



Human Rights, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) & the Law

International Online Symposium & Hon Justice CD Gonthier Memorial Lectures

Friday, 15 May 2020

9:00 – 16:30 EST / 18:00 – 19:30 EST

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Human Rights, the Sustainable Development Goals & the Law **2020 International Online Symposium &** **Hon Justice CD Gonthier Memorial Lectures**

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Canada and all countries, through the United Nations, have committed to global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), tackling the toughest social, environmental and economic challenges of our century. Across 17 SDGs with 169 targets, human rights play a critical role as legal obligations, policy drivers and principles shaping practical collaboration. However, significant implementation gaps exist, as evidenced in Voluntary National Reports (VNRs) submitted to the UN by Member States. As countries implement new strategies for the SDGs, ongoing challenges on all levels highlight the complexities of harnessing rights-based approaches to the SDGs in law, policy and practice. New connections, skills and knowledge can help fill this SDG implementation gap, through interdisciplinary review of rights-based approaches highlighted in VNRs, recent law and policy reforms, tribunals and treaties. In current times, as countries design new post-pandemic recovery strategies and policies for the SDGs, informed dialogue between experts, academics and practitioners, while building skills in rights-based approaches and engaging SDG-focused institutions, offers opportunities for outstanding learning and impact.

The international symposium on **Human Rights, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Law** will be held on May 15, 2020, co-hosted online by the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism at McGill University and the Centre for International Sustainable Development Law (CISDL), in cooperation with the University of Montreal Faculty of Law, the University of Cambridge Centre for Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Governance (CEENRG), the University of Waterloo School of Environment, Enterprise and Development (SEED), the Balsillie School of International Affairs (BSIA), the International Law Association of Canada, the McGill Journal of Sustainable Development Law (MJSDL), Canada's Sustainable Development Solutions Network, the IUCN's World Commission on Environmental Law Climate Change Specialist Group, and many other generous partners.

The evening features the biennial **Hon Justice CD Gonthier Memorial Lectures**, which after brief opening remarks by the Rt Hon Chief Justice Richard Wagner of the Supreme Court of Canada, are given by Acting Executive Secretary Dr Elizabeth Mrema of the Convention on Biological Diversity, former Director of Environmental Law for the United Nations (UN) Environment Programme and the Hon Justice Professor Marcel Szabo of the Constitutional Court of Hungary, former Ombudsman for Future Generations his country's UN Human Rights Commission.

Keynote speakers and interactive online dialogue will focus on three key themes, as identified by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which may be essential for post-pandemic law and policy measures:

- * **Transformation:** As an agenda for “people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership”, the SDGs offer a paradigm shift from the traditional model of development, providing a transformative vision for post-pandemic measures that are people and planet-centred, human rights-based, and gender-sensitive.
- * **Comprehensiveness:** Alongside a wide range of social, economic and environmental objectives, post-pandemic measures which contribute to the SDGs will promote “more peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence” with attention to democratic governance, rule of law, access to justice and personal security (in Goal 16), as well as an enabling international environment (in Goal 17 and throughout the framework). They cover issues related to all human rights, including economic, civil, cultural, political, social rights and the right to development.
- * **Inclusion:** Post-pandemic measures which contribute to the SDGs will leave no-one behind, envisaging “a world of universal respect for equality and non-discrimination” between and within countries, including gender equality, by reaffirming the responsibilities of all States to “respect, protect and promote human rights, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national and social origin, property, birth, disability or other status.”

This global online event convenes national and international experts and leaders together with emerging scholars, students and practitioners, to explore new research trends, challenges and insights in implementing the SDGs through a rights-based approach and to share innovative solutions and lessons in designing post-pandemic legal and policy measures to achieve the SDGs while advancing universal human rights.

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International Online Symposium & Hon Justice CD Gonthier Memorial Lectures

Friday, 15 May 2020

**9:00 – 16:30 EST International Legal Symposium
18:00 – 19:30 EST Hon Justice CD Gonthier Memorial Lectures**

Online Programme

8:30 – 9:00 Online Moderation & Plenary Chair/Speaker Registration

Online Masters of Ceremony: Ms. Robyn Rugenius (Coordinator, McGill Centre for Human Rights & Legal Pluralism CHRLP) & Mr. Freedom-Kai Phillips (Operations Director, Centre for International Sustainable Development Law CISDL)

9:00 – 9:30 Welcome & Opening Plenary (Zoom Room ZR Montreal)

Chairs: Prof. François Crépeau (Director, CHRLP / Hans & Tamar Oppenheimer Chair in Public International Law, McGill University) & Prof. Marie-Claire Cordonier Segger (Senior Director, CISDL / Leverhulme Trust Visiting Professor, University of Cambridge / Professor of Law, University of Waterloo)

Welcomes: Dr. Ashfaq Khalfan (Chair, CISDL Board of Governors / Law & Policy Director, Amnesty International); Dean Jean Andrey (Dean, University of Waterloo / Chair, Sustainable Development Solutions Network of Canada); Prof. Christina Voigt (Professor, University of Oslo / Chair, IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law Climate Change Specialist Group); Prof. Alexandra Harrington (Fulbright Canada Research Chair in Global Governance, Balsillie School of International Affairs BSIA / Research Director, CISDL); Adv. Bernard Colas (Partner, Colas Moreira Kazandjian Zikovsky; former President, International Law Association of Canada ILA); Maitre Pierre Gonthier (Chair, Hon Justice CD Gonthier Memorial Lectures Committee).

9:30 – 10:00 Plenary I - Keynote Addresses (ZR Montreal)

Prof. David Boyd (United Nations UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights & the Environment / Assoc. Professor, University of British Columbia)

Dr. Catarina de Albuquerque (Chief Executive Officer, Sanitation & Water for All / former UN Special Rapporteur on Rights to Water & Sanitation, Chair of UN Working Group on Optional Protocol to ICESCR)

Zoom Chat Moderator: Ms. Lauren MacDonald (Researcher, University of Cambridge Faculty of Law & Lucy Cavendish College)

10:00 – 11:00 Simultaneous Global Experts Panels I & II

I Advancing Post-Pandemic Justice, Governance & Partnership - SDG 16 & 17 (ZR Montreal)

How to strengthen efforts to secure peace, justice and good institutional governance in international and national post-pandemic responses? What are some of the critical challenges facing peace-building, transitional justice and governance in light of the pandemic? How can the partnerships highlighted in SDG 17 be used to craft a durable post-pandemic response that facilitates the achievement of all SDGs?

Chairs: Prof. Alexandra Harrington (Lead Counsel & Research Director, CISDL / Fulbright Canada Research Chair in Global Governance) & Ms. Janet McIntyre (Director of Access to Justice Secretariat, Justice Canada)

Keynote: Prof. Payam Akhavan (Professor, McGill University / Member, Permanent Court of Arbitration)

Speakers: Dr. Neshan Gunasekera (Coordinator, UNDP Sri Lanka); Prof. Emily Reid (Southampton Law School, University of Southampton); Prof. Sumudu Atapattu (Director of Research Centers and Senior Lecturer University of Wisconsin Law School, by film) & **Intervenors:** Prof. Ilaria Espa (Asst. Professor, Università della Svizzera italiana / Senior Research Fellow, World Trade Institute (WTI) / Adj. Professor, University of Milan); Dr. Henry Lovat (Lord Kelvin Adam Smith Research Fellow, University of Glasgow).

Zoom Chat Moderator: Mr. Arsalan Ahmed (Researcher, McGill University Faculty of Law / Editor-in-Chief, McGill Journal of Sustainable Development Law)

II Addressing Rights, Poverty & Disabilities - SDGs 1, 8 & 11 (ZR Cambridge)

How and to what extent do various SDGs recognize the importance of promoting the rights, dignity, and inclusion of persons with disabilities? What are the barriers facing persons with disabilities in the recognition and protection of their human rights? What practices are needed to empower persons with disabilities as agents and beneficiaries of inclusive sustainable development?

Chairs: Prof. Sebastien Jodoin (Asst. Professor, McGill University / Canada Research Chair in Human Rights & Environment) & Prof. Nandini Ramanujam (Executive Director, CHRLP / Assoc. Professor, McGill University)

Speakers: Prof. Nandini Ramanujam (Executive Director, CHRLP / Assoc. Professor, McGill University); Dr. Yolanda Muñoz (Senior Research Associate, Canada Research Chair in Human Rights & Environment); Ms. Perpetua Senkoro (Researcher / O'Brien Fellow, McGill University); Ms. Nilani Ananthamoorthy (Research Associate, Canada Research Chair in Human Rights & Environment) & **Intervenors:** Adv. Alexander Agnello (Policy Analyst, Office of the Ombudsperson, British Columbia); Mr. Jorge Caicedo (Researcher, McGill Faculty of Law Rule of Law and Economic Development Research Group).

Zoom Chat Moderator: Ms. Marie-Denise Vane (Researcher, McGill University Faculty of Law)

11:00 – 11:15 Health Break

11:15 – 12:15 Simultaneous Experts Panels III & IV

III Designing Post-Pandemic Rights-Based Approaches to Paris Agreement Implementation - SDGs 7 & 13 (ZR Montreal)

Why and how could a human-rights based approach to climate change yield better results than simply focusing on emission reductions? Given that access to energy determines levels of development, should there be a human right to energy and if so, what role would renewables play? What standard of care would be implied by a "human right to a stable climate" and what is expected of States?

Chairs: Prof. Christina Voigt (Full Professor of Public and International Law, University of Oslo / Chair of the IUCN WCEL's Specialist Group on Climate Change) & Adv. Ayman Cherkaoui (Lead Counsel, CISDL / Obama Foundation Africa Leader)

Speakers: Prof. Lynda Collins (Full Professor, University of Ottawa Common Law Section); Prof. Cristina Redko (Assoc. Professor & Center for Global Health Director, Wright State University Boonshoft School of Medicine); Prof. Damilola Olawuyi (Assoc. Professor, Hamad Bin Kalifa University / Legal Fellow, CISDL); Adv. Erick Kassongo (Director, Centre Congolais pour le Développement Durable (CODED) & **Intervenors:** Prof. David Boyd (United Nations UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights & the Environment / Assoc. Professor, University of British

Columbia); Dr. Saleemul Huq (Senior Fellow, Climate Change, International Institute for Environment and Development); Dr. Cosmin Correndea (Professor, O.P. Jindal Global University / Senior Legal Research Fellow, CISDL); Dr. Idil Boran (Assoc. Professor, York University / Ass. Researcher German Development Institute).

Closing Remarks: Adv. Hafijul Islam Khan (Co-coordinator, Loss and Damage Team, UNFCCC LDCs Group / Centre for Climate Justice-Bangladesh (CCJ-B) / Researcher, University of Waterloo)

Zoom Chat Moderator: Ms. Chantelle Byron (Coordinator, UNFCCC Climate Law & Governance Initiative / Researcher, University of Cambridge Faculty of Law)

IV Devising Post-Pandemic Rights-Based Approaches to Global Health & Gender - SDGs 3 & 5 (ZR Cambridge)

How can governments shape international and national post-pandemic responses to advance the SDGs? What are the balancing concerns between responding to the pandemic from a medical perspective, and maintaining or strengthening existing human rights laws and norms? How will gender concerns be integrated in the post-pandemic response and what examples can be informative in this context?

Chairs: Prof. Maya Prabhu (Assoc. Professor, Yale University /Yale Center for Asylum Medicine / Yale Institute for Global Health Fellow, Lead Counsel, CISDL) & Dr. Oonagh Fitzgerald (Member of the Board, ILA-Canada / Co-Chair of Canadian Environmental Domestic Advisory Group under the CETA)

Speakers Prof. Steven Hoffman (Dahdaleh Distinguished Chair in Global Governance & Legal Epidemiology / Professor, York University); Prof. Francois Crépeau (Director, CHRLP / Hans & Tamar Oppenheimer Chair in Public International Law, McGill University); Ms. Ghazaleh Jerban (Research Fellow, Trade Facilitation Office of Canada OpenAIR / Queen Elizabeth Scholar) & Intervenors: Dr. Basil Ugochukwu (Fellow, CIGI); Ms. Christina Beninger (Researcher, University of Cape Town).

Zoom Chat Moderator: Ms. Julia Green (Researcher, McGill University Faculty of Law)

12:15 – 12:45 Lunch Break

12:45 – 13:15 Plenary II - Keynote Addresses

Chairs: Dr. Ashfaq Khalfan (Chair, CISDL Board of Governors / Director, Amnesty International) & Prof. Susan Breau (Dean, University of Victoria Faculty of Law)

Hon. Minister David Lametti (Minister of Justice, Government of Canada)

Prof. John Knox (Full Professor, Wake Forest Law / former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment)

Launch of HE Judge CG and Rosemary Weeramantry International Law and Sustainable Development Global Fellowship / Celebration of HE Justice CG Weeramantry International Justice Awards, with Prof. Romesh Weeramantry (Adj Professor, Singapore Management University / Counsel, Clifford Chance Asia, by film).

Zoom Chat Moderator: Ms. Chantelle Byron (Coordinator, UNFCCC Climate Law & Governance Initiative / Researcher, University of Cambridge Faculty of Law)

13:15 – 14:15 Simultaneous Experts Panels V & VI

V Structuring Rights-Based Trade, Investment & Financial Rules for Economic Recovery - SDGs 9, 10 & 11 (ZR Montreal)

How can the human rights and the SDGs be better integrated into post COVID-19 economic recovery plans, to foster or frustrate a fast transition to a greener economy and zero-carbon societies? How can new economic laws, including tax and intellectual property rules, contribute to the realization of human rights and the SDGs? What reforms to trade and investment agreements could promote more sustainable, resilient infrastructure, industrialization and innovation, especially in cities and communities?

Chairs: Dr. Markus Gehring (Faculty of Law, University of Cambridge / Lead Counsel, CISDL) & Dr. Wayne Garnons-Williams (Chair, Inter-Tribal Trade & Investment Organization & Principal, Garwill)

Speakers: Prof. Avidan Kent (Assoc. Professor, University of East Anglia, UK); Dr. Maria Panezi (Asst. Professor, University of New Brunswick); Dr. James Collard (Economic Planning Director, Citizen Potawatomi Nation); Dr. Marsha Cadogan (Principal, Cadogan Law) & **Intervenors:** Prof. Alexander Ezenagu (Asst. Professor, Hamad bin Khalifa University); Mr. Sean Stephenson (Senior Assoc, Dentons); Dr. Ksenia Polonskaya (Researcher, Queens University); Mr. Marios Tokas (Programme Coordinator, CISDL & Researcher, Graduate Institute Geneva); Dr. James Hopkins (Associate Clinical Professor at the University of Arizona/former Chief Justice of the Pascua Yaqui Court of Appeals).

Zoom Chat Moderator: Mr. Jorge Caicedo (McGill University Faculty of Law)

VI Securing Co-Benefits of Human Rights, Biodiversity & Freshwater Ecosystems Protections - SDG 15 & 6 (ZR Cambridge)

How can the post-2020 biodiversity agenda effectively advance sustainable development and respond to cross-cutting global issues such as climate change or global health? What are the lessons learned from national experiences which illustrate pathways for achievement of the SDGs? What are ways to promote nature-based solutions and what are the interfaces with traditional knowledge, ecosystems, and food security.

Chairs: Prof. Jorge Cabrera (Professor, University of Costa Rica / Lead Counsel, CISDL) & Mr. Freedom-Kai Phillips (Researcher, University of Cambridge / Operations Director, CISDL)

Speakers: Mr. Gaute Voigt-Hanssen (CBD Head of Delegation & Senior Advisor, Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment); Mr. Tim Scott (Senior Policy Advisor, UNDP); Dr. Balakrishna Pisupati (Chairperson, FLEDGE); Prof. Robert Kibugi (Professor, University of Nairobi / Legal Research Fellow, CISDL); Dr. Claudia Ituarte-Lima (Senior Researcher, Raoul Wallenberg Institute on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law / Research Fellow, Stockholm University) & **Intervenors:** Prof. Erin Daly (Professor, Widener University, Delaware Law School); Ms. Ana Barreira (Director, Instituto Internacional de Derecho y Medio Ambiente); Ms. Danting Fan (Researcher, University of Cambridge, Faculty of Law).

Zoom Chat Moderator: Ms Nathalie Legendre (Researcher, University of Cambridge / Lucy Cavendish College)

14:15 – 14:30 Health Break

14:30 – 15:30 Simultaneous Experts Panels VII / Roundtables VIII

VII Empowering Children's Voices & Quality Education - SDG 4 & SDG 17 (ZR Montreal)

Education plays a formative role in shaping children and young people's values. In what ways can global partnerships influence the content of education globally to promote sustainability and environmental protection, in the pursuit of more resilient societies? How can children's voices and perspectives regarding human rights be heard in planning post-pandemic responses? How to advance the educational rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and SDG 4 through the local and global empowerment of children and youth?

Chairs: Hon. Marcel Szabo (Justice, Constitutional Court of Hungary/former Hungarian Ombudsman of Future Generations) & Dr. Gabrielle Sacconaghi Bacon (Goodwill Ambassador, UNESCO Voices of Future Generations Childrens Rights Initiative VoFG)

Moderators: Adv. Sarah Sanders (Editor, VoFG) / Dr. Odeeth Lara Morales (Coordinator, VoFG)

Special Film: The Voices of Future Generations Childrens' Rights Initiative

Child Authors: Ms. Andrea Wilson (VoFG Child Author & Scholar, USA); Miss Rehema Kibugi (VoFG Child Author & Scholar, Kenya); Miss Christina-Angelina Kassongo (VoFG Child Author & Scholar, Democratic Republic of Congo); Master Jasper Chin Moody (VoFG Child Author & Scholar, Australia); Master Nico Roman (Co-Chair, Cambridge Schools Eco-Council, VoFG Child Ambassador & Scholar, UK / Canada / Switzerland).

Speakers: Prof. Kirsten Sandberg (Full Professor, University of Oslo / former Chair, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child); Dr. Sandor Szemesi (Chief Counselor, Constitutional Court of Hungary); Prof. Sebastien Jodoin (Asst. Professor, McGill University / Chapter Author, 'Children's Rights and Sustainable Development: Interpreting the UNCRC for Future Generations' Cambridge University Press, 2019).

Zoom Chat Moderator: Ms. Julia Green (Researcher, McGill University Faculty of Law)

VIII Promoting Indigenous Rights, Identity & Food Security - SDGs 2 & 14 (ZR Cambridge)

In the context of the SDGs, how can international and national law be tailored to implement respect for indigenous rights in the post-pandemic recovery? What has been the experience of indigenous communities, with respect to realizing human rights and reconciliation, and the SDGs? What can indigenous knowledge provide in the context of modern food security, agro-ecological systems and fisheries, and how can indigenous approaches help to weather the pandemic and guide recovery in this respect?

Chairs: Hon. Judge Sebastien Grammond (Justice, Federal Court of Canada / former Dean, University of Ottawa Civil Law Section) & Prof. Konstantia Koutouki (Professor, University of Montreal, Lead Counsel, CISDL, President, ILA-Canada)

Special Guest Speaker: Ms. Adelyn Sophie (Child Author, VoFG & Scholar, Canada)

Speakers M. Sarah Mainville (Partner, Olthuis Kleer Townshend LLP); Ms Tara Dawn Atleo (Researcher, University of Waterloo, SEED) & Prof. Alexandra R. Harrington (Lead Counsel & Research Director, CISDL / Fulbright Canada Research Chair in Global Governance); Prof. Sharaban Tahura Zaman (Lecturer, Department of Law, North South University, Bangladesh/Senior Research Fellow, Center for Climate Justice- Bangladesh); Prof. Priscilla Settee (Professor, University of Saskatchewan) & **Intervenor:** Ms. Claire Perttula (Researcher, Balsillie School of International Affairs); Ms. Darlene Coyle (Researcher, SEED, University of Waterloo).

Zoom Chat Moderator: Mr. Arsalan Ahmed (Researcher, McGill University Faculty of Law / Editor-in-Chief, McGill Journal of Sustainable Development Law)

15:30 – 16:30 Plenary III – Closing International Experts Roundtable (ZR Montreal)

The SDGs offer a paradigm shift from the traditional model of development and post-pandemic measures - why did your session consider this shift to be essential? How did your session find a rights-based approach might strengthen post-pandemic measures to achieve the SDGs, in different countries – what were the worst and best examples that you discussed, and what can we learn from them? Moving forward, how to design, develop and enforce international and domestic measures to advance the SDGs which fully respect and realise human rights – what is the advice of your session, into the future, who should be engaged and what are the first key steps?

Chairs: Prof. Marie-Claire Cordonier Segger (Senior Director, CISDL / Professor, University of Waterloo / Leverhulme Visiting Professor, University of Cambridge) & Rt Hon. Judge Prof. Nico Schrijver (Full Professor, Leiden University / Member, Permanent Court of Arbitration & former President, Institut de Droit International & International Law Association)

Interactive Dialogue with Chairs of International Experts Panels:

(Q 1) Prof. Alexandra Harrington, Prof. Maya Prabhu, Dr. Gabrielle Sacconaghi Bacon & Dr. Wayne Garnons-Williams; (Q 2) Hon Judge Sebastien Grammond, Prof. Christina Voigt, Dr. Markus Gehring & Mr. Freedom-Kai Phillips; (Q 3) Ms. Janet McIntyre, Prof. Jorge Cabrera, Prof. Sebastien Jodoin & Adv Ayman Cherkaoui.

Closing Remarks: Prof. François Crépeau (Director, Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, Hans & Tamar Oppenheimer Chair in Public International Law, McGill University)

18:00 – 19:30 Hon Judge Charles D Gonthier Memorial Lectures (Online)

(Zoom Room Montreal / www.cisdsl.org)

Chairs (live, online):

Prof. Marie-Claire Cordonier Segger (Senior Director, CISDL / Professor, University of Waterloo / Leverhulme Visiting Professor, University of Cambridge) & Prof. François Crépeau (Director, Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, Hans & Tamar Oppenheimer Chair in Public International Law, McGill University)

Opening (online, by film):

- * **Rt Hon. Chief Justice Richard Wagner, PC (Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Canada)**
- * **Prof Robert Leckey (Dean, McGill University Faculty of Law)**
- * **Prof. France Houle (Doyenne, Université de Montreal, Faculté de droit)**

Hon Justice CD Gonthier Memorial Lectures (online, by film):

- * **Hon. Justice Prof. Marcel Szabo (Judge, Constitutional Court of Hungary, Professor of International Law and former Ombudsman for Future Generations)**
- * **Dr. Elizabeth Mrema (Acting Executive-Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity)**

Questions & Discussion (live, online):

Moderators: Prof. Alexandra Harrington (CISDL Research Director & Fulbright Chair in Global Governance, Balsillie School of International Affairs, Canada) & Prof. Michel Morin (Professor, Université de Montreal, Faculté de droit)

Closing (live, online):

- * **Hon. Judge Sebastien Grammond (Justice, Federal Court of Canada / former Dean, University of Ottawa Civil Law Section)**
- * **Maitre Pierre Gonthier (Chair, Hon Justice CD Gonthier Memorial Lectures Committee, LSA Avocats & Board of Governors, CISDL)**
- * **Mr. Arsalan Ahmed (Editor-in-Chief, McGill Journal of Sustainable Development Law 2019-2020) & Ms. Kimia Towfigh (Editor-in-Chief, McGill Journal for Sustainable Development Law 2020-21).**

Masters of Ceremonies (online, live):

Maitre Freedom-Kai Phillips (CISDL Operations Director, fkp22@cam.ac.uk) & Ms Robyn Rugenius (Coordinator, McGill CHTLP, robyn.rugenius@mcgill.ca)