


# JOINT CONVENING OF THE SOCIAL PRACTICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS 2023 & 6TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

Decolonization and Development for Africa and People of  
African Descent  
Dayton, Ohio  
November 2-4, 2023

The University of Dayton Human Rights Center, in collaboration with the Centre for Human Rights of the Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria, and the Free State Centre for Human Rights of the Faculty of Law, University of the Free State, will host a joint convening, bringing together the 2023 Social Practice of Human Rights Conference and the 6th International Conference on the Right to Development, which will be held for the first time outside of the African continent.

As we mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), we will reflect on the growing discourse on decolonization and development in relation to the social practice of human rights, which centers the approaches of diverse communities, including activism, organizing, communications, artistic expressions, and reflective conversations. Our particular focus is on Africa, and individuals of African descent, and our work is firmly grounded in various frameworks such as the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development (1986) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (Banjul Charter).





Today, we recognize that the realization of the right to development is stymied by persistent growing inequality, poverty, conflict, unemployment, and the marginalization of women and girls. Africa's particular place in the international political economy is inextricably linked to and confounded by its former colonizers and current neo-colonial actors. Moreover, communities of African descent across the globe live in structural discrimination, scarred by poverty, underdevelopment, marginalization, social exclusion, and economic disparities. As the International Decade for People of African Descent draws to a close in 2024 and the Permanent Forum launches its work, transnational movements for racial justice have new platforms through which to bring the social practice of human rights to bear.

At this moment, we see the potential to disrupt the entrenched cycle generated by colonial and neocolonial dynamics by drawing on epistemologies of the Global South, particularly of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. The goal is to envision a new future of changing political, economic, feminist, and cultural engagement around Africa and people of African descent in the US and globally. Thus, we welcome submissions that offer new insights, tools, mutual learning, and transformational advocacy to shift the paradigm from the developmental and Pan-African approaches and to reframe, reenergize, and restructure connections and theorizations of rights and justice for Africa and communities of African descent.



We welcome contributions that focus on the following sub-themes or any related topic:

- **Inclusive development** - redistributive models, business and human rights, rights-based economies and financial institutions, global supply chains, inequalities, and Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Social transformation, movements & resistance** - new forms of civic and cultural engagement, education and pedagogy, the intersection of theater, art and activism, music, performance, and visual culture, new technologies and resistance to anti-rights movements, and democratic fragility.
- **Climate change and sustainability** - climate and environmental justice, ecological disaster, natural resources exploitation, building sustainable futures, corporate interests, and fiscal and economic dimensions.
- **Belonging in Africa and for People of African Descent** - migration, evolving feminist methods and the decolonization of norms, human rights in cities and localities, youth, intersectionality, identities, equity, racial and social justice, and reparations.

We especially encourage workshops, roundtables, and panels that bridge coalition thinking by placing scholars, policy designers, practitioners, artists, and activists in a space of engagement.



## ABOUT THE JOINT CONFERENCE 2023

The Social Practice of Human Rights conference, hosted by the University of Dayton's Human Rights Center since 2013, aims to bring together scholars and practitioners to reflect on social justice and human rights research and to foster potential collaborations and initiatives.

The Joint Convening is aimed at providing a space where interdisciplinary perspectives can be shared on current discourses on human rights, development, and the social practice of human rights.

The events will take place **November 2-4, 2023**, at the University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio. U.S. The Conference is planned as a hybrid event experience. In-person and some virtual participation is envisioned.

There will be a number of keynote conversations featuring thought leaders in this field, including **Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni**, Professor and Chair of Epistemologies of the Global South with Emphasis on Africa at the University of Bayreuth in Germany and author of *Decolonization, development, and knowledge in Africa: Turning over a new leaf* (2022).

For more information about SPHR and to stay updated on keynote speakers and conference activities:

- See [go.udayton.edu/hrc](https://go.udayton.edu/hrc)
- Email [hrc@udayton.edu](mailto:hrc@udayton.edu)
- Follow [@udhumanrights](https://twitter.com/udhumanrights) #SPHR23



# SUBMIT A PROPOSAL, ROUNDTABLE, OR WORKSHOP:

Submissions are due by **May 8, 2023**, through [[ecommons](#)]

Submissions must contain:

- A title of the paper, roundtable, or workshop
- An abstract or concept of 300 or fewer words
- A biographical statement (no more than 200 words) for each author or contributor, including name, title, and institution/organization affiliation.

The selection committee will prioritize **collaborative submissions by practitioners and academics** that bridge the gap between scholarly analysis and practical implementation, aiming to advance new research methods, tools, and strategies applicable in real-world contexts.

Submitters will be notified of the status of their submissions by **June 2, 2023**. Contributions will be considered for an edited volume or special issue to be published in an accredited and peer-reviewed journal in 2024. Presenters must submit the full text of their papers (e.g., academic paper, report, manuscript, white paper, concept note) to the Human Rights Center via email to [hrc@udayton.edu](mailto:hrc@udayton.edu) by **September 29, 2023**.

*Limited travel support is available to practitioners and presenters from the Global South as well as graduate students, junior scholars, and contingent faculty with financial need.*

