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Europe
South East Europe
Latin America-Caribbean
Asia-Pacific

Central Asia
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Editorial

Encyclopedia of Human Rights
Rights of the Child 1989

Encyclopedia of Human Rights
African Charter 1981

Encyclopedia of Human Rights
Inter-American Convention 1969

Encyclopedia of Human Rights
European Convention 1950

Encyclopedia of Human Rights
Universal Declaration and Covenants 1948-1966

In a world awash with uncertainty and relentless change, human rights education **stands at a pivotal crossroads**, beckoning us to reimagine its essence and relevance.

The defense of dignity today demands more than mere legal or technical knowledge; it calls for a tapestry woven with imagination, empathy, and the courage to engage societies where values are birthed, concrete issues confronted within the heart of culture, the spirit of arts and sport, and the resonance of human stories. This new edition of the Global Campus of Human Rights Magazine gazes into the horizon, exploring how human rights education can remain not just relevant, but transformative and profoundly humane.

Throughout this issue, voices from institutions and oversight bodies resonate with urgency, reflecting on the vital task of breathing life into human rights standards paradigms. Jonas Grimheden eloquently reminds us that these rights must be *embedded in operating procedures*, made tangible in the rich tapestry of real-world settings, especially in sensitive realms such as migration and border governance. Here, education emerges not as an abstract notion, but as a guiding light, equipping professionals to navigate ethical dilemmas and institutional pressures, all while keeping the sanctity of fundamental rights at the forefront.

Deliberately, this edition broadens the canvas on which human rights are explored and advanced. Sport unfolds as a vital arena; as Daniela Heerdt poignantly expresses, *human rights apply to every aspect of life, meaning that they also apply in the world of sport... athletes are human beings first and athletes second*. Viewed through this lens, sport becomes both a stage of risk and a realm of potential, reflecting societal inequalities while simultaneously breaking barriers, fostering dignity, equality, and inclusion. All in line with everyday essentials UN campaigns for human rights promotion not only human rights day but beyond.

The arts, culture, and visual expression further expand this horizon. Within the Global Campus experience, creative practices are increasingly embraced as essential threads in the fabric of human rights education and advocacy. Guido Battaglia beautifully captures this idea, noting that sport and by extension, cultural expression holds *a unique ability to rise above geopolitical tensions, serving as a platform for peace, dialogue, and mutual understanding*. In a divided world, shared experiences in sport, film, and art can illuminate paths for connection where politics often falters. A proof of this is the important milestone of our CHRA Summer School that celebrates its 20 years anniversary.

This forward-looking vision is embodied in the vibrant tapestry of the Global Campus community its students, alumni, partners, and educators. From interdisciplinary courses and microlearning initiatives to alumni-led projects that expand access to education and justice, the stories woven within these pages reveal a transformative

evolution in human rights education: becoming more interdisciplinary, accessible, and deeply rooted in social impact. As European Ombudswoman Teresa Anjinho reflects, in line with our main donor EU policies, networks like the Global Campus are instrumental in shaping professionals who are not merely knowledgeable, but **empathetic, resilient, and globally minded**.

As readers journey through this magazine, we invite them to perceive it not just as a reflection of the Global Campus today, but as a vision of what human rights education can aspire to be. In a fragmented world, the intersection of human rights with other disciplines, art, sport, and culture unveils new pathways to understanding, solidarity, and change. It is within these shared spaces, where values are felt, practiced, and experienced, that the future of human rights will continue to take shape.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Carlotta Brunetta, our Graphic Designer and Communications Officer, for her dedication and creativity throughout her tenure. Her contributions have enriched our journey immensely we wish her a great success in future endeavours.

THE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Interviews and Contributions

Malik

Umar Bakari Muhammad

Human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.



Interview with Fundamental Rights Officer Frontex Jonas Grimheden

The Press Office had interviewed the Fundamental Rights Officer Frontex Jonas Grimheden during the Seminar on “Ensuring fundamental rights compliant screening in the context of the implementation of the EU Migration and Asylum Pact” we had organised at the European Cultural Center” as one of the partners institutions of the Frontex Consultative Forum.

Could you share a bit more on your background, in particular your past links with our EMA Global Campus Europe programme, and your current role?

Thanks for this possibility to share some thoughts and thanks for the lovely days on Lido. Some two decades ago I was for a few years the Swedish member of the EMA board. At least at that time, there was a lead university from each country and I was then at Lund University and took part in that capacity. My engagement also included occasional teaching, serving on panels for master thesis defence and taking part in the magnificent graduation ceremony wearing the Swedish academic insignia – a black top hat! I have also kept in touch with the developments of the Global Campus through always inspiring exchanges with Manfred Nowak. Since then, I have worked for the European Union, first at the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights in Vienna, with legal and policy work, mainly on criminal justice, sustainability and monitoring and complaints mechanisms. And since soon 5 years, I am heading the independent Fundamental Rights Office at the European

Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex). This work brings together a fascinating set of legal and policy areas, including migration, security, law of the sea, and of course border management and coast guard. It is also interesting works in the cross-roads between the EU and national authorities, and, one could say, in the crosshairs of a lot of attention.

What is the importance of human rights education institutions like the Global Campus to help to find solutions to the current challenges in the international agenda and in particular migration issues?

Coming from human rights law education as a recipient and as a provider in terms of teaching and research, such education is for me key. However, I have understood even more in the last years how important it is that the standards are embedded in operating procedures and that these, in turn, are feasible to comply with, and ideally that there are strong incentives for officers in the field to follow these procedures. Equally, human rights law needs to permeate all areas of governance, so it is important that human rights education is inter-disciplinary and that students are encouraged – as the

Global Campus does – to apply a human rights framework to all types of areas, be it financial budgeting, sustainability or technological developments.

Were the meetings at our headquarters, from 13 to 15 October, helpful? Could you tell us something about the Seminar on “Ensuring fundamental rights compliant screening in the context of the implementation of the EU Migration and Asylum Pact” organized by Frontex Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights?

The Consultative Forum of Frontex is a body that helps the Agency with feedback and criticism from NGOs, EU and international organisations. In an area such as border management with many sensitive issues, it is important to ensure accountability and transparency and the Forum boosts this dimension. To be able to have the meeting in the serene and secluded confines of the Monastery of San Nicolo, added quality to our discussions between the Forum and the Agency. The seminar on fundamental rights compliant screening was very timely and useful. The EU Member States are due to apply the EU’s Screening rules from June next year, at which time procedures and monitoring need to be in place. The Consultative Forum was able to bring together a number of key actors to explore and stress what needs to happen in the months to come for this important instrument to be brought to life.

Could you give a message to the students, alumni, professors, staff and experts of the Global Campus of Human Rights?

Happily! To me, the Global Campus with its global coverage, is an inspiring institution. When the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted almost 80 years ago, education in itself was formulated (in Article 26) as not only an obligation and a right, but also that it should “promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, [...] for the maintenance of peace.” So ensuring a global campus for human rights education is delivering also on something much needed these days, peace.



Interview with European Ombudswoman Teresa Anjinho

The Press Office had the opportunity to ask questions to the European Ombudswoman Teresa Anjinho during her visit to our headquarters premises in Venice regarding her important role in the European Union.

Could you share a bit more on your background, in particular your past links with our EMA Global Campus Europe programme, and your current position of European Ombudsman?

My connection with the EMA Global Campus Europe programme dates back to 1997, when I completed the European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation, carrying out the second semester at the University of Maastricht. This experience was instrumental in preparing me for the operational demands of daily work in international organisations, field operations, governmental and non-governmental bodies, and academia. One year later, I became a trainee in the European Parliament and subsequently in the European Commission. I hold a law degree from the University of Coimbra and I am a PhD candidate at the NOVA School of Law, with my studies currently suspended due to public office responsibilities. Alongside publishing several scientific papers, I have lectured at NOVA School of Law and at the Ius Gentium Conimbrigae Institute of the University of Coimbra. My professional career has been deeply rooted in human rights, public international law, gender, and equality. I served as a Member of Parliament in Portugal (2011–2015),

Secretary of State for Justice (2015), and Deputy Ombudsperson of Portugal (2017–2022). From 2022 to 2025, I was a Member of the Supervisory Committee of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF).

Since 27 February 2025, I have been serving as the European Ombudswoman, responsible for investigating maladministration within the institutions, bodies, offices, and agencies of the European Union.

What is the importance of human rights education networks like the Global Campus of Human Rights to solve the current urgent problems in your field?

Human rights education networks such as the Global Campus of Human Rights are essential to addressing the complex and urgent challenges we face today. They create a community of informed, engaged, and ethically grounded individuals who are ready to act for justice and human rights across borders. The Global Campus plays a particularly important role in cultivating the next generation of professionals who not only defend human dignity but who also think critically, work collaboratively, and understand the systemic nature of the problems ahead.

From my personal experience, being part of this network—building on my Erasmus

journey—shaped me profoundly. It made me a better human being, a better lawyer, and ultimately a better public servant. It gave me the intellectual tools and moral grounding to navigate demanding roles in public life, and later, to serve as European Ombudswoman. Today, facing issues such as shrinking civic space, disinformation, threats to the rule of law, and increasing public distrust in institutions, we need professionals who are not only knowledgeable but also empathetic, resilient, and globally minded. Networks like the Global Campus provide exactly that: a space where values, expertise, and a commitment to human rights are cultivated together. They are indispensable partners in strengthening democratic governance and ensuring that human rights remain at the heart of European public administration.

Please tell us more about the priorities of your office and the challenges you will need to address?

Recently, I published my Strategy for the next four years, titled “Building Trust, Driving Change.” It is structured around three main pillars. The first pillar focuses on truly listening to citizens and addressing their complaints. By prioritising individual concerns, we strengthen trust in the EU administration and encourage greater public engagement with our Office. Helping people resolve their issues is — and will remain — at the very core of our mandate. The second pillar concerns the strategic use of our own-initiative powers. These tools enable us to act proactively when systemic or emerging challenges arise within the EU administration. To craft effective and lasting solutions, we sometimes need to step back: to examine both the legal and ethical frameworks in place, and the practical realities that shape how the administration functions. The third pillar is dedicated to building strong partnerships. Assisting citizens is a shared responsibility, and to be truly effective, we must foster continuous dialogue and close cooperation with institutions, civil society, academia, and national ombudsman offices.

The challenges ahead are considerable. Over the last five years alone, we have witnessed

extraordinary developments: a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, the return of full-scale warfare to the European continent, and a gradual erosion of global commitment to the rules-based international order. At the same time, our planet has endured devastating droughts, forest fires, and floods; public debate has been increasingly polluted by misinformation and conspiracy theories; and citizens and businesses have been confronted with the societal and economic implications of profound technological change, particularly in areas such as artificial intelligence. Periods of upheaval are not new to humanity. What is different today is the unprecedented speed and complexity of change. Societal and technological development has been accelerating for centuries, but in recent years we have reached an inflection point — one where the pace and interconnectedness of these transformations are putting traditional models of governance under significant strain.

This is precisely why the work of the European Ombudsman matters so much: ensuring that EU administration remains transparent, accountable, ethical, and responsive is essential to maintaining public trust in a time when trust is both fragile and urgently needed.

Could you give a message to the students, alumni, professors, staff and experts of the Global Campus of Human Rights?

Over the past eight months as European Ombudswoman, I have had the privilege of meeting remarkable leaders, public servants, activists, journalists, and many others dedicated to the public good. These encounters have been deeply inspiring — especially in times like ours, when it is easy to feel pessimistic or anxious about the present and the future. But let me focus on what I have witnessed firsthand: every meaningful exchange has strengthened my optimism. Despite the setbacks we inevitably face, I see an extraordinary reservoir of commitment, creativity, and integrity in the people working for human rights and democratic values. To the students, alumni, professors, staff, and experts of the Global Campus of Human Rights: never lose hope, and never stop advocating for the

world you believe in. Your work matters. Your voice matters. And your dedication — often quiet, persistent, and principled — is one of the strongest forces we have for building a more just and humane future.




Interview with Centre for Sports and Human Rights Daniela Heerdt and Guido Battaglia

The Press Office had the opportunity to interview representatives of the Centre for Sports and Human Rights, Daniela Heerdt and Guido Battaglia, about the importance of our global partnerships and initiatives in the field.

Could you tell us about yourself and about the activities of the institution you represent?

Guido: The Centre for Sport and Human Rights is a dedicated human rights organisation for the world of sport. Our mission is to advance a sporting environment that fully respects and promotes human rights—by raising awareness, building capacity, and driving meaningful impact across the global sports ecosystem. As Head of Partnerships and Institutional Affairs, my role is centered on building strategic bridges across the sport movement—whether with federations, NGOs, governments, the private sector, or international institutions. I work to initiate and strengthen collaborations that advance the sport movement toward a more responsible, inclusive, and values-driven model of sport.

Daniela: As Senior Advisor Research and Education and Senior Project Lead Remedy, I coordinate the Centre's research and education activities, in the form of setting up and creating content for the Global Sport and Human Rights Academy and maintaining the Global Sport and Human Rights Research network, with the goal to bridge research and practice. I also lead the projects we do on access to remedy, such as the 'Roadmap to Remedy' project, to

support sport bodies in understanding and acting upon their responsibilities to provide access to remedy when human rights have been harmed and help build a more just world of sport.

How do you see the relationships between sports and our discipline of education on human rights and democracy and also with the academic research in the field?

Daniela: Human rights apply to every aspect of life, meaning that they also apply in the world of sport, and to the people within that world. That is individuals who attend their local clubs' sport practice every week, or participate as referees or other type of volunteers in matches or tournaments that are organized, but also professional athletes that show up to their daily routines and check-ups. They as well are human beings first and athletes second.

Furthermore, if you look at the values that sport promotes, you will find that many of these values are very closely linked to human rights. In most statutes of sport federations you will find references to fundamental values such as respect, equality, or unity, and most statutes of international federations and many national ones have specific provisions on non-discrimination. Also sport's impact and

legacy, are linked to human rights in the way that sport is trying to create lasting benefits for a community. Similarly, sport integrity issues, and many of the relevant policies and regulations, deal with questions that can and need to be assessed from a human rights-based approach, in addition to the sporting perspective. And also the way sport develops, and how it is used for development, and development and peace, has links to the respect for and the promotion and protection of human rights.

So while this shows that there is an inherent link between sport and human rights, it is important that we understand this link both in a positive and negative dimension. While on the one hand, many of the issues that sport is struggling with are examples of its negative human rights impacts, on the other hand, sport offers a great platform to promote human rights and other values like democracy, not just to raise awareness, but to actually break down barriers and fight inequalities. It is often said that sport is a mirror of society, meaning that societal issues are reflected in sports. But this mirror actually works both ways, and sport can lead by example and be a place for trying to solve these issues and reflect lessons learned into wider society.

And for that, we need research as well as education. We already know a lot about how sport and human rights are linked, but we need more data to keep building our work on a solid evidence base that highlights the positive and negative dimension to keep driving change.

You had participated in the 8th online GC Global Campus of Human Rights conversation caring for generating a foundational reflection, study and debate for the near future. In your opinion what will be the most important challenges we will need to address in the near future in the sports field and how human rights defenders, activists and professionals of our network could contribute?

Guido: "In my view, the major challenge sport faces today is avoiding its instrumentalization in complex geopolitical situations—where it risks becoming a vehicle for nationalism, hate,

and violence. Linking sport to the international human rights framework is key to preserving its true promise: unity, inclusion, and respect. But here lies the opportunity. Sport has a unique ability to rise above geopolitical tensions and serve as a platform for peace, dialogue, and mutual understanding. In a divided world, it remains one of the few spaces where people from different backgrounds can come together through shared values like fair play, perseverance, and respect.

When used wisely, sport can challenge divisive nationalism and promote a healthier sense of identity rooted in dignity and solidarity. It can give voice to the marginalized, spotlight global issues, and build bridges where politics often fail. The task, then, is not just to shield sport from misuse—but to unlock its full potential as a force for positive change."

Initiatives such as the GC Conversation help all actors involved recognize the important role they play in showcasing the power of responsible sport, enabling it to serve as a true catalyst for sustainable development.

Any particular projects that you have in your heart also for the activities of the Center that you would like to share with us?

Guido: Joining forces with relevant institutions, such as the Global Campus, on campaigns that combine arts, visuals, human rights, and responsible sport is a very promising project we are currently working on. In general, one of the most rewarding aspects of our work is when engagement and trust-building lead to honest conversations about the internal and external barriers that prevent organisations from taking certain steps. This openness enables us to develop projects focused on finding solutions, create joint strategies, meaningfully engage all stakeholders, and build internal capacity to mitigate risks.

Could you give a message to students, professors, partners and staff of our more than 100 Universities of our academic network of the Global Campus of Human Rights?

Daniela: If we agree that education research is essential for building a strong evidence base

to drive meaningful change, then it's clear that universities and academic networks have a vital role to play in shaping a better sporting world. We need these institutions to foster innovation in responsible sport practices—through research, experimentation, and by setting an example of how sport can fully respect human rights.

Just as importantly, universities are key to disseminating the knowledge and insights gained from such research to the broader world of sport. We should also make a more conscious effort to engage students—especially student-athletes, coaches, and staff—not only to raise awareness but also to include their perspectives in shaping the future of sport.

Furthermore, there is significant room for improvement when it comes to integrating sport and human rights into relevant educational programmes and learning formats—whether through courses, workshops, debates, case studies, field trips, or other methods.

In my view, education is one of the most powerful and sustainable ways to advance the sport and human rights movement. I've had the privilege of leading numerous initiatives to develop programmes, courses, masterclasses, teaching materials, and more in this space. It's exciting to witness the steady growth of this field, with an increasing number of courses being offered to explore the connection between sport and human rights—especially sport's responsibility to respect and protect those rights.

For me, there is no better place to drive this movement forward than within the university setting.



Interview with the President of the Veneto Paralympic Committee Davide Giorgi

The Press Office met the President of the Veneto Paralympic Committee Davide Giorgi about the collaboration with the Global Campus of Human Rights on the field of sports and fundamental rights regarding disability.

Can you tell us more about your work at the Veneto Paralympic Committee and your main goals?

The Veneto Paralympic Committee renewed its governance in April. The new working group immediately identified three areas of focus for the next four years: the first is healthcare, to integrate physical activity and sports into the rehabilitation processes that people with disabilities turn to for maintenance; the second is education, involving schools and universities to support student integration into sports and promote the Paralympic approach, including through scholarships and master's degrees; the third is sports, primarily with CONI, for collaboration with sports clubs to bring the Paralympic sector to the forefront.

Could you provide us with more details on the joint efforts with other partners at sporting events for fundamental rights regarding disability?

Many public institutions, both in the cultural and social fields, support our movement. The right to sports only became a right on June 23, 2023, when it was included in the Italian Constitution: the shift from opportunities to rights was only two years ago. Networking with all those who support and promote rights

is crucial.

Through our network of 100 universities, the EU has helped fund human rights training, and more than 7,000 graduates from these universities are now human rights ambassadors and defenders in international, governmental, and civil society organizations. What inspires you, as President of CIP Veneto, to become a new partner of the Global Campus of Human Rights?

The Global Campus is training future generations who will fight for the protection and promotion of rights worldwide. Even today, the world of disability is subject to discrimination in many places. Sport is a right yet to be achieved. I would like to contribute precisely to this spirit of synergy we mentioned earlier, because unity is strength.

What motivated you to contribute to the first edition of our "Annual Joint Award on Sports, Arts, and Human Rights," with the Global Campus and the Panathlon Venezia given to the Paralympic athlete Francesca Tarantello?

Francesca Tarantello excels in triathlon and is an example of sacrifice and resilience in the face of the barriers and obstacles so many athletes face every day. This is especially

true as a woman, given that the female participation rate in sports currently stands at 25%. Recognizing a female athlete is a sign of care and encouragement for the many women with disabilities stuck at home.

Can you leave us a personal message for the students, professors, partners, and staff of the Global Campus of Human Rights?

It's thrilling to be able to showcase the Paralympic movement in an international context like the Global Campus, which brings together many universities united by a single goal: to promote human rights that are still trampled upon and ignored in too many parts of the planet,

It's a moment of great hope: we must work to achieve them, but also, where they have been recognized, to maintain them and not retreat. It's a battle of civilization to be fought together with enthusiasm and strength.



Contribution of CHRA Alumni Umar Bakari Muh'd About the Experience at the Last CHRA School 2025

It was a heartwarming moment when I received the email confirming my selection to participate in the 2025 Summer School in Cinema, Human Rights, and Advocacy at the Global Campus of Human Rights in Venice, Italy.

When the programme began on 25 August 2025, I joined 21 other participants from different parts of the world. From the very start, I felt inspired realizing that being part of such a diverse and passionate network would not only enrich my own journey but also empower me to create impact in my community. In the course of introductions, it became clear that I was one of the very if not only African in the group, and the only Nigerian. Yet, the differences in context did not divide us; rather, they reminded us of our shared commitment to advocating for the rights of children and all humans through visual story telling.

The programme was officially opened by Manfred Nowak, Secretary General of the Global Campus of Human Rights, who reflected on the origins of the programme. What started as an idea in 2005 has since

become a remarkable space for learning, with over 432 alumni across two decades. He explained why the programme is linked to the International Venice Film Festival (La Biennale di Venezia) immersing participants not only in daily lectures, debates, and workshops, but also in exclusive film screenings, followed by enriching discussions with directors and industry professionals. This deliberate integration of cinema and human rights allowed us to understand more on the power of storytelling in shaping dialogue, justice, and change especially in advocating for Human rights.

Throughout the sessions, we were guided by experts such as Claudia Modonesi, Kelly Matheson, Christopher Hird, Nick Danziger, and Emma Lawrance. Their lectures and workshops connected human rights to visual storytelling, climate change, mental health, legal advocacy, and ethical filmmaking. These engagements were not just theoretical, they challenged us to think critically about our own roles as advocates and creators, equipping us with practical tools to design impactful campaigns and narratives.

Screenings at the 82nd Venice International Film Festival became an integral part of our learning. From powerful films like *My Father and Qaddafi* and *Memory* to deeply moving works such as *Becoming Human* and *Harà Watan (Lost Land)*, we were confronted with stories of justice, loss, displacement, resilience, and belonging. Each film brought fresh perspectives, sparking thoughtful conversations about culture, history, ethics, and the responsibility of storytelling. Meeting directors and production teams behind these works further enriched the experience, offering insights into the craft of filmmaking and the challenges of telling authentic stories.

As someone coming from Bama, a community in Borno State of Nigeria, I can relate to the films which basically we can make to tell our firsthand experiences from both the devastating impacts of the Boko Haram insurgency, and the transformative power of storytelling. *Hara Watan* a film by Akio Fujimoto tells us how people are displaced

forcefully from their home town similar to what we have experienced. Even though it was fictional telling a real life story, it has motivated me to work with like minds and tell our own stories. Not presently, but sometime soon as my current role as a communications officer demands more, although the skills and knowledge I acquired will help me in developing content that amplify human stories to influence policy in North-East Nigeria as producing and disseminating video contents is an essential component of my role. The programme also allowed space for personal mentorship and creative exchange. One-on-one discussions with filmmakers such as Nick Danziger which gave me the opportunity to share my advocacy plans around child protection in North-East Nigeria and receive constructive feedback on shaping human-centered, impactful stories. Equally valuable were moments of reflection with peers, young advocates from around the world who brought unique experiences from their own contexts. Together we built a network of vision, united by the belief that storytelling can be a force for justice.

Beyond the classroom and screenings, the experience of being in Venice itself was enriching. From exploring parts of the city to finding familiar food at an African restaurant when I missed home cooking, these personal moments added warmth and balance to an otherwise intense programme.

The final day of the Summer School was particularly special. We had the opportunity to reflect on all we had learned and later, during a hands-on activity led by Nick Danziger, we applied our knowledge in practice, a fitting conclusion to an unforgettable journey. To crown it all, I was named the winner of the Social Media Contest with nearly 300 points, an honor that came with thoughtful gifts and recognition from the Global Campus of Human rights.

I am deeply grateful to the UNODC for sponsoring my participation and making it possible to be part of such a transformative programme. My appreciation also goes to my supervisor, colleagues and the Global Campus team Manfred Nowak, Claudia Modonesi, Nick

Danziger, Kelly Matheson, Christopher Hird, Emma Lawrance, and the entire coordination team including Elena Battaglia and Sara Brogliato for their tireless efforts in creating such an impactful learning environment.





Most importantly, I carry with me not only new knowledge and skills but also **lifelong connections** with colleagues who share the same vision of advancing human rights through cinema and storytelling. This programme was more than just a course; it was an empowering journey that **will shape my work and commitment to advocacy in the years ahead.**



The background of the slide features a blurred image of a keyboard on a wooden desk. A color gradient is applied across the entire image, transitioning from a light blue at the top to a warm orange at the bottom. The text is centered and presented in a bold, dark grey font on a white background.

**Online Course
“Authoring Justice”:
Capstone Projects**

Introduction

From 12 May to 20 July 2025 the Global Campus of Human Rights ran the second edition of its online course called "**Authoring Justice**". The course focused on how to write powerful narrative nonfiction works about human rights and social justice issues – using storytelling to touch the hearts and minds of readers and affect change around the world. The second iteration included lessons from award-winning authors, activists and publishers, including Professor Andrew Leon Hanna (the main lecturer), Kao Kalia Yang, Sheila Watt-Cloutier, Shahram Khosravi, Jemma Neville, Casey Gerald, and Joel Rickett.

The cohort of students included human rights experts, journalists, climate activists, professors, and researchers from across the globe with a wide range of focus areas – from migration to racial justice, from youth-led social movements to climate advocacy and beyond. The following pages feature a few selected examples of the students' "**Capstone Projects**," which were designed to be either standalone long-form works or components of books they are now beginning to write.

Check the entire collection of the Capstone Projects [here](#).

Borrowed Motherland

Stories of Migrant Women Raising Families Alone

By Matilde Tassinari

It was the fifth day of the fifth month, the year 2015, when Angie¹ arrived in Finland with her husband. A date so precise, so symmetrical, she believed it must mean something: perhaps a sign, a blessing folded into numbers.

Just weeks before arriving in Finland, Angie and her husband were married in Manila. It was a warm celebration, a fairytale wedding, simple and good. Then came the move: her husband's fatherland would be her new home. A new place, a new beginning; nothing she hadn't done before, in other lands, other languages. Starting from zero was a language she already knew, and the move did not frighten her. The plan was simple: find an entry-level job, learn the language, settle in, like any other time. But life here did not unfold the way it had in other places.

When Angie learned she was pregnant, she was living in a crisis shelter in Helsinki, after fleeing a home that had grown dangerous. The country was still a stranger to her, with unfamiliar streets, a language that hadn't settled on her tongue. The workers told her they had booked her an appointment for an abortion. As if they expected her to be grateful, as if it were helpful. Angie stood, confused. She hadn't expected this, and for a moment, she wasn't sure she understood. "No," she said, gently but firmly. This is my child.

Other women in the shelter shared similar stories, similar silences. Many accepted one-way tickets home. "At least your family is there," they said. But for Angie, going home as a mother, and yet no more a wife, was not an option. In her hometown, that would have followed her like a shadow. So she chose to stay with the quiet clarity of a woman who knew her choices did not require explaining.

¹ The stories in this piece are drawn from real lives. To protect the privacy of the women who shared them, all names and identifying details have been changed.

It was night when the contractions began. She was alone. A taxi wasn't an option, not then. So she put on her coat, paused at the door, and walked through the quiet Helsinki dark until the hospital.

Today, that child tells her she needs more time with her best friend and less with her mother. Angie smiles, a softness in her eyes. "It's that time when they start becoming who they are," she says wistfully, even though she has told harder stories without a hint of melancholy. Maybe she's recalling when her baby was small, falling asleep in the most unlikely places. Across the floor or on the highchair, legs flung like tired exclamation marks. And gently, she lifted her into her arms, and brought her to bed, as if moving a sentence to a softer line. Maybe that's what she did too, by staying. By raising her children here. She carried them to a softer place, even if her own feet stayed tired.

There's something magnetic about Angie. Her eyes smile before her lips do. Apologetic is not a word you'd use to describe her, and you will find yourself agreeing with her without knowing why. She got herself a pendant, a silver Kalevalakoru. Someone once told her it was the mark of warriors (quiet ones, perhaps, who carried on without ceremony). She thought that sounded right on her.

Lluisa would not call herself a warrior. Her voice is calm, shaped like a stream threading through stones. Her story comes softly, a carving more than a blow. She speaks from a place of stillness.

She arrived in Helsinki with no intention of laying roots. It was to be a bracket in her life, a chance to study, learn English, experience life somewhere new. But something remained unfinished, a chapter just opening. The pages felt thin and full of promise. Months later, she returned: not because she wanted to write an ending, but as the words kept forming, she felt compelled to write more.

Lluisa was a blossoming artist. She dreamed of a studio, canvases and clay. That dream softened when her children came, and the stability that children thrive in became her art. But still, she paints, captures, sculpts when time permits, her hands still fluent in the language of form

and color, as if they never paused.

Finnish nature has become her quiet companion. In the forest, among birch and moss, she finds a home that doesn't ask her to speak a foreign tongue. She feels most herself when she can speak her own language. And yet, there is something quietly grounding in the pull of the sea. She often walks the shore in Kaivopuisto, where the air feels less like distance and more like space. There, among rocks smoothed by waves, she notices names carved by others. People who, in their own way, had wanted to say "I was here." That gesture brings her into brief contact with them, as if they'd waited to be met by a mother searching for a sense of home on a Finnish shore. Her closest name is Wallenius, etched into the stone in 1897. Here especially, people find ways to be near each other, even when no one is speaking.

Unlike Angie, Lluisa does not share her story freely. Not because she carries any secret, but because she hopes for a life that doesn't ask her to explain herself, where her children can grow up surrounded by the comfort of things being simple. She doesn't need to be seen as anything other than a mother at the leikkipuisto. She's done everything by the book, learned the language, earned the passport. But in the playgrounds, she still feels the invisible walls. She has the lingering thought that at the leikkipuisto, conversations rarely cross certain lines, that Finnish mothers orbit the same space, but at different distances. And though she's done everything by the book, no book tells you how to bridge the quiet between mothers.

Angie knows that silence too. Her child longs to play with a friend. Angie asked the friend's mother many times. "Maybe next week," she'd reply. "I'll give you my number next time." But next week never came, and her name never filled the pending a spot among Angie's contacts. A year passed, and the playdate remained a vague possibility. "Maybe she's just a quiet person," Angie says. "Or maybe it's because of me" she wonders aloud, the way someone does when trying to make sense of silence.

Where Angie is from, friendship means visiting each other's homes, cooking, sharing meals. But in Finland, it's different. She speaks of

her friend, Sanna, who has been in her life for over a decade. Over the years, Sanna's answers came gently, like the closing of a door without sound, a rain check that never turned sunny. And though more than a decade had passed, she had never seen the inside of Angie's home, nor had Angie stepped into hers. And yet (not often nor deeply, but reliably, like a note slipped under a door that stays closed) Sanna remembers to check in.

There were days, Angie admits, when the walls of her apartment felt like a cage. Days when the children were small and the silence loud, and she thought she might go mad. Some nights all that went wrong in her life pierced through her chest and kept her awake. Some days passed without much more than the hum of the refrigerator and the sound of squeaking toys. Other days, she found herself watching the light move across the room, slow and disinterested, like it had somewhere better to be.

But even then, there were the small things. Her child's breath steady in sleep, steam rising from a mug, small socks to pair. A window that fogged and cleared, fogged and cleared, without asking anything of her. Those days didn't lift her, but didn't let her go either. And in between long stretches of stillness, Angie held.

Lluisa was lucky. She felt that, at a time when she could barely trust her own voice, she had found a guardian angel, who went by the name of Rabija. Those days, Lluisa had lost track of where she ended and someone else's judgment began. The boundaries had blurred so gradually she barely noticed. But Rabija noticed. And with time, with long conversations and quiet reminders, she helped Lluisa remember the shape of her own self. Not all at once, more like a river reshaping the riverbank. It took two years of slow unfolding for Lluisa to feel herself again. She had once returned to Helsinki because a story felt unfinished, because the words kept forming. But this also became part of the story: the realization that some chapters carry you too far from who you are. And that part of writing more is knowing when to set a book down.

"When you raise your children alone, people always find a way to tell you what you're not doing right" said Angie. That the children should eat better, sleep longer, scream less, sit quiet. That your house is messy and your Finnish broken. Everyone has a measure, but no one ever handed her a word of praise.

So, she began saying it to herself. Not every day, but sometimes, at the end of a working day, when the dishes were done and the apartment finally quiet, she would sit on the edge of her bed and wrap her arms around her own shoulders. She would say, barely loud enough for the words to settle somewhere inside her: "You did well today."

The children had eaten. They had laughed. They had fought and made up. She had paid a bill, answered a message, remembered to buy milk.

There was no script for the life she was building. No model to hold up and say, "like this." She made it up as she went along, stitching mornings to nights, meals to memories, folding small pajamas and haunting memories into the same drawer. And if no one clapped, she didn't wait for applause, but her one hand holding tight the other hand.



News and Events



20 Years of Cinema, Human Rights & Advocacy

The Global Campus of Human Rights is currently celebrating two decades of storytelling, activism, and global connection at the 20th edition of the Summer School in Cinema, Human Rights and Advocacy: Summer School in Venice | 25 August – 3 September 2025

For twenty years, the Summer School has been a unique meeting point for students, activists, filmmakers, and human rights professionals from around the world, offering a unique training opportunity where cinema is explored as a tool for human rights education and advocacy.

Held at the Global Campus of Human Rights in Venice and in partnership with Picture People, the School immerses participants in 10 days of engaging daily lectures, debates, and hands-on workshops, and opens the possibility for them to attend exclusive screenings at the 82nd Venice International Film Festival, and then have enriching discussions among them, and also occasionally with prominent directors or filming industry professionals.

As **Claudia Modonesi**, co-director of the Summer School, highlights in the celebratory video:

We believe in the power of cinema to transform perceptions and inspire change. This is why the Summer School is not just an academic programme, but an immersive experience in advocacy.

Nick Danziger, award-winning photographer and filmmaker and co-director of the Summer School, adds:

Watching a film together and talking about it afterwards can open perspectives that no textbook can provide.

The 2025 edition featured an internationally recognised faculty, including Manfred Nowak, Christopher Hird, Emma Lawrance, Kelly Matheson, Nick Danziger, and Claudia Modonesi, leaders in human rights, documentary filmmaking, climate justice, and strategic storytelling.

Within these 20 years of history, the Summer School has created strong bonds of collaboration with institutions orbiting around Biennale Cinema, which have enriched the film selection and strengthened networking between participants and the filming industry, namely Biennale College Cinema, Giornate degli Autori and Premio Kinéo.

Biennale College Cinema offers the possibility for CHRA participants to meet with first-time young talented directors and producers and discuss about the challenges of a limited-budget project, and this year's involved teams are going to be those of *Becoming Human* by Polen Ly and *One Woman One Bra* by Vincho Nchogu.

Giornate degli Autori, as independent sidebar of the Venice Film Festival, has a vast selection of movies, among which many are focused on pressing human rights issues, and they intersect perfectly with recurring themes discussed in the School programme. This year they have suggested attending the screening of *Memory* by Vladlena Sandu about the collapse of the Chechen Republic and facilitated the organisation of a private meeting with the director.

Premio Kinéo, a cultural association and official collateral award of the Venice Film Festival, collaborates with Global Campus in spreading awareness of and promoting the intersection between human rights and cinema culture, offering visibility to the award and awardees, and this is done through the awarding of the Premio Kinéo & GCHR Award. This year the award will be presented to Monica Guerritore on 30 August at 2 PM at the Hotel Excelsior Lido of Venice, recognising her lifelong commitment to humanitarian causes, also reflected in her book *Quel che so di lei*.

As it celebrates its 20th anniversary, the Summer School continues to empower a new generation of changemakers bridging art and activism and reaffirming the enduring impact of film on human rights.

Stay updated on the Summer School and Biennale Cinema 2025 through our official hashtags: [#HumanRightsEducation](#) [#MediaActivism](#) [#GCHumanRights](#) [#Venezia82](#) [#BiennaleCinema2025](#)

For further details about the programme: gchumanrights.org/chra



Official Awards of the 82nd Venice International Film Festival

Announced by the five international Juries during the Awards Ceremony that was held on Saturday, 6 September at 7:00 pm.

Another inspiring edition of the Summer School in Cinema, Human Rights and Advocacy has just come to an end. During these days, our Global Campus of Human Rights Press Office actively followed the 82nd Venice International Film Festival, Biennale Cinema, attending press conferences, screenings and collateral events, including the Premio Kinéo, where the Premio Kinéo & GCHR Award was presented to Monica Guerritore for her social and humanitarian engagement.

We congratulate all the participants of the Summer School, the filmmakers, and the winners of Venezia 82 and Orizzonti. Thank you for sharing with us the power of cinema as a tool for dialogue and human rights advocacy.

Waiting for another edition of our CHRA and #Venezia83!

The VENEZIA 82 Jury, chaired by Alexander Payne and composed of Stéphane Brizé, Maura Delpero, Cristian Mungiu, Mohammad Rasoulof, Fernanda Torres and Zhao Tao having viewed all 21 films in competition, has decided as follows:

Venezia 82

GOLDEN LION for Best Film to:

FATHER MOTHER SISTER BROTHER by Jim Jarmusch (USA, Ireland, France)

SILVER LION – GRAND JURY PRIZE to:

THE VOICE OF HIND RAJAB by Kaouther Ben Hania (Tunisia, France)

SILVER LION – AWARD FOR BEST DIRECTOR to:

Benny Safdie for the film THE SMASHING MACHINE (USA)

COPPA VOLPI for Best Actress:

Xin Zhilei in the film RI GUA ZHONG TIAN (THE SUN RISES ON US ALL) by Cai Shangjun (China)

COPPA VOLPI for Best Actor:

Toni Servillo in the film LA GRAZIA by Paolo Sorrentino (Italy)

AWARD FOR BEST SCREENPLAY to:

Valérie Donzelli and Gilles Marchand for the film À PIED D'ŒUVRE (AT WORK) by Valérie Donzelli (France)

SPECIAL JURY PRIZE to:

SOTTO LE NUVOLE (BELOW THE CLOUDS) by Gianfranco Rosi (Italy)

MARCELLO MASTROIANNI AWARD for Best Young Actor or Actress to:

Luna Wedler in the film SILENT FRIEND by Ildikó Enyedi (Germany, Hungary, France)

Orizzonti

The ORIZZONTI Jury of the 82nd Venice Film Festival, chaired by Julia Ducournau and composed by Yuri Ancarani, Fernando Enrique Juan Lima, Shannon Murphy and RaMell Ross, after screening the 19 feature-length films and 14 short films in competition has decided to award:

ORIZZONTI AWARD FOR BEST FILM to:

EN EL CAMINO (ON THE ROAD) by David Pablos (Mexico)

ORIZZONTI AWARD FOR BEST DIRECTOR to:

Anuparna Roy for the film SONGS OF FORGOTTEN TREES (India)

SPECIAL ORIZZONTI JURY PRIZE to:

HARÀ WATAN (LOST LAND) by Akio Fujimoto (Japan, France, Malaysia, Germany)

ORIZZONTI AWARD FOR BEST ACTRESS to:

Benedetta Porcaroli in the film IL RAPIMENTO DI ARABELLA by Carolina Cavalli (Italy)

ORIZZONTI AWARD FOR BEST ACTOR to:

Giacomo Covi in the film UN ANNO DI SCUOLA (A YEAR OF SCHOOL) by Laura Samani (Italy, France)

ORIZZONTI AWARD FOR BEST SCREENPLAY to:

Ana Cristina Barragán for the film HIEDRA (THE IVY) (Ecuador)

ORIZZONTI AWARD FOR BEST SHORT FILM to:

UTAN KELLY (WITHOUT KELLY) by Lovisa Sirén (Sweden)

Premio Giornate degli Autori (GDA Director's Award) | Giornate degli Autori

INSIDE AMIR by Amir Azizi

VARIOUS AWARDS

PREMIO KINEO & GCHR (Global Campus of Human Rights): MONICA GUERRITORE



Global Campus and Moldova State University Inaugurate Human Rights Education Lab in Chişinău at EU-Funded Project Closing Ceremony

The Global Campus of Human Rights (GC), along with its GC Caucasus programme coordinated by Yerevan State University (YSU) and Moldova State University (MSU), proudly announces the successful completion of the project “Development of Climate Justice and Human Rights Education at Moldova State University.”

Launched in early 2024 with the support of the European Union’s Delegation in Chisinau and the Government of the Republic of Moldova, during the past two academic years, the project managed to significantly enhance MSU’s capacity to promote human rights, environmental protection, and climate justice within and outside the local academic community.

Thanks to faculty training, peer-to-peer collaboration, modernization of learning spaces, and outreach initiatives, through the project the University has taken substantial steps forward to position itself as a leader in critical knowledge production for a more fair and equitable green transition, within the context of the EU enlargement process.

The key project objective has been the creation and adoption of innovative curricula as well as new teaching tools and skills, leading to a policy change with the integration of new courses and activities in the field of human rights and climate justice education as part of the University’s programming.

To achieve that, a pool of MSU scholars engaged in a two-year capacity development process to enhance both their theoretical and practical know-how. Their training

included the experimentation of new gamification practices for innovative teaching, as well as the conceptualization and realization of international educational initiatives culminating in two editions of the European Cross-Regional Spring School in Climate Justice and Human Rights.

The project's methodology relied on a strong interdisciplinary approach, particularly through a close collaboration between the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Biology & Geoscience, and the involvement of local scholars and GC experts dealing with the project's themes from both a socio-political and a natural sciences perspective.

A significant accomplishment of the project is the establishment of the "JURIS Lab – Research and Education on Human Rights and Sustainable Development" inaugurated on the 30th of June 2025 as part of the project closing event, which included a strategic workshop on the Lab's long-term mission. As an ambitious academic unit bridging disciplines and approaches, the JURIS Lab is envisioned to serve as an incubator for innovative pedagogy and interdisciplinary research, contributing to Moldova's sustainable and green transition.

The project marks another successful chapter in the collaboration between GC and MSU initiated in 2023 as part of the GC Capacity Development programme. Within three years, such cooperation has allowed MSU to follow the virtuous path of the main public universities from Eastern and Southeast Europe that have become full members of the Global Campus, parallel to their EU integration process.

Stay tuned for more updates as we continue supporting human rights education in Moldova and the region.

This project is part of the GC Capacity Development programme. For more information, contact Adriano Remiddi – project manager, Vukašin Pajović, and Larisa Barbu – project officers at capacity.development@gchumanrights.org



Human Dignity and Human Rights: Global Campus initiates timely Microlearning Course

The Global Campus of Human Rights is excited to launch its first-ever Microlearning Course on Human Dignity and Human Rights, a compelling e-learning journey into one of the most powerful concepts at the heart of human rights.



In the old days, the dignitas was for the dignitaries – the important people – and the humble masses had to show respect to them. Dignity now is for everybody. Everybody. Everybody simply by virtue of the fact that you are a **human being. You're entitled to be treated with respect as a human being, full stop.**

- Justice Albie Sachs

Designed and coordinated by renowned scholars Erin Daly and Catherine Dupré, the course is the result of their passionate work in researching, teaching and inspiring global conversations about dignity. It brings together the voices of three distinguished judges whose work has helped shape how dignity is protected in courts around the world: Albie Sachs, Susanne Baer, and Veronica Gomez. Their reflections are accompanied by those of leading human rights experts Manfred Nowak and George Ulrich. According to Daly and Dupré,



Human dignity is an idea that starts in the human heart, and then spreads out, into the world, and into the law. We all have a sense of what human dignity is. We know when our dignity is respected, and when it isn't. And we know that, because we have **inherent human dignity, we have a right to have and claim our rights.**

This Microlearning Course explores the rights we hold simply because we are human. It looks at how the law is evolving to reflect and promote human dignity, not only as a value or a principle but also as a legal right increasingly enshrined in constitutions around the world and developed in case law and international human rights practice. Throughout the course, you will discover how dignity guides the work of human rights experts and judges. You will also discover its impact in people's lives, whether in access to justice, civil and democratic rights, or social rights including employment. As Global Campus President Veronica Gomez powerfully states in her contribution to the course: "I think it's an interesting point of view to try to recognise that, as part of the right to a dignified life, individuals – and communities as well – need to have a right to a project, the right to work, in particular, as a means to achieve objectives in life. Access to work, in conditions of equality, is an essential part of the social contract in modern society."

The micro-learning nature of the course makes it very short (5 hours in total) but also very focused on 5 need-to-know areas:

- Dignity and Human Rights
- Dignity and Democracy
- Dignity and Criminal Law
- Dignity and Social, Economic, Cultural, and Environmental Rights
- Dignity and Equality

If you want to deepen your knowledge about the heart of human rights law or if you believe in justice and equality, and that everyone should be treated as a human being no matter who they are, join us. Our e-learning journey together starts on 14 July 2025, is fully asynchronous, and **free for everyone**.



Global Campus and UN Forge New Partnership as Nelson Mandela World Moot 2025 Showcases Human Rights Education Excellence

The Global Campus of Human Rights looks back at a very eventful week in Geneva, in which a new UN partnership agreement was signed and the Nelson Mandela World Moot Court Competition finals, an annual flagship Global Campus student activity, took place.

On 15 July 2025, the Global Campus of Human Rights and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) entered a new phase of strategic collaboration with the signing of a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The agreement was signed by Manfred Nowak, Secretary General of the Global Campus of Human Rights, and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, during a ceremony that marked a renewed commitment to advancing human rights through education, research, and global cooperation.

This new MoU—developed in close coordination with the OHCHR’s Human Rights Education Unit—replaces two previous agreements signed in the past by the European Master’s Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (EMA) and the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation (EIUC). The partnership lays the foundation for stronger future cooperation between the OHCHR and the Global Campus across its regional hubs, OHCHR regional and national offices, and at the headquarters level.

Volker Türk emphasised the importance of this renewed partnership: “Human rights education is key to countering hate, building social cohesion and shaping the responsible, just leaders our world urgently needs. That’s why I was pleased to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between my Office and the Global Campus of Human Rights. This agreement strengthens our collaboration to advance human

rights through education, research, student engagement, and shared expertise at the global, regional, and national levels. It is a vital investment in youth and in the future leadership needed to build more inclusive, sustainable, and peaceful societies.”

Manfred Nowak also welcomed this milestone:



This MoU represents a powerful step forward for the Global Campus network and for global human rights education. It formalises and deepens our collaboration with OHCHR, building on decades of joint efforts. We look forward to launching impactful initiatives that connect youth, academics, and practitioners to promote justice and dignity across all regions.

Among the first joint initiatives under the new MoU, the Global Campus will participate as a global partner in the OHCHR–Council of Europe Human Rights Education Youth Forum, taking place in Budapest in December 2025.

This significant development coincided with the successful conclusion of the 2025 Nelson Mandela World Human Rights Moot Court Competition, the world’s leading human rights moot court, which took place in Geneva, Switzerland, from 14 to 18 July 2025.

After months of preparation, Midlands State University from Zimbabwe emerged as the winning team, demonstrating exceptional advocacy and legal reasoning. The Universidad Nacional de Colombia was awarded second place for their impressive performance throughout the competition.

The 2025 edition of the World Moot was judged by an esteemed panel, including Judge Ivana Jelić, Judge Carlos Gómez, Professor Manfred Nowak, Mr. Cláudio Foquiço, Prof. Thompson Chengeta, and as presiding Judge Verónica Gómez.

The competition was organised by:

- o Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria
- o Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, American University, Washington College of Law
- o The Commonwealth Secretariat

- o United Nations Human Rights Council Branch (HRCB) at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

With the financial support of:

- o European Union through the Global Campus of Human Rights
- o Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva
- o South African Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office in Geneva
- o The Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA) of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

The Global Campus congratulates all participating teams and stakeholders who made the 2025 World Moot an outstanding success and celebrates the deepening of its partnership with OHCHR to further human rights education and global engagement.

More information about the #Mootcourt: <https://www.chr.up.ac.za/worldmoot>

Full video, UN Web TV: <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1o/k1omnqi991>



Shifting Minds Through Visuals: GC Central Asia Students Explore Children's Rights Through Video Production

The OSCE Academy in Bishkek hosted an immersive and reflective course as part of the Master of Arts in Human Rights and Sustainability. Titled 'Arts & Human Rights: Pathways to Sustainability', the course was led by photojournalist and documentary filmmaker Nick Danziger, alongside human rights media trainer Claudia Modonesi of Picture People—a Scottish NGO that provides training on the use of visual media to expose human rights abuses, shift perceptions, and influence behavior, and with which the Global Campus has a long-standing collaboration.

Over the course of five intensive days, and under the expert lead of Nick Danziger and Claudia Modonesi, GC Central Asia students gained practical skills in visual media and storytelling, with a specific focus on advocating for children's rights. Through a combination of lectures, discussions, and hands-on assignments, the course helped students to understand how visual narratives can raise awareness, foster dialogue, and influence policy-making.

Students developed and filmed their own short videos on a range of human rights topics, applying the tools and techniques presented by the instructors. The format was both practical and interactive, creating an environment where motivation, originality, and professional standards went hand in hand.



The Arts and Human Rights course was one of the most inspiring and emotionally impactful courses I have taken. I

created short films in real time and **received direct, constructive feedback from the lecturers**. This hands-on approach helped me develop concrete skills in visual communication and taught me how to express complex human rights issues in a way that resonates with a broader audience.

- Kristina Ryabova, MAHRS student

Throughout the week, students tackled a range of challenging and sensitive themes, such as human trafficking and child abuse in the media space. By applying the methods taught in class, students were able not only to build technical media skills but also to sharpen their awareness of ethical storytelling, audience engagement, and the power of emotional impact.



Nick and Claudia approached such complex topics through creativity, **which was truly impressive**. They managed to create a very comfortable and open environment, which at the same time encouraged productive and meaningful work. The assignments were relevant and thought-provoking. Their expertise and the practical tools they shared will undoubtedly help us in our future careers.

- Darya Vasilenko, MAHRS student

A central question running through the course—*What change do I want to bring about through my creation, product, or visual message?*—encouraged students to think critically not just about how they communicate, but why. For many, the course served as a springboard to begin thinking about longer-term advocacy projects that could combine human rights education, multimedia, and policy impact. In parallel with the course, GC Central Asia developed a series of video interviews ('Ray of Light video podcast') to raise awareness about children's rights by spotlighting the voices of those making a real impact on the lives of children in Central Asia and beyond, and highlighting such urgent children's rights issues, including child labor, access to quality education, healthcare, and protection from violence. Karlygach Nurmanbetova, MAHRS Programme Specialist, and Aiyem Chotoeva, MAHRS Programme Assistant, also filmed a video podcast with Nick and Claudia during their stay in Bishkek. The unique course 'Arts & Human Rights: Pathways to Sustainability' left a lasting impression on the students—both for the skills they gained and for the mindset shift it inspired. As visual storytelling becomes an increasingly powerful medium in the human rights field, courses like this one will continue to equip the next generation of advocates to make children's rights visible, relatable, and impactful.



Gender leadership in law: GC Africa Alumnae at the forefront

The Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa (HRDA) has a long tradition of training women human rights legal experts who are having an impact across the continent. A recent conference in Nairobi brought together over 100 women for an intergenerational dialogue, in which two alumnae shared their experiences after graduation.

According to the African Women's Development and Communications Network (FEMNET), *"While women constitute an average of 40% of judges across the continent, their representation thins at the upper ranks of power, where the most consequential decisions are made."* Under the theme "Women Leading in Shaping Justice Across Generations," women from different sectors across the legal and justice field recently met in Nairobi, Kenya, for a conference co-hosted by FEMNET and Co-Impact. Thanks to this platform for problem-solving and movement-building, participants reflected on and exchanged solutions to systemic barriers (e.g., patriarchal laws, institutional sexism, new digital-age obstacles) to leadership in Africa.

But throughout generations, African women have shown resilience. As stated by The Reporter Ethiopia,



At the heart of this exchange is a call for structured **mentorship** and **coaching**, recognizing that continuity of leadership in justice can only

be ensured when knowledge is intentionally transferred.

Our GC Africa Programme (HRDA) was represented by Dr Michelle Maziwisa, programme manager, and two alumnae of different generations committed to women's rights and gender justice.

Awa Gai (2023 cohort), a feminist lawyer from The Gambia, conducted in-depth research during her master's programme on advancing access to justice for women in her country using transitional justice mechanisms. Her work earned her third place in the Dean's Essay Competition at the Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria. Since completing the HRDA, she has taken up an internship as a Professional Assistant at the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, and was thereafter awarded the Mandela Washington Fellowship in the United States, where she worked with the Centre for Strategic and International Studies. Upon completion, she returned to The Gambia and has been supporting her government's work on transitional justice for women. She is now a fellow at the Clooney Foundation for Justice.

For Awa,



Pursuing a Master of Laws in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa at the Centre for Human Rights has profoundly enriched my career as a thriving feminist human rights lawyer. This programme has provided me with the critical knowledge and platform to advance my advocacy for systemic change in the pursuit of justice and equality.

Henrietta Ekefre (2015 cohort), an international lawyer and policy advocate with 10+ years' experience advising African human rights bodies, was also a fellow at the Clooney Foundation, supporting women through mobile legal clinics—resolving cases of forced eviction, marital disputes, and financial abuse, and reaching over 1,200 women and girls. She is now engaged in research on reparations for historical injustices, including apartheid, colonialism, and transatlantic enslavement. Henrietta recently launched a background paper she co-authored, “Creating Feminist Perspectives and pathways for Justice,” at the GIMAC – African Union's Gender Is My Agenda Campaign Network (6–10 July, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea), in line with the AU theme for 2025, “Justice for Africans and People of African Descent Through Reparations.”

The contributions and achievements of Awa Gai and Henrietta Ekefre highlight the continued impact of GC Africa alumnae in advancing gender justice and leadership in law across the continent. Their work reflects the programme's enduring role in strengthening human rights and democratisation in Africa.

EMA awarded theses 2023/2024 are published online!

We are glad to announce that the Global Campus Europe / EMA awarded theses 2023/2024 selected for the publication are online and you can find them at our Repository.

EMA Council selected the following theses for their originality, innovation, exceptional knowledge of the academic literature, excellent capacity for critical analysis, clarity of structure, language and argumentation.

Addressing some of the most urgent and complex issues of our time through the lens of human rights – from armed conflict to artificial intelligence in relation to fake news and child sexual abuse, from climate change to oil extractivism and children’s rights –these works reflect the intellectual rigor and commitment of a new generation of human rights researchers.

The five theses are:

- o Brousek, Marie, *War as a Human Rights Matter: The European Court of Human Rights' Approach to Armed Conflicts in the Light of the Inter-State Application Ukraine V. Russia (X)*. Supervisor: Christina Binder, University of Vienna. <https://doi.org/10.25330/2836>
- o Díaz-Quirós, Adriana, *The Hidden International Legal Obligation: The Prevention of Climate Statelessness*. Supervisor: Majtényi Balázs, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. <https://doi.org/10.25330/2835>
- o Kolen, Elise, *A modern Tale of Frankenstein? How to Regulate Non-Consensual Sexually Explicit AI-Generated Deepfakes in the Metaverse*. Supervisors: Wolfgang Benedek and Helmut Tichy, University of Graz. <https://doi.org/10.25330/2834>
- o Van den Bergh, Cézarne, *Legislation in the Age of Innovation: Regulating AI-Driven Child Sexual Abuse Material in the European Union. Fact or Fiction?* Supervisor: Karol Nowak, Lund University. <https://doi.org/10.25330/2833>



EMA Graduation Ceremony 2024/2025 and Opening of the new Academic Year 2025/2026: Oleksandra Matviichuk Inspires EMA Graduates in Venice with Call to Place Human Values at the Heart of Human Rights

an Master in
and **Democratisation**

Oleksandra Matviichuk, Right Livelihood Laureate 2022 and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, a leading Ukrainian human rights lawyer and head of the Centre for Civil Liberties, whose work has been vital in documenting war crimes and defending civic freedoms, on 21 September 2025 made a keynote speech during the EMA Graduation Ceremony at the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista in Venice, honouring the Class of 2024/2025 of the European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (EMA).



Human rights are about how people see the world. This vision determines our actions and decisions. We cannot leave the protection of human rights solely to lawyers and diplomats. It is not enough to adopt quality laws and form democratic institutions. **Society's values always prevail. Their energy enables laws and institutions to protect people and their dignity.**

- Oleksandra Matviichuk

The event opened with classical music performed by the ArTime Quartet and continued with welcome speeches from GC Secretary General Manfred Nowak, GC Vice-President Elina Pirjatanniemi, Diego Vecchiato, Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista, and EMA Programme Director Orla Ní Cheallacháin.



September is an important moment of celebration and connection for the EMA Programme; representatives from our 43 participating universities come together to examine our graduating students and to welcome our new students. It is a moment when we collectively reaffirm the importance of our network and of inter-university and international collaboration around human rights education. **Nearly 90 students from 33 countries will begin the EMA programme this year showing the continued relevance and resonance of human rights and democracy in Europe and beyond.**

- Orla Ní Cheallacháin.

Two further powerful keynote speeches marked the Ceremony and the Opening of the new Academic Year 2025/2026:

Artūrs Kučs, Judge at the European Court of Human Rights, former EMA National Director for Latvia for almost two decades and EMA alumnus of 2002,



EMA was one of the best decisions in my professional life, it opened many doors in the future. You will take different paths, because there are many ways to defend human rights. For the graduates, **follow your dreams, enjoy the celebration and for the new students support each other like a community.**

Micha Ramakers, Deputy Head of Unit “Gender Equality, Human Rights and Democratic Governance” at the European Commission’s Directorate-General on International Partnerships (INTPA), the closest and most long-standing partner and supporter of the Global Campus of Human Rights,



All of you here today can still see clearly that all human beings are born equal in dignity and rights. In this turbulent world you are key actors, **your leadership and expertise will advance human rights education and work.**

During the event, the EMA Alumni Award 2025, a glass sculpture “Collective Memory” donated by the Artist Koen Vanmechelen, was given to Thomas Coombes, former GC alumnus, human rights strategist and expert in hope-based communication. Founder of the community of activists “Hope-based communications” and with a background in journalism and strategic communications, Thomas has worked globally with NGOs, activists, and media to develop messaging that uplifts and mobilises rather than divides. The Sports, Arts, Peace & Human Rights Award was conferred to Francesca Tarantello, Paralympic athlete, silver medalist at the 2024 Paralympics in Paris, and was given by Davide Giorgi, Veneto President of the Paralympic Committee. Student representatives Vitória Assis and Dhruv Maroo shared inspiring reflections before the diplomas were awarded to this year’s graduates. The Graduation Ceremony concluded with Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy” and reaffirmed the mission of the Global Campus: to support a global community dedicated to human rights, democracy, and peace.



The Millennium Alumni Return to Venice To Meet the 2025 Student Cohort

Venice, September 2025 — Twenty-five years after completing their studies, members of the 2000 “Millennium” Alumni Cohort of the European Master’s Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (EMA) returned to Venice to meet the current class of 2025 of around 90 students.

The encounter, part of the EMA’s “In Conversation With” series, offered a space for informal cross-generational dialogue between alumni and students on careers, life choices, and the evolving practice of human rights. Despite a general strike, around ten alumni managed to join the afternoon session at the Global Campus HQ in Venice, with others arriving later for the interactive session and evening reunion. The atmosphere was warm and reflective, as participants revisited old memories and engaged with the students who are now following in their footsteps.

The alumni represented an impressive range of paths — from NGOs, academia and government to international organisations, post-conflict field work, grassroots initiatives, research and consulting, education, social entrepreneurship and politics. Their professional journeys span the globe, from the Arab World to Africa, Asia-Pacific, Central Asia, the United States and Europe.



EMA gave us not just the foundations, but a spirit and common values,” one alumna reflected. **“It became part of who we are — Masteroni (the nickname of EMA alumni) once and forever.**

Discussions covered the practical and emotional dimensions of working in human rights — from UN negotiations on global standards to field missions, asylum

investigations and conflict prevention. Alumni shared lessons about resilience, self-awareness and the importance of staying true to one's own values, especially when working in challenging contexts.

Among the key takeaways:

- o Treasure transversal skills such as communication, analytical thinking and stakeholder management — they remain valuable across sectors.
- o Use your network as a source of support and collaboration after graduation.
- o Be persistent and visible: publish, join projects, and “don't get tired of knocking on doors.”
- o Follow your passion but stay open-minded — every experience teaches something.
- o Accept stress, cherish small achievements and enjoy this study year without constant pressure about what comes next.

Many alumni also spoke candidly about the different life stages that shape a professional journey, acknowledging the need to pause, reassess, and even change direction over time. The students, eager and curious, asked thoughtful questions — from how to handle inner pressure and work-life balance, to whether the alumni felt accomplished after two decades. Their honest response: “We'll never feel fully accomplished — we keep learning every day.”

The session concluded with a final interactive exercise that included the question: Are human rights better protected now than 25 years ago? While most alumni leaned toward “no,” citing persistent violations, over a third of the students stood in the “yes” group, pointing to growing awareness, stronger case law and greater public visibility of abuses — a hopeful sign of generational optimism.

The meeting ended on a reflective and inspiring note, with both cohorts agreeing that in human rights work, every impact matters — however small it may seem.

A heartfelt thank you to all 2000 Alumni who visited us and engaged with our students: Anders Folmer Buhelt, Angela Melchiorre, Despina Saraliotou, Eoin Lawlor, Irene Milleiro, Julia Savage, Katarina Mansson, Katja Schemmann, Kirsten Saxinger, Marianne Dons Tychsen, Nel Ruigrok, Niamh Walsh, Sandra Conway, Ana Sofia Chieira, Susie O'Brien, Trine Stjernø, Veronique Joosten



Breaking Barriers: GC Afghan Alumnae Open Doors to Education for Afghan Girls

Two recent graduates, Rosita Sekandari (GC Europe – EMA) and Rokhsar Sadat (GC Caucasus – CES), have launched an online educational program for Afghan girls who were either school graduates or university students. Both alumnae, originally from Afghanistan, are deeply aware of the severe restrictions on education and the impact these have had on the lives of young women after the Taliban takeover. The programme Empowering Afghan Girls Through Education, developed in collaboration with the Global Campus Alumni network and our partner Right Livelihood, was launched in March 2025. The call for participation received an overwhelming response, with nearly 800 applications from across Afghanistan and neighboring countries with Afghan diaspora communities.



I want to show myself that everything I am going through is a meaningful setback, not just damage—and that **my gender does not define my worth or limit my abilities**, I am capable of doing anything I want. Above all, I want to take control of my life and make my own decisions. [...] the reality that someone else can decide whether I can study—and ban me from my most basic right, education—makes me even more determined not to give up and to keep going.

— Dina K., from the essays' collection developed as part of the educational programme

The programme officially began on April 10 with an orientation session featuring a surprise guest speaker: Dr. Sima Samar, Right Livelihood Laureate, human rights activist, educator, and medical doctor. Fervently believing that education is the key to socio-economic development and sustaining civil society in countries like Afghanistan, Samar was delighted to support the alumnae's programme and inspire participants. One student expressed her admiration simply: "You are... a hero for us."

The training phase included seven online workshops on university application strategies, personal statement writing, academic skills, and Duolingo English Test preparation. The Duolingo test center generously offered 70 free vouchers, making participation more accessible. From the initial 55 students, 26 advanced to the next phase, 17 successfully completed Duolingo tests, and 20 were selected for a focused mentorship program that began in July. Afghan women leaders in academia and civil society mentored participants, providing tailored guidance to support their educational paths.



One of the most useful parts of the program for me was the Duolingo English Test preparation sessions. These sessions were **incredibly helpful in building my confidence and improving my language skills through clear strategies, regular practice, and personalized feedback.**

— Anonymous student



Each Afghan girl brought a powerful personal story of how she experienced and interpreted the restrictions and bans on her rights. Recognising the importance of amplifying these voices, our two alumnae collected students' essays, which were recently featured on the **Amplify Afghan Women platform — a collective dedicated to supporting and amplifying marginalised voices.**

— Anonymous student



We were used to studying together—boys and girls—separated by a board, following the Taliban’s rules. How painful do you think it is when you see your boy classmates allowed to stay and continue learning, but you, **just because you are a girl**, must leave? It was not just leaving the classroom; it was leaving my dreams, my hope, and everything I had worked for.

— Nasrin S.



The essay writing sessions played a key role in improving my **writing skills**, and with the help of the training, I was able to write a well-structured and strong essay.

— Anonymous student

The programme primarily seeks to address the critical educational barriers Afghan girls face following the country’s collapse and to pave the way for them to continue their studies. The alumnae also advocate for the inclusion of their voices in shaping their own futures.

One participant, Hadia S., is now studying computer science online at a university in India. She has also begun working as an online project manager at a humanitarian organization, where she wrote a successful proposal that helped secure funding and create job opportunities for sixty girls deprived of education. At the same time, she established a secret class for girls in her community, where she teaches English and mathematics.



I am Maryam N.H., a girl from Afghanistan, [...] a girl who not only fights for herself but also for her community, her country, and the girls of the future. I believe that we Afghan girls are not just victims; **we are the leaders of the future**. [...] The day will come when we will stand in a place where we are decision-makers, a place where no one can take education away from us. And I, Maryam, am stepping towards that day.

— Maryam N.H.



Timor-Leste once again welcomed human rights defenders from Asia and the Pacific for another edition of the Human Rights and People's Diplomacy Training Programme.



This transformative programme allowed me to build **connections across countries, expand my network, and discover how I can advocate more effectively for human rights – including my own.**

Joaquina, participant

Jointly organized by the Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) affiliated to the University of New South Wales in Sydney, together with the Global Campus of Human Rights (GC), and the Human Rights Centre at the National University of Timor-Leste (UNTL), this residential and intensive programme gathered participants from thirteen South and Southeast Asian countries in an atmosphere of shared learning and solidarity.

Founded by Peace Nobel Laureate and Timorese President José Ramos-Horta in 1989, the annual training is one of the most established and prestigious human rights education initiatives in the Asia-Pacific. An innovative format defined by a highly practical and hands-on methodology, the programme has so far trained over 3500 human rights advocates from over 50 countries and three generations.

During the 2025 edition, for two intensive weeks, participants engaged in workshops,

dialogues, and practical exercises aimed at strengthening their advocacy skills and building collective strategies for change. The programme combined academic depth with grassroots wisdom, echoing the lived struggles of those working daily for justice in their communities.

Sessions were animated by a diverse group of lecturers and practitioners who combined technical expertise with personal insights. Lucas Lixinski (University of New South Wales, Australia) opened the programme with sessions on Human Rights Standards and UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies, providing participants with knowledge and tools to engage more effectively with international mechanisms. Building on this foundation, Michael Hayes (GC-Asia Pacific at Mahidol University, Thailand) led practical exercises on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, using regional case studies to explore strategies for grassroots mobilization and community advocacy. The focus then shifted to the role of media, as Arul Prakkash and Fritzie Rodriguez (Forum Asia) delivered sessions on Human Rights Advocacy through Videomaking and Storytelling, guiding participants through awareness-raising techniques and audience targeting. Yuyun Wahuningrum addressed Human Rights in ASEAN and Lobbying Strategies, emphasizing movement-building and cross-border solidarity. The programme concluded with Joshua Cooper's interactive session on UN Human Rights Standards, Mechanisms, and the UPR role play, which offered participants hands-on experience in engaging with the UN system. A special highlight was the opportunity to meet with President José Ramos-Horta for a unique moment of discussion and sharing on the role and struggle of human rights defenders.

The joint organisation of the 33rd DTP in collaboration with the National University is also part of the continued support that Global Campus is providing to the UNTL, GC's youngest member university, for the consolidation and internationalisation of the Human Rights Centre in Dili. Jointly established in 2019-2022 with the support of the European Union, the Centre continues to highlight Timor-Leste's role as a vibrant and safe meeting place for human rights defenders of the region and beyond. On the occasion of 2025's DTP, UNTL Rector Prof. Joao Soares Martins, GC Head of Capacity Development Adriano Remiddi and GC Asia Pacific Director Prof. Michael Hayes signed a new cooperation agreement, steering the institutional partnership for the next three years.

The organisation of the 33rd DTP with the National University of Timor-Leste reflects the continued support that the Global Campus is providing to UNTL—its youngest member university—in consolidating and internationalising the Human Rights Centre in Dili. Jointly established between 2019 and 2022 with support from the European Union, the Centre has since become a vibrant and safe meeting place for human rights defenders from across the region and beyond. Building on this foundation, the 2025 DTP also provided the occasion to sign the new GC-UNTL cooperation agreement, steering the institutional partnership into the next three years.

Moreover, this year's edition carried a special significance for the Global Campus

commitment to capacity development: the programme welcomed a delegation of Pakistani students who joined the training through the international mobility scheme under the human rights education pillar of Huqooq-e-Pakistan 2—a project funded by the European Union and implemented in Pakistan by the Global Campus of Human Rights as part of the United Nations Development Programme.

The activity was made possible thanks to the generous support of partners, including the co-funding by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. On the occasion of the opening ceremony, Hon. Giorgio Silli, Undersecretary of State to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, addressed the authorities and participants with a video message, stating that: “The role of Asia-Pacific nations in advancing human rights and addressing global challenges is vital. I am confident that this summer school will provide participants with valuable knowledge, fresh perspectives, and practical tools to engage meaningfully in these critical areas of international affairs.”

This project is part of the GC Capacity Development programme. For more information, contact Adriano Remiddi – programme manager, Vukašin Pajović, and Larisa Barbu – programme officers at capacity.development@gchumanrights.org



The Global Campus – Right Livelihood Fellowship: From Research to Internship

Recent EMA graduate Vitória Viana Assis, recipient of the 2024–25 Global Campus–Right Livelihood Fellowship, is exploring how art and inclusive education empower children and persons with disabilities. Guided by Laureate Marthe Wandou, founder of ALDEPA, and supported by ShareMusic & Performing Arts, she describes the fellowship as a transformative journey. Vitória will soon begin an internship to deepen her research.



As I step into the next chapter, I am reminded once more of **how transformative this journey has been**. My experience as a Global Campus student and fellow was never just about academic rigour, nor simply about research into children’s rights and inclusion; it has been an ongoing process of discovering what it means to belong to a community that cares deeply about dignity, justice, and the lived realities of those too often overlooked.

Coming from Brazil, the transition into a Global Campus setting felt like the continuation of a dream nurtured since childhood. I was raised in a naturalistic school where differences were embraced, conversations were open, and a connection to

nature brought learning to life. I learnt early on that education flourishes not just through knowledge, but through kindness, diversity, and courage—qualities that have accompanied me throughout this fellowship and now shape my motivations as I embark on my internship at ShareMusic and Performing Arts in Sweden.

The focus of my research—exploring how Art and Inclusive Education empower children and persons with disabilities—emerged naturally from my past and from countless hours spent volunteering and working with creative and human rights-led organisations. Inspired by Paulo Freire’s philosophy, I believe education does not change the world. Education changes people. People change the world. Inclusion through artistic intervention provides a path not only for expression but for genuine participation and connection. My completed thesis brought these concepts together in both practice and advocacy, guided by the frameworks of the CRC and the CRPD.

Throughout my fellowship, I received invaluable support from both ALDEPA (founded by Right Livelihood Laureate Marthe Wandou and promoting community-led, participatory development and empowerment in Cameroon) and ShareMusic, a Swedish knowledge centre for artistic development and inclusion). These organisations offered guidance, encouragement and practical assistance during my thesis writing, under the supervision of Dr. Ajda Hedžet from the University of Ljubljana. The collaborative environment cultivated by Right Livelihood and the Global Campus enabled me to develop my research and refine my ideas, ensuring that my thesis could highlight the power of inclusive and artistic approaches in the field of human rights.

Now, as I begin my internship, my aspirations are rooted in learning with and from others—developing interdisciplinary skills, deepening my understanding of inclusive practice, and contributing to the vibrant work at ShareMusic. To the Global Campus community, fellow alumni, and the many mentors who have shaped this path—thank you. The responsibility to continue is great, but equally meaningful is the solidarity discovered among us. Together we move forward, committed not simply to knowledge, but to acts of dignity and care.”

This Right Livelihood Fellowship Programme connects students of the Global Campus Master’s Programmes who have a strong interest in children’s rights with Right Livelihood Laureates. During the research phase of their Master’s, the selected student receives guidance and support from the Laureate’s organisation in preparing their thesis. Following thesis defence and graduation, the Fellow undertakes an internship with the Laureate’s organisation. The Fellowship covers internship-related expenses and provides a monthly stipend.

A new round of selections will soon begin for GC students who have just started the 2025–26 edition of the Master’s Programmes. Beyond EMA (GC Europe), this year’s call will also expand to students from other Global Campus programmes. Vitória will begin her funded internship on 1 October, a five-month experience — and we wish her every success!

Publication of Awarded Theses across Global Campus Regional Programmes 2023/2024

Fostering Critical Inquiry and Empowering Future Human Rights Defenders - The Global Campus of Human Rights is proud to announce the publication of a selection of outstanding master's theses that have been recognized for their academic excellence and relevance to contemporary human rights challenges.

These theses, produced within the framework of the Global Campus' regional master's programmes, reflect the diversity, depth, and interdisciplinary nature of human rights scholarship across the globe.

From the impact of generative AI on freedom of expression in Mexican elections, to the environmental and human rights implications of plastic pollution in Kathmandu's riverside settlements; from EU conflict resolution and peacebuilding strategies in Eastern Partnership countries, to the socio-economic effects of inheritance practices on women in Burundi; from the securitisation of EU border policies and their human rights impact in the Western Balkans, to the influence of parental mediation on adolescents' autonomy of opinion formation in Beirut; from the role of decentralisation and community participation in renewable energy policy in Central Asia, to the bureaucratic challenges faced by rural women victims of armed conflict in Colombia—these works explore pressing global issues through rigorous research and local engagement.

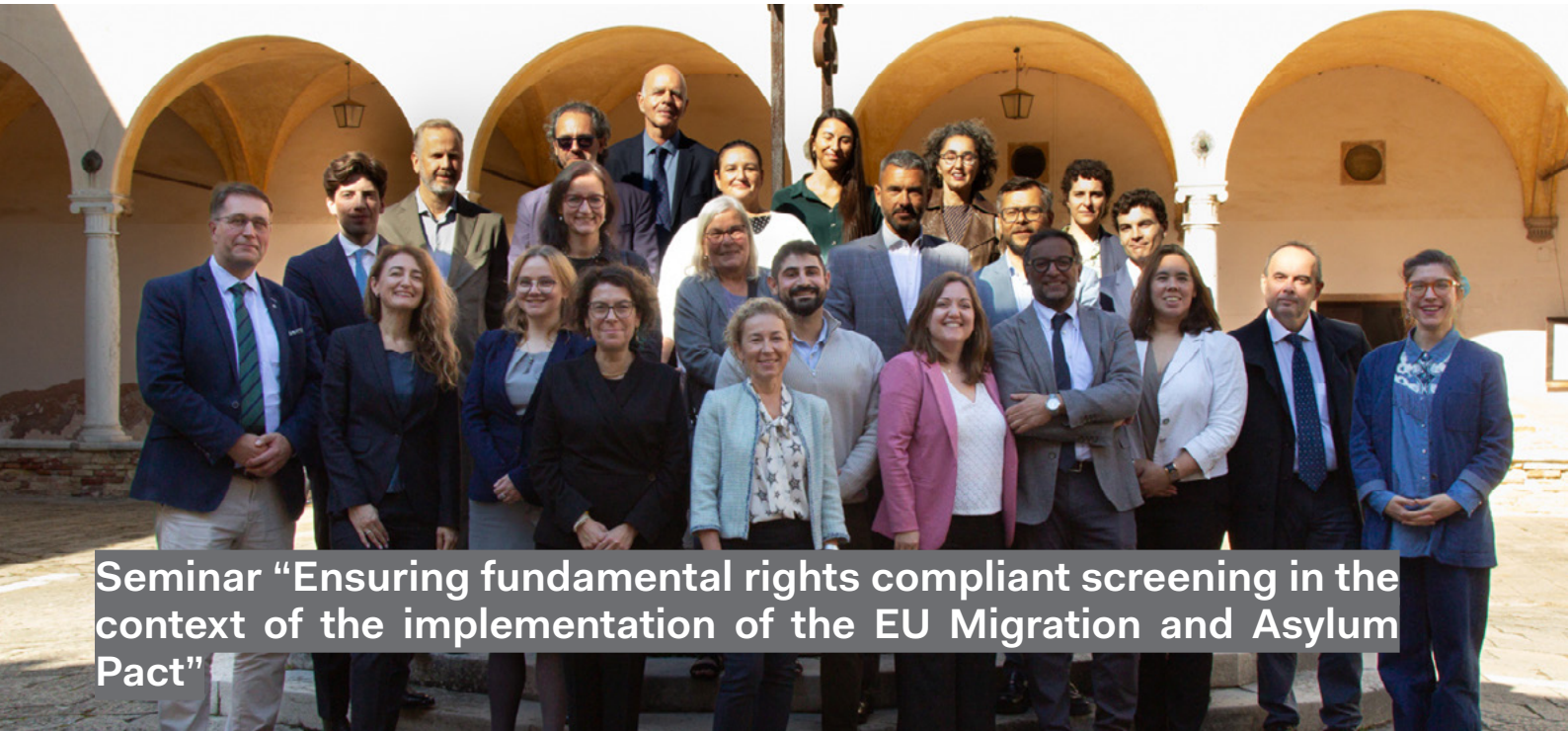
This publication not only highlights the achievements of the authors but also reinforces the Global Campus' commitment to fostering critical inquiry and empowering future human rights defenders.

The Global Campus Awarded Theses of the academic year 2023/2024 are:

- o [Cortés Roshdestvensky, Vladimir, Voices amplified or silenced? Navigating the impact of generative AI on freedom of expression in Mexican elections](https://doi.org/10.25330/2845). Supervisor: Łukasz Szoszkiewicz, Adam Mickiewicz University. European Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation (EMA), coordinated by Global Campus of Human Rights Headquarters. <https://doi.org/10.25330/2845>

- o [Engel, Alexandra, Plastic Pollution and the Right to a Clean and Healthy Environment: A Case Study of People Living in Squatter Settlements Along the Riversides of Kathmandu City, Nepal](https://doi.org/10.25330/2844). Supervisors: Mike Hayes, Mahidol University, Thailand and Geeta Pathak Sangroula, Kathmandu School of Law, Nepal. Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in Asia Pacific (APMA), coordinated by Mahidol University (Thailand). <https://doi.org/10.25330/2844>

- o **Grigoryan, Liana, EU Policy in Eastern Partnership Countries: A Comprehensive Analysis of Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding Strategies.** Supervisor: Arusyak Aleksanyan, Yerevan State University (YSU). Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in the Caucasus (CES), coordinated by Yerevan State University. <https://doi.org/10.25330/2843>
- o **Mugisha, Merveille, Examining the Effects of Inheritance Practices on Women's Socio-Economic Rights in Burundi.** Supervisors: Susan Mutambasere, Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria and Untalimile Crystal Mokoena, School of Law, University of Venda. Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa, coordinated by Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa (HRDA), coordinated by Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria. <https://doi.org/10.25330/2842>
- o **Nicolaou, Orestis, EU Border Policies Between Securitisation and Human Rights: The Impact of the New Pact on Migration and Asylum on BiH and The Western Balkans.** Supervisor: Anna Krasteva, New Bulgarian University. Master's Programme in Democracy and Human Rights in South-East Europe (ERMA), coordinated by University of Sarajevo and University of Bologna. <https://doi.org/10.25330/2841>
- o **Nukiry, Laila, The Effect of Parental Mediation Strategies on the Autonomy of Opinion Formation of Adolescents in Beirut: A Comparison Between Secular and Non-Secular Schools.** Supervisor: Carol Al-Sharabati, Saint Joseph University, Arab Master's Programme in Democracy and Human Rights (ARMA), coordinated by Saint Joseph University (Lebanon). <https://doi.org/10.25330/2840>
- o **Salakhunova, Alina, Decentralization and Renewable Energy Policy in Central Asia: Exploring the Role of Local Governance and Community Participation.** Supervisor: Sergey Sayapin, KIMEP University (Almaty, Kazakhstan). The Master of Liberal Arts in Human Rights and Sustainability (MAHRS – GC Central Asia), coordinated by the OSCE Academy in Bishkek. <https://doi.org/10.25330/2839>
- o **Torres Cuenca, Laura, El camino del retorno. Experiencias de mujeres rurales víctimas del conflicto armado en el proceso burocrático de ingreso al Registro de Tierras Despojadas y Abandonadas Forzosamente para el departamento del Cesar, Colombia.** Supervisor: Ezequiel Fernández Bravo, Universidad Nacional de San Martín – Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (UNASAM-CONICET). Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in Latin America and the Caribbean (LATMA), coordinated by National University of San Martin (Argentina). <https://doi.org/10.25330/2838>



Seminar “Ensuring fundamental rights compliant screening in the context of the implementation of the EU Migration and Asylum Pact”

The Frontex Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights organised the seminar “Ensuring fundamental rights compliant screening in the context of the implementation of the EU Migration and Asylum Pact” in Venice on 15 October 2025 hosted by the Global Campus of Human Rights.

The seminar gathered human rights experts from the Consultative Forum, National Human Rights Institutions, representatives Frontex, EU institutions and bodies and Member States. The experts mapped the key challenges and opportunities in the implementation of the EU Screening Regulation. Particular attention was paid to fundamental rights safeguards in screening such as the vulnerability assessment and monitoring by jointly paving ways for their operationalisation.

Secretary General Manfred Nowak, Prof. Marco Borracetti and Research Manager Chiara Altafin represented the Global Campus of Human Rights, which is an engaged member of the Frontex Consultative Forum since 2024 and closely cooperates with key European institutions, international and civil society organisations advising the European Border and Coast Guard Agency on Fundamental Rights.

More info at www.frontex.europa.eu/fundamental-rights/consultative-forum/general



Our network joins the UN Human Rights Day Campaign – Everyday Essentials with an awards ceremony and a film screening

Like every year our global academic network is glad to join the United Nations campaign for Human Rights Day. On 2025, we will be part specifically of the “Everyday Essentials” edition to bridge the gap between human rights and our everyday experiences. Because human rights aren’t just ideals; they are the essentials we rely on every day. Human rights shape our daily lives in ways we may not always notice. They are in the food we eat, the air we breathe, the words we speak, the sports we practice, the arts we create, the opportunities we pursue and the most important in our shared humanity.

On 22 October, the Communications Department of the Global Campus of Human Rights is engaging with partners and audiences such as sports clubs and associations (Panathlon Club Venezia, Venice Marathon), cultural creative groups (Carlo Ratti Associates, Venice Biennale), youth centres and facilities (Paralympics Committee of Veneto, Milano Cortina 2026), art spaces (The Human Safety Net and MovieLab programme), etc., and connect essentials from their world to the Global Campus world of human rights.

The event took place at the prestigious Auditorium of the Home of the Human Safety Net at the heart of St. Marks square in Venice close by where our Global Campus Headquarters are located which is the Monastery of San Nicolò of the City of Venice.

The Global Campus Administrative Director Elisabetta Noli and the THSN Director Alexia Boro welcomed the guests and guided the Awards Ceremony in the categories of creativity, business and athletes runners. It was followed by the film screening of the documentary film “The right to Race” part of of the MovieLab programme of the project INVOLVED! InnovationLab for Sustainable ChangeMakers curated by Cafoscari Professor Francesco Della Puppa.

During the event people attending were invited to share what “everyday essentials” mean to them, connecting their personal experience to human rights. By sharing their experiences, people not only recognized the value of their own rights but also connect with others on a deeply human level, fostering a shared sense of humanity and feeling more inspired to take action when those rights are denied.

The aim of this campaign also showed partners, athletes, artists, businesses, students and friends that they are already respecting human rights in their daily life activities by simply being kind, respectful, helpful, open, proactive, patient, etc. and that they should never underestimate their own personal contribution—voices and actions matter more than we may realize.

The GC Communications Department started and will continue creating a contribution collection through our own and partner events and a regular social media campaign to incentive the participation of many stakeholders in the global Our Everyday Essentials digital platform and stand booths (like the stand booth at the Expo Village Venice Marathon Charity Programme) with graphics, messages, photos, qr code or a simple poster integrated to the infrastructures. You are all invited to share stories, photos, messages and reflections and be part of the campaign while it last.



Observing reality, today, is **already a revolutionary act. With this film screening of the Right to Race, we want to build, vision by vision, a community that observes, questions itself, and feels. An invitation to inhabit the present with attention, to rediscover the responsibility of the gaze and the power of listening.**

- Professor Francesco Della Puppa and curator of the MovieLab



We must reconnect with human rights, remembering that they are about people – about their needs, wants and fears, as well as their hopes and **aspirations.**

- UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk

More info: communications@gchumanrights.org



Students from Pakistan join the first international mobility under the GC-UNDP human rights education project

Working in partnership with UNDP Pakistan and financed by the European Union, the Global Campus of Human Rights has recently inaugurated an international mobility scheme for Pakistani students interested in pursuing human rights education. The initiative is a core component of the Huqooq-e-Pakistan II programme and is offered to students from the Lahore University of Management Science - LUMS, Habib University, the University of Peshawar, and the University of Balochistan.

Working in partnership with UNDP Pakistan and financed by the European Union, the Global Campus of Human Rights has recently inaugurated an international mobility scheme for Pakistani students interested in pursuing human rights education. The initiative is a core component of the Huqooq-e-Pakistan II programme and is offered to students from the Lahore University of Management Science – LUMS, Habib University, the University of Peshawar, and the University of Balochistan.

During the first iteration of the mobility programme, four selected students attended the 33rd Annual Human Rights and People’s Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) co-organised in Timor-Leste by the Global Campus and the DTP, affiliated with the New South Wales University (Australia).

Organized in Dili from 25 August to 5 September 2025, the training represented a unique opportunity to focus on international human rights standards, UN mechanisms, and hands-on advocacy alongside peers from across the South and Southeast Asia regions.

During the intensive two-week program, participants engaged with peers and experts, combining classroom learning with practical exercises and field visits. Role-plays on UN procedures helped demystify how treaty bodies and the Universal Periodic Review work in practice—turning complex systems into usable pathways for local advocacy.

For Aimun a fifth-year law student from LUMS, researching land rights and extractivism, Timor-Leste's own history resonated strongly. Exposure to cases from other countries and regions broadened her comparative lens, while UN role-plays clarified practical routes for bringing under-represented Pakistani land issues to international attention.

I plan to adapt the techniques and strategies that my colleagues engaged in activism are using in **pursuing their goals and see how they can be applied to my own context.**

Ahmed, who leads study circles on civil and political rights in Balochistan, reported a profoundly enriching shift from theory to practice. He highlighted clearer understanding of treaty bodies, the UPR, and transitional justice, and plans to channel this learning into his work within the students' circles he leads.

The training has fundamentally **transformed my understanding of how human rights are defended through concrete community-based actions.**

Aamna (Habib University), active in youth-led research on AI and health, gendered mobility, climate, and inequality, said the program reinforced a pragmatic lesson: when a perfect mechanism doesn't exist, work within existing ones to create space. She aims to link youth research to policy and expand community-level trainings on rights and advocacy.

It's been inspiring and **eye-opening to exchange experiences with peers across so many countries. I want to build on learned examples of youth-led work and link it with policy discussions in my community.**

In the upcoming months, other cohorts of Pakistani students will have the opportunity to undertake human rights studies and training through the GC mobility scheme, co-organised with Mahidol University (Bangkok) and Kathmandu School of Law (Nepal).

Stay tuned for more on project activities, forthcoming initiatives, and first-hand accounts from our students!

This activity is part of the GC Capacity Development programme. For more information, contact Adriano Remiddi – programme manager, Vukašin Pajović, and Larisa Barbu – programme officers at capacity.development@gchumanrights.org



ERMA Graduates Celebrate Academic Achievement and Renewed Commitment to Human Rights

Seventeen talented young professionals from across [Southeast Europe](#) and beyond have successfully completed the 24th edition of the European Regional Master's Programme in Democracy and Human Rights in South East Europe (GCSEE/ERMA). A new generation of human rights practitioners — equipped with critical thinking, empathy, and the determination to address today's most pressing global challenges. Their graduation ceremony, held at the Professor Zdravko Grebo Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of the University of Sarajevo, brought together diplomats, university faculty, ERMA staff, and students to celebrate both academic excellence and the transformative journey these students undertook over the past year.

Since its inception in 2000, ERMA has trained around 680 graduates, who now work across Southeast Europe, the EU, and globally. Jointly awarded by the University of Sarajevo and the University of Bologna, the degree stands as a symbol of European academic cooperation and shared values.

The ceremony opened with remarks from Prof. Dženana Husremović, Vice Rector for Teaching and Student Affairs at the University of Sarajevo, followed by Riccardo Righielli, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Italy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Aurélie Valtat, Head of Section "European Integration, Political, Press and Information" at the EU Delegation to BiH and EUSR.

Representatives of the graduating class, Nura Hamzić and Adna Mujović, reflected on the personal and academic growth experienced throughout the program. Their testimonies echoed the sentiments shared by ERMA Alumni Network (EAN) members Anju Marie Sadasivam and Clara Salaverria Embid, who highlighted the strength of the ERMA community and its ongoing contribution to human rights practice. Programme Co-Directors Prof. Marco Borraccetti and Prof. Asim Mujkić presented the academic report for 2024/2025 and announced the recipients of this

year's awards.

Armin Tufo received the Global Campus six-month paid internship award for academic excellence. Entenela Ndrevačaji's thesis will be published in the Global Campus repository. Adna Mujović and Tarik Hodžić received the Best Thesis Award, with their work to be featured in the ERMA Best Theses booklet.

For Tufo, the ceremony marked not just an academic milestone but also a deeply personal experience.



The ERMA journey was as much about intellectual growth as it was about [empathy](#), [understanding](#), and [responsibility](#) in addressing human rights challenges, he reflected. **Receiving the Global Campus internship award is both an honor and a reminder of the work that lies ahead — [beyond the classroom](#).**

Amidst the joy and pride of graduation, many students also expressed concern for the global state of democracy and human rights. The world often seems to move “one step forward and two steps back,” confronting challenges once thought to be overcome — from environmental degradation to exploitative production chains and the impact of the arms industry.

Yet, the ceremony ended on a hopeful note. For 25 years, ERMA has served as a beacon for young professionals committed to positive change. Each new generation carries forward the same aspiration: to defend justice, advance human rights, and inspire others to believe in the shared values of freedom and dignity.

The University of Sarajevo and the University of Bologna congratulated the graduates and warmly welcomed them into the ERMA Alumni Network, wishing them success as they begin the next chapter of their professional journey — one grounded in knowledge, empathy, and a steadfast commitment to human rights.



Global Classroom 2025: Students and Alumni Address the Global Intersection of Climate, Business, and Human Rights

Hosted by **Mahidol University** (GC Asia Pacific) in Bangkok, the 12th edition of the Global Classroom united students, alumni, and experts from over 20 countries to tackle global human rights challenges linked to business accountability and the environmental crisis.

Over 130 local and international participants — including 30 Global Campus selected students and alumni — gathered in Bangkok for a week-long programme of dialogue, research, and advocacy focused on the intersection of climate, business, and human rights. Hosted by the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies (IHRP) at Mahidol University, the 2025 Global Classroom combined academic exchange, field learning, and public engagement to explore how global cooperation could strengthen accountability and protect rights in an era of environmental crisis.

Human rights violations today increasingly transcend borders, linking economic, political, social, and environmental issues. The Global Classroom aimed to bridge these divides by building networks of practitioners and researchers capable of responding to these multi-dimensional challenges. Drawing on the strength of the eight Global Campus regional Master's programmes, participants explored collaborative approaches to address systemic inequalities and promote sustainable, rights-based solutions.

Students and alumni worked in five interdisciplinary groups, focusing on key themes: exploitation in global supply chains, the impact of extractive industries, human rights in the food sector, technology and artificial intelligence, and the human rights abuses related to the defence industry and the funding of conflict. Their research examined weak enforcement of business accountability, delayed recognition of the right to a clean environment, and power imbalances between corporations and grassroots actors.

Leading up to the event, participants joined online sessions with faculty and international experts from Amnesty International Thailand, the Business and Human

Rights Resource Centre, and Cuttlefish Digital. These workshops offered both theoretical frameworks and advocacy tools that shaped the students' projects and campaigns.

During the first two days in Bangkok, participants had the opportunity to learn from local and regional experts who shared research, policy, and advocacy insights on the same topics they had been exploring, with a particular focus on South East Asia perspectives and practices. This exchange deepened their understanding of how global issues play out across diverse local contexts. Students and alumni teams also presented their cross-regional research work, sharing comparative findings and recommendations on business accountability and environmental protection.

Midweek, participants travelled to Samut Sakhon Province to witness the human dimensions of environmental and business-related rights violations. The province faces severe coastal erosion and flooding, driven by climate change and human activity. Students and alumni also visited migrant labour rights organisations, including one combating human trafficking in the fisheries sector, and met with NGOs supporting education access for migrant children.

On the final day, participants presented their advocacy projects at International Civil Society Week 2025 (ICSW), co-hosted by CIVICUS and the Asia Democracy Network (ADN). Their proposals and campaigns included a UN Protocol on AI and the Environment, a Legally Binding Instrument on AI, Defence, and Human Rights, a community-led monitoring framework for critical minerals, a human rights footprint app for fast food products, and the #WhatSheWears campaign supporting women garment workers.

The Global Classroom 2025 demonstrated the power of education, collaboration, and cross-regional dialogue to address pressing global challenges. By uniting students, alumni, academics, and civil society, the Global Campus continues to foster shared learning and collective advocacy for human rights worldwide.



Listening to and engaging with the discussions on the **intersection of business, environment, and human rights was deeply insightful,”** said a participant from GC Africa. **“The sessions and field visit to Samut Sakhon Province were both thought-provoking and inspiring. The advocacy work and engagement with local communities gave the event real impact. It was a privilege to participate, and I look forward to future opportunities to **collaborate** and engage through the Global Campus network.**



From Myanmar to Thailand: GC Alumna Leads Efforts to Protect Migrant Workers' Rights

When Myanmar's fragile democratic opening collapsed in 2021, GC Asia Pacific alumna Hnin Wut Yee was forced to flee the country she had spent years trying to support. Today, from Thailand, she leads efforts to protect the rights of migrant workers—many of them Myanmar nationals—drawing on the human rights education and experience she gained through the Global Campus.

Hnin Wut Yee completed the GC Asia Pacific Regional Master's Programme between 2010 and 2011. Coming from Myanmar, a country plagued by widespread human rights violations and the absence of justice, she developed a strong interest in human rights education.

After her graduation, Myanmar began opening up politically and economically. Hnin returned home and contributed to advancing business and human rights. As foreign investment entered the previously closed country, concerns grew about the potential negative impacts of business conduct on workers' and environmental rights. With the expansion of civic space during the democratic transition, people were able to raise their voices, express their concerns, and demand accountability and transparency from duty bearers, including government institutions and businesses.

However, the 2021 coup in Myanmar overturned all these developments. Civic space and basic freedoms rapidly disappeared. Expressions of dissent or criticism were severely repressed, with thousands detained or killed. Under such conditions, it became nearly impossible for Hnin to continue pursuing her work in social justice and human rights. She was forced to leave the country and relocate to Thailand.

In Thailand, Hnin joined the Labour Rights Foundation (LRF), a local NGO that promotes and protects migrant workers' rights, and assumed the role of Director in September 2023. She regarded this position as a great opportunity to apply her expertise in business and human rights, with a particular focus on migrant

workers. Given that most migrant workers in Thailand are from Myanmar—and as a migrant herself—Hnin deeply understands how the conflict at home exacerbates their vulnerabilities. Her knowledge and experience have become valuable assets to the organisation.

Many young people—including educated youth—who are unable to remain in Myanmar seek refuge in Thailand. They work across various sectors, often performing the “3D” jobs: dirty, difficult, and dangerous work that local workers tend to avoid. These workers face numerous challenges and forms of exploitation, including wage cuts, wage theft, and non-payment of wages. Many are deceived by unscrupulous brokers who charge excessive fees for legal documentation or job placements, leaving them undocumented, indebted, and at even greater risk. Without legal status, migrant workers are vulnerable to employer exploitation, arrest, and potential deportation.

Despite these challenges, LRF has been able to provide meaningful support to distressed workers whenever possible. In some cases, it has successfully intervened to help workers escape exploitative or forced-labour situations. Nevertheless, many cases remain beyond the organisation’s capacity due to the complex operating environment.

Amid these obstacles, the establishment of the Migrant Workers’ Solidarity Community (MWSC) stands out as a major achievement. Formed in February 2024 with LRF’s support, MWSC now brings together more than 1,000 migrant workers from a wide range of sectors, both formal and informal. It serves as a vital space where workers can build their capacity in Thai language, Thai law, and international labour standards, discuss workplace issues, and work collectively to improve their conditions.

As the saying goes, “Unity is power and strength.” MWSC is expected to grow stronger and more capable of consolidating migrant workers’ collective power to safeguard and advance their rights. The journey is undeniably challenging, but Hnin sees these difficulties as an opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge gained from her human rights higher education to real-world situations. This training has equipped her with essential tools not only to support workers in accessing justice and remedies but also to empower them to build collective strength and hold duty bearers accountable.

Written by GC Asia Pacific Alumna Hnin Wut Yee



Supporting Alumni in Their Career Development: The 2025 GCA Careers Orientation

The Global Campus Alumni network recently concluded the 2025 edition of the GCA Careers Orientation, held from October to November 2025. This annual programme continues to offer a supportive environment for Global Campus alumni who are looking to strengthen their professional skills and navigate the human rights field with confidence.

A total of 107 alumni registered for this year's Careers Orientation, joining from multiple Global Campus regions. Each workshop welcomed an average of 20 participants, creating a setting where alumni could exchange experiences and learn from one another.

As in previous years, the programme combined contributions from external professionals and Global Campus alumni. Five workshops shaped this year's orientation:

- o **Navigating career opportunities in human rights (15 October)**

The opening session featured EMA alumna Samantha Chaitkin (EEAS), who shared her varied professional journey across different sectors, and Adam Bond (Leonid Group), who offered insights into recruitment trends and the role of human rights knowledge in the private sector.

- o **Developing effective CVs and cover letters (22 October) & Mastering job interview techniques (29 October)**

Led by EMA alumna and career coach Niamh Walsh, this practical session guided alumni through strategies for presenting their experience clearly and preparing tailored applications. Participants also reviewed submitted CVs and cover letters

together. Niamh also supported alumni in preparing for interviews, approaching topics such as transitions or employment gaps with clarity.

o Creating impactful human rights projects (5 November)

EMA Alumni Anand Deo (Ananda Foundation) and Juan José Guzmán (Fundacion Mecenaz) spoke about their experiences developing rights-based and social initiatives in India, where Ananda Foundation works to reduce suffering in vulnerable communities through sustainable, community-based initiatives that expand access to healthcare, education, and local empowerment; and Chile, where Fundacion Mecenaz promotes convergence, talent development, and the positioning of art as a tool for the inclusion and well-being of LGBTIQANB* communities. Anand and Juan discussed how they shaped their projects, engaged with their communities, and managed the challenges that accompany new ventures.

o Networking and alumni insights with Q&A (12 November)

The very successful closing session brought together alumni Ricardo José Miranda Rivero from LATMA (UN Women), Ashwanee Budoo from HRDA (Human Rights Watch – Africa Division), and Ashley Nancy Reynolds from EMA (ALDI SÜD KG – International Sustainability). Speakers and participants shared networking practices, exchanged questions, and connected across regions in an open and collegial atmosphere.

Across all sessions, participants had the opportunity to ask questions, receive individual guidance, and interact with fellow alumni. The orientation once again offered space for learning and connection within the wider Global Campus Alumni community.

The GCA Careers Orientation reflects the Global Campus's ongoing commitment to accompany its graduates as they take their next steps. By offering structured tools and access to fellow alumni, the programme supports them in navigating their professional paths.



Unleashing Human Rights Education: Reflections from the Budapest Forum and Our Journey to Exercise the Human Right to Joy

From 9 to 11 December 2025, we, a small team of GC alumni and Youth Advisory Group members, joined more than 250 participants in Budapest for the Forum on Human Rights Education — Unleashing Human Rights, organised by the Council of Europe and OHCHR with the European Youth Forum, Amnesty International, and the support of the Global Campus. Representing GC hubs across Brazil, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Uzbekistan, South Africa, Palestine and Cameroon, our group contributed diverse regional perspectives to the discussions.

As representatives of the Global Campus, we engaged in the Forum in multiple ways: sharing our regional insights in working groups and workshops, presenting GC programmes at the Human Rights Education Fair, and participating in the multilingual reading of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on Human Rights Day — a symbolic reminder that human rights belong to everyone, regardless of background. Being part of such a diverse delegation was both an honour and a responsibility, reinforcing the Global Campus's long-standing commitment to human rights education as a transformative and emancipatory practice worldwide.

Human Rights Education as a Transformative Practice

Throughout the Forum, human rights education (HRE) was approached as a central and transversal element of human rights work. Discussions highlighted how HRE is inherently intersectional and responsive to diverse realities, addressing issues from decolonial climate justice to artificial intelligence. We also reflected on the power of non-formal learning: many of the most impactful exchanges happened in informal spaces, where stories of identity, struggle and belonging reminded us that HRE emerges wherever people share lived experiences and build understanding.

Facing the Rise of Authoritarianism

A recurring theme was the global rise of authoritarianism and its consequences for the future of HRE. Participants described shrinking civic spaces, restrictions on academic freedom and increasing risks for human rights defenders and educators working in fragile or repressive contexts. The Forum reinforced the need for international solidarity, transnational networks and collective strategies to protect and sustain human rights education in these environments.

Human Rights as a Pathway to Peace and Conflict Resolution

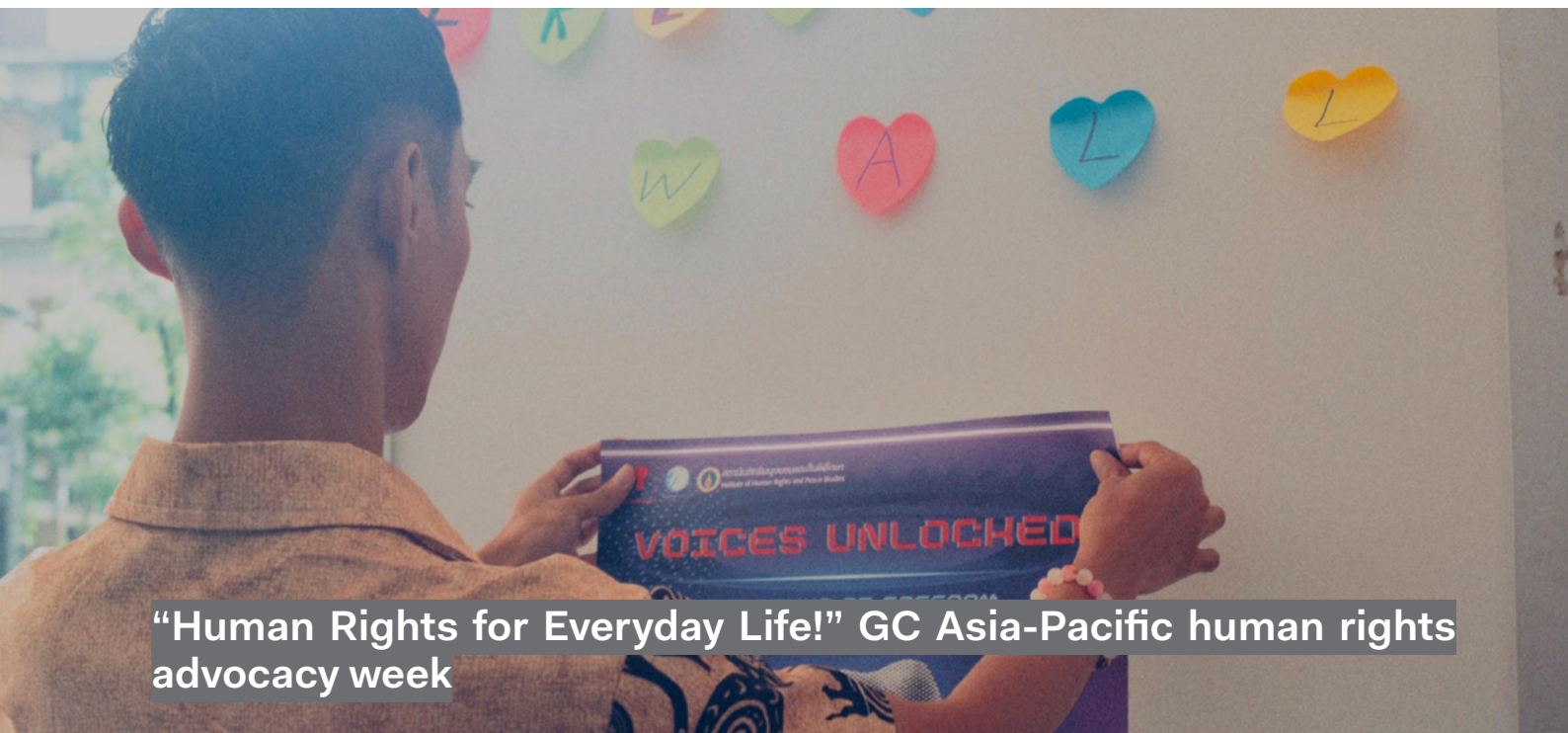
We explored how HRE can contribute to peacebuilding by strengthening dialogue, promoting mutual understanding and addressing root causes of conflict. Participants emphasised that HRE is not only theoretical but a practical and transformative tool that empowers youth and communities to engage constructively even in contexts of tension. Drawing from our own regions, we shared experiences of community-based projects, conflict resolution exercises and safe spaces for discussion, illustrating how HRE supports social cohesion, accountability and resilience.

Strengthening a Global Community

For the Global Campus alumni present in Budapest, the Forum reinforced a deep sense of belonging to a global community committed to justice, dignity, education—and to joy as a human right. Despite addressing the many crises shaping our world, moments of shared joy and connection emerged as a powerful reminder that human rights work is sustained not only by struggle, but also by hope and human connection. As we move forward, the lessons from Budapest remind us that human rights education is ultimately about people: their stories, their courage and their determination to imagine a more just world. And above all, the Forum reassured us that we are not alone in this task.

Authors: Amanda Rossini Martins, Rosita Sekandari, Sai Khun Min (Arthur), Azwikonisaho Gloria Ramavhuya, Yazan Mezher and Ahmat Yakoub

Photos by Sai Khun Min (Arthur)



“Human Rights for Everyday Life!” GC Asia-Pacific human rights advocacy week

Students from the Asia-Pacific Master of Arts in Human Rights and Democratization (APMA) and its sister MA programme recently transformed the Mahidol University campus into a week-long exhibition of student-led human rights campaigns under the theme “Human Rights for Everyday Life!” The initiative focused on three key concerns for young people today: mental health, digital freedom and climate justice. The exhibition opened with a reminder that human rights are not abstract principles confined to treaties, but shape the daily realities of communities across the region. Whether it is extreme air pollution, rising sea levels, widening digital surveillance, or the emotional strain faced by university students, the students argued that rights-based solutions must involve everyone: governments, universities, civil society, and young people themselves.

Seven student-led campaigns addressed some of the most urgent and overlooked human rights concerns affecting young people today:

Mental health on campus: an essential part of the right to education

One group focused on the link between mental health, academic success, and students’ broader right to good health.

Their campaign noted that while Mahidol University offers mental health services, many students do not use them—likely due to stigma, lack of awareness, or insufficient institutional support. To better understand how Mahidol students perceive mental health needs and preferred support mechanisms, the team designed interactive games during the exhibition. The information collected will be shared with faculty in hopes of influencing future campus policies. The group also proposed introducing mental health as a compulsory subject to strengthen early intervention, promote empathy, and normalize conversations about well-being within university life.

Supporting students from conflict zones

Following the interruption of several international scholarship schemes after the dissolution of global funding support programs, many students from conflict zones (and especially Myanmar) have faced severe financial strain and emotional stress. To respond to this, the team piloted a peer-led support initiative, including a workshop and the formation of a confidential, in-person support group emphasizing trust, cultural sensitivity, and empowerment. Their goal is to create a sustained network where affected students can find solidarity, share coping strategies, and access emotional support within the Mahidol community.

Climate justice: rights in the age of rising seas and unbreathable air

A team decided to bring attention to climate injustice—particularly the unequal impact of environmental degradation on vulnerable populations. The group highlighted how extreme air pollution, increasingly frequent floods, and unsafe living conditions jeopardize basic rights to health, shelter, and livelihood. Their exhibit called on policymakers, universities, and community actors to play a stronger role in climate mitigation and adaptation. They argued that meaningful climate action requires not only technical responses but also a strong human rights lens to ensure that no group is left behind in the transition.

Digital freedom: “Voices unlocked – Sound of freedom”

A striking visual campaign explored digital rights and the shrinking space for online expression. With a symbol of a microphone shaped like a raised fist, two teams emphasised how digital platforms have become both essential channels for youth engagement and risky spaces where censorship, surveillance, and harassment are growing. The campaign gathered personal testimonies from young people across ASEAN on their experiences with expressing themselves online. Through these stories, the students sought to highlight the fragility of digital freedom and the need for stronger protections that allow people—especially youth—to speak without fear.

#SafeSpacesOnline: addressing sexist cyberbullying

This campaign tackled sexist cyberbullying through an encouraging, youth-friendly approach. On 24 November, two teams ran an interactive booth inviting participants to write examples of “good” and “bad” online comments they had encountered. The activity drew steady crowds and sparked thoughtful conversations. Many participants shared personal stories, revealing patterns of body-shaming, sexualized insults, and subtle gendered remarks. The students noted that naming these experiences helped individuals recognize sexist cyberbullying as a form of harm, not a normal part of digital life. The activity also promoted empathy by encouraging participants to reflect on how words affect emotional well-being.

Across all seven campaigns, the message was clear: human rights are lived realities shaped every day by environmental conditions, digital access, mental health, and the socio-political contexts students carry with them. The APMA students hope their campaigns will ignite deeper conversations on campus and contribute to

long-term policy changes that make Mahidol University a safer, more inclusive, and more rights-respecting space for all.

With thanks to the students from the Asia-Pacific Master of Arts in Human Rights and Democratization (APMA) and the Master of Arts in Human Rights (MAHR), who drafted this piece under the supervision of Dr. Mst Umme Habiba Fahmina Karim, Lecturer at the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University, Thailand

Photos by Chu Nguyen Gia Anh, APMA student 2025



From the Philippines to APMA: A Human Rights Learning Journey

Mabuhay! I am Jerome Jeffe Novio Crebillo, a 23-year-old from the Philippines and a student in the Asia-Pacific Master of Arts in Human Rights and Democratization at Mahidol University in Bangkok, Thailand.

To begin with, it is truly an honor for me to become part of this programme, as I am the only Filipino in our batch this 2025-2026. Being a student of the Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in Asia-Pacific (APMA), for me, as a Filipino, feels like carrying home with me wherever I go. For nearly six years, I have been a human rights defender and have been fighting for human rights issues in the Philippines, such as SOGIE Rights, press freedom and environmental rights. As a gay person in my country, I have been collecting experiences in a heavy, tattered backpack for 23 years now. It was tough for me at a very young age, because I come from a country where conversations about human rights, justice, and democracy are sensitive. However, I still choose to stand for what is right as I believe that being a human rights defender is not only a title you claim, but a commitment you live with everyday life.

I did not choose the APMA programme simply to earn a master's degree. I chose this path because it is truly aligned with my passion and closest to my heart. Moreover, I wanted to understand the concept of human rights and my own country's experiences in a wider picture, especially within the Asia-Pacific and international frameworks. As a Filipino, I have seen how human rights can be debated, defended, and denied in very real ways. Taking this program in an international classroom, together with my classmates from different countries around the globe, made me realize that my questions are not isolated. They echoed in other countries as well, especially the struggles and the endless fight for human rights. That is, I would say that the program allowed me to speak from where I stand, while learning how

others navigate similar struggles in their own contexts.

On the other hand, the Programme has challenged me intellectually, culturally, and emotionally in a positive way. Through rigorous readings, discussions, and reflections, I have learned about human rights with the help of my professors, and most of all, my classmates from different countries, cultures, and expertise. As time goes by, by hearing their inspiring stories as human rights advocates and scholars, I could say that human rights work demands both clarity and compassion. APMA helped me to confront uncomfortable truths, to question assumptions, and to listen carefully to narratives that are not my own. Besides, it taught me that advocating for human rights is not only about speaking out, but also about understanding complexity, culture, history, and the consequences of action and silence.

What makes the Programme exceptional is its truly diverse, international, and especially, human rights-centered approach. It brings together students not only from the Asia-Pacific region but across the world by creating a safe learning space rooted in a healthy discourse, respect, and shared responsibility. As an APMA student, I learned to value difference not as division, but as a source of strength for everyday life struggles. This notable experience, as a Filipino, affirmed that local struggles are connected to global movements for dignity and justice.

Further, looking toward the future, I carry hope, strength, and responsibility. I truly hope to apply what I have learned in the APMA programme to contribute to broader work that protects human rights, strengthens democratic spaces, and centers the voices of marginalized groups and communities in society. My journey in the program has reminded me that human rights cannot be set aside, no matter what happens. They are lived, defended, and sometimes lost in everyday life, which is why we should always choose to speak up for the truth. As I move forward, I do so with a deeper and meaningful sense of purpose, shaped by where I come from and strengthened by what APMA has helped me become.



EMA Students Celebrate the Right to Play Through Film and Dialogue

The 15th edition of the recent EMA Human Rights Film Festival turned the Global Campus headquarters in Venice into a lively space dedicated to the right to play. Organised by GC Europe students, the festival—titled *Un, Due, Tre... Stella!*—placed children’s perspectives at the centre, combining films, performances, and intergenerational dialogue to explore play as a fundamental human right and a source of creativity and resilience.

The festival, supported once again by Right Livelihood, was organised on December 12-13 2025 by a team of 8 student coordinators who were supported by 20 other students, all volunteering their time in advance of and during the Festival days. The level of attendance was very satisfactory – having reached a peak of around 90 people on Saturday evening! – and the audience gathered a joyful mix of EMA students and Venetian residents.

Taking place in the Global Campus Headquarters in the Monastero di San Nicolò in Lido, Venice, the title of this year’s Festival was *Un, Due, Tre...Stella!*, drawn from one of the most beloved childhood games in Italy (i.e., the Italian version of the children’s game known in English as “Red Light, Green Light”). What began as ‘stai là!’ (‘stay there!’) gradually softened into ‘stella’ (‘star’), a transformation born from the rhythm and imagination of children themselves. The students chose this title because it reflects what they aimed to celebrate: the right to play, creativity, spontaneity, and resilience that define childhood. ‘Un, Due, Tre... Stella!’ is more than a game; it is a shared cultural memory, a reminder of the joyful, inventive ways children can make sense of the world. Therefore, the 2025 Film Festival was an invitation to the audience to tap into their own childhood spirit, remembering that the right to play must not end.

The opening and closing movies of the festival were “Lunana: a yak in the classroom” by Pawo Choyning Dorji (Bhutan) and “Homework”, by Abbas Kiarostami (Iran). By focusing on exploring the role of playing for children and how they make sense of school and of the social dilemmas that stem from it, these movies encapsulate greatly how to see the world through the eyes of children. The film programme was further composed of a very diverse list of short movies, several of them responding to an open call organised by the students. In a short period of time a wide range of movies from activists and Human Rights advocates from all around the world were submitted, the festival’s Film Programming team curated a selection of the best ones. See the full programme on the website.

It was very important for the student coordinators to go beyond adult talks about children’s rights and to give space to the voices of children. Thus, with the help of the GC team and building on a fruitful partnership with I.C. Dante Alighieri in Venice, children from the P.F. Calvi school took part in a workshop organised and facilitated by students from the EMA programme, a few weeks in advance of the festival. The children were invited to choose an important human right to them and to make a drawing based on its personal meaning. Each child used great imagination to draw beautiful representations of the rights they want to see upheld in their day-to-day lives. Accordingly, during the festival, Saturday morning was solely dedicated to an inter-generational approach to the right to play, where the children’s artwork was exhibited and a documentary made by EMA student Emily Malkin based on this workshop and the experience of playing in Venice was screened.

Furthermore, the public programme included discussions on the right to play: especially relevant was the talk on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child by the Honorary Judge of the Juvenile Court of Florence Sofia Ciuffoletti. After having discussed the importance of playing to the dignity, development and freedom of human beings, this right was put in practice by the performances that closed each one of the festival days. With Disco Zenith Laguna, the musicians’ improvisation paved the way to a session of fun and of enjoyment for all the participants. In addition, the EMA student-led band’s performance showed how studying the right to play can be complemented with actual playing. The interaction between the audience, the students and the guests originated two days of a deep involvement in the right to play and in the children’s own worldview.

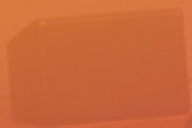
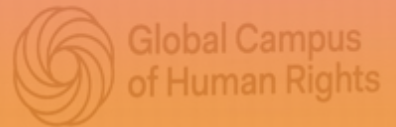
Through this festival, the students of the EMA Programme aimed to place children’s perspectives at the centre of the discussion on the right to play. The festival’s core lied in an intergenerational approach to the right to play. Hence, the Monastero di San Nicolò became a place where all participants could rediscover the transformative power of play.


Written by Constança Rodrigues Fraga dos Santos Seabra, EMA student

SPORTS ARTS & HUMAN RIGHTS *through celebration*

Promotion

THE HOME OF THE HUMAN S





Sports, Arts and Human Rights initiatives at the Venice Marathon 2025

The Global Campus of Human Rights, the most extensive human rights education network in the world consisting of about 100 leading universities, is committed to raise awareness of human rights by connecting with the culture of arts and sports initiatives at local and international levels. In this framework, the network will be present at the next Venice Marathon 2025, and in the run-up of Milano Cortina Olympics and Paralympics 2026.

Sports can only flourish in an atmosphere of peace and security. With its universal reach, Sports culture is a joyful medium to promote the universal values of human rights. This is the focus of the cooperation with our partners (City of Venice, Region of Veneto, CIP Veneto, Panathlon Club Venezia, The Human Safety Net, Venice Marathon) through a series of sportive events and awards which have been developed every year.

The Venice Marathon proves to be an important event, and solidarity has always been an integral part of the project. Proof of this is the numbers of their Charity Programme which in 10 years has raised over 1 million euros, but above all it is the enthusiasm with which the non-profit organizations participate in the initiative every year and are committed to creating teams of activists and ambassadors of good causes at their Expo Sports Charity Programme Village stands at San Giuliano Park (VE) on 24 and 25 October 2025.

In that sense, we invited our community of students, alumni, professors, experts and staff to keep standing up for human rights and participate at our Sports/Arts/HumanRights Awards Ceremony and a Movie Screening of the documentary “The

Right to Race” (On | The Right to Race Trailer – YouTube) to interact with our awardees, partners and team of solidarity runners participating in the Venice Marathon 2025.

To give us visibility, please follow us and share our social media posts with the hashtags #GCHumanRights #Sport4HumanRights #VeniceMarathon #RUN4GCHR2025

And stay tuned for our next campaigns related to the Milano Cortina Winter Olympics and Paralympics 2026!

For more info, please contact communications@gchumanrights.org

For more information, contact the

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