdinur Ibrahim



Dina Meza

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