

International Conference

FROM THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION TO THE RIGHT TO PEACE: HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS IN THE COLLAPSING MULTILATERAL ORDER

University of Padova, 10 -11 November 2025



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI PADOVA



HUMAN RIGHTS CENTRE
ANTONIO PAPISCA

Spigi DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE,
LAW AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES



CONCEPT NOTE

This international conference aims to explore the intricate and complex relationship between self-determination, peace, core human and peoples' rights and multilateralism in the current era, marked by rising aggressive nationalism and a return of power politics and armed conflict. The last decade has shown an unrelenting increase in unilateral war actions, forbidden under the UN Charter, including those launched by Russia against Ukraine, and those advanced by Israel against Gaza, Lebanon, Syria and more recently Iran, with the direct engagement of the US. Lots of people and groups are having their fundamental rights and freedoms smashed by these actions and their consequences. In Gaza, the situation in which civilians find themselves, especially women and children, is beyond imagination, with authoritative voices in academia and civil society identifying it as a genocide, and with ethnic cleansing looming in the words and actions of the Israeli and US Governments concerning the future of the Strip. The European Union and its members show to have completely forgotten (or betrayed) the values on which European political integration has long been claimed to be built, displaying clear self-interested double standards in approaching ongoing international situations and a short-sighted but strong and ultimate belief in the power of rearmament. The UN, turning 80 in 2025, have received unprecedented blows to their legitimacy, credibility and "moral force". The most powerful states are bending, as never before since 1945, international law to the particular political interests mining the normative basis of international politics. Member states are also cutting resources for global multilateral cooperation and institutions, leading to a process of streamlining of UN functioning which, however, risks flattening the diversity and visibility of its action for peace, human and peoples' rights, sustainable development and climate justice, as implied in the recommendations of the recent UN80 Task Force's memo about the actions to be taken. Still, while institutions and programmes for human rights and social and economic development are cut to the bones, the arms race is skyrocketing in every part of the world with possibly disastrous nuclear outcomes on human life and the environment. On its part, the climate crisis is disappearing from the radars of international politics reducing the opportunity for agency, participation and protection of civil society, especially vulnerable groups, indigenous peoples and minorities.

Framed within such a daunting global context, the conference aims to examine how the fundamental right to self-determination and other people's rights, such as those to a healthy environment and to development intersect with the individual and collective aspiration for peace and justice before the current status of international politics and international law. It seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of human and peoples' rights and their multilateral frame in the current complex geopolitical landscape and to more enhanced research on these crucial elements of global, transnational and national politics, with the University of Padova at its centre. It is open to the participation of scholars (including Ph.D. students and early career researchers) and human rights practitioners and looks for ideas and practices to resist the current existential challenges for the survival of an international order based on inclusive multilateral order based on dialogue, inclusion, respect and shared values.

PROGRAMME

Monday, 10th November 2025

9:30-10:00 Archivio Antico, Palazzo Bo

Salutation and short introduction

Marco Mascia, President of the Human Rights Centre "Antonio Papisca", Unesco Chair "Human Rights, Democracy and Peace", University of Padova

Sara Pennicino, Head of the MA Degree Programme in Human Rights and Multi-Level Governance, University of Padova

Maria Cristina Ginevra, International Joint Ph.D Programme "Human Rights, Society, and Multi-level Governance", University of Padova

Pietro de Perini, Coordinator of the Conference's Scientific Committee, University of Padova

10:00-12:30

Opening Plenary Session

Human and Peoples' Rights in the Collapsing Multilateral Order

Chair: **Damien Short**, Human Rights Consortium, School of Advanced Studies, University of London

Speakers

Nazila Ghanea, University of Oxford, UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief

Gamze Erdem Türkelli, University of Antwerp, Law & Development Research Group

Jan Wouters, Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies, KU Leuven

12:30-14:00 Basilica, Palazzo Bo
Conference Lunch

14:30-16:00 Human Rights Centre,
Via Beato Pellegrino, 28

Parallel Research Panels, track A

PANEL 1A

How can global governance institutions better support peaceful self-determination claims of sub-state groups?

Chair: **Corinne Lennox**, Human Rights Consortium, School of Advanced Studies, University of London

Speakers

Uche Ndumele, Prime International Law Consults (PIL Consults)

Reframing Self-Determination: Electoral Integrity as a Pathway to Peace in Africa's Collapsing Multilateral Order

Vishnu Nair, Amity University Dubai

Negotiated Self-Determination and the Right to Peace: Towards an Institutional Framework for Consensual Secession

Chopra Tushti, Maharashtra National Law University Mumbai

Mediation Mandates 2.0: Operationalizing the Right to Self-Determination through Autonomy and Federal Bargains

Arenca Trashani, University "Luigj Gurakuqi" Shkodër, Albania

The relationship between state sovereignty and the right to self-determination and their impact to human rights protection

Leake Mekonen Tesfay, Aksum University School of Law

Fostering Peaceful Self-Determination in Federal Ethiopia: The State of Tigray in Focus

Sevanna Poghosyan, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich

Russia and the Right of Peoples to Self-Determination in International Law

PANEL 2A

How does marginalisation today shape "indigenous"?

Chair: **Paolo De Stefani**, Department of Political Science, Law and International Studies, University of Padova

Speakers

Nisha Bhaskar, KLE Law College

The Law That Forgot the Land: Indigeneity and the Epistemic Violence through Non-recognition

Martin Crook, University of the West of England

A Political Economy of Eco-genocide: The Ecocide-Genocide Nexus

David Montaluisa, Universidad Intercultural de las Nacionalidades y Pueblos Indígenas Amawtay Wasi

Rethinking the "Indigenous": Homogenization, Minoritization, and the Challenge of Plurinationality

Bodhi Ramteke, Advocate, Researcher, and Social Justice Practitioner

Caste and the Condition of Indigeneity: Dalits, Marginalisation, and the Expropriation of Rights

During the Conference, self-managed groups of students from the MA Degree Programme in Human Rights and Multi-level Governance (HRG) will hold a booth to promote their activities to participants. The groups include the Student Engagement Team (SET), the Advocacy Hub and the Latin-American Collective.

PANEL 3A

Shrinking Space: Indigenous and Minority Self-Determination in the Crisis of Multilateralism

Chair: **Magdalena Ratajczak**, Institute of International Studies, University of Wrocław

Speakers

Stella Pizzato, Independent Researcher/Consultant

The Cruel Irony behind Biodiversity Conservation: Forced Displacement and Fragmentation of Indigenous Peoples

Jarosław Jarzabek, University of Wrocław

Between a rock and a hard place. The Bahama People in Saudi Arabia

Rina Muhaj, UN OHCHR Fellow

Is minority protection still an EU criterion for enlargement countries? Minority struggles in Montenegro in the shadow of geopolitical pressures

Issamaldeen Alshanan, Un Ponte Per ETS

Weaponizing Water Forced Evictions and Ecocide in the Iraqi Marshlands

Mostafa Masjedi Arani, Saint Joseph University Beirut

Land, Home, and Homeland in Jewish-Israeli Legal Thought: Implications for the Palestinian Right to the City

Natalia Pietruszka, University of Wrocław

From exploitation to resistance: Indigenous struggles against environmental and organized crime

PANEL 4A

The Right to Development and the Crisis of Global Governance: Contestations between Multilateralism and Multistakeholderism

Chair: **Rossella De Falco**, Law & Development Research Group, Faculty of Law, University of Antwerp

Speakers

Azadeh Chalabi, School of Law and Social Justice at the University of Liverpool

The Right to Development as a Human Right to an Enabling Environment for Collective Wellbeing

Issa Souare, Sustainable Development Africa (SDA)

Community Data Sovereignty as a People's Right to Development in an AI-Driven Order

Camila Bertelli Kodric, University of Perugia

Accountability Mechanisms in the Age of Multistakeholderism: the case of the World Bank

Francesca Mussi, University of Trento

The Draft International Covenant on the Right to Development: Not All Hope Is Lost for the Realization of the Right to Development?

Ludovica Aricò, University of Padova

The International Action Against Child Labour: A Mirror of Evolving Global Dynamics

Himangshu Rathee, The NorthCap University

Indigenous Self-Determination and Resistance in the Ongoing Crisis of Multilateralism: Insights from India's Adivasi Communities

16:00-16:30 Coffee Break

17:00-18:30 Human Rights Centre

Parallel Research Panels, track B

PANEL 1B

Peoples' Rights and the Crisis of Multilateralism: Rethinking Collective Claims in a Fragmenting World

Chair: **Lisa Heschl**, UNESCO Chair in Human Rights and Human Security, University of Graz

Speakers

Adina-Iuliana Deacu, Research Institute for Sustainability at GFZ / Tianmei's World Academy

Reframing Business as Collective Economic Agency: A Systemic Shift Toward Peoples' Rights

Claire-Marie Beyet, Consultant

Peoples' Rights and Ecocide: Reclaiming Collective Environmental Justice Amid the Crisis of Multilateralism

Andrea Pelliconi, Southampton Law school;

Beya Mousli, University Paris Nanterre

The illusion of multilateralism in WS through demographic engineering, apartheid and denied self-determination

David Montaluisa, Universidad Intercultural de las Nacionalidades y Pueblos Indígenas Amawtay Wasi (Ecuador)

The Right to Self-Determination in Ecuador: Between Normative Recognition and Ontological Denial

Carlo Bortolami, University of Padova;

Francesca Fiorese, Diocese of Padova; **Sara Santilli**, University of Padova

SPIAZZATI: Reclaiming Civic Space among Young People between Work Uncertainty and the Right to Peace

Majd Owda, An-Najah National University;

Raed Abubadawia, Arab American University

The Impact of Israeli Settlements on the Palestinian Right to Self-Determination

PANEL 2B

The Human and People's Right to Peace: What margins of action before a failing international community?

Chairs: **Pietro de Perini** and **Angelica Vascotto**, University of Padova Human Rights Centre "A. Papisca"

Speakers

Zenobia Homan, King's College London;
Saman Omar, University of Duhok

Information as peacebuilding: grassroots strategies against chemical weapon misinformation in Kurdistan

John Duncan, School of Advanced Study, University of London

I don't care about human rights

Tancredi Marini, "La Sapienza" Rome University

The role of local authorities for the Right to Peace: the Italian case

Denise Zucchini, University of Padova; **Maria Anna Donati**, University of Firenze; **Sara Santilli**, University of Padova

Beyond Binaries: Mapping Italian Youth Orientations Toward Peace and War

Thi Ngoc Anh Nguyen, University of Padova; **Tamar Navdarashvili**, University of Milan
From Deepfake to Propaganda: The loopholes of the AI Act in Governing Harmful Synthetic Media

Katarzyna Widlas-Klimsiak, Institute of Law Sciences Polish Academy of Sciences

Disability Rights as a Test Case for Multilateralism: What the UN's Crisis Means for the Right to Peace

PANEL 3B

Reclaiming Space: Indigenous and Minority Self-Determination in the Crisis of Multilateralism

Chair: **Peter Johansson**, School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg and **Piergiuseppe Parisi**, Centre for Applied Human Rights & York Law School, University of York

Speakers

Philip Wade, Gothenburg University; **Malayna Raftopoulos**, Aalborg University

Mapuche Resistance and Perpendicularity at the Border

Lamia Yasin, Human Rights Center "A.Papisca" - University of Padova

Reclaiming Belonging: Palestinian Youth Movements in the '48 territories

Nina Bries Silva, European University Institute

Nasa Indigenous strategic litigation for Mother Earth: Decolonizing the human rights discourse through Indigenous territories

Jordan Thorne, Global Campus of Human Rights

From Marginalisation to Agency: Indigenous Self-Determination in Heritage Governance

Liubov Iashchenko, Sapienza University of Rome

Hybrid Cosmologies and Digital Diplomacy: Siberian Indigenous Peoples in Search of New International Spaces

PANEL 4B

The Right to Peace and to a Healthy Environment in Times of War and Polycrisis

Chair: **Roberto De Vogli**, Department of Developmental Psychology and Socialisation, University of Padova

Speakers

Malayna Raftopoulos, Aalborg University;
Doug Specht, University of Westminster

Cultivating Peace through Colombia's Green Transition

Charalampia Mikropoulou, Aix Marseille University

Weaponizing the Environment in Armed Conflict: Legal Gaps and the Right to Peace under International Humanitarian Law

Maria Fernanda Montes Ribeiro, Maastricht University

Starvation as a Method of Warfare: The Right to Peace and a Healthy Environment in Times of Polycrisis

Mariia Zheltukha, United Nations Development Programme; **Dilruba Begüm Kartepe**, Strategic Litigation and Research Centre (Ankara)

The Environment as a Weapon, the Environment as Reparation: Rethinking Rights to Peace and a Healthy Environment in Wartime Ukraine

Damien Short, Human Rights Consortium, School of Advanced Studies, University of London

Ecocide and the corporation

Tuesday, 11th November 2025

10:30-12:30 Teatro Ruzante,
Riviera Tito Livio, 45

Closing Plenary Roundtable

Human and People's Rights in the Collapsing Multilateral Order – Challenges and Ideas from a Practitioner's Viewpoint

Chairs

Orla Ní Cheallacháin, Global Campus of Human Rights

Pietro de Perini, Department of Political Science, Law and International Studies, University of Padova

Speakers

Martina Pignatti Morano, Un Ponte Per...,
Madiha Fareed, UNDP Huqooq-e-Pakistan II programme

Andrea De Domenico OCHA, Ukraine
Issa Amro, Director of Working for Peace and Justice in the Middle East

Nello Scavo, Avvenire

Maria Fernanda Salas Jimenez, MA student, Human Rights and Multi-level Governance, University of Padova



SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Valentina Carraro, Institute of Security and Global Affairs, Leiden University; **Karen Da Costa**, School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg; **Rossella De Falco**, Law & Development Research Group, Faculty of Law, University of Antwerp; **Paola Degani**, Department of Political Science, Law and International Studies, University of Padova; **Pietro de Perini**, Department of Political Science, Law and International Studies, University of Padova; **Paolo De Stefani**, Human Rights Centre, University of Padova; **Roberto De Vogli**, Department of Developmental Psychology and Socialisation, University of Padova; **Lisa Heschl**, UNESCO Chair in Human Rights and Human Security, University of Graz; **Peter Johansson**, School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg; **Corinne Lennox**, Human Rights Consortium, School of Advanced Studies, University of London; **Marco Mascia**, Human Rights Centre, UNESCO Chair in Human Rights, Democracy and Peace, University of Padova; **Orla Ní Chealla-cháin**, Global Campus of Human Rights; **Gerd Oberleitner**, UNESCO Chair in Human Rights and Human Security, University of Graz; **Piergiuseppe Parisi**, Centre for Applied Human Rights, University of York; **Magdalena Ratajczak**, Institute of International Studies, University of Wrocław, Poland; **Damien Short**, Human Rights Consortium, School of Advanced Studies, University of London; **Angelica Vascotto**, Department of Political Science, Law and International Studies, University of Padova.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

Katia Milan, Donatella Daniel, Luca Gazzola, Sofia Vanzan, Anna Cicala, Ylli Alija, Noemi Musella, Giulia Guatieri, Benedetta Rose Artolli.

The International conference is organised by the Human Rights Centre "Antonio Papisca" together with the UNESCO Chair Human Rights Democracy and Peace and with the support of the Department of Political Science, Law and International Studies of the University of Padova.

It benefits from the active collaboration, of the following partner institutes: the Human Rights Consortium at the University of London, the UNESCO Chair in Human Security and Human Rights at the University of Graz, the School of Global Studies at the University of Göteborg, the Centre for Applied Human Rights at the University of York, the Global Campus of Human Rights and the Institute of International Studies at the University of Wrocław.

CONFERENCE'S VENUES

The Opening Plenary Session takes place in the Archivio Antico, located in the historic headquarters of the University of Padova at the Palazzo Bo, via 8 febbraio, Padova.

The Closing Plenary Roundtable takes place in Teatro Ruzante, Riviera Tito Livio, 45, Padova

The panels take place at the headquarters of the Human Rights Centre, located in via Beato Pellegrino, 28, Padova.

CONTACTS

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