

# Human Rights Brief

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## Front Matter/Letter from the Editors

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# HUMAN RIGHTS **BRIEF**

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The ideas, opinions, and conclusions expressed in the issue are those of the authors only, and do not necessarily represent the views of American University Washington College of Law and the Center for Human Rights & Humanitarian Law.

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Dear Reader:

Around the world, people are calling on states to better protect human rights. Most states are a party to at least one of the major human rights treaties; however, all states also have serious human rights violations occurring within their borders. Meanwhile, a global pandemic continues to expose inequalities in our systems, and a reckoning of racial tensions has reverberated with communities around the world. As we reflect on 2020, we also look forward — how do we use existing legal mechanisms to effectively protect human rights? What new mechanisms need to be created?

The answer, at least partially, lies in the technical details of implementation and interpretation. Removing statutes of limitations for human rights claims; acknowledging gender when interpreting non-gendered laws; updating excessive force laws and regulations to address current technology; and providing specific laws for citizenship are some ways to ensure individual rights are protected. More broadly, defining rights explicitly in domestic law and integrating a human rights approach in other areas of law, such as arbitration and corporate law, is also necessary to protecting human rights. As we look towards a post-2020 world, we encourage our readers to continue watching the technical implementation of human rights protections with a close eye.

This year has been one of transformation. At *The Human Rights Brief*, we have taken this opportunity to reflect upon our own processes and goals in order to better support our student staff and be a resource to the human rights community. We could not have gone through this process without our incredibly visionary and talented Editorial Board, and all of our student editors and staff have been instrumental in making this change.

We hope you find the ideas in this issue as encouraging and thought-provoking as we have. We will continue to advocate for a world where states protect every individual's human rights, and we thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,  
Samira & Kate

Samira Elhosary & Kate Morrow  
*Co-Editors-in-Chief*  
*Human Rights Brief*

