



The Universal Declaration of Human Rights at 60

When the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly 60 years ago, it represented the first international recognition that human rights and fundamental freedoms are shared by every person, everywhere. The Declaration was drafted by representatives of all regions and legal traditions, and is almost universally accepted. It forms the foundation of international human rights law, and is incorporated into the constitutions and laws of many countries. The UDHR is widely acknowledged to be one of the most important documents in the history of humanity, and has been translated into more languages than any other.

Marking 60 years of the UDHR, the United Nations University will hold a seminar to look back on the progress made towards achieving universal respect for human rights, as well as look forward to the challenges ahead. **Prof. Yozo Yokota** will review the origins, achievements and shortcomings of the UDHR since it was adopted, drawing upon his extensive experience in the United Nations Human Rights system. He will summarize the current challenges the international community faces in promoting respect for human rights, and the roles of the UN and civil society in overcoming these challenges. **Dr. Morten Pedersen** will present a summary of his research into the case of Myanmar, which since 1988 has been subject to intense international scrutiny of its human rights record, yet with few positive results. Drawing on evidence from this country during the past twenty years, Dr. Pedersen's presentation will highlight the failures of Western sanctions and Asian engagement alike and discuss alternative ways forward.

Prof. Yozo Yokota is Special Advisor to the Rector at UNU, and Professor at Chuo University Law School. He is a former UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar.

Dr. Morten Pedersen is a Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Postdoctoral Fellow and former senior analyst for the International Crisis Group in Myanmar.

Programme

- 15:00 – 15:10 Opening Address by UNU Rector Konrad Osterwalder
- 15:10 – 15:40 *60 Years of the UDHR* — Yozo Yokota
- 15:40 – 16:10 *Promoting Universal Human Rights: The Case of Myanmar* — Morten Pedersen
- 16:10 – 16:50 Q & A
- 16:50 – 17:00 Closing Remarks

Links

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (English): <http://www.unhchr.ch/udhr/lang/eng.htm>

Dr. Morten Pedersen (profile): <http://unu.edu/pg/personnel.html#pedersen>