

University of Dayton

eCommons

Conference: The Social Practice of Human Rights

2021 – Between Peril and Potential: Human Rights Advocacy in the Wake of a Global Pandemic

Dec 2nd, 4:15 PM - 5:45 PM

Developing a Practice in Remote Sensing for Next-Generation Human Rights Researchers

Theresa Harris

American Association for the Advancement of Science, tharris@aaas.org

Jonathan Drake

American Association for the Advancement of Science, jdrake@aaas.org

Umesh K. Haritashya

University of Dayton, uharitashya1@udayton.edu

Wumi Asubiaro Dada

University of Pretoria

Fredy Cumes

Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/human_rights



Part of the [Astrophysics and Astronomy Commons](#), [Computer Sciences Commons](#), [Earth Sciences Commons](#), [Environmental Sciences Commons](#), [Geography Commons](#), [Human Rights Law Commons](#), [International and Area Studies Commons](#), [International Humanitarian Law Commons](#), and the [Political Science Commons](#)

Harris, Theresa; Drake, Jonathan; Haritashya, Umesh K.; Dada, Wumi Asubiaro; and Cumes, Fredy, "Developing a Practice in Remote Sensing for Next-Generation Human Rights Researchers" (2021). *Conference: The Social Practice of Human Rights*. 16.

https://ecommons.udayton.edu/human_rights/2021/schedule/16

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Human Rights Center at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Conference: The Social Practice of Human Rights by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact mschlengen1@udayton.edu, ecommons@udayton.edu.

Next Generation Human Rights Researchers: Developing a Practice in Remote Sensing for Human Rights

Remote sensing is increasingly recognized as an important tool for documenting human rights abuses. When used alongside interviews, case studies, surveys, forensic science, and other well-established research methods in human rights and humanitarian practice, remotely sensed data can effectively geolocate and establish chronologies for mass graves, forced displacement, destruction of cultural heritage sites, and other violations. But as a highly technical field of science that relies on ever-changing technologies, remote sensing and geospatial analysis are not readily accessible for human rights and humanitarian practitioners. The community of practice grew out of innovative work by practitioners at NGOs and specialized inter-governmental such as UNITAR/UNOSAT.

Now, with the increasing demand by human rights NGOs for geospatial evidence, there is an urgent need to expand the community of practitioners who have training in the appropriate and responsible use of geospatial technologies for human rights research and documentation. One piece of this will be opportunities for training new practitioners, such as a multi-disciplinary curriculum that prepares students across human rights, law, sciences, and engineering for work in this field. Places for those students to learn, such as university research centers focused on remote sensing and human rights, and experiential learning opportunities with NGOs also need to be created. These practitioners will then need places to do their work in NGOs, inter-governmental organizations, and development agencies.

After a brief introduction to the current state of practice and a pilot initiative at the University of Dayton, most of the session will be a facilitated discussion among session participants. What would a career pathway as a geospatial analyst for human rights look like? What educational opportunities are needed to support those careers? What experiential learning opportunities are available with human rights and humanitarian organizations? What is the role of funders and donors in developing this community of practice?