

Bar Human Rights Committee (BHRC) and the Alliance for Lawyers at Risk (ALR)

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR:

Spotlight on the Inter-American System of Human Rights: Enforcing Human Rights in the Americas?

Wednesday, 4th July 2012, 5:30 -7:00 pm

Doughty Street Chambers

54 Doughty Street

London WC1N 2LS

Synopsis of the Seminar

The Inter-American Commission and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights are the two main institutions designed specifically for human rights protection within the Organisation of American States (OAS). Since its creation, the Inter-American jurisdiction has played a prominent role in upholding the rule of law and protecting human rights in countries of the Latin American region with both democratic and authoritarian regimes. Speakers at the seminar will reflect on the significance of this supranational subsidiary body in delivering justice and reparations for human rights abuses when national justice systems fail to do so. Speakers will also comment upon some of the most cutting-edge jurisprudence and standards set so far, particularly, but not exclusively, in relation to indigenous peoples and land rights.

Chaired by:

Kirsty Brimelow QC, Vice-Chair of the Bar Human Rights Committee (BHRC)

Addressed by:

Juan Carlos Gutierrez, Mexican Lawyer, Fellow at the Centre for Applied Human Rights, Human Rights Defenders Scheme, York University. Currently, General Director of the Comision Mexicana de Defensa y Promocion de los Derechos Humanos.

Topic: A panoramic view of the Inter-American System of Human Rights: its most emblematic jurisprudence, remaining challenges and impacts on Mexico.

Sylvia Vasquez, lawyer at the Comision Mexicana de Defensa y Promocion de los Derechos Humanos.

Topic: The significance of Precautionary Measures granted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and their impact on lawyers and human rights defenders in Mexico.

Schona Jolly, Barrister at Cloisters and BHRC Executive Committee Member

Topic: The development of land rights for indigenous communities, considering rights to meaningful participation and consultation, and the role of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in developing the protections afforded within and beyond the American Convention on Human Rights.

1.5 CPD available to barristers (in application)

The BHRC's meetings are aimed at legal professionals, academics, Ngo's, students and others with an interest in human rights and in particular international human rights law.

The *Alliance for Lawyers at Risk* is a network of UK barristers and solicitors available to provide pro bono work to lawyers and other Human Rights Defenders at risk. The BHRC is part of the (ALR)

All are welcome - please feel free to circulate widely

Please note that places for this event are limited, so please RSVP to confirm your attendance.

For further information, please contact

Ms Illari Aragon, Project Coordinator at coordination@barhumanrights.org.uk

More information about our international speakers

Juan Carlos Gutiérrez Contreras, a Mexican lawyer who specialises in criminal law and human rights. He has been a consultant for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights– Mexico; Director for the Program of Cooperation on Human Rights Mexico-European Union, and Regional Director of Centre for Justice and International Law (CEJIL). Currently he is General Director of the Comision Mexicana de Defensa y Promocion de los Derechos Humanos.

Silvia Vazquez, a lawyer at the Comision Mexicana de Defensa y Promocion de los Derechos Humanos who was working in the State Human Rights Commission (Baja California Commission for Citizen Protection and Human Rights) as a General Examiner before she had to leave her job and flee because of fears that her life was in danger as a result of her human rights activism.