

16. Revised Guide to Human Rights Research on the Web

by: Marci Hoffman*
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As we all know by now, the Web has become the primary resource for accessing human rights information, documents, and other materials. This guide will focus on some of the major human rights and related Web sites that are crucial to the ongoing research efforts of human rights lawyers, activists, researchers, and scholars. Web sources for the following types of materials will be highlighted in this guide: research guides, treaties and international instruments, other important human rights documents and reports, status information, jurisprudence and case law, and primary Web sites.

A new feature of this research guide is a topical supplement that focuses on researching specialized topics within the area of human rights. This topic of the first supplement is researching economic, social and political rights. This document points out the best Web sites for researching the rights enumerated in the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**. See the end of the main research guide for this specialized research tool.

A quick note about searching the Web...

Before we get started, just a quick note about using search engines for locating relevant materials on the Web. While most researchers use search engines, such as Google or Alta Vista, to locate documents, it is important to note that search engines alone cannot possibly search the entire Web. In fact, a good deal of the content available on the Web cannot be

* Marci Hoffman is the International and Foreign Law Librarian at the E.B. Williams Law Library, Georgetown University Law Center.

accessed through search engines at all because it is contained in Web databases. Therefore, it is important that researchers use a combination of search engines, Web catalogs (also called directories or indices), and Web guides (such as this one) to locate relevant documents and information. For more information on this issue, see *The Nuts and Bolts of Search Engines*, by Gail Partin in *What's Online in International Law* (ASIL Newsletter, September-October, 2001)

<<http://www.asil.org/newsletter/wol015.htm>>.

I. Research Guides and Bibliographies

One of the best places to begin research on a human rights topic is with a research guide or bibliography. Listed below are some of the major research tools.

1) Marci Hoffman, *ASIL Guide to Electronic Resources for International Law: Human Rights*

<<http://www.asil.org/resource/humrts1.htm>>.

This guide contains other relevant chapters on treaties, the UN, international criminal law, and a new chapter on international organizations.

2) Human Rights Program, Harvard Law School, *Getting Started in Human Rights Research: On-Line and Off-Line Resources*
<<http://www.law.harvard.edu/programs/HRP/Publications/research.html>>.

3) Elisa Mason, *Update to Guide to Country Research for Refugee Status Determination*
<<http://www.llrx.com/features/rsd2.htm>> and *Update to Annex: Human Rights, Country and Legal Information Resources on the Internet*

<http://www.llrx.com/features/rsd_bib2.htm>.

See also *Guide to International Refugee Law Resources on the Web*

<<http://www.llrx.com/features/refugee.htm>>.

4) Rights International, The Center for International Human Rights Law Inc., *The Rights International Research Guide for International Human Rights Lawyers* <<http://www.rightsinternational.org/links.html>>.

5) United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library, *United Nations Documentation: Research Guide on Human Rights* <<http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/spechr.htm>>.

See also the specialized research guide on *international law* <<http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/specil.htm>>.

6) University of Toronto, *Women's Human Rights Resources* <<http://www.law-lib.utoronto.ca/Diana/>>. An excellent place to start researching any women's human rights issue. Also links to some useful research guides on human rights and related topics.

II. Compilations of Human Rights Instruments

Since international human rights law is treaty based, locating the necessary instruments is usually the first place to begin research in this area. The Web offers many sites for obtaining the full-text of the most important treaties and international instruments. A good strategy is to begin with the body that promulgated the instrument. This section will outline the major Web resources for human rights instruments as well as the sources that provide information about the issuing body itself.

1) United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights <<http://www.unhchr.ch/>>

In 1995 the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights "embarked upon the development

of what is hoped will become the most complete source of information available on the Internet concerning United Nations action in the field of human rights." It contains information on the human rights activities of the UN. The most important human rights instruments are available full-text, but they lack complete citations. Ratification and status information is also available. Other human rights related documents, reports, and resolutions from various UN bodies are available. This should be one of the first places to begin research for UN human rights documents and information. Languages: English, French and Spanish

Primary features of this site include:

a. International Human Rights Instruments

<<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/intlinst.htm>>
A good collection of basic treaties and instruments.

b. Treaty Body Database

<<http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/>>
Contains documents issued by the treaty bodies. In addition to documents, there is information about the committee members, reporting status by country or treaty, and status of ratification by country or by treaty.

c. Charter-based Bodies Database

<<http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/documents?openframeset>>
Contains documents issued by the Charter-based bodies, arranged by body, country, mandate, subject, symbol, and year.

2) United Nations Home Page

<<http://www.un.org>>

This site provides information about the UN (history, list of member states, the UN

Charter, the ICJ Statute, an online tour, and a calendar of conferences and observances), information about publications and databases and access to UN news and documents. Direct access to the **Human Rights** page <<http://www.un.org/rights/>> provides links to many important UN pages, such as the UNHCHR (see above), international criminal tribunals, and treaties. Languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish.

a. United Nations Treaty Collection

<<http://untreaty.un.org/>>

This site provides access to the full text of over 40,000 bilateral and multilateral treaties contained in the *United Nations Treaty Series* (in the authentic languages, and English and French translations) as well ratification and status information from the *Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary General*. The UNTS section offers basic and advanced searching options. The basic option offers title word and popular name access. The electronic version of *Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary General* offers more up-to-date status information than the paper version. Access is provided through a topical table of contents and a new alphabetical and searchable index. This collection also contains the texts of recently deposited multilateral treaties. Some newly added features include the *Monthly Statement of Treaties and International Agreements* and the *UN Treaty Series Cumulative Index* – two sources previously only available in print. Access to this database is by subscription, see subscription information

<<http://untreaty.un.org/English/howtoreg>

.asp> for more information. Languages: English and French.

b. UN Documentation Centre

<<http://www.un.org/documents/>>

This collection contains a selection of official documents from the Secretary-General, the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Note that the General Assembly resolutions are available from 1977 to present and Security Council resolutions go back to 1946. The archive for other documents varies depending on the issuing body. This site also offers access to **UN-I-QUE** (a database offered by the UN Dag Hammarskjöld Library designed to provide quick access to document symbols) <<http://lib-unique.un.org/lib/unique.nsf>> and a **research guide on UN documentation** <<http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/>>

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Languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish.

c. UN Action Against Terrorism <<http://www.un.org>

This site is a recent addition to the UN Web site. It contains documents, statements, and reports from various UN bodies and agencies involved in this issue. Documents and information from the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee, established pursuant to Resolution 1373 (2001), are available from this site <<http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1373/>>. Under the “Documents” tab, you will find the country reports mandated by that resolution.

3) University of Minnesota Human Rights Library <<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/>>

The Library contains a collection of more than 10,400 international human rights treaties, instruments, and other documents. These documents can be accessed by subject matter

<<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/ainstls2.htm>>, by instrument list

<<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/ainstls1.htm>> or by using one of the search mechanisms

<<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/searchdevices.htm>>. Many of the documents contain authoritative citations and many of the instruments are available in French and Spanish (also with complete citations). Where possible, this site links to ratification information. There is also a large collection of UN documents

<<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/un-orgs.htm>> materials from other regional systems (European, African and Inter-American)

<<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/regional.htm>> and a good collection of links to other Web resources

<<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/links/links.htm>>. A helpful tool is the meta-search device that allows the user to search for documents on multiple human rights Web sites from a single form

<<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/lawform.html>>. Languages: English, French, Spanish and some Russian. Some documents are available in Arabic, via Internet Explorer

(<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/arabic.html>).

4) **Multilaterals Project** (Tufts University, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy)

<<http://fletcher.tufts.edu/multilaterals.html>>

Contains a variety of full-text treaties, including many human rights instruments. No citations are provided however. There is a searching mechanism available and a chronological list of agreements. This site also provides a general link to the UN Treaty Collection and other treaty secretariats.

5) **Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM), Human Rights Treaties**

<<http://www.law.uu.nl/english/sim/instr/>>

A good collection of primary treaties and instruments. Provides information on signatures and ratifications. Languages: Dutch and English.

III. Specialized Sites

1) **International Labour Organization (ILO)**

<<http://www.ilo.org/>>

This is an outstanding Web site. Begin by selecting the International Labour Standards page which provides access to important documents and information

<<http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/index.cfm?lang=EN>>. Other topical areas of interest include employment, social protection, and social dialog.

Access to the following ILO legal information services are available:

a. **ILOLEX** (database of international labour standards containing over 75,000 full-text ILO documents)

<<http://ilolex.ilo.ch:1567/english/index.htm>>

b. **Ratification information** (comprehensive ratification information by country, convention, and comparative information)

<<http://ilolex.ilo.ch:1567/english/newratframeE.htm>>

c. **NATLEX** (bibliographic database featuring national laws on labour, social security and related human rights)

<<http://natlex.ilo.org/scripts/natlexcgi.exe?lang=E>>

d. **ILODOC** (documents and publications of the ILO, some full text online)

<<http://ilis.ilo.org/ilis/engl/ilodoc/eintilo.htm>>

Other databases are also available.
Languages: English, French and Spanish.

See also the **ILO Research Guide** (Cornell Law Library's ILO Mirror Site). This mirror site contains a detailed bibliography on international labor issues
<http://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/library/International_Resources/iloguide.htm>.

2) **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**

<<http://www.unesco.org/>>

Provides information about the organization, current events, publications, programs, documentation and databases. There is a section called **Legal Instruments**
<<http://www.unesco.org/general/eng/legal/index.shtml>> that provides some of the relevant human rights conventions and agreements and some full text documents. For example, UNESCO's *Standard-setting Instruments in Human Rights*
<http://www.unesco.org/human_rights/hrcontent.htm>. UNESCO's procedure for examination of human rights complaints is also available full text
<<http://www.unesco.org/general/eng/legal/hrights/>>. In addition to legal instruments, documents issued by UNESCO are available
<<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/ulis/>>.
Languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish.

3) **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** <<http://www.unhcr.ch/>>

This Web site is the primary source for information on refugee related issues. The extremely valuable REF WORLD site is no longer available and most (but not all) of the information is now available from the "Research/Evaluation" page
<<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home?page=research>>. From this page, access the following databases:

a. **Country of Origin and Legal Information**

<<http://www.unhcr.ch/research/rsd.htm>>
Contains a variety of country reports, legal documents, news, and maps.

b. **UNHCR Library**

<<http://www.unhcr.ch/research/library.htm>>
Allows you to search the UNHCR's collection of refugee and related materials.

See also the "Protecting Refugees" page <<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home?page=protect>> which contains information about legal protection and the 1951 Refugee Convention, including the "travaux préparatoires." Languages: Bulgarian, Chinese, Czech, English, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish.

4) **Council of Europe (COE) Portal**

<<http://www.coe.int/>>

This site contains information about the COE, its activities and the **European Treaties** collection
<<http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/EN/cadreprincip.htm>>. In addition to human rights treaties, it contains treaties related to social matters, bioethics, penal, public and international law

and other subject areas. This is a wonderful collection that provides the user with access to the texts of the treaties, list of declarations and reservations, and an explanatory report. Of great importance is the signature and ratification information for each Member State.

Languages: English, French.

a. Council of Europe, **Directorate General of Human Rights**

<http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human_rights/>

The Directorate General of Human Rights focuses on a variety of activities: Human rights convention, Economic and social rights, Preventing torture, National minorities, Combating racism, Equality between women and men, and more. This is a good page to find out what is COE is doing in the area of human rights. Languages: English and French.

b. Council of Europe, **European Committee for the Prevention of Torture** <<http://www.cpt.coe.int/en/>>

This page contains information about the Convention for the Prevention of Torture as well as information about the activities and reports of the Committee. Under Publications, you will find the convention, background information, rules of procedure, and other information related to the convention. The CPT has a database that includes all reports of the CPT, public statements, “substantive” sections of CPT Annual General Reports <<http://hudoc.cpt.coe.int/>>. Languages: English and French.

c. **European Court of Human Rights**

<<http://www.echr.coe.int/>>

The official Web site of the Court contains general information on the court, pending cases, judgments and basic texts (such as the Rules of Court). A list of recent judgments is also available. **HUDOC** is the Court’s database containing the case-law of European Convention on Human Rights <<http://www.echr.coe.int/Hudoc.htm>>. Languages: English and French.

d. Council of Europe, **Commissioner for Human Rights**

<<http://www.commissioner.coe.int/>>

Provides access to documents issued by the Commissioner, such as reports, opinions, recommendations, and other documents.

For more information on the documentation issued by the Council of Europe, see Anne Burnett, *Guide to Researching the Council of Europe*. This guide focuses on information and documentation on a variety of topics, including human rights <<http://www.llrx.com/features/coe.htm>>.

5) **Organization of American States (OAS)**

<<http://www.oas.org/>>

This is the official homepage of the OAS. It contains a great deal of information about the OAS, its charter, resolutions, annual report of the Secretary General, treaties and conventions, speeches and statements and press releases. Some of the documents available at this site are full-text (resolutions, annual reports, speeches, etc.). The OAS’ Documents & Speeches page contains the full text of resolutions, treaties and conventions. Languages: English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.

a. **Inter-American Commission on Human Rights**

<<http://www.cidh.oas.org/DefaultE.htm>>
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The Commission page contains **annual reports** from 1970-2001 as well as some country reports and other publications

<<http://www.cidh.oas.org/publications.htm>>. Many of the older reports are only available in Spanish. There is also a link to the **Basic Documents** <<http://www.cidh.oas.org/basic.htm>> that contains the full-text of the instruments as well as status and ratification information. Languages: English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

b. **Inter-American Court of Human Rights**

<<http://www.corteidh.or.cr/index-ingles.html>>

This page contains information about the Court, some jurisprudence (advisory opinions, decisions and judgments) press releases, and other information. Some of the cases are available only in Spanish. This site can be difficult to access. Languages: English and Spanish.

c. **Inter-American Commission of Women**

<<http://www.oas.org/cim/default.htm>>

This page contains information on the Inter-American conventions relating to women as well as some documents. There is a **Brief History of Women's Human Rights in the Inter-American System**, but it is only available in

Spanish at the moment. Languages: English and Spanish.

IV. **Humanitarian Law**

1) **International Committee of the Red Cross** <<http://www.icrc.org/>>

The documents here are quite good: basic rules of humanitarian law, the Geneva conventions, information on ratifications, accessions and successions and humanitarian law issues (war at sea, land mines, famine and war, etc.). See the **International Humanitarian Law (IHL)** database, a collection of "91 treaties and texts, commentaries on the four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, an up-to-date list of signatures, ratifications relating to IHL treaties and full text of reservations" <<http://www.icrc.org/ihl>>. See also the National Implementation Database, includes data on the implementation of international humanitarian law at the country level. Implementing laws, regulations, and case law can be accessed by State or keyword <<http://www.icrc.org/ihl-nat>>. The ICRC also provides brief narratives on a variety of topics, such as **International Humanitarian Law in Brief** and **Treaties and Customary Law** (these are available from the IHL page). Languages: English, French and Spanish.

2) **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**
<<http://www.ifrc.org/>>

Current information on humanitarian issues from around the world. Contains links to other Red Cross/Red Crescent organizations on the Internet. Under publications, see the **World Disasters Report** and **Code of Conduct**. Languages: English, French and Spanish.

3) **ReliefWeb** <<http://www.reliefweb.int/>>

ReliefWeb is a project of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). It provides current information on the humanitarian relief operations. There is also a library filled with reports related to population, migration, world emergencies and many other issues. See also the archive on natural disasters. This site provides access to lots of useful information.

V. Status, Reservations and Declarations

Locating status and ratification information as well as reservations and declarations for an instrument is of primary importance in international human rights law. This can be a daunting task when relying on paper sources. Now, there are many sources on the Web for this kind of information - and they are usually quite up-to-date.

- 1) **UN, Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General**
<<http://www.untreaty.un.org>>

This material is part of the **United Nations Treaty Collection**. This publication is available in print, but it is updated almost daily on the Web. Access information through a topical list, see chapter IV for human rights. Each treaty record contains entry into force information, status, the UNTS citation (if there is one), and a list by country which includes signature and ratification dates. The text of country declarations, reservations, and objections are also provided. A link to the full-text of the treaty is available. A recent addition is an alphabetical index and a searchable index. One of the biggest advantages of using this tool online is that is much more current than the print version. This is a fee-based service, see subscription information for more details <<http://untreaty.un.org/English/howtoreg.asp>>.

- 2) **UNHCHR, Treaty Body Database**
<<http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/>>

This database was established to monitor the implementation of the principal international human rights treaties. The database provides information on submission of reports by States, documents issued by the treaty bodies, and reporting and ratification information. Full-text documents are available as well as status and submission information. Documents can be accessed in a variety of ways (by treaty, country, symbol, etc.).

- 3) **Basic Documents Pertaining to Human Rights in the Inter-American System**
<<http://www.cidh.oas.org/basic.htm>>

This site offers signature and ratification information for several of the Inter-American human rights treaties. Other OAS treaty signature and ratification information can be accessed through the Treaties and Conventions section of this site <<http://www.oas.org/EN/PROG/JURIDICO/english/treaties.html>>.

- 4) International Labour Organization
Conventions, Information on Ratifications
<<http://ilolex.ilo.ch:1567/english/newrat/frameE.htm>>.

- 5) **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, States Parties to the Convention** are listed under the “Legal Protection” section of the “Protecting Refugees” page
<<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home?page=protect>>.

- 6) **International Committee of the Red Cross** <<http://www.icrc.org>> and the **IHL** database
<<http://www.icrc.org/ihl>>.

7) Each treaty included on **Council of Europe** treaties page includes a link to the chart of signature and ratification information
<<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/CadreListeTraites.htm>>.

8) If the U.S. is a party to the agreement, consult tools such as **Treaties in Force (TIF)**
<http://www.state.gov/www/global/legal_affairs/tifindex.html>. TIF is also available on Lexis (INTLAW/Treaties and International Agreements). Update Treaties in Force (since it is issued only once a year) by consulting **Treaty Actions** (supposed to be issued monthly)
<<http://www.state.gov/s/l/c3428.htm>>. Archived Treaty Actions from 1997 are also available on this page.

* A note of caution when using the State Dept. Web site, with the new administration, many portions of the current Web site do not have complete (or current information)
<<http://www.state.gov/>>. It may be necessary to consult the archive for certain pieces of information
<<http://www.state.gov/index.html>>.

9) **Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM), Human Rights Instruments**
<<http://www.law.uu.nl/english/sim/instr/>>

Provides information on signatures and ratifications for most primary treaties and instruments.

For more information on ratification information on the Web as well as useful phone numbers, see the **Treaties Chapter** of the *ASIL Guide to Electronic Resources for*

International Law

<<http://www.asil.org/resource/treaty1.htm>>.

VI. Jurisprudence, Case law, Decisions and Reports

This section contains information from human rights courts, like the European Court of Human Rights as well as from the bodies established under the major human rights instruments, like the Human Rights Committee. Keep in mind that only a small portion of this information is available in electronic form. Most of the documents are still only available in publications from the issuing body (UN, COE, etc.) or reprinted in other sources (such as *International Legal Materials*, *Human Rights Law Journal*, *International Human Rights Reports*, etc.).

1) United Nations

There are a few good Web resources for reports of States parties, concluding observations or comments, general comments and recommendations and other basic documents submitted to and issued by the UN Treaty Bodies.

a. Treaty Body Database at the UNHCHR Web site

<<http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/>>

b. University of Minnesota Human Rights Library, United Nations Documents

<<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/un-orgs.htm>>

Both of these sites will have documents from the following UN bodies: Commission on Human Rights, Human Rights Committee, Committee Against Torture, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women,

Committee on the Rights of the Child, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

2) European System

a. European Court of Human Rights (pending cases and judgments)

<<http://www.echr.coe.int/>>

b. Council of Europe Case-Law collection (HUDOC)

<<http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/hudoc/>>

3) Inter-American System

a. Inter-American Commission. Annual Reports

<<http://www.cidh.oas.org/publications.htm>>

b. University of Minnesota Human Rights Library, Inter-American Commission, Annual Reports

<<http://www.umn.edu/humanrts/cases/commisn.htm>>

c. Inter-American Court Jurisprudence

<http://www.corteidh.or.cr/juris_ing/index.html>

d. University of Minnesota Human Rights Library, Inter-American Court on Human Rights Advisory Opinions and Contentious Cases

<<http://www.umn.edu/humanrts/iachr/iachr.html>>

e. Inter-American Human Rights Database

Contains annual reports, session reports, and special reports of the Inter-American Commission since 1960

<<http://www.wcl.american.edu/pub/humanright/digest/index.html>>. Languages: English and Spanish.

4) Collections of Decisions

a. INTERIGHTS, **International Law Reports Database**

<<http://www.interights.org/icl/>>

Contains summaries of decisions from various human rights tribunals. The full-text of the decisions are available from INTERIGHTS.

b. INTERIGHTS, **Commonwealth Human Rights Case Law Database**

<<http://www.interights.org/ccl/>>

This database provides summaries of recent human rights decisions from national courts in Commonwealth jurisdictions through a browse facility and a search engine.

c. **Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM) Case Law Database**

<<http://sim.law.uu.nl/SIM/Dochome.nsf?Open>>

This site provides access to the databases containing summaries of the case law of the Human Rights Committee, the Committee Against Torture, and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. There is also a database containing information on judgements of the European Court of Human Rights and the concluding comments of the United Nations treaty bodies have been made accessible. Coverage varies. Users must register to use the databases, but there is no charge for access. Languages: Dutch and English.

5) Other

a. **International Court of Justice**

<<http://www.icj-cij.org/>>

b. **International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia**

<<http://www.un.org/icty/index.html>>

c. **International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda**

<<http://www.un.org/law/rwanda/>>

<<http://www.ictr.org/>>

d. **International Criminal Court**

<<http://www.un.org/icc/>>

e. **Reports of Cases before the Court of Justice**

<<http://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/library/cijwww/icjwww/idocket.htm>>

f. **The University of Michigan Law School, Refugee Caselaw Site**

<<http://www.refugeecaselaw.org/Refugee/Default.asp>>

g. **World Court Digest.** A compendium of the Jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice <<http://www.virtual-institute.de/en/wcd/wcd.cfm>>

VII. Country Reports

Many international organizations produce reports on the human rights conditions in various countries. Human rights activists and lawyers rely on these reports for asylum proceedings and when appearing before various treaty bodies and tribunals. Be sure to consult *Update to Guide to Country Research for Refugee Status Determination* by Elisa Mason, a useful guide to country documentation <<http://www.llrx.com/features/rsd2.htm>>.

1) **Amnesty International Country Reports** <<http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/>>. This is a wonderful collection of AI reports arranged by country, region, or theme.

2) **Asylumlaw.org**

<<http://www.asylumlaw.org/>>. The “case support” database has over 800 documents by country or theme. See also the “legal tools” section of this site.

3) **Center for Gender and Refugee Studies**

<<http://www.uchastings.edu/cgrs/>>.

4) **Human Rights Watch, World Report**

<<http://www.hrw.org/wr2k1/>>. See also publications list for other reports <<http://www.hrw.org/research/nations.html>> as well as the “documents by country” section <<http://www.hrw.org/countries.html>>.

5) **ICRC Annual Report**

<http://www.icrc.org/eng/operations_country/>.

6) **International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights**

<<http://www.ihf-hr.org/index.htm>>. Produces a variety of reports on many topics: religious freedom, human rights abuses in OSCE countries, and fact-finding missions.

7) **Lawyer’s Committee for Human Rights Web site** <<http://www.lchr.org/home.htm>>.

LCHR produces a variety of reports, some of which are available on its Web site.

8) **ReliefWeb**

<<http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf>>. Contains a large number of documents from many different organizations.

9) **UNHCR, Public Information Section Country Profiles**

< <http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-in/texis/vtx/rsd?search=coi&source=>

10) **UNHCR, Research: Country of Origin and Legal Information**, contains many country reports <<http://www.unhcr.ch/research/rsd.htm>>

11) **UNDP, Human Development Reports**

<<http://hdr.undp.org/>>.

12) **UNICEF, State of the World’s Children**

<<http://www.unicef.org/pubsgen/sowc02/>>.

13) **U.S. Dept. of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices**

<<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/hr/c1470.htm>>. There is also a link to archived reports from 1993-1999. See also the reports against torture and racial discrimination <<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/hr/>>. The religious freedom reports are available on this Web site <<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/>> as well as the new Trafficking in Persons Report <<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/>>.

VIII. Lists and Newsgroups

Lists and newsgroups are valuable tools for the human rights researcher. They provide a mechanism for communicating with other researchers and activists as well as provide information on action alerts and documentation. For more information on how to subscribe as well as information on other law related lists, see the **Lists, Newsgroups and Networks Chapter** of the *ASIL Guide to Electronic Resources for International Law* <<http://www.asil.org/resource/lists1.htm>>.

IX. Other Relevant Web Sites

These Web sites are good places to begin one’s research since they link to many other relevant sources.

1) AAAS Directory of Human Rights Resources on the Internet

<<http://shr.aaas.org/dhr/>>

A good collection of links to hundreds of human rights organizations worldwide. Also includes links to many electronic publications on the Internet. See also *Getting Online for Human Rights, Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about Using the Internet in Human Rights Work*

<<http://shr.aaas.org/Online/Cover.htm>>.

2) American Society of International Law

<<http://www.asil.org/>>

A good place to begin researching the Web for international law sources. Be sure to check the *ASIL Guide to Electronic Resources for International Law*. The *Guide* contains 11 chapters, including the UN, Treaties, Human Rights, Environmental Law, International Criminal Law, Private International Law and Lists, Newsgroups and Networks, International Economic Law, and International Organizations

<<http://www.asil.org/resource/Home.htm>>.

3) Amnesty International Online

<<http://www.amnesty.org/>>

This is the official Internet site for AI. It contains the most up-to-date information -- new document summaries, publications from AI (including the annual country reports) and links to other sites.

4) Annual Review of Population Law

<http://www.law.harvard.edu/programs/annual_review/annual_review.htm>

This database contains summaries and excerpts of legislation, constitutions, court decisions, and other official government documents from every country in the world

relating to population policies, reproductive health, women's rights, and related topics.

5) Derechos — Human Rights

<<http://www.derechos.org/>>

This Web site offers a variety of human rights information, including reports on human rights violations, actions, links and documents. Information is organized by country and by issue; an index and a search engine allow for easy finding of materials. The focus is on Latin America and many of these documents are only available in Spanish.

6) Forced Migration Online

<<http://www.forcedmigration.org/>>

The first component of this collection is now available. This new site is a searchable digital collection of about 3,000 full-text grey (unpublished) literature documents.

7) Human Rights Internet

<<http://www.hri.ca/welcome.cfm>>

Human Rights Internet is an international network of human rights organizations, documentation centre and publishing house. This site contains many things including UN documents, education materials, resource guides and lists of links.

8) International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights <<http://www.ihf-hr.org/>>

Provides a wide variety of reports on various human rights issues, such as religious freedom, rights of national minorities, and freedom of expression and access to information.

9) OneWorld Online <

<http://www.oneworld.net/>>

"OneWorld is dedicated to promoting human rights and sustainable development by harnessing the democratic potential of the Internet." It contains news, thematic guides and other resources.

10) Women's Human Rights Page

<<http://www.law-lib.utoronto.ca/diana/>>

This wonderful site continues to be one of the best resources on women's human rights. The site has recently been reorganized and the materials are now available in a new resources database. The materials are organized into articles, documents and links. Other useful materials are available as well, such as fact sheets, publications, and research guides.

X. Conclusion

The Internet continues to have a profound impact on the way people research and use information, especially in the area of human rights. As the Web has grown as a primary source for human rights information and documentation, so has the need for tools for navigating through the maze of resources. Diligent researchers should not rely solely on search engines to locate relevant materials. Hopefully, this guide will act as such a tool for helping human rights researchers identify, locate, and obtain the materials and information necessary for their work. Please send comments and questions to Marci Hoffman at hoffmamb@law.georgetown.edu.

Supplement to Revised Guide to Human Rights Research on the Web

Researching Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the Web

July 2002

A new feature of this article is a specialized research guide on **economic, social and cultural rights** (ESC rights). This guide

will highlight some of the major Web resources available for researching this topic.

ESC rights are enumerated in the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, G.A. res. 2200A (XXI), 21 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 16) at 49, U.N. Doc. A/6316 (1966), 993 U.N.T.S. 3, *entered into force* Jan. 3, 1976.

The **text of the covenant** is available on the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) Web site <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ceschr.htm>. This version of the text also includes "general comments on implementation." This site also provides updated status information and the text of country declarations and reservations. Alternatively, the text and related information is available from the University of Minnesota Human Rights Library <<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/b2esc.htm>>.

Many **other international instruments** contain provisions that promote economic, social and cultural rights, such as the ILO conventions on labor and employment, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. For assistance in locating these related instruments, see Section II of the main research guide, "Compilations of Human Rights Instruments." For more information, see *Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: A Guide to the Legal Framework*, prepared by the Center for Economic and Social Rights <<http://www.cesr.org/text%20files/escrguide.PDF>>.

Some of the basic economic, social and cultural rights include:

- right to work
- right to food
- right to health
- right to education
- right to housing

I. General Resources on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

A. Documents and Background Information

• UNHCHR, **Related international Instruments**

<<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/intlinst.htm#develop>>

These related international instruments include the Declaration on Social Progress and Development, the Declaration on the Right to Development, and the Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation.

• UNHCHR, **Treaty Body Database**

<<http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf>>

Contains the full-text of States reports, concluding observations, decisions, views, etc. related to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

• UNHCHR, **Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

<<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/6/cescr.htm>>

Provides information about the Committee and its work. Includes the text of the Draft Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

B. General ESC Rights Web Sites

• UNHCHR, **Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights**

<<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/isscon.htm>>

⁰ AUS abandons International Criminal Court treaty,[@]Agence France-

Presse, May 6, 2002. This complete resource page contains links to documents, news, the draft protocol, the Committee's page, as well as other topical pages. The topics include: extreme poverty, transnational corporations, employment, right to food and education, and more.

- **Amnesty International, Economic Relations**
<http://web.amnesty.org/web/web.nsf/pages/ec_home>

Provides information about economic relations and human rights, including AI campaigns and briefings. The Economic Relations documents links to the library of AI documents on the topic.

- **Center for Economic and Social Rights** <<http://www.cesr.org>>

This site contains links to many documents and publications about particular economic and social rights, such as the right to food, education and work. It also has links to other sites and organizations concerned with social and economic rights.

- **International Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**
<<http://www.escr-net.org/EngGeneral/home.asp>>

This organization is a coalition of organizations and activists dedicated to advancing economic, social and cultural rights. Of particular interest is the database of "legal jurisprudence" on these rights.

- **Human Rights Watch, Economic, Social & Cultural Rights**
<<http://www.hrw.org/esc/>>

List of recent Human Rights Watch reports that address, at least in part, economic, social and cultural rights, including the rights to health care, education, and fair conditions of labor.

C. Selected E-Publications

- *Circle of Rights Economic, Social & Cultural Rights Activism: A Training Resource*
<<http://www.hrusa.org/hrmaterials/IHRI/circle/toc.htm>>.

- *Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: A Guide to the Legal Framework* (Center for Economic and Social Rights, January 2000)
<<http://www.cesr.org/text%20files/escrguide.PDF>>.

- Stephen A. Hansen, *Thesaurus of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights: Terminology and Potential Violations* (2000)
<<http://ip.aaas.org/ethesaurus.nsf/Main?OpenFrameSet>>.

- Allan McChesney, *Promoting and Defending Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: A Handbook* (2000)
<<http://shr.aaas.org/escr/handbook>>.

- *UN Fact Sheet No.16 (Rev.1) The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*
<<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu6/2/fs16.htm>>.

II. Selected Web Sites by Topic

Economic, social and cultural rights is a enormous and varied area. The sites listed below are just a few the many resources available on the Web for this topic.

A. Labor

- **International Labour Organization**
(ILO) <<http://www.ilo.org>>

See the main section of this guide for general information about the ILO Web site. Of particular interest, see the Business and Social Initiatives Database <<http://oracle02.ilo.org/dyn/basi/vpisearch.first>>. Includes comprehensive information and documents on private sector initiatives that address labor and social conditions in the workplace.

- **Global March Against Child Labor**
<<http://globalmarch.org/index.html>>

This site contains lots of articles related to various child labor topics, such as child trafficking, domestic child labor and children being used as soldiers. It also has some other documents and reports.

- **LaborNet** <<http://www.labornet.org/>>

This site has a forum where users can access newgroups related to labor. It also provides lots of news articles. This site also has links to other labor organizations, news organizations, legislative resources, and multimedia resources.

- **Workers' Rights Consortium**
<<http://www.workersrights.org/>>

This organization was created to help enforce manufacturing Codes of Conduct adopted by colleges and universities for the manufacture of goods with their school logos. It contains information about the organization's activities as well as links to other groups concerned with workers' rights. See also the links to the factory reports that the organization compiles. It contains a list

of news articles related to their work and a list of links for other organizations involved with workers' rights.

B. Business and Human Rights

- **Business and Human Rights: A Resource Website**
<<http://www.business-humanrights.org/index.html>>

This "online library" provides links to information about business and human rights. It provides a variety of searchable categories, such as by sectors, country, groups, campaigns, and legal accountability.

- **Business for Social Responsibility**
<<http://www.bsr.org/BSRServices/HumanRights.cfm>>

BSR provides in-depth reports on key human rights subjects including child labor, codes of conduct, discrimination, external monitoring, forced labor, health and safety, independent monitoring, rights of indigenous peoples and several others. BSR also provides copies of its magazine articles and publications pertaining to business and human rights

- **The Global Compact**
<<http://65.214.34.30/un/gc/unweb.nsf/>>

The Global Compact is a challenge to world business leaders to enact human rights, labor, and environmental principles. The resources section links to some databases and studies in these areas.

- **UNHCHR, Business and Human Rights: A Progress Report**
<<http://www.unhchr.ch/business.htm>>

This report notes the progress made by the business community regarding the human rights principles noted in the Global Compact.

- University of Minnesota Human Rights Library, **Links related to Business and Human Rights**
<<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/links/business.html>>

A good collection of links to resources related to business and human rights. See also the collection called “Human Rights Guidelines for Business”
<<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/links/codes.html>>.

C. International Financial Institutions

- **African Development Bank**
<<http://www.afdb.org>>

This site contains information exclusively on Africa and what claims to be the “premier financial development institution of Africa.” The site lists environmental studies and project studies. There is also a link detailed economic information about African nations.

- **Asian Development Bank**
<<http://www.adb.org>>

This site has information exclusively about economic development in Asia. The site also has a link to news releases for the ADB as well as statistics and news releases about individual Asian countries. Also, there is access to information on what development obstacles exist in Asia and what is being done to combat them.

- **Inter-American Development Bank**
<<http://www.iadb.org>>

This site contains information about this developmental bank for the Americas.

- **International Monetary Fund**
<<http://www.imf.org>>

There is a great deal of information available on this site. See the country information section and browse or search the publications collection.

- **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development**
<<http://www.oecd.org>>

The documents and research resources available on this site are plentiful. You can search this site by themes including agriculture, education, labor, health, trade and about 20 more.

- **World Bank**
<<http://www.worldbank.org>>

This site is the main site for the World Bank, as well as the starting point for specific questions about what is happening in individual countries or regions. There is a wealth of statistics and data on different areas of the world.

- **Development Topics**
<http://www.worldbank.org/html/extdr/thematic.htm>>

Information and documents on a variety of development topics, such as globalization, poverty, social protection and labor, social development.

- **Documents and Reports**
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wds.worldbank.org/
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Access to over 14,000 documents and reports created by the World Bank.

- **International Financial Institutions Research Site**
<<http://www.wellesley.edu/Economics/IFI>>

This site lists research material on the international financial institutions, with separate listings for the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group and other major multilateral institutions. The listings include basic references, books and monographs, published articles and recent working papers. There is also Web links collection.

D. Codes of Conduct

- **Business and Human Rights: Corporate Codes of Conduct**
<<http://www.business-humanrights.org/Codes-of-conduct.htm>>

This Web site has news articles going back to 1996. It has links to guidelines prepared by NGO's and human rights advocates, by business associations, by governments, and by combinations of NGO's, businesses and governments.

- **Fair Labor Association**
<<http://www.fairlabor.org/index.html>>

The Fair Labor Association (FLA) is a nonprofit organization established to protect the rights of workers in the United States and around the world. The FLA Charter Agreement creates a first-of-a-kind industry-wide code of conduct and monitoring system. The Web site provides

copies of the workplace code of conduct and monitoring procedures, profiles on participating companies, news articles and fair labor resources and links.

- **Public Policies to Promote Corporate Social Responsibility: Codes of Conduct**
<<http://www.multinationalguidelines.org/>>

This site provides the history of global codes of conduct, and the UN Global Compact, the OCED Guidelines and the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy. The site has a comparison chart on the three different codes listed above and links to government sites from around the world, and international and other organization sites dealing with corporate social responsibility.

- **Social Accountability International**
<<http://www.cepaa.org/>>

Formerly known as the Council on Economic Priorities Accreditation Agency (CEPAA), SAI was established to develop and verify the implementation of voluntary corporate social responsibility standards. The site provides information about their standard for workplace conditions and accreditation criteria.

- **Worker's Rights Consortium**
<<http://www.workersrights.org/index.asp>>

The WRC aids colleges and universities with the enforcement of manufacturing Codes of Conduct. The site has factory reports, copies of news articles on WRC, and the Model Code of Conduct affiliates agree to require of their licensees. A

collection of links to other similar sites is also available.

E. Right to Food

- 1) **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Right to Food**
<<http://www.fao.org/legal/rtf/rtfood%2De.htm>>

This FAO site focuses on the right to food. It provides information on the concept of the right to food and the organizations activities. It also provides links to UN documents and FAO publications and statements. This site provides a time line of events related to the right to food and a list of other concerned organizations.

- 2) **World Food Summit, Five Years Later**
<<http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsummit/english/index.html>>

Contains information about the 1995 World Food Summit, as well as what progress has been made. See the documents section for a large collection of official documents and related information.

- 3) **Foodfirst Information & Action Network (FIAN)**<<http://www.FIAN.org>>

This NGO documents violations of this right and responds through lobbying, campaigning and education. Their Web site details specific cases where the right to food is being violated and suggests ways in which people can get involved, including providing the necessary information to participate in mass mailing campaigns.

- 4) **Food First Institute for Food and Development Policy**
<<http://www.foodfirst.org/>>

This organization seeks to increase awareness of this issue. Produces books, reports, and other publications. The site has news articles pertaining to the right to food. See the "Resource Library" for an extensive listing of other Web sites devoted to the right to food and related human rights.

- 5) **The Human Right to Adequate Food** (World Alliance on Nutrition and Human Rights)

<<http://www2.hawaii.edu/~kent/tutorial2000/titlepage.htm>>

This text provides detailed information malnutrition and its causes and governmental involvement in the right to food. In addition, there is detailed information about the history and organization of the international human rights system, the right to food, national and other rights systems, rights and entitlements, governmental obligations, accountability mechanisms, and international law.

- 6) **International Food Policy Research Institute** <<http://www.ifpri.cgiar.org/>>

This site includes lots of documents, reports and articles pertaining to the right to food as well as detailed information about research ongoing in countries around the world. The site also contains many links to other organizations and to databases and catalogues concerned with the right to food.

- 7) **United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food**

<<http://www.righttofood.org/>>

Defines the right to food and the duties of the Special Rapporteur (Jean Ziegler) and the research unit. The site provides links to reports, documents, and gives some information about the first World Food Summit.

- 8) **UNHCHR, Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food**
<<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/7/b/mfood.htm>>

Links to UN documents related to the right to food, news, and related issues.

F. Right to Health

- 1) **Francois-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights**
<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/xfbcenter/international_hhr.htm>

The International Health and Human Rights program promotes and catalyzes thinking and action in health and human rights by impacting governmental and nongovernmental action both in countries and through the work of international organizations. The site gives recent activity reports of the program from July 1997 to present. The site also provides access to the table of contents and abstracts from its journal - *Health and Human Rights*.

- 2) **Global Lawyers and Physicians**
<<http://www.glphr.org/index.htm>>

GLP's major goal is to facilitate cooperative work on human rights by lawyers and physicians with a primary focus on health. The site has health related news and a health and human rights database.

- 3) **Harvard Research Guide: Right to Health**
<<http://www.law.harvard.edu/programs/HRP/guide/rg4i-iii.html#anchor221450>>

This guide contains a list of books, articles, periodicals, newspapers, indices, guides and bibliographies pertaining to the right to health.

- 4) **The Human Right to Health: The People's Movement for Human Rights Education**
<<http://www.pdhre.org/rights/health.html>>

This site provides excerpts of provisions of human rights laws that guarantee everyone the human right to health. It also includes government commitments made at the Earth Summit in Rio, the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, the Habitat II conference in Istanbul.

- 5) **Physicians for Human Health, The Health Rights Connection**
<<http://www.phrusa.org/healthrights/index.html>>

This site provides health rights news, reports and events and links to other health rights organizations

- 6) **University of Minnesota Human Rights Library, Health and Human Rights Links**
<<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/links/health.html>>

This site contains links to many health and human rights Web sites.

- 7) **The World Health Organization**
<<http://www.who.int/home-page/>>

This site has searchable health topics listed in alphabetical order that includes Web references related to the topic. It has an information resources page with links to its library, publications, catalogue, and multimedia resources. It also provides a link to the World Health Assembly documentation, which governs the WHO.

- a. **International Digest of Health Legislation**

< <http://www.who.int/m/topics/idhl/en/index.html>>

Contains summaries of national and international health legislation and, where possible, includes links to other Web sites that contain the full text of the legislation.

- 2) **World Health News – Harvard School of Public Health**
<<http://www.worldhealthnews.harvard.edu/>>

The site covers critical public health issues from around the world. It includes special features prepared by the Harvard School of Public Health, such as videotaped interviews with experts, as well as access to radio and television coverage of important breaking public health news stories from Web sites of leading news organizations.

G. Right to Education

- 1) **Global Campaign for Education**
<<http://www.campaignforeducation.org/>>

Of particular interest to the researcher is the “Reports and Resources” page
<http://www.campaignforeducation.org/_html/docs/welcome/frameset.shtml>. This page contains briefings, position papers, and other informative documents.

- 2) **Right to Education Project** (Raoul Wallenberg Institute)
<<http://www.right-to-education.org/>>

This site provides primers on major themes, reports of the Special Rapporteur (Katarina Tomaševski), and information about legal status. Provides a good collection of links to organizations involved in education.

- 3) **UNESCO, Education**
<<http://www.unesco.org/education/index.shtml>>

Tremendous amount of information on various education themes and the work being done by UNESCO.

- 4) **UNHCHR, Special Rapporteur on the Right To Education**
<<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/7/b/medu.htm>>

Links to UN documents on and by the Special Rapporteur as well as news and related information.

H. Right to Housing

- 1) **Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE)** <<http://www.cohre.org/>>

An international human rights organization committed to ensuring the full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, with a particular focus on the right to adequate housing and preventing forced evictions. The “Library” contains many documents and publications on housing and related topics.

- 2) **The Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation (CERA)**
<<http://www.web.net/cera/>>

CERA promotes human rights in housing and related issues. The site provides access to a number of reports and documents. The library has a number of full-text reports and articles. While the focus is Canada, there is information on other regions of the world as well.

- 3) **The Centre for Housing Policy**
<<http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/chp/Welcome.htm>>

This organization specializes in housing research. The “research” page links to many reports on various issues within

housing, such as housing and social security. Some full-text discussion papers and research reports are available under “publications,” others can be ordered.

- 4) **UNHCHR, Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing**
<<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/7/b/mhous.htm>>

Links to UN documents, news, and related information by and about the Special Rapporteur (Miloon Kothari) and the right to housing.

III. Conclusion

This overview of economic, social and cultural rights just scratches the surface of this immense area. Thorough researchers should consult both the main research guide on human rights as well as this specialized topical section to locate the many relevant instruments, documents and related Web sites. Please send comments and questions to Marci Hoffman at hoffmamb@law.georgetown.edu.