



ADVANCING SCIENCE. SERVING SOCIETY

Program News

Science and Human Rights Coalition

From the UN

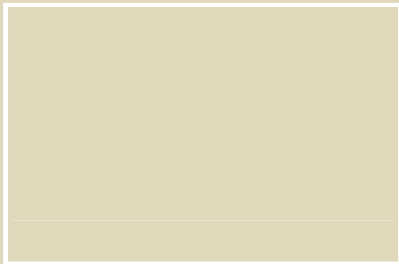
About

Science and Human Rights Program Newsletter

Program News

Community Wireless Networks Could Have

"Transformative" Impact



"The right to receive and impart information is a universal human right that can be enhanced and protected by providing access to wireless communication for all,

experts told a recent meeting at AAAS . . . But at the May 28-30 International Summit for Community Wireless Networks, hosted by AAAS, specialists noted that providing low-cost, universal access to wireless networks has not been easy, even in some tech-savvy locales." View the [full article](#).

Geospatial Technologies and Human Rights Project Secures Data Grant

The European Space Agency (ESA) recently agreed to grant Earth observation data to the Geospatial Technologies and Human Rights Project. This data will be used by the Project to research the effects of petroleum exploration on the availability of water to the people of South Sudan. Access to safe drinking water is one of the chief hurdles to development in Sudan, where rainfall is

ACTION ALERT

Call for Urgent Action on behalf of Saudi Political Scientist - An Action Alert from the American Political Science Association ([link](#))

SHRP EVENTS

**June 9, 2008
Washington, DC**
[5th Science and Human Rights Coalition Planning Meeting](#)

PUBLICATIONS

Societies Without Borders: Human Rights & the Social Sciences
Judith Blau and Alberto Moncada (eds) ([link](#))

Societies without Borders is a bi-annual journal. One main objective of the journal is to "bring scholars from different continents closer together by showing their different approaches to the same research material, especially human rights and public goods... [The journal]



Program News

Community Wireless Networks Could Have

"Transformative" Impact



"The right to receive and impart information is a universal human right that can be enhanced and protected by providing access to wireless communication for all,

experts told a recent meeting at AAAS . . . But at the May 28-30 International Summit for Community Wireless Networks, hosted by AAAS, specialists noted that providing low-cost, universal access to wireless networks has not been easy, even in some tech-savvy locales." View the [full article](#).

Geospatial Technologies and Human Rights Project Secures Data Grant

The European Space Agency (ESA) recently agreed to grant Earth observation data to the Geospatial Technologies and Human Rights Project. This data will be used by the Project to research the effects of petroleum exploration on the availability of water to the people of South Sudan. Access to safe drinking water is one of the chief hurdles to development in Sudan, where rainfall is highly seasonal and reliable wells are scarce. Since the arrival of the petroleum industry in the area ten years ago, reports of irresponsible water management have amplified among the local population, increasing tensions in an already volatile region. In an effort to provide an objective view of the situation, the Project will use the Advanced Synthetic Aperture Radar aboard ESA's ENVISAT spacecraft to attempt to measure terrain deformation caused by excessive pumping of groundwater resources.

Right to Benefit from Scientific Progress - Article 15 New Resources

What does the right to benefit from scientific progress mean in the context of HIV/AIDS trials, the environment or the right to food? How can it be applied to issues of maternal mortality? Can the right to benefit from scientific

also aims at breaking down the walls between the disciplines of Social Sciences, Human Rights (as formulated in the international standards of the UN-related organizations), Environmental Sciences, and the Humanities."

How e-technologies can assist education on human and minorities' rights

Wolfgang Benedek, Mitja Zagar, Sasa Madacki (eds) ([link](#))

"The results of the research project 'ICT service in human rights education: The role of digital libraries,' ... have been published as an e-book. [The] aim of the project was to analyze digital libraries in South-Eastern Europe with regard to contents and applied human rights education, and to compare them to digital libraries in Western Europe. Besides structural analysis and a comparison of good practices the new publication provides also a rough guide for how to effectively set up digital human rights libraries."



progress be reconciled with intellectual property rights? These and other questions are considered in new materials, articles and international instruments added to our Article 15 resource page. Click [here](#) to find these and other related materials.

SHRP poster commemorates the 60th Anniversary of the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights

2008 marks the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). To commemorate this important milestone, the Science and Human Rights Program has designed a poster, using the double helix to represent the fundamental nature of human rights, and highlighting the right of everyone to "share in scientific advancement and its benefits." Download your free copy [here](#). We encourage you to reproduce and share this poster as appropriate.

Science and Human Rights Coalition

Next Planning Meeting - June 9, 2008

Working toward a public launch in January 2009, the Coalition will hold its fifth planning meeting on Monday, June 9 at 8:45am-12:00pm at AAAS headquarters in downtown Washington, DC. Meeting participants will consider a recommendation for membership eligibility and requirements. Participants will also review specific recommendations for two of the Coalition's five areas of planned activity. These areas are: Service to the Community of Scientific Associations; and Information Materials. View the agenda and meeting materials, and RSVP [here](#).

Introducing our Areas of Activity: *Science Ethics and Human Rights*

"Science Ethics and Human Rights" is one of the Coalition's areas of planned activity. The primary goal of this area is to raise the relevance and value of human rights principles in the ethical underpinnings of scientific research and the practice of science. Proposed activities to be undertaken as part of this area of focus include the development of common principles for guiding the conduct of science in a manner consistent with human rights;

and consideration of the value of integrating human rights into the ethics codes of research societies and scientific associations. Further details about the rationale, objectives, and content of this area of activity are



available [here](#). If you wish to find out more about this area of activity and how your association can participate, please contact the committee chairs, [Rob Albro](#) (American Anthropological Association) and [Paula Skedsvold](#) (American Educational Research Association).

Introducing our Members: *American Society of Plant Biologists*

"The American Society of Plant Biologists was founded in 1924 to promote the growth and development of plant biology, to encourage and publish research in plant biology, and to promote the interests and growth of plant scientists in general. Over the decades the Society has evolved and expanded to provide a forum for molecular and cellular biology as well as to serve the basic interests of plant science. It publishes [Plant Physiology](#) and [The Plant Cell](#). ASPB members span six continents, and its members work in such diverse areas as academia, government laboratories, and industrial and commercial environments. The Society also has a large student membership. ASPB plays a key role in uniting the international plant science disciplines." [Read more](#).

For more information about the Coalition and how you or your organization can become involved, please [visit our website](#). To receive the latest information about the Coalition, please sign-up for our [Coalition Listserv](#).

From the UN

Independent Expert on Human Right to Water and Sanitation



On May 22, the UN Human Rights Council held a Special Session to address the negative impact of the worsening world food crisis on the realization of the right to food. In a background note prepared for the meeting by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier de Schutter, specific emphasis is given to the importance



of "redirecting agricultural science and technology in order to ensure that it addresses the needs of small-scale farmers in developing

countries, and that it meets the challenge of sustainability, particularly in the context of climate change." [Read more.](#)

Equitable Access to the Benefits of IT

In a statement marking World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon acknowledged that "the reach of communications technology is not universal, its benefits have not been shared equally." Highlighting the particular challenges faced by people with disabilities, Ban affirmed that "we must find creative solutions, including the development of new assistive technologies, and facilitate a broader access to ICT." Ban urged policy-makers and industry leaders to "accelerate scientific and technical research aimed at developing technologies that will be inclusive and accessible to all." [Read more.](#)

Issues before the World Health Organization

- ***Enhancing Access to Medicines***

The 61st World Health Assembly came to a close on May 24, having set the World Health Organization on a course "to tackle longstanding, new and looming threats to global public health." Among its achievements, the Health Assembly endorsed a strategy to address the inter-related issues of public health, innovation and intellectual property. Specifically, the strategy is designed "to promote new approaches to pharmaceutical research and development (R&D), and to enhance access to medicines. It is also designed to provide a medium-term framework for enhancing and making sustainable essential R&D relevant to diseases impacting developing countries." [Read more.](#)

- ***Evaluation of the WHO Publications Policy***

The World Health Organization (WHO) has launched an overhaul of its publications policy amidst concerns that the policy will "undermine the independence, neutrality and editorial freedom of WHO." With a view to increasing

the "quality . . . cost-effectiveness . . . and accessibility" of WHO publications, the new policy requires that publications relating to the workings of a particular government, or that address controversial health-related issues, be subject to additional clearance; that the same requirement be imposed on regional offices; and that at the beginning of each year WHO prepare a master list of planned publications for executive approval. In a letter to WHO Director General, Dr. Margaret Chan, over 50 representatives of civil society organizations raised their concerns that these measures threatened to introduce political considerations into the publication development and review process; would undermine the ability of regional and national offices to take pro-public health initiatives that may be considered "controversial"; and would hinder WHO's ability to deal with new issues or concerns as they arose during the year. Click [here](#) to find out more about the policy.

About the SHRP Newsletter

The Science & Human Rights Newsletter is issued monthly by the AAAS Science and Human Rights Program. Through the newsletter we strive to keep scientists and human rights practitioners informed with news items, program updates, new resources, and upcoming events at the intersection of science and human rights. Submissions to the newsletter are welcome and can be made via our [online submission form](#).

Please visit our website to learn more about our [programs](#) as well as our [past accomplishments](#).

Science and Human Rights Program

American Association for the Advancement of Science
1200 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005

Tel: 202 326 6600; Fax: 202 289 4950

Email: shrp@aaas.org

<http://shr.aaas.org>