

May 2021



# MAGAZINE

Global Campus









**MANFRED NOWAK**  
Secretary General  
of the Global Campus  
of Human Rights

From 10 to 12 May 2021, the Global Campus of Human Rights organized its annual International Conference at Yerevan State University, the hub of our Caucasus Master Programme. Although it was primarily held online due to COVID-19 related restrictions, I was able to participate together with a few of my colleagues from the Venice Headquarters. The topic of the Conference was “Climate Change and Children: Impact, Rights and Participation”. I was highly impressed by the enthusiasm of many participating school children and young people, including organizers of the Fridays for Future strikes, who conveyed the message that children have not only a right to actively participate in all matters that directly affect them, but that they are already taking the lead in pushing political and economic leaders to take the current global climate crisis seriously by radically changing the global economic and political system with the aim of saving our planet from collapsing. Together we discussed the need for a legally enforceable human right of future generations to a clean and healthy environment, strategic climate-related litigation initiated by children, the idea of a trusteeship for future generations and even rights of animals, nature and Mother Earth.

As a city built in the Lagoon, Venice is particularly threatened by the rise in sea level caused by climate change. The Global Campus of Human Rights is fully dedicated to supporting the various movements of children and young people aimed at changing European and global climate policies and mitigating the effects of climate change. At next year’s Festa della Sensa, which is dedicated to the traditional relationship between Venice and the Sea, we may organize a symposium on the effects of climate change on the future of Venice in our Monastery of San Nicolò, with the active participation of children and young people. We are grateful to President Piero Rosa Salva for his interview and his interest in cooperating with the Global Campus on this and other ideas, how our human rights-related activities could be linked to some of the traditional cultural events taking place in this beautiful city with its magnificent 1600-year history. For example, together with the European Parliament, we are planning to organize a high-level annual Venice Conference on the State of Human Rights around the time of the Redentore Festival. We sincerely hope that EU Vice-President and High Representative Josep Borrell Fontelles, who expressed his full support for the Global Campus in his excellent interview, will participate in our Venice Conference.



We are equally grateful to Ambassador Umberto Vattani for his very kind interview and his offer to strengthen the cooperation between Venice International University and the Global Campus in relation to our partnership with countries and universities in the North African and Middle Eastern region. Since the Arab Master of Democracy and Human Rights is the youngest of our seven regional Master programmes, we may jointly organize a conference on issues of democracy and human rights in the Mediterranean region. These and similar events aimed at putting students and young people at the centre of developing Venice into a Human Rights City, also through drawing on the necessary lessons learnt from the COVID-19 Pandemic, could also be supported by the Government of Italy and the City of Venice, as the interviews with the Italian Minister for Public Administration, Renato Brunetta, and the Deputy Mayor of Venice Andrea Tomaello underlined.

Finally, I wish to thank our EMA student representatives Naomi van den Broeck and Charles-Antoine Leboeuf for their suggestion of using the COVID-19 Pandemic as a window of opportunity aimed at transforming Venice from a city of mass tourism to a more sustainable city welcoming higher numbers of international students rather than hit-and-run tourism. The Global Campus stands ready to assist the City of Venice in implementing such human rights-based reform policies.

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Interviews with:

H.E. Josep Borrell Fontelles,  
EU High Representative /  
Vice-President of the  
Commission (HR/VP)

Renato Brunetta,  
Italian Minister for the Public  
Administration

Ambassador Umberto Vattani,  
President of the Venice International  
University (VIU)

Piero Rosa Salva,  
President of VELA S.p.A., Organiser  
of Festa della Sensa

Naomi Van den Broeck and Charles-  
Antoine Leboeuf,  
European Master's in Human Rights  
and Democratisation, EMA 2020/2021  
Student Representatives

Andrea Tomaello,  
Deputy Mayor of Venice



## Interview with the EU High Representative / Vice-President of the Commission (HR/VP), H.E. Josep Borrell Fontelles



*In preparation of our participation at the next European Development Days Village (EDD21), the Global Campus of Human Rights Press Office had the privilege to interview the EU High Representative / Vice-President (HR/VP) H.E. Josep Borrell Fontelles about his views for the future of the European Union, the cooperation with our institution and the importance of human rights education around the world.*

Please elaborate on the new EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy, which sets out an ambitious roadmap for external action for the next five years, and how will the EU be driving “education” progress in these two areas.

The Plan aims to respond to a tragic reality: human rights and democracy are under severe stress across the world. We are witnessing an increased pushback against the universality and indivisibility of human rights and a backsliding of democracy. Moreover, new challenges such as the digital transition and climate change are posing new threats to human rights. This is not an abstract observation. In our own neighbourhood, governments are increasingly questioning women’s rights, persecuting journalists, curtailing academic freedoms and freedom of assembly, harassing human rights defenders and generally closing off the public space. The COVID-19 pandemic and the emergency health measures have accelerated these trends.

Against this backdrop, the EU must be more than a moral force. We must go beyond declaratory politics and be more assertive and action-oriented. To this end, the Plan sets out a roadmap establishing priorities that are built on 5 pillars: protecting and empowering individuals; building resilient, inclusive and democratic societies; promoting a global system for human rights and democracy; addressing new-technology opportunities and challenges; and delivering by working together.

Ensuring quality education is a key horizontal priority of the Action Plan. Paraphrasing Judge Learned Hand: the respect for human rights should lie in the hearts of men and women; while it lies there, it does not really need an institution to

help it; but when it dies there, no institution can do much to save it. A quality education that engages young people to cherish human rights, and understand their universality and indivisibility, is essential for their promotion and defence worldwide. On the other hand, access to education is also a fundamental right. Thus, the new Action Plan includes several objectives to reinforce such rights, for example promoting access to distance learning, supporting the protection of academic freedom, the autonomy of education institutions, etc.

It also seeks to curb inequalities by combating poverty and social exclusion, which are strong barriers to an inclusive and equitable quality education, for instance by barring many from effective access to digital technologies. In this context, civic education should particularly target women, children, youths, persons with disabilities, persons belonging to minorities, indigenous peoples, and other persons in vulnerable situations.

Through our network of 100 universities, the EU has helped fund human rights education. More than 6000 graduates of these universities are now human rights ambassadors and defenders in international, governmental and civil society organisations. What motivates you as EU High Representative to continue supporting the Global Campus of Human Rights activities in the field of human rights education & democratisation around the world? What does the External Action Service hope to achieve through continued support to our rapidly growing academic network? Why is advancing democracy and respect for human rights so central to the external action service?



The European Union's founders imagined a continent that instead of exporting war would promote peace, democracy and human development within its borders and around the world. These are the founding values of the EU: solidarity, openness, freedom, and respect for the rule of law. As such, they underpin our external action, as established by the Treaties.

Taking action on defending human rights is not only the right thing to do. It is not just moralism à la européenne, nor is it a European whim. It is also in our interest: defending human rights around the world means protecting freedom, prosperity and peace, also for us in Europe. It is part and parcel of defending a rules-based order which recognises the dignity of the weak and defends them from the strong. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has done this for several generations already: it has delivered great results, and we must defend it from current pressures.

Human rights education is a vital instrument to achieve these goals. It is key to foster knowledge, awareness, inclusion and values, to strengthen networks of human rights defenders, to promote international and regional dialogue and inform national human rights and democracy agendas. Education empowers individuals to not only claim and uphold their own rights, but also the rights of others. This is why it is a key priority of the new Action Plan. I am proud that, for more than 20 years, the EU has supported the Global Campus of Human Rights and its regional Master's programmes across the world. You contribute to further advancing universal values for all.

**The EU Action Plan will be implemented at local, national, regional and multilateral level and the EU will work with all stakeholders, especially Civil Society, on realising the goals of the Action Plan and making it a living document. How could the Global Campus of Human Rights be helping you to reach concrete ways to implement it at all levels?**

Engagement is the key word. It is crucial to implement the Action Plan at all levels – local, regional, national and multilateral. For this, we want to engage with the whole of civil society, from human rights defenders to legal professionals, journalists and faith-based actors. Certainly, this includes the Global Campus as well. Your cross-regional structure places you in a unique position

to translate universal human rights into national and local contexts, which is one of the aims of the Action Plan. From advocacy to training, there are many opportunities for the Global Campus to be involved. We also strongly encourage you to engage with civil society, and put your expertise to work in analysing new and future challenges to global human rights.

**What are the main challenges you think the EU Commission will need to address in the next few years related to Human Rights and Democracy?**

First, despite our best efforts, long-standing 'traditional' violations of human rights continue to happen daily. I am referring to slavery, child soldiers, torture, human trafficking, sexual and gender-based violence, limits to online and offline freedom of expression, death sentences, etc. The world is full of examples, and the EU will step-up its action to address them, as we have already done by launching the new Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime.

Regarding human rights violations, there has been a dangerous shift lately. The perpetrators of these violations around the world are much more confident in carrying them out in plain sight. Geopolitical rivalries and competing visions of rules-based multilateralism further weaken the universality and indivisibility of human rights and the global human rights framework. The real fuel behind the narrative is the changing geopolitical landscape, caused by the rise of China and the *bandwagoning* of other countries. Some of these countries explicitly challenge the global human rights framework as we know it, and this creates a dangerous space for impunity across the world. In order to face this challenge, I am afraid declaratory politics and leadership by example will not suffice. We must clearly communicate what our red lines and expectations are, and what we are willing to do to maintain them.

Beyond these traditional 'political' challenges, there are new threats to human rights that we must learn to deal with. These are climate change and digitalisation. Environmental degradation is a direct threat to the fundamental right to health, food, water, education and even life itself. The reality is that it is the world's poorest and most vulnerable that will suffer the bulk of the climate crisis, which merits very special attention. Through its many policies and global engagements, the



EU is leading the charge on climate mitigation and adaptation. It is crucial that we increase the resilience of many countries that are already direly affected by the climate crisis. Likewise, new digital technologies have the potential to be extremely intrusive and to spiral out of control. We must leverage their many benefits, but also minimise the risks they pose to our public spheres and the many rights linked to political participation and non-discrimination as well as cultural and economic rights. The EU, as shown by our new package on Artificial Intelligence, is already taking the lead on building a human-centred digital world.

### **What are the main topics and tools needed to educate the next generations of Human Rights Defenders?**

Having a sound knowledge of international human rights law and their history, including all UN human rights conventions, is vastly important to defend them. Younger people must fully understand how previous generations from across the world contributed to building and constructing the complex and vast human rights framework. This knowledge is essential to counter those that consider universal human rights as “cultural relativism”. It is also key to reinforce their knowledge on all the ropes of human rights multilateralism: how the UN human rights fora work in detail, as well as regional organisations like the Council of Europe, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the African Union. This will help them become effective Human Rights Defenders.

It is of course also important to explain how the EU human rights toolbox actually works. This toolbox includes measures to directly protect human rights defenders, but also trade agreements, political dialogues, different funds, and the new sanctions regime mentioned before. The EU is very active across the world in defending human rights, so many of the Global Campus students will probably end up cooperating with EU Delegations in the future in one way or another.

The current younger generations will also play a prominent role in addressing the emerging threats I mentioned before: climate change and new digital technologies. Their prominence will only grow, and they must understand their crosscutting effects very well. In fact, they will probably educate us first about these issues!

In a similar vein, the new generations must be

aware about the specific threats and vulnerabilities faced by certain groups such as journalists, women, LGBTI people, and migrants. Recent improvements made on protecting some of these groups must not be taken for granted.

Finally, let me emphasise that human rights education must also address core skills required to be an effective human rights defender such as advocacy strategies, public campaigning, public communication (including social media knowledge, and the fight against disinformation), and digital security training. Similarly, it is essential for students to be aware of how to engage with a whole range of relevant actors, such as the private sector (including social media platforms), National Human Rights Institutions, as well as local, national, and global NGOs and public institutions.

But beyond formal education, it is important that your students maximise peer-to-peer exchange. Often our colleagues are our best teachers. This will also be true when they become practitioners. The solutions of tomorrow will come above all from exchanges of best practices between human rights defenders with different background and experiences.

### **There is a new EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime. What lies ahead for this important milestone?**

The establishment of the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime has been a landmark achievement. It signals the EU's strong determination to stand up for human rights wherever they are threatened. It simplifies and streamlines the process to adopt sanctions against violators of human rights wherever they are, without having to adopt cumbersome, specific frameworks for each country, etc. The process to adopt the EUGHRSR was long and not always easy, but I am very happy we managed to push through the barriers. Indeed, the entry into force of the regime came almost exactly one year after EU Foreign Ministers gave their political endorsement at the very first FAC that I chaired in my capacity as HRVP.

In March 2020, I used my right of initiative to propose the first package of human rights sanctions to the Foreign Affairs Council. These included four Russian senior officials sanctioned for their direct link to the arbitrary arrest, prosecution and sentencing of opposition politician Alexei Navalny,



as well as their crackdown on peaceful protests. A few weeks later, I complemented this by proposing the addition of 11 individuals and 4 entities from six countries (China, DPRK, Libya, South Sudan, Eritrea and Russia). They had committed a variety of serious human rights violations and abuses, ranging from torture, extrajudicial executions and killings, to enforced disappearance of persons, arbitrary arrests, detentions and the systematic use of forced labour. These individuals are now prevented from travelling to the EU, have had their assets within the EU frozen, and no funds and economic resources can be available to them from within the EU. We will continue to be vigilant and act accordingly to impose costs on the perpetrators of human rights violations across the world.

I would like to underline that these sanctions are one aspect of our broader EU human rights toolbox. Imposing sanctions is a last resort, and we are committed to engaging with all governments around the world to improve human rights standards.

Looking to 2021 and beyond, the European Union commits to working alongside its partners to show leadership on human rights issues and to work to strengthen the protection of human rights in a post-COVID-19 world. Please elaborate on your vision of the future.

Allow me first to highlight that the post-COVID-19 world is not here yet. We are still in the midst of the crisis, which is a particularly thorny test for the realisation of all human rights and the respect for democratic principles. The pandemic is deepening pre-existing inequalities and increasing pressure on persons in vulnerable situations. Defending human rights should be our compass to exit the crisis and build back fairer, more resilient and more inclusive societies.

Indeed, human rights, democracy and the rule of law will remain at the heart of the EU's response to and recovery from the pandemic. We are convinced this is essential to ensure a more sustainable, long-term recovery. The EU will focus on inclusive policies that mitigate the worst consequences of the pandemic, also by supporting women, girls, youth, and persons with disabilities. To achieve this, we will surely engage with our partners to ensure we coordinate our efforts so that no country is left behind. Special attention should be paid to the worst affected regions, such as Latin America,

sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

We also consider the COVID-19 pandemic to be a wake-up call to the even greater threat of climate change and environmental degradation. This is a generational crisis like no other. In our work, we will continue to be guided by the 2030 Agenda as well as the Paris Agreement and the European Green Deal.

Could you give a personal message to students, professors, partners and staff of the Global Campus of Human Rights, a network of 100 Universities around the world supported by the EU, who are our followers and reading this interview? How could they be inspired and encouraged by your work as EU High Representative leading your team of professionals which recently celebrated a decade of EU Diplomacy?

Supporting the Global Campus of Human Rights has been a very important decision. Your global network and various programmes focusing on human rights have never been more relevant than today.

One of the great assets of EU diplomacy and the EEAS is the diversity of its people, coming together from different backgrounds and working towards a common goal. As a Global Campus, you are all also part of a collective journey, sharing experiences and learning from each other. Try to make the very best of this unique experience!

When you graduate, gain as many different experiences as possible. Learn by being exposed to different realities, on the ground and in different institutions. These lessons will remain with you for your whole life. Over time, you will find the place where you can best contribute to defending human rights across the world. We will always be happy to count you among the EU's ranks and friends.

Thank you!

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The full programme of the online European Development Days 2021 (15-16 June) is now available at: [eudevdays.eu/programme](https://eudevdays.eu/programme)



## Interview with the Italian Minister for the Public Administration, Renato Brunetta



*The Press Office of the Global Campus of Human Rights had the opportunity to ask the Minister for Public Administration, Renato Brunetta, about the priorities of the new Italian government for the issues of higher education, human rights and democracy.*

**What are the priorities of the new Italian government in this difficult period for Italy and the world?**

The number one priority is vaccinating, vaccinating, vaccinating. Vaccinations are today the best economic and fiscal policy: those who come out of the pandemic late lose markets. I am an optimist. The vaccination convoy has set off. We have an extraordinary situation: a Prime Minister like Mario Draghi, with his unparalleled credibility in the world; a government of national unity; the European funds of the Next Generation EU, an unrepeatable opportunity; and finally, the Italian presidency of the G20, which will allow us to talk about what we are doing to enter a new dimension. The time to reform is now. Now or never, because these conditions and resources will not return. Strong and innovative choices are needed. We work for the after, but without forgetting those who suffer now, those who lost their jobs or are forced to close their businesses. From February 2020 to February 2021, as recorded by Istat, about one million jobs have vanished: behind those figures, there are lives, there are families. Securing the country after more than a year of pandemic is the key to restarting the economy as well.

**Considering the objectives of the new Italian government, how do the themes of higher university education, human rights and democratisation fit into the executive's programmes?**

Many ministers of this government, including me, are university professors and are very clear on the role played by training skills in the level of growth and development in the country and therefore in the future of citizens, who are at the centre of the goals set for the projects included in the national recovery and resilience plan. We need to restore

turnover to strengthen a public administration that has been impoverished by years of blocks and limitations. We intend to unlock at least 150,000 new recruitments per year. We have already reformed the procedures for ordinary access to the Public Administration: Article 10 of Decree Law 44/2021 finally eliminates the nineteenth-century model of pen and paper competitions, digitalizing the entire process, from application submission to publication of the final rankings. In the selections we have chosen to enhance educational qualifications and therefore training courses, to ensure that the Public Administration is not only new, but qualified. Alongside this, we are defining the procedures for the extraordinary recruitment of the technical and managerial profiles required to implement the projects included in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. Engineers, geologists, statisticians, project managers. With the Minister for Universities and Research, Maria Cristina Messa, we have started a process of enhancing doctorates also to facilitate their entry into the Public Administration. A recruitment portal will be set up, which will borrow the best international experiences. Italy, and its public administration as the main company in the country, need trained talents capable of embodying and guiding change. A theme very dear to me is linked to all this: higher education courses for the PA, which I intend to strengthen through the relaunch of our SNA: the National Administration School. Public human capital must be the engine, the centre of recovery.

**How can we increase the international contribution, and in particular that of the European Union, to our country?**

Italy is a pillar of the European Union, we must find a way to become attractive again. There are no



magic formulas, but there must be a commitment to writing new rules to attract human, economic and cultural capital. It's all connected. We must be aware of the historical significance of the Next Generation EU, the result of a Europe that has decided to make a common debt to support recovery in this "post-war pandemic": it is a unique opportunity to improve infrastructures, modernize bureaucracy and finally digitalize the country. We are aware that digitalization is not possible without simplifying all the bottlenecks and all complex procedures. Our best business card is the Italy brand, beauty combined with culture, and food and wine. There is no territory that is an exception, from North to South. But Italy is also industry, manufacturing, trade, services. European friends, but also others, want to return as visitors, but also to invest: we must make it easier to do so, without forgetting that the health emergency has already made clear the need to act together at community level. United we can win, divided we count for little or nothing on the international geopolitical chessboard.

**What ideas are there on the front of promoting the city of Venice, also considering the Recovery Fund? What is your vision of a possible future for the lagoon city? Do you think it is strategic to think of a new edition of the Special Law?**

I am so convinced that for my Venice, one of the pearls of Italy, a special law is needed as was already the case during the Berlusconi government when I was a minister with responsibility for reform of the special law, but also now. I consider it appropriate to resubmit a revised and corrected reissue of the provision after the high water emergency that brought the city to its knees in November 2019. I believe it is absolutely vital to proceed with an strategic, organic intervention on the set of physical, environmental, socio-economic and artistic cultural characteristics that make Venice unique in the world and in the history of humanity. Measures that go beyond the emergency approach and guarantee the mid-long term view that Venice needs, starting with the creation of a

system of infrastructural investments and urban redevelopment. Now more than ever: the pandemic has aggravated the crisis, seeing it deserted is painful. Venice and its lagoon must come back to life, together with their natural national and transnational vocation. The safeguarding of the historical, artistic and environmental heritage must be made sustainable through the socio-economic recovery of the communities concerned. Beauty and development: it can be done, also thanks to digitalisation. It is the bet of the PNRR.

**How do you see the role of academic institutions, Italian universities and the Global Campus of Human Rights on the front of the reform of the public administration?**

A civil service that works is a guarantee of better access to citizenship rights, a necessary prerequisite for a more efficient state and a very powerful weapon against inequalities: only the rich can afford to buy replacement services on the market. This is why it is important for the academic world to help young people form a different opinion of working in the public administration: it must no longer be seen as a social safety net, but must return to being attractive to those who want to serve the country with dignity and honor. What is more beautiful than working to serve 60 million Italians? This is the spirit with which I hold this position for the second time.

**How can we contribute with the training and innovation of the civil service that you are studying at the moment?**

The training courses can and must help students get out of the cages made from fear for the future, uncertainty and paralysis: we have fueled immobility and frustration for years. Now we have an extraordinary opportunity: that of freeing up the skills and talents to strengthen the administrative capacity of the country and support the two transitions - digital and environmental - which shows Europe as a driving force for growth. Your energy is vital for the future of the country. Training on fundamental rights protection mechanisms is a



driving force for democracy. In this sense, the work you do in Venice for postgraduate education in the field of human rights is precious. There is no more suitable place to spread universal democratic values.

**What message do you want to leave for the international students, alumni, professors, experts and staff of the Global Campus of Human Rights?**

I want to tell everyone to have courage and trust, first of all in study and the value of training courses as a vehicle for building their future and their profession. We must walk in the same direction, abandoning sterile contrasts and dualisms, to get out of this tragic period, not just for Italy. We can do it, but we must be “hungry” for the future. We not only have the opportunity, but also the duty, to rebuild our country, to restore hope to those who have lost it. That is why we can and must imagine the possible and dare the impossible with commitment, but also with creativity. Innovation is not something pre-packaged, but a path to be followed with courage, dedication and inventiveness. I always repeat: the time is now. Now or never.



## Interview with the President of the Venice International University (VIU), Ambassador Umberto Vattani



*The Press Office for the Global Campus of Human Rights had the opportunity to ask questions to the President of the Venice International University (VIU), Ambassador Umberto Vattani, to share his impressions on the current relations between our institutions and how to extend our cooperation with all academic networks in the territory.*

The Global Campus of Human Rights has been collaborating with the Venice International University (VIU) for a few years now since the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in 2017. What are some of the best results of this cooperation so far? How do you see the relations between both institutions, other universities in Veneto and the City of Venice? And specifically, how it can develop in terms of promoting education, human rights and democracy?

It has been a wonderful collaboration, and we are most grateful to the EIUC/Global Campus for Human Rights for having helped us to organize a very interesting workshop with the Countries of the Maghreb Region - Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia - entitled "Académie de Formation pour Jeunes Professionnels de la Région du Sud de la Méditerranée sur la Gouvernance Démocratique", back in April 2014. The aim of this project was to raise awareness among citizens of these countries, who are already involved in the civil service, public administration and NGOs, of the principles of human rights and democracy, by underlining the many values we share and exchanging views in order to increase mutual understanding. This initiative was carried out in collaboration with the Council of Europe and with the support of the European Union. We were all involved in teaching the classes about theory, but also in the sometimes lively discussions that followed. This was a winning formula, and the participants were all very eager for the workshop to be organised again.

In 2018, Manfred Nowak and I travelled to Brussels to try and find funds for further editions, but unfortunately it was not to be.

An important part of the citizens of Venice is made up of students who come to Venice every year to study. How can our academic institutions do more for them and eventually make them stay? Should there be consultations with the academic institutions to create a coordinated long-term strategy with the authorities? What can we do to improve the quality of the activities and events of the city to position Venice as one of the top places for education, innovation and research?

Certainly, more can be done to guarantee favourable conditions to encourage students to stay longer, study and carry out their research projects in Venice. The presence of the Global Campus for Human Rights, Venice International University, Ca' Foscari, IUAV, the *Conservatorio*, the *Accademia delle Belle Arti* and all the other cultural institutions create an ideal setting for finding new stimuli that are conducive to encouraging education, innovation and research. The City of Venice has shown that the local authorities are fully committed to facilitating the presence of the student body and have organized a number of round tables on this subject to create a synergy involving all academic institutions by pooling our different resources for the benefit of all.

Given the 1600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Venice, what are the main challenges for the future of Venice in terms of youth education? What do we ask of our young people regarding the promotion of human rights and democratisation? How important is the ability to relate internationally in a globalised world and generate good opportunities on the working level?



In terms of neighbouring countries in the Mediterranean, the European Union could have done much more, along the lines of its policy in the Balkans. If we really want to make progress and accelerate steps in political, economic and social fields, the EU must deliver, and that means more real dialogue, more understanding of the issues, holding annual debates at ministerial level to share analysis and to allow real participation. This was the spirit of the workshop with the MENA countries which we organized in San Servolo in 2013, and I believe that together with the Global Campus for Human Rights we could relaunch this very promising initiative.

**Can you leave us with a message for professors, experts, alumni, students and staff of the Global Campus of Human Rights?**

Venice should be an inspiration for all of us, in particular its history, its system of governance through the ages. The sense of working towards the common good was the most remarkable aspect of the Council of Ten. Even the citizens themselves, especially when travelling and trading, never lost sight of the most important objective: the good of the Republic of the Serenissima. I hope that students and professors who spend time in Venice studying or teaching at the Global Campus of Human Rights, at Venice International University, at Ca' Foscari or IUAV, at the *Conservatorio* or at the *Accademia delle Belle Arti*, will learn this important lesson and use the fruits of their experience in Venice for the common good by giving something back to the City that has welcomed them for their studies, and to the world at large if they decide to move on from here.



## Interview with Piero Rosa Salva, President of VELA S.p.A., Organiser of Festa della Sensa



*The Global Campus of Human Rights Press Office had the opportunity to interview the President of VELA S.p.A., organiser of the Festa della Sensa, Piero Rosa Salva, on the priorities of the company he represents and of the City of Venice administration regarding the organisation of international events based in Venice and his vision for the future in this field.*

What future do you see in terms of promoting the city of Venice also using the events scheduled during the times of COVID-19? How have the situations and your vision changed? How can we return (or remain) on the international stage? What path should you take with the public events you coordinate with the institution you represent? How will the events change?

Given that our business is developed on the basis of strategic indications from the City of Venice Administration, it is clear that COVID-19 has radically (I would say “dramatically”) changed international scenarios at all levels (social, economic, cultural, not to mention the health aspect). Our perception of the value of “health” has been placed in the foreground by the pandemic we are experiencing and whatever happens, some new behaviors will remain in our everyday life for a long time and will affect our habits and our choices. In my opinion, the strategies for promoting territories and events will have to be rethought, greatly enhancing the elements linked to the quality of the use of the places and the proposals as well as the artistic and spectacular quality of the events themselves. The latter, in particular, will have to be even more attentive to the quantitative, organised management of attendance and movement of the public, to environmental sustainability and personal safety (not just health). From this point of view, Venice, before others, has faced and, let me say positively, initiated good practices thanks also to the effective collaboration established for some time between all the institutions.

The city of Venice has always been a destination for high-level events, and it has now businesses and tourism that are suffering a particular dif-

ficulty in this period. How can you think, on the hosting front, to look ahead for tomorrow? How can the various Universities and Academic Institutions such as the Global Campus of Human Rights contribute to the visibility and relevance of these activities and make a synergy with the planning of certain events of international importance?

At the end of the nineteenth century, Venice “invented” seaside tourism with the Lido, then in the first half of the twentieth century cultural tourism with the *Biennale Arte* and the *Mostra del Cinema*. In the second post-war period it was the turn of what I call the tourism of Traditions, with an organic programming of the great historical festivals (Sensa, Redentore, Historical Regatta, Palio of the 4 Maritime Republics and in particular the Carnival). Today, Universities, Academic Institutions and Cultural Institutions in general, for example *La Biennale* and many others, can and, I dare say, “must” intensify the dialogue between them, which is already fruitful in our city. The contribution of this system of excellence has always been and will be even more decisive for tomorrow. The training of new managerial skills, more oriented towards innovative interpretations of scenarios, is an urgent and fundamental challenge in this regard. Furthermore, participants in the activities of the Universities and Institutions can be bearers of the positive message of a city which, despite its fragility and complexity, will once again be able to reinterpret itself in the best possible way without losing its values and traditions.

We are approaching the events of the Festa della Sensa, which this year will have a particular value given the 1600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the city of



Venice. What legacy should we be able to take from the past and what should we bring in the future for the sustainable development of the city? Can these events continue to unite the local community and at the same time provide an idea of innovation and more creativity in the residents' relations with the values of the territory?

More than any other, the *Festa della Sensa* celebrates the very essence of the Serenissima and its history. Each year it renews the indissoluble union with the Sea, "sanctified" by the Marriage that is incarnated in Christian values. With its over a thousand years of history, La Sensa represents perhaps the most emblematic moment of the initiatives for the 1600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of Venice. Our future is based precisely on our past, on our ability to develop development strategies without losing our roots. The challenge once again consists in the consistency of the choices for tomorrow using the characteristics that have made Venice a magnificent reality that is unique in the world. This will make it possible to ensure compatibility between the urban and global dimensions.

What message do you want to leave for the international students, alumni, professors, experts and staff of the Global Campus of Human Rights?

I recognise myself very much in something our Mayor Luigi Brugnaro said, reiterated recently: "We give space to young people and to people who want to do something: this is how the future is really built". Our city, more than other realities, is paying a heavy price today for a NOT-DO mentality that has characterised most of Italian politics in recent decades. In Venice, this tenacious opposition to so

many innovative proposals had caused enormous damage. Above all, I would like to tell young people to study, train with commitment but also to always "dare", maybe sometimes even making mistakes, but only in this way can we build a better future! In this, the Global Campus of Human Rights can make a very important contribution.



## Interview with Naomi Van den Broeck and Charles-Antoine Leboeuf, European Master's in Human Rights and Democratisation, EMA 2020/2021 Student Representatives



*The Global Campus of Human Rights Press Office had the opportunity to ask Naomi Van den Broeck and Charles-Antoine Leboeuf, European Master's in Human Rights and Democratisation, EMA 2020/2021 Student Representatives, about their views on possible sustainable futures for Venice.*

Could you tell us more about yourselves and your roles as EMA students representatives? Could you describe the experience of studying in Venice during the first semester of the Master? What could be a possible future for the city in terms of hospitality of foreign students, academic offers, quality of living and ways to improve the current conditions you had experienced? Do you think there is a way for Venice to become more efficient, innovative, attractive and well-prepared to host important events and course studies? What do students like you need?

First things first: thank you for allowing us to be part of this issue.

We, Charles-Antoine Leboeuf and Naomi Van den Broeck, are the student-representatives of the current group of students of the European programme of the Global Campus of Human Rights. We are the bridge between the student body and the Global Campus/EMA staff and represent our fellow students in the EMA meetings with the Executive Committee and the Council. We support our fellow students by organizing multiple activities such as thesis advice sessions and study sessions. Despite the COVID-19 measures, we had a wonderful time in Venice: as we almost had the city to ourselves during the pandemic, we felt very privileged to spend a semester in La Serenissima. This challenging time brought us even closer as we depended on each other and we often had the feeling we were the only 'young' people on the Lido. Venice is now mostly focused on short-term tourists and therefore international students feel sometimes forgotten. We need more places to study, such as co-working spaces, and more student housing. We also suggest introducing special student prices regardless of their age for public transport in and outside Venice as well as for

cultural events and museum visits. Furthermore, putting more garbage cans in the city, promoting local shops and making tourists aware of the surrounding nature and citizens of Venice through social media could help as well. We also applaud the decision of the Italian authorities to approve a ban on cruise ships entering the historic centre of Venice.

Which topics could be interesting to address and related to your human rights and democracy education during and after this COVID-19 emergency? What will the most important challenges be in relation to promoting human rights and democracy in the years to come?

The COVID-19 pandemic poses extremely important challenges to human rights and democracy. This topic has been integrated in a transversal way in the curriculum of our studies in Venice this year, but it will remain there for several more years. There are several issues to be addressed: how to balance public health with other human rights, such as freedom of movement or the right to work? What are the limits that a democratic government can impose? How can we ensure the inclusion of the most vulnerable groups in the response to the pandemic?

Even when we are out of the public health crisis, the economic crisis, let alone the climate crisis, will be far from over. The long-term effects of this pandemic may damage the human rights sector, for example through budget cuts by pro-austerity governments. It is likely that we will see more isolationism and less cooperation or solidarity. COVID-19 is taking over the agenda of governments, leaving little room or interest for other serious human rights issues far from our borders, such as the current situation in Myanmar where a



fellow student from the Asia-Pacific campus, Saw Lin, got arrested by the military and has become a victim of enforced disappearance.

As human rights students and future practitioners, we are part of the solution to counter misinformation, hate, fear, and violence and help make the world a better place.

With its 1600-year anniversary coming up, how do you envisage the Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) being integrated into the sustainable future of the city of Venice and the Region of Veneto? Do you have any specific ideas? How might EMA students continue to help locally in the possible sustainable future scenarios?

Goal 11 of the Sustainable Development Goals is to make cities and communities human-scale, and this can be achieved through greater resilience and sustainability. The city of Venice has gone from one extreme to the other in the last year. By early 2020, it was awash with tourists, arriving by the thousands in cruise ships with disastrous impacts on the environment and threatening the very survival of the city and the well-being of its inhabitants. When we arrived in Venice in September 2020 as international or Italian students, we discovered a city completely deserted by tourists, with chain closures of local businesses and a down economy.

Sustainable development is about finding a balance between economic development at all costs and the preservation of the environment for people's well-being and quality of life. The pandemic has opened an incredible window of opportunity to rethink Venice. The city can now develop a new, more sustainable tourism, with visitors who stay longer and truly enjoy and respect the beauty and mysteries of Venice. This includes

international students! We stay several months in Venice, we contribute to the local economy, we enjoy the unique chance to live in one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

Students on our master's degree programme, EMA, can help make a difference for the future of Venice. Many would be interested in volunteering with local organizations that work to preserve the environment, for example. Also, we would definitely be interested in trying new local and sustainable tourism tours, such as visits to artisans, culinary tours, or a boat tour to appreciate and learn about the biodiversity of the lagoon. Investing in sustainability will allow Venice to revive itself after the crisis and enter a new phase of its millennial history.

Could you share a message with the Global Campus of Human Rights Community (professors, experts, alumni, staff) and to their students in particular?

While we were walking on the wooden platforms during high tide, even though Venice has built a dam system, we once again realised the effects of the climate crisis. We should rethink the way we deal with climate change as this affects the most vulnerable countries and citizens first, just like the COVID-19 crisis. Therefore, defending human rights and addressing the climate crisis should go hand in hand. We cannot do this alone. All countries and citizens should cooperate. The Global Campus could take more action on the problem of climate change, such as creating a MOOC on sustainability rights and raising awareness.



## Interview with the Deputy Mayor of Venice, Andrea Tomaello



*The Global Campus of Human Rights Press Office interviewed the Deputy Mayor of the City of Venice, Andrea Tomaello, about the city administration's priorities regarding youth policies and community projects.*

This year we are celebrating 1600 years of Venice. In which direction will the city have to look to plan a possible future for its inhabitants but also for the international students who are coming here, based on its history as the first Republic of Europe and example of values such as freedom, rights and democracy which are very dear to the Global Campus of Human Rights?

The history of Venice, a history of 1600 years, is important to understand the life of the major democracies of today. Just think of how the *Serenissima* was the inspiration for the United States, traces of its history can still be found today in many of their laws. The *Serenissima* was a model for values such as freedom and democracy, every corner of our city is full of historical memories, from the Doge's Palace to all the major institutions and monuments. Coming to study in Venice is certainly an exciting and at the same time unique experience. We are happy when someone chooses to live in our city, even if only for a period of time, and wants to learn more about its history and further their curiosity. The city is undergoing a major transformation, and is attracting worldwide attention in terms of climate change and sustainability. This will be what we must focus on in the future; living in Venice today means being part of the great changes for the whole world.

**Can you share your priorities in the field of youth policies in this respect?**

Youth policies must be aimed at involving the youngest inhabitants in the decision-making process of our city. We must also ensure that they re-appropriate with interest and curiosity what Venice represents, through study and knowledge. It is the youngest who have to save and pass on the Venetian traditions. We are an open city, already an important economic centre, we should try to

inspire not only Venetians but also young people who come from all over the world wanting to "learn" about Venice.

Venice is a showcase for Italy in its entirety and for the whole world. In your opinion, what are the most important events on the agenda for this year of recovery? And the main challenges?

The most important event is the *Salone Nautico* from 29 May to 6 June in conjunction with the opening of the Architecture Biennale which will be next on 22 May, an event that has always been a place of attraction for many tourists. Then certainly the Film Festival in September, but also all the more historical and identity celebrations such as the *Festa della Sensa*, which we will celebrate on 16 May, the *Redentore*, the *Regata Storica* and the *Festa della Salute*.

**Could you elaborate on the promotion of community projects in Venice which are followed by the Global Campus of Human Rights?**

The Municipality of Venice is an example for many in the field of European planning and in European policies more generally. The community projects office manages dozens of calls every year and puts in place all the necessary actions to better spend the cohesion funds, managing to redevelop many areas of the city and implement many projects aimed at sustainability. Then we have the Europe Direct desk, which also acts as a representative for the whole of Veneto and which recently won the European Commission's tender for Europe Direct centres scattered throughout Europe (more than 400). The counter is the European Commission information centre and helps citizens, especially young people and schools, to relate to European institutions.



Can you leave us a message for teachers, pupils, students and staff of the Global Campus of Human Rights?

Get passionate about Venice, experience it, bring knowledge and innovation to our city, with a global vision but with a Venetian spirit! That spirit of those who always look to the future with optimism and have the courage to face the challenges that we face every day.

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## News & Events

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Support the People of Timor-Leste: An Announcement from the Global Campus of Human Rights on the Recent Floods

The Global Campus of Human Rights Mourns the Passing of Christof Heyns

Dr Johan Heyns: An Exorcist of Apartheid – in Memory of his Son Christof Heyns

In Memory of Dimitra Papadopoulou  
La Museion / The Unthinkable  
Experiment

Global Campus International  
Conference 2021 — Climate Change  
and Children: Impact, Rights and  
Participation

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14<sup>th</sup> Edition of the European  
Development Days Village (EDD21)  
MOOC — Child Participation and  
the Right to a Sustainable Environment  
16<sup>th</sup> edition of the Summer School in  
Cinema Human Rights and Advocacy  
Press Release about the Participation of  
the Global Campus of Human Rights  
in the Commission VII of the Venice  
City Council



## Third Online Global Campus of Human Rights Conversation

We live in difficult times. We are facing a global health crisis unlike any experienced in the recent past. The coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) is exacerbating human suffering, widening inequalities and threatening peoples' livelihoods. The UN Secretary General has described it as not just a health crisis but a human crisis that is fast becoming a human rights crisis. This is because it is attacking societies at their very core. In this situation, a focus on investing in the education of young generations should be a non-negotiable requirement in order to face the future in a spirit of hope. Education shall also be at the core of a sustainable future for the city of Venice, which is now inaugurating the celebrations for its 1600-year anniversary (to be continued in 2021), and become one of the driving forces in the middle of this pandemic both for our local and global community. The Global Campus of Human Rights wishes to provide a space for the exchange of views on the possible futures for Venice, and to do so will host a series of "Online Global Campus of Human Rights Conversations: Possible Futures for Venice".

Our third edition featured the following speakers talking about possible futures based on historical traditions (such as the *Festa della Sensa*) and the modern relationship of the city with national institutions, academic networks/Universities, natural ecosystems, innovation technology and sustainability:

Renato Brunetta, Minister for the Public Administration of the Italian Government

Ambassador Umberto Vattani, President of Venice International University (VIU)

Piero Rosa Salva, President of VELA S.p.A and organiser of the *Festa della Sensa*

Naomi Van Den Broeck and Charles-Antoine Leboeuf, Representatives of EMA students

Manfred Nowak, GC Secretary General

Elisabetta Noli, GC Administrative Director



This Conversation provided an occasion for local partners, our staff, professors, alumni and students to actively participate in the discussion about the future development of the city of Venice, which hosts the Headquarters of the Global Campus of Human Rights at the Monastery of San Nicolò in Lido. The third online Global Campus of Human Rights Conversation took place via Zoom on Friday, 14 May from 11:00 to 12:00.

Save the date: the fourth conversation will be on 14 July at 11:00 (CEST) during the week of the *Festa del Redentore*.



## The Vienna Forum for Democracy and Human Rights Begins Its Work

As of 19 February 2021, a new institution in the field of human rights has started its work. An interdisciplinary team composed of leading Austrian human rights experts safeguards the development of praxis-oriented human rights research.

Marion Wisinger, long-term Secretary General of the Austrian League for Human Rights (Österreichische Liga für Menschenrechte), says: "Especially now, we need institutions like the Vienna Forum for Democracy and Human Rights! That is why I am happy to be part of the board of the Vienna Forum together with Maria Berger, Ulrike Lunacek, Thomas Höhne, Manfred Nowak and Hannes Tretter".

The Vienna Forum for Democracy and Human Rights is not a completely new foundation, but the continuation and expansion of the work of the Research Association (BIM-FV) at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights. Since 1996, the Association – also founded by Manfred Nowak and Hannes Tretter in 1992 – has conducted impact-oriented applied research projects which fell outside the strongly theoretically oriented scope of the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Human Rights (BIM). Thus, the Vienna Forum builds on 25 years of experience in the implementation of human rights. The activities of the Forum are supported by an interdisciplinary advisory board consisting of numerous renowned scientists and experts from the fields of politics, justice, administration, media, civil society, arts and culture.

### **What are the tasks of the Forum?**

Manfred Nowak and Hannes Tretter, in line with the views of all other board members, clarify: "The Vienna Forum for Democracy and Human Rights is active at national, European and international levels. Its central task is to provide and foster the implementation of scientifically based ideas and recommendations for securing and strengthening democracy, rule of law and human rights. More than ever, practice-based research, teaching and educational work are required to contribute necessary criticism and, above all, meaningful approaches to solutions".

Therefore, the Vienna Forum's 2021 research programme focuses on essential current and future-oriented topics. Ulrike Lunacek and Hannes Tretter emphasise that these include "climate and the environment, poverty and inequality, asylum and migration, crisis management (especially regarding the COVID-19 pandemic), and participation of civil society in political and constitutional decision-making processes".



Another central task of the Vienna Forum is to continue the educational work of the former BIM-FV for different target groups. One example is the polis centre, which was founded in 2006 and is headed by Patricia Hladschik, coordinating “numerous projects with a focus on political and human rights education”. Last but not least, human rights issues shall be approached and discussed through cultural and artistic means. According to Manfred Nowak, the Vienna Forum is also particularly concerned with promoting young scientists and students through “academic start-ups” and project-related research stays.

The Vienna Forum further plans to scientifically prepare and accompany strategic litigation in human rights and rule of law matters. Maria Berger and Thomas Höhne highlight that “this is specifically about strengthening civil

society engagement in the implementation of human rights at all levels”.

Human rights, democracy and rule of law gain an even stronger voice with the Vienna Forum for Democracy and Human Rights. And with the cooperation of other institutions engaged in this field, we will make sure w be heard.

**Contact, requests and more information:**

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## The Global Campus Celebrates the Launch of the Annual Report 2020

### Championing Education on Human Rights and Democratisation in Times of Uncertainty

The Annual Report can be  
downloaded at:  
[doi.org/20.500.11825/1935](https://doi.org/20.500.11825/1935)

In an unprecedentedly challenging year, both for human rights and for us, the Global Campus embraced – and strengthened – its ties as a global network of almost 100 universities, proving that collaborative efforts can take us further.

Thanks to the resilience of our members based in seven regional hubs – Africa, the Arab World, Asia Pacific, Caucasus, Europe, South America and the Caribbean, and South East Europe - we achieved our main goals for 2019/2020.

Through interdisciplinary insights, creativity and cross-cultural exchanges, we added almost 200 graduates from our seven Master's programmes to our 4,000-plus worldwide alumni. We also organised dozens of professional training programmes, including free online courses (MOOCs), and hundreds of internships, seminars, workshops and events across the different regions.

The Global Campus inaugural Annual Report features a bit of history, the achievements of our members around the world, how we responded to the pandemic, our focus on the rights of children, our deep connections with the arts, research; and data on our activities. A sneak peek at 2021 gives you a taste of what we are working on.

The people we most wish to celebrate are our students and alumni. They trusted in us, maintaining their commitment and achieving excellent results. They embody the Global Campus vision, which is to foster new generations of human rights defenders able to contribute to a world in which human dignity, equality, freedom, human security, sustainable development, democracy, the rule of law and respect for all human rights are realised.

“The Arab Master’s in Democracy and Human Rights provided me with an incredibly unique set of skills in an increasingly challenging job market. It opened my eyes to the reality of the people we are trying to help, going beyond the traditional theory-driven approach other programmes usually adopt”.

GC Arab World student

“The programme gave me insights into the human rights situation in so many countries... You don’t get this experience anywhere else”.

GC Asia Pacific student

“The skills and experience I gained in the Global Campus internship programme had a major impact on shaping my global perspective and equipped me with the right tools to fight global challenges locally”.

GC Caucasus student

# Championing Education on Human Rights and Democratisation in Times of Uncertainty

“It has been an invaluable international experience, with exposure to lecturers and other students, a cross-curricular approach and regular focus on practical skills all incorporated into academic content.” Thank you so much. Despite all the difficulties it was the best year of my life. I have met so many amazing people, professors and classmates and made many friends. I have changed a lot. I think I have grown personally, morally, spiritually and intellectually”.

GC Europe student

We wish to thank the European Union, the Right Livelihood Foundation, and many other donors. None of our efforts would have been possible without them. In addition, we are grateful to the invited contributors to our Annual Report, prominent figures from international agencies, politics, philanthropy, and the arts, all committed to the promotion and protection of human rights:

Michelle Bachelet, Eamon Gilmore, Jutta Urpilainen, Michael O’Flaherty, Ole von Uexküll, Vandana Shiva, Julian Fiferand, and Koen Vanmechelen.

“One of my personal priorities is to have more young people involved in shaping and implementing EU external action. Young people are the change makers. I would invite the Global Campus to further reach out to young people in countries where civic and political space is closing”.

Jutta Urpilainen, European Commissioner for International Partnerships

“I am proud that, for more than 20 years, the EU has supported regional Master’s programmes in human rights and democracy, now embedded in the Global Campus of Human Rights, and based on the founding values and principles of the EU: dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law and respect for human

rights”.

Eamon Gilmore, European Union Special Representative for Human Rights

“Through its academic programmes and network, the Global Campus of Human Rights contributes to the human rights education global initiative by nurturing young people’s interest and passion for human rights, so that they can be positive agents of change towards a just and peaceful future for all, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic”.

Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

“Bringing together cutting-edge academia and grassroots activism is the core of our education work. In our long-term partnership with the Global Campus we’re taking this aspiration to a new level”.

Ole von Uexküll, Executive Director of the Right Livelihood Foundation



## Support the People of Timor-Leste: An Announcement from the Global Campus of Human Rights on the Recent Floods

As the largest global network of universities involved in human rights education, and with a presence in Timor-Leste, the Global Campus of Human Rights wishes to express its solidarity with the people and institutions of Timor-Leste, recently hit by a devastating flood.

This dramatic event has caused extensive damages throughout the country, and claimed the lives of many, including several children, while the count of displaced people is above 10,000.

This disaster is happening at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak is peaking. As a least developed country, the people of Timor-Leste face increasing social and economic insecurity, particularly women, children, and students.

The Global Campus and its Asia Pacific Programme feel particularly close to the students, lecturers, and staff of the local universities and education community.

We are relieved to know that our staff and trainees are safe. Though we are lucky that the premises of the UNTL Human Rights Centre are not affected, there are many others being heavily damaged. In a country where nearly half of the population is under the age of 18, this flood can have long term consequences for education.

*Veronica Gomez*, President - Global Campus of Human Rights (University of San Martin, Argentina)

*Manfred Nowak*, Secretary General - Global Campus of Human Rights (Headquarters, Italy)

*Michael Hayes*, Director - Global Campus Asia-Pacific Programme (Mahidol University, Thailand)

*Adriano Remiddi*, Project Manager - Global Campus of Human Rights (UNTL, Timor-Leste)



Several relief initiatives have been set up by civil society groups, prominent public figures, and reputable humanitarian organisations. These are addressing the urgent needs in the capital Dili and in the districts. We warmly invite the members of our academic network, our partners, and friends to consider supporting these campaigns:

- Organised by Rosa Horta Carrascalao on behalf of President José Ramos-Horta:  
[www.gofundme.com/f/helping-dli-flood-victims](http://www.gofundme.com/f/helping-dli-flood-victims)
- Organised by Kara Chesal:  
[www.gofundme.com/f/help-feed-flood-victims-in-timorleste](http://www.gofundme.com/f/help-feed-flood-victims-in-timorleste)
- Organised by Timor-Leste Red Cross:  
[www.redcross.tl/page/donation](http://www.redcross.tl/page/donation)
- Organised by Palmira Pires for ETDA:  
[www.gofundme.com/f/timor-floods-help-rebuilt-etda-youth-centre](http://www.gofundme.com/f/timor-floods-help-rebuilt-etda-youth-centre)



## The Global Campus of Human Rights Mourns the Passing of Christof Heyns, Former Director of the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria

The Centre for Human Rights (Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria), together with the Global Campus of Human Rights, is deeply saddened by the sudden passing of the Centre's previous Director, Professor Christof Heyns. His death is an incredible loss, and he will be truly missed by us and so many others across the world.

Christof was so many things to so many people.

For the Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria (UP), he was a founding father, a trail-blazer, and a constant source of inspiration and encouragement.

He was our dynamic initiator-in-chief. He played a pioneering role in positioning the Centre as a pan-African centre of excellence. Constantly brimming with new ideas and grand schemes, plans and projects, he propelled the Centre into new directions and challenged it to explore different dimensions. To Christof, if something could be conceived, it could be achieved. Among these initiatives are landmark events that will be there for many years to come, including the African Human Rights Moot Court Competition, which in 2021 celebrates 30 years; the Nelson Mandela World Human Rights Moot Court Competition; and the National Schools Moot Competition (which was later extended to countries beyond South Africa, under the aegis of the Global Campus of Human Rights).

His passing is too soon, and too sudden. It is such a loss. He still had so much to offer. But what a legacy this giant leaves.

Christof was the Director of the Centre for Human Rights from 1999 to 2006. He was Dean of the Faculty of Law at UP from 2007 to 2010. After stepping down as Dean, he became the founding Co-Director of the Institute for International and Comparative Law in Africa (ICLA) at UP. He was United Nations Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions from 2010 to 2016; and was a member of the UN Human Rights Committee from 2017 to 2020.

In each of these positions, he made significant and original and long-lasting contributions.

As Director of the Centre, he left his fingerprint on the heart and soul of the Centre. The Centre logo – Africa as a butterfly – was his brainchild, based on the notion that a minor or seemingly insignificant change or action can have momentous or consequential outcomes or consequences. He captured our essence in the phrase “excellence with Ubuntu”. It was Christof who took the initiative towards establishing the Master's in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa programme, which is part of the Global Campus of Human Rights.

As Dean of the Faculty, he insisted on a greater focus on post-graduate studies, and in particular doctoral studies at the Faculty.



# In memory of Christof Heyns

He secured funding for full-time doctoral students, and made the Faculty a magnet for talented prospective students from across the African continent.

As Special Rapporteur, he drew attention to cutting-edge issues such as the use of force by private security providers in the law enforcement contexts; the use of drones and autonomous weapons in armed conflict or counter-terrorism operations; and the role of forensic science in protecting the right to life. During 2016, he chaired the UN Independent Investigation on Burundi.

As member of the Human Rights Committee, he was pivotal in the drafting of General Comment 37, the right of peaceful assembly (article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights).

As an academic, he was recognised internationally as a leading expert in the field of international human rights law, including right to life issues and regional human rights mechanisms. He has published

widely on these matters. His experience as Special Rapporteur drew him to explore an area surprisingly neglected by legal academics – the ‘right to life’ and ‘freedom from violence’. He published widely around these themes. He also was a member of the Working Group on Death Penalty, Extra-Judicial, Summary or Arbitrary Killings and Enforced Disappearances in Africa of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights. He had been leading discussions at the level of the Commission on how to curb the excessive use of police force in Africa.

Over many years and to generations of students, Christof was an inspiring teacher and mentor. He supervised a number of doctoral candidates who are in their own right contributing as South African legal academics: Bernard Bekink, Henk Botha, Willem Gravett, Magnus Killander, Wessel Le Roux, Frans Viljoen. Other supervisees of Christof include Thompson Chengeta, Waruguru Kaguongo and Zambian Judge Mumba

Malila.

His academic interest was varied, and included expounding on the ‘struggle theory’ of human rights, and exploring the life and times of Jan Smuts. One of his abiding passions was to better track and understand the actual effect of international human rights on the real lives of people. This concern led him to devise a far-reaching study on the effect of the core United Nations human rights treaties in twenty UN member states, which culminated in the publication Heyns and Viljoen publication *The impact of the United Nations human rights treaties at the domestic level* (2002). This work has been described as ‘seminal’. Christof energised a follow-up study, which tracks the changes in impact over the subsequent 20 years. During his sabbatical in Stellenbosch, he was preparing the results of this study, involving twenty country-based researchers or teams, for publication.

Christof was also a great editor and collector of materials, with a



view to make inaccessible documents available to a broader public. At a time when the African regional human rights system was largely unknown, he collected and published a number of volumes of texts and commentaries. In this way, he breathed life into an almost non-existent field of academic study. The Heyns and Killander collection (eds) Compendium of key human rights documents of the African Union (PULP, various editions) has served – and will still serve – as a source of reference to generations of students of African human rights law.

It was also his passion to see others publish, and was involved in the founding of two such endeavours. First, he was the (co)founding editor of the African Human Rights Law Journal, which has been published since 2001. Second, together with Faculty colleagues, he forged the Pretoria University Law Press (PULP) into being. PULP just published a landmark publication edited by him and Professor Philip Alston, Sarah Knuckey, and Thomas Probert, Alston and Heyns on Unlawful Killings: A Compendium of the Jurisprudence of the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions from 2004-2016.

Christof Heyns was an internationalist. He found great pleasure in regularly teaching at the University of Oxford and at the American University in Washington, D.C. He was a Humboldt Fellow at Heidelberg University, a Fulbright Scholar at Yale Law School and a Fulbright Fellow at Harvard Law School.

There were so many dimensions to Christof, each of which he inhabited so fully and so completely. Whether it was rowing, being a father, a family man, a grandfather, playing the guitar, appreciating a good book or a piece of music, or working for human rights. He was a good and deeply moral man, integrity personified, warm-hearted, had a quirky sense of humour, and was ready with a witticism for every occasion. His enthusiasm was boundless and infectious, leaving no one untouched whose life intersected with his. He was immeasurably wise.

Our heart-felt condolences and wishes of comfort and strength go to his wife Fearika, his children Willemien, Adam, and Renée, his mother, other family, and all his friends and colleagues who had the privilege of walking some part of his path with him.

May his spirit soar. We all honour, appreciate and have been touched by his consequential life.

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DR. JOHAN ADAM HEYNS:

# EXORCIST OF APARTHEID

## Dr Johan Heyns: An Exorcist of Apartheid – in Memory of his Son Christof Heyns

On Sunday, 28 March, Christof Heyns suddenly and unexpectedly passed away during a hike in his native country South Africa. As founder of the Human Rights Centre at the University of Pretoria and the African Master in Human Rights and Democratisation, he was one of the pioneers and architects of the Global Campus of Human Rights. As UN Special Rapporteur on Summary Executions and member of the UN Human Rights Committee, he was one of the most well-known and influential human rights experts of our time. Most importantly, he was a wonderful human being and a great friend to many of us.

Chris' father, Johan Heyns, was a leading Calvinist theologian and moderator of the general synod of the Dutch Reformed Church, the main Afrikaans church in South Africa. In 1982, he publicly rejected the notion that apartheid was the will of God, and caused a furore at that year's synod by openly supporting multiracial marriages. Under his leadership at the 1986 synod, tens of thousands of church members and many congregations broke away to form the Afrikaans Protestant Church. In 1990, he finally declared apartheid a sin, which had a large impact on the white minority government and helped opening doors towards dismantling the apartheid regime. On 5 November 1994, just half a year after Nelson Mandela had been inaugurated as South Africa's first black President, Johan Heyns was assassinated by a white extremist at his home when playing cards with three of his grandchildren, aged 2, 8 and 11.

Another grandchild and son of Christof, Adam, was 5 years old when his grandfather was assassinated. Together with Christof, he directed and produced the video "Dr. Johan Heyns – Exorcist of Apartheid", which won the award for best short documentary at the Jozi Film Festival in South Africa. It is a moving document about the brutality of the apartheid system and the difficulties to change it from within. The story of Johan Heyns also makes us understand why Christof became such a dedicated human rights champion. We miss you and will never forget you!



# In memory of Dimitra Papadopoulou

## In Memory of Dimitra Papadopoulou

The Global Campus of Human Rights expresses its deep regret and profound sorrow for the loss of Professor Emerita Dimitra Papadopoulou, from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, who passed away on Wednesday, 21 April 2021.

In 1997, Dimitra Papadopoulou founded the first UNESCO Chair in a Greek academic institution at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, as a result of her vision, her scientific vigilance in the academic disciplines of Social Psychology and Peace Education as well as her deep conviction of the need to foster a culture of peace in education and society. She worked for the UNESCO Chair tirelessly for two decades with absolute devotion and self-denial, with dynamism and academic integrity, while serving the same goals in her scientific work and activity throughout her academic career, both in Greece and abroad. She highlighted the interdisciplinarity of the UNESCO Chair's academic field and its importance for the education of students of all disciplines at the university.

As one of the original pioneers of The European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (Global Campus Europe - EMA), she contributed decisively to the advancement of global values and human dignity through inter-university cooperation as well as to the internationalisation of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

Dimitra was deeply committed to the right to culture and the protection of cultural property. This was one of the main thematic areas in which she and her colleagues from Thessaloniki contributed to the EMA cooperation in the early years, and it was highly appreciated by the students. In the second semester, students always felt welcomed and greatly supported in Thessaloniki, largely thanks to Dimitra's personal involvement.

Dimitra was one of the original pioneers of the EMA programme. As fellow UNESCO Chairs, she had a close bond with our founder Professor Antonio Papisca and remained a very strong and treasured supporter of the cooperation until her retirement as EMA Director in 2018, and even beyond this.

The legacy that Dimitra leaves to the Global Campus of Human Rights, the UNESCO Chair and to the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki is and will remain profound. We express our sincere and warm condolences to her family and relatives.



## La Museion / The Unthinkable Experiment

Koen Vanmechelen's is continuing with the Human Rights Pavilion Cosmocafes follow up and launching a new project during these exceptional times: La Mouseion / The Unthinkable Experiment with a call for application open to the public.

The Secretary General of the EMAlumni Association, Gabriel Alves de Faria, was present at the opening Press Conference at La Biomista on 2 April 2021.

With La Mouseion/Unthinkable Experiment, a reference to the ancient Mouseion in Alexandria, our partner Koen Vanmechelen once again proves that he is one of Belgium most socially relevant artists. In three knowledge containers, young people in particular are invited to think about the future. "The Unthinkable Experiment" gives young people and Global Campus of Human Rights students a chance to think outside the box, while residing in the fertile frontier between wilderness and civilisation. Inspired by the environment of his studio "La Biomista", sheltered by the freedom of the arts and empowered by the encounter with others.

«Thinking out of the box while being in the box».

Koen Vanmechelen

Learn more about the project:

[labiomista.be/en/unthinkable-experiment](http://labiomista.be/en/unthinkable-experiment)

[labiomista.be/en/lamouseion](http://labiomista.be/en/lamouseion)

# Climate Change and Children: Impact, Rights and Participation

10 - 12 May 2021

## Global Campus International Conference 2021 Climate Change and Children: Impact, Rights and Participation

Climate change has been identified by United Nations' agencies and experts as one of the biggest threats to children's health. Globally, children are being detrimentally affected by climate shocks (e.g. droughts, floods, cyclones) and related diseases, polluted air, soil and water, exposure to toxic substances. Despite contributing the least to the causes of climate change, children are the worst affected by it, right now and in the future.

As the impact of climate change is child-sensitive, any response to it also has to be child-sensitive. Even more, it has to fully include meaningful consultation and direct participation of children in line with article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that 'the child who is capable of forming his or her own views has the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child'. The Convention also recognises the rights of the child to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. In this light, it is significant that much as (adult) concerns on the impact of climate change have raised worldwide, so have the voices of children and adolescents who have mobilised, demanding States take measures in mitigating the impact of climate change and start immediate actions.

The International Conference from 10 to 12 May 2021 on Climate Change and Children: impact, rights and participation brought together experts, representatives of States, international and non-governmental organisations, policymakers, academics and students from different regions of the world to discuss and debate on the importance of a child rights-based approach to climate action and to suggest options ensuring child participation in such policy developments. The conference has been coordinated by the Global Campus Caucasus and organised in a hybrid format.



**eddd** European  
Development  
Days

**15-16 June 2021**

## 14<sup>th</sup> Edition of the European Development Days Village (EDD21)

The Global Campus of Human Rights Press Office will be present this year too at the European Development Days Village 2021 (EDD21 – 14<sup>th</sup> fully online edition). The event is Europe's premier forum for International Cooperation and Development that will take place on 15 & 16 June 2021 and will be fully digital. The title of this year's event is "The Green Deal for a Sustainable Future".

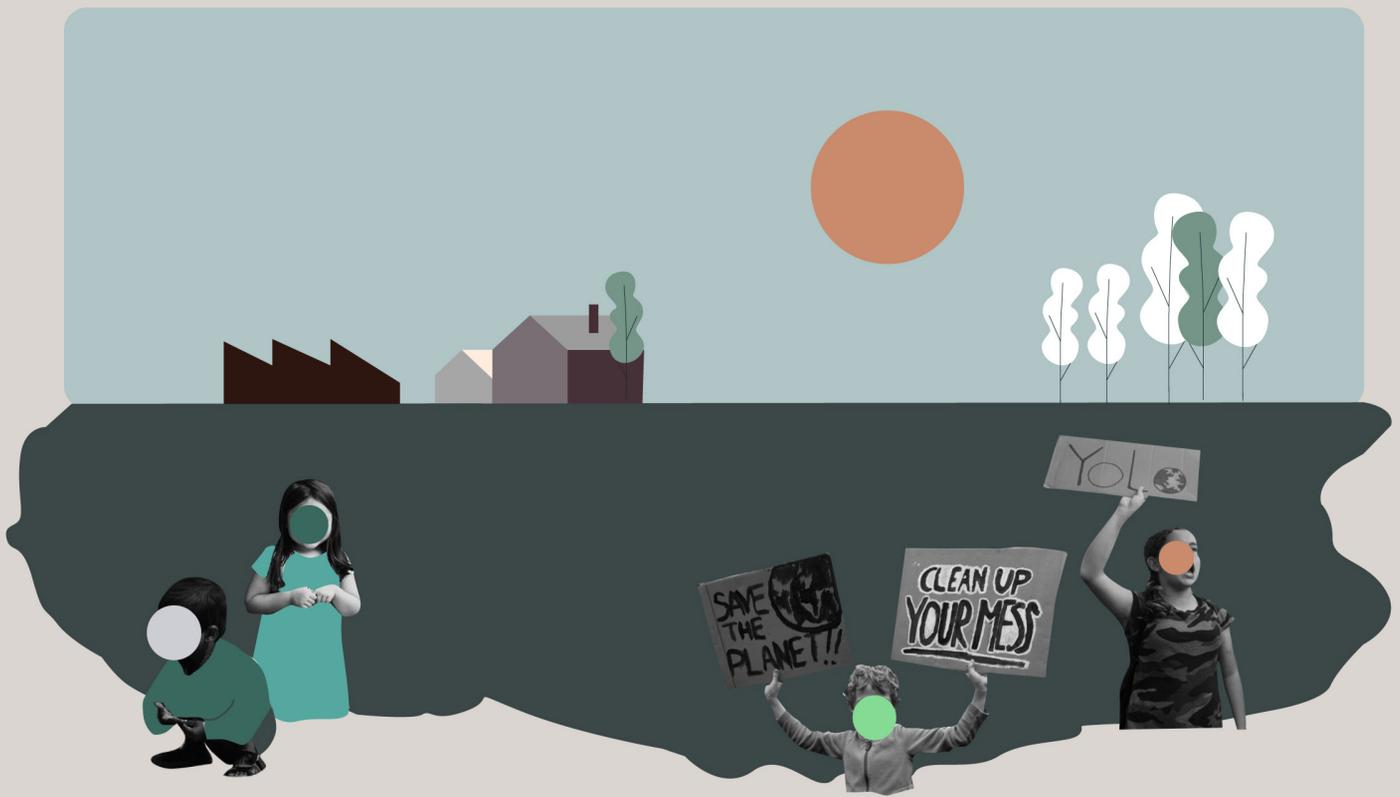
Biodiversity loss, climate change and environmental degradation are defining challenges of our generation and require more coordinated and incisive international efforts. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the interlinkages between human health and a healthy planet. The post COVID recovery should be an opportunity to build back greener and more inclusive societies and economies.

In this respect, the European Development Days will provide a decisive moment for analysis and reflection on the road to the CBD COP15 in Kunming in October and the Glasgow COP26 in November 2021.

Within those themes, participants at EDD 2021 will discuss a whole range of issues, such as: sustainable blue economy; green finance; sustainable energy; sustainable urbanisation; water and sanitation; rural transformation and food systems; pollution and chemicals; green-economy related education and training; protecting biodiversity and people; forest and landscape management; seascapes and coastal areas; wildlife, security and development; climate-change; transboundary watersheds, indigenous peoples and local communities; research, data and new technologies; protected area management and species conservation.

Each year, the forum attracts more than 8000 participants from over 140 countries worldwide, representing 1200 organisations from the development community. As in previous years, the EDD 2021 will host the Young Leaders Programme and the award ceremony for the Lorenzo Natali Media Prize 2021. The prize, established in 1992, rewards excellence in reporting on development issues, inequality, human rights and poverty eradication.

The Global Campus of Human Rights Press Office will follow up and interact with EU Institutions organisers with their online PR global campaign designed to make people reflect on the subject with the hashtag #EDD21.



## MOOC

### Child Participation and the Right to a Sustainable Environment

The increasing visibility of climate action campaigns led by young activists strongly indicates that our attention must not be diverted from the environmental emergency that is undermining children's rights and future prospects around the world. Discussions in these areas typically revolve around the types of children's rights that are most at risk and the protection of children and young people from the harmful effects of climate change and a degraded environment. The call of young activists, instead, expresses the need to go a step further by recognising the many links between a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and children's rights to be heard and participate.

Such a stand should not be underestimated, especially if considered in the light of existing frameworks relating to both the environment and children's rights. Whether we look at children's rights to health and education, or children's freedom of association and peaceful assembly, or the increasing calls for the recognition of a right to a healthy environment, international standards indicate that the understanding of environmental concerns, enhanced by the full consciousness of children's right to participate, may improve not only the quality of children's lives but also the quality of children's responsive actions, such as those of youth environmental movements.

In this light, recent developments such as UN resolutions, reports and summits or civil society campaigns and calls for legal accountability and redress seem to be a step in the 'right' direction and provide an empowering context for initiatives organised by children to defend their environmental rights. However, questions still remain: how many children proactively make use of human rights standards in their action against environmental damage? How can we build on the movement initiated by young climate activists to recognise children as direct agents of change? How can climate action be organised, sustained and deployed in a way that upholds children's rights and the effective participation of children?

This MOOC asks children's rights experts, environment specialists, human rights scholars and young climate activists to examine concepts, standards and practices of rights-based participation of children in environmental matters. Through free and open access to current knowledge and debates, the course speaks to a worldwide audience - and young people specifically - to inform those who are seeking human rights guidance, encourage those who are curious to know more, support those who are already acting, and ultimately boost effective change.

Course dates: From 31 May to 11 July 2021 — [gchumanrights.org/mooc-cpe](https://gchumanrights.org/mooc-cpe)



## 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the Summer School in Cinema Human Rights and Advocacy

The 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the Summer School in Cinema Human Rights and Advocacy is a training initiative jointly developed by the Global Campus of Human Rights (GC) and Picture People. The School is aimed at young professionals wishing to broaden their understanding on the connections between human rights, films, digital media and video advocacy, and learn how to use film as a tool for social change. The 10-day programme provides a safe, culturally rich and collaborative environment where diversity and inclusivity are embraced, original and critical thinking is encouraged, skills are honed, creativity is unleashed and networking with experts from the human rights arena and professionals from the film industry at the 78<sup>th</sup> Venice international Film Festival is supported.

This year's programme is focusing on delivering social change to children and young people' in the broader framework of human rights protection and promotion. The school is designed to appeal to young professionals from diverse backgrounds and experiences.

This year the Summer School programme will be delivered in a blended format with online and in presence sessions in Venice Lido, both at the Global Campus and the Venice International Film Festival venues.

The Global Campus of Human Rights launched the summer school programme in 2005. It was meant to be a one-off event; nevertheless, given its success, the summer school ran for another four years in Venice before moving in 2010 to the Huston School of Film & Digital Media (part of the National University of Ireland in Galway), where it flourished for an additional six years. Since 2017, the Summer School is back in its birthplace in Venice Lido.

Application deadline: 20 June 2021

More information at: [gchumanrights.org/chra](https://gchumanrights.org/chra)



## Press Release about the Participation of the Global Campus of Human Rights in the Commission VII of the Venice City Council

### Evolution

The Global Campus of Human Rights is a network of excellence in international postgraduate education. Its origin dates back to 1997, thanks to the joint initiative of the European Union and 10 European universities, coordinated by the University of Padua, which established the European Master in Human Rights and Democratisation. Supported from the outset by the Venice City Council, the consortium was first hosted at the Giudecca, and since 1998 at the Monastery of San Nicolò.

Since then, the Global Campus has continued to evolve and broaden its scope of action:

- Based on the model of the European Master's degree, 6 other Master's degrees on human rights and democracy have been launched in Africa, South East Europe, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, the Caucasus and the Arab world;
- In 2002, the University of Padua extended management of the Master's programme to its university partners, establishing the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights (EIUC) as a recognised non-profit association under private law - supported by the City and the Regional Council;
- In 2019, the consortium was further transformed from a European association to a global centre, becoming the Global Campus of Human Rights;
- To date, the Global Campus consists of 100 member universities, has seen over 4000 Master's students graduate and delivered courses for another 3000 participants.

### Global Campus activities

For the past 23 years, the Monastery of San Nicolò has been the headquarters and heart of the Global Campus activities:

- The Monastery houses the secretariat of the association that coordinates the joint activities of the 7 Masters;
- It is the venue of the European Master's Programme, which attracts about 90 students each year to the Lido as well as an equal number of professors and experts from all over the world, who use the local hotels, restaurants, catering and transport services. 92% of our graduates find work in institutions - governmental and non-governmental - that carry out concrete projects on human rights. The European Master's Programme, which received an important recognition from the President of the Republic on the occasion of its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017, has regularly held its courses in presence also in the current academic year, with 60 European and non-European students and in compliance with the current regulations for the prevention of COVID-19;
- Other international training courses are held at the Monastery throughout the year for the benefit of professional groups and participants from all over the world: the Venice School of Human Rights dedicated to human rights defenders organised with the European Parliament, training seminars on election observation, specialised courses on the jurisprudence of the European Court attended by hundreds of lawyers and jurists from all over Italy, a school on Cinema, Human Rights and Advocacy on the occasion of the Venice Film Festival, diplomatic and academic conferences, activities in the artistic and cultural field. Protagonists of the educational activities are academics from associated universities and experts from international partner organisations (European Parliament and European Commission, the Right Livelihood Foundation, United Nations, OECD, Council of Europe and many others).
- On the occasion of the 1600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Venice, the Global Campus has promoted a series of important activities to stimulate debate on the sustainable future of the city - the Global Campus Human Rights Conversations - together with Ca' Foscari, the University of Padua, VIU, the City



Council, the Region, and civil society actors; it has also launched a Magazine in which it has collected the contributions of important international and national interlocutors on the theme of the importance of human rights education (Urpilainen, Sassoli, Castaldo, Zaia).

- Nonetheless, the Centre has always been open to the needs of the community, especially in the Lido area, hosting summer concerts, guided tours, Pro Loco events, and the activities of parish volunteers (involving scouts, the disabled, children from Chernobyl, etc.). Anyone who has asked for spaces with a social purpose and for the benefit of the community has never been denied the use of the Monastery spaces in agreement with the local council.
- Under-use of the Monastery is far from the Global Campus' reality.

### **The relationship with Venice City Council and the Veneto Region**

- The City Council has always supported the activities of Global Campus and confirmed the assignment of the venue through repeated resolutions of the council and conventions of use, and in 2014 with the concession for nine years of the Monastery, renewable for another 9 years.
- After an initial partial restoration, the Monastery was logistically managed until 2012 by the Morosini centre in Alberoni (a branch of the City Administration) and the Global Campus has constantly invested in the structure, innovating the teaching spaces and offices, updating the technical and IT equipment, constantly investing in the maintenance and adaptation of the premises with over € 500,000 spent.
- The Veneto Region has also always supported the activities of the Global Campus and in particular those of the European Master's Degree with a law dedicated to it (LR 28 December 1998 n. 33).

### **Past and future**

- Building on its experience, the Global Campus looks into the future. In its resolution of 20/01/2021, the European Parliament defines it as «the flagship of the European Union's support for human rights education in the world» and our institution is reconfirmed in the European Union's support for the next seven-year period (2021/2027) through the Neighbourhood, Development Cooperation and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI).
- In order to be able to continue our activities, we trust we will be reconfirmed in the concession for the use of the Monastery and supported for the continued work performed over the years, always searching for the collaboration with the City of Venice.
- At a time when the common sensibility speaks of sustainability and investment in the younger generations, of enhancing the international role of the city of Venice as an ideal place for training and research on human rights, we believe that moving, interrupting, or modifying existing activities that already contribute to this objective is incomprehensible. We therefore expect the city administration to act consistently with this intention.
- With regard to the Pepe Barracks, we are convinced that its recovery will certainly benefit the entire San Nicolò area and offer opportunities for synergies among the activities that can be carried out in the future. However, what is puzzling is the media discrediting what has been going on for years with the intention of calling into question established realities, in order to replace them with new projects to be launched from scratch. Projects which do not need the spaces of the monastery to be started up, should they be considered worthy investing in.



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## Contributions

MOOC Children's Rights and  
Technology in the Digital Age:  
Interview with Flavia, a Young  
Participant



## MOOC on Children's Rights and Technology in the Digital Age: Interview with Flavia, a Young Participant



In March 2021 we opened a new MOOC: *Children's Rights and Technology in the Digital Age* in which we focussed on how technology is shaping the minds and behaviours of the coming generations. The goal of the free online course was to promote a more ethical, human-centric, and accessible tech-infused future that respects the rights of the children.

It was a 'niche-MOOC' that attracted participants (over 2500) from all over the world and different professional backgrounds (education, health-care, technology, even business). As we hoped, under-18-years-olds also joined us. One of them reached out to our tutors and was asked to share what she thought about the MOOC: Flavia, a 17-year-old high school student from a town near Naples (Italy), was interviewed by Meredith Veit, one of the directors of the course.

**What inspired you to take this course in particular?**

I think it was the title, children and technology. In theory I'm still a child because I'm 17 years old; I thought it could be interesting not only for me but also for my family and friends, and I could learn a lot of new things that for sure I would have never learned at school. And this for many reasons: for example, my teachers are all over 50; their generation is maybe a little bit naive about technologies.

**What were your overall impressions of the course, what did you most like or what was the thing that most surprised you?**

I didn't really expect this MOOC to be so interesting! At the beginning I thought that maybe I was too young or English is not my mother tongue, so I would encounter problems. But I understood almost everything and improved my writing skills thanks to the weekly discussions. I loved listening to the lectures and the different accents of the speakers. What I liked the most was in module no. 5: the document 'personal mental health of children and youth', because in those statements I really saw myself, reading about feelings such as anxiety, lack of sleep, anger, sadness, no desire for doing anything ... these are situations I noticed even before I started the course and they were very much related to the time I spent on social media. And after reading about this I started to feel better.

Now if I use my phone for more than one hour I decide by myself that I won't use it, for example, until the evening. I've started making my own rules -- not my parents or other people around me. The numbers I found on the MOOC's documents were pretty shocking but I was also relieved to understand how many people share the same very personal situations.

**How can you apply what you've learned to your everyday life? What were the lessons that were most impactful for you?**

In many different ways. Since the pandemic started, my life has basically depended on technology. So I'm even more exposed to every kind of risk. Now I try and read the websites' terms and conditions and do not accept all those cookies without even thinking about it. I've told my family and friends 'please, be careful, you don't really know what you're accepting!' So I'm more conscious. Also this MOOC has had an impact in terms of what I want to study at university. I've really started thinking about my future. You know, if we talk about human rights and social inequalities, now I know something about these topics. And I have the desire to learn more about human rights and to work with people in order to create better opportunities for everyone in the world.

I would say that even as a student, as a young person, you definitely can have an impact. And it sounds like you're already talking about these



things with your friends. In the human rights community we like to talk about 'thinking global but acting locally'. Sometimes the most impactful changes are exactly when you are talking to your friends about not accepting all the cookies, or showing them how to turn off the location, joining the data detox challenge... it's so impressive that you're already becoming an advocate.

**Why do you think young people should be engaged in the topic of technology and human rights?**

Because it is seriously essential. I've learned that children have so many beautiful rights and often we don't even know about them. I didn't learn them at school and my parents never informed me. Maybe simply because some people have this naive conception of children, that they are little so they do not deserve to be treated as human beings with their own rights. This is absolutely not true: children are particularly delicate at that age, so they need to be understood and helped. Also governments don't help the young generation enough. For example I can see my generation moving, I mean we've seen Greta Thunberg and Fridays for Future and all of these things and I think they are incredible. But I also see that governments don't really want us to be a single voice, don't want us to have a voice at all, and that's the reason why we should fight for our rights, for what we believe in. And to do that we have to know what our rights are. So I think knowledge really empowers us, because if we do not know what our rights are we cannot fight for them. So learning and studying and being interested in these things is the least that we can do. I mean: we are the future!

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## Campaigns

Donations Campaign for the Global  
Campus of Human Rights



## Donations Campaign for the Global Campus of Human Rights

Your donation helps fund the Global Campus of Human Rights' daily commitments. Our students, professors and academic communities are building the future of our society – a fairer one based on Human Rights Education.

Supporting the Scholarship Programme will help many qualified students to start their career. Endowing a Professorship or Fellowship is one of the most significant investments a contributor can make to an academic institution. Contributing to the Internships Programme, you will support trained students access the job market. A legacy bequest will ensure that your name will be bound to us for years to come. In return we offer our services and network to help you benefit from your participation and collaboration.

And a general gift will make a true difference in successfully developing all of our global education activities and projects.

You could participate in our ongoing social media fundraising campaign and donate now:  
[gchumanrights.org/support-us/join-us/donations.html](https://gchumanrights.org/support-us/join-us/donations.html)

More info: [fundraising@gchumanrights.org](mailto:fundraising@gchumanrights.org)  
Elisa Aquino – Giulia Ballarin  
Fundraising Office



You can contribute greatly to the success of the Global Campus in the following ways:

- donations help to fund the everyday functioning of our institution;
- companies, charitable foundations and institutions can sponsor and partner our initiatives, linking their brand to the prestigious academic network of the Global Campus of Human Rights;
- supporting the scholarship programmes helps many qualified students to start their career and enter the job market, in particular through internships and fellowships;
- contributing to the Global Campus of Human Rights research projects.

Your support allows us to go forward in the pursuit of our vision and to make the Global Campus a convener for those who share our goals.

You can also donate your il 5x1000 from IRPEF (CF 94054110278).



#### GENERAL DONATION

This donation helps fund our everyday functions



#### SPECIFIC DONATION

Support scholarships, internships, fellowships and professorships



#### IN MEMORIAM

Celebrate a loved one's life by making a donation in their memory

For more information visit:

<https://gchumanrights.org/support-us/join-us/donations.html>

<https://gchumanrights.org/support-us/join-us/partnership-sponsorships.html>

or contact our Fundraising Office at [fundraising@gchumanrights.org](mailto:fundraising@gchumanrights.org)



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This project is co-funded by the European Union

