

PROGRAMME

9.30-10.15am *Registration*
(Old Theatre, Old Building, LSE)

10.15-10.30am **Welcome**
Professor Conor Gearty, Director, Centre for the Study of Human Rights, LSE

10.30-11.30am **Humans & Habitats: rethinking rights in an age of climate change**

Keynote Speaker:

Mark Lynas, Climate change specialist and author of *'Six Degrees: Our future on a hotter planet'*

Respondents:

Tony Juniper, Executive Director, Friends of the Earth

Arvind Ganesan, Director, Business and Human Rights Programme, Human Rights Watch

11.30am-12 noon **Coffee and tea**

12 noon-1.30pm **Workshops – Part A**

Please note: The six workshops will each be held twice (Part A and Part B) to enable conference participants to attend two different sessions. The workshops will take place in the same room for Part A and Part B.

The right to knowledge

Room: D202, Clement House

Chair:

Tom Porteous (London Director, Human Rights Watch)

The right to space

Room: D302, Clement House

Chair:

Professor Diane Perrons (Gender Institute, LSE)

The right to resist

Room: D402, Clement House

Chair:

Professor Conor Gearty (Centre for the Study of Human Rights, LSE)

The right to development

Room: D502, Clement House

Chair:

Professor Jo Beall (Development Studies Institute, LSE)

The right to pollute and exploit

Room: D602, Clement House

Chair:

Arvind Ganesan (Business and Human Rights Programme, Human Rights Watch)

The right to a healthy environment

Room: D702, Clement House

Chair:

Dr Alastair Cochrane (Centre for the Study of Human Rights, LSE)

1.30-3pm

Lunch

(Senior Dining Room, 5th Floor, Old Building)

3-4.30pm

Workshops – Part B

(See above for details)

4.30-5pm

Coffee and tea

5-6pm

Closing remarks and feedback from the workshops

(Old Theatre, Old Building, LSE)



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE

HUMANS & HABITATS:

rethinking rights in an age of climate change

Centre for the Study of Human Rights
The London School of Economics
and Political Science
Houghton Street
London
WC2A 2AE

Tel: +44 (0)20 7955 6532
Fax: +44 (0)20 7955 6934
Email: human.rights@lse.ac.uk
www.lse.ac.uk/humanrights

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CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

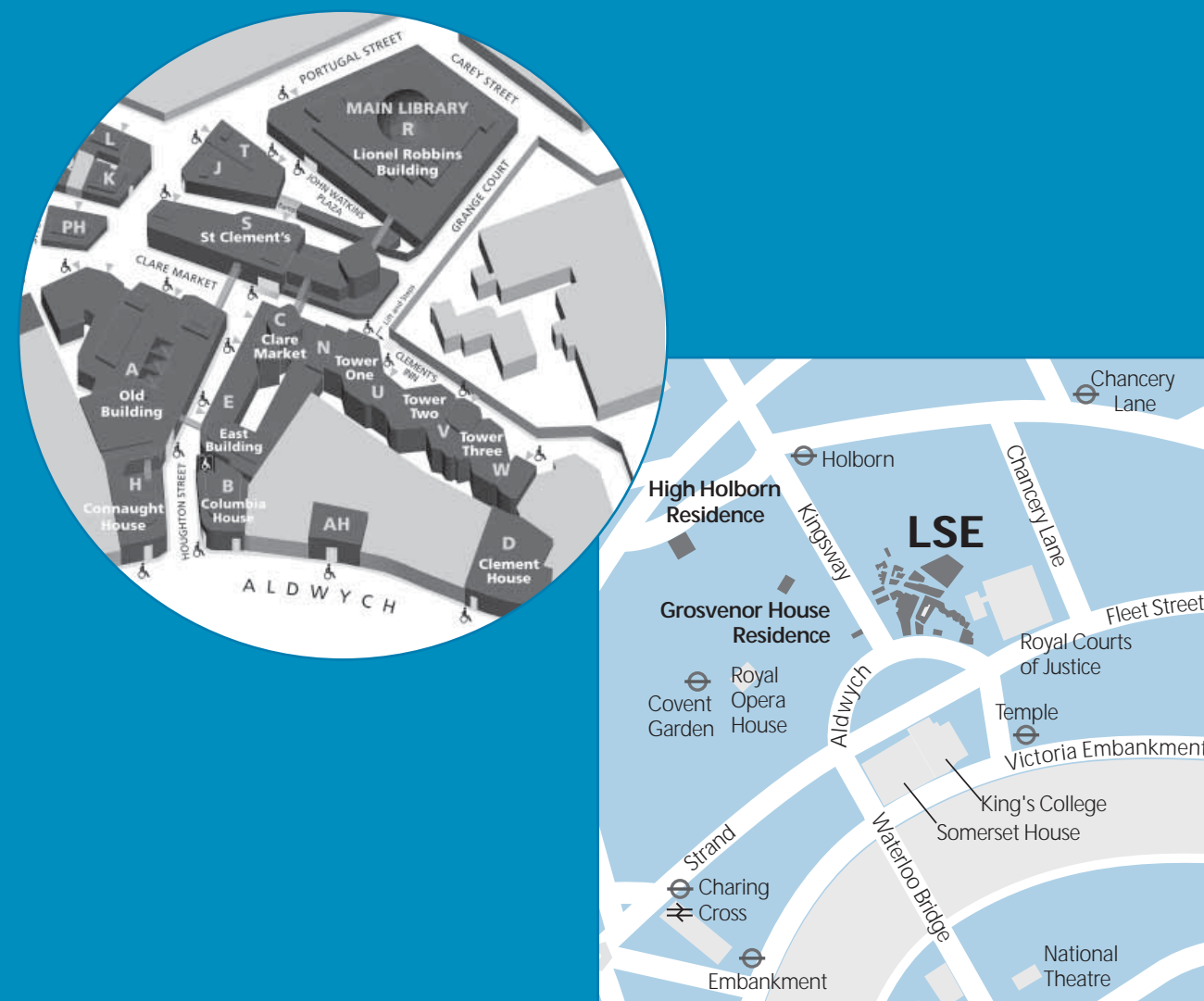
Human rights naturally focus on the inherent dignity and worth of the person. In the past they have prompted democratic reform and inspirational documents such as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Since the 1970s the environmental movement has highlighted the impacts of human activities on the biodiversity and habitats on which we all depend. This has led to global environmental principles such as those contained in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

The two movements share concerns about current economic paradigms; quality of life; the necessity to find solutions to these problems; and a strong desire to safeguard the health of the planet for future generations. Both face a common challenge in the form of climate change and its impacts on people. The task is to find real solutions to climate change that respect human rights and prevent the worst off from facing even greater hardship. How can the two movements work together to achieve this?

DIRECTIONS TO AND AROUND LSE

Nearest tube stations: Holborn (Piccadilly and Central Lines), and Temple (District and Circle Lines).



WORKSHOPS

Conference participants are invited to join two of the following workshops:

The right to knowledge

Knowledge and information are important tools in the fight against climate change. What do we have a right to know about? How do we tackle the continued denial of climate change by some scientists? Knowledge can be used and also misused in the form of misinformation. What are the rights of indigenous peoples to free, prior and informed consent to development projects. Human rights has generally relied on principles whereas climate change policies and campaigns rely heavily on data: are these different approaches reconcilable?

The right to space

Access to space and land structures the majority of people's lives across the globe. What role do borders and immigration policies play in climate change policies and debates? How should people fleeing environmental disaster caused by climate change be classified? Who is likely to be most affected? How should states prepare for short and longer term population displacement? Considering the significant relationship to land and space many indigenous people and communities have, it is important to consider the ramifications of climate change and displacement.

The right to resist

Social movements and political resistance continue to achieve significant social change worldwide. Can social movements make their voices and demands heard in climate discussions, where governments and corporations have seemed unprepared to act? What is the difference between rights in abstract and putting them into practice through political engagement and protest? Should workers have the right to resist the imposition of the cost of responding to climate change? Is the curtailment of civil liberties having a direct impact on the ability of society to affect change? What is the role of direct action?

The right to development

The right to development traditionally finds support in developing states that seek a just economic order and a fair share of the world's resources. Climate change introduces unforeseen issues, in particular that the right to development needs to be understood as a right to sustainable development and subsequently, that the idea of freedom to develop is under pressure to be reviewed. Do peoples have the right to exploit their natural resources even if that is detrimental to the rights of others? How is this balanced with the rights of indigenous peoples to free, prior and informed consent or ability to inform climate policies? How will climate change influence our understanding of rights, freedoms and trade-offs?

The right to pollute and exploit

The expansion of business operations is often associated with environmental pollution and human rights violations, leading to a growing concern that business enjoys a great deal of power, with little responsibility or accountability. Some argue that this process of industrialisation is necessary to provide conditions for the development of a strong civil society, which then helps to codify a rights framework and holds the 'Nation State' accountable for implementing these rights. What is the relationship between human and environmental rights and the rights of corporations? How do corporate liberties and environmental and human rights relate? Given the impacts of globalisation strong Northern Corporate rights often sit alongside weak individual rights in the South. How does this change the role of global civil society in upholding a rights discourse?

The right to a healthy environment

Many have proposed that everyone has the right to a healthy environment as it is essential to human life. Could such a right be used to assist communities affected by climate change? Does it entail equitable access to resources and if so how does it relate to other rights, particularly those concerning development and property? Who holds such a right – communities, animals, ecosystems? Are future generations entitled to 'inherit the Earth in a condition comparable to that enjoyed by previous generations?' (Edith Brown-Weiss). If there is such a right, how best can it be protected, domestically and internationally?