Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Local Government and Human Rights

State of Hawai'i and City of Honolulu

Island Initiatives to Implement International Human Rights &

Sustainable Development Instruments to Improve Dignity & Realize Rights

Hawai'i Institute for Human Rights / University of Hawai'i

1.

There are historical and holistic challenges facing our city and state. Due to the circumstances, we have coordinated academia and advocates to partner with our public officials to guarantee fundamental freedoms. Beginning in 2005, University of Hawaii classes systemwide decided on and participated to educate decision-makers to adopt United Nations human rights instruments through resolutions and annual events to promote and protect human rights. The University of Hawaii partnered with civil society and directly impacted people to share their stories and shape public policy. UH & Hawaii Institute for Human Rights worked with United Nations Association, Amnesty International and other civil society to explain importance of international human rights to guide our government in policy making. Our first adoption, in 2005, was the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to address the historical violations of Kanaka Maoli people and redress the nation of Hawai'i to pursue self-determination. We also focus heavily on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights as well as Youth. We have since adopted the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the State of Hawai'i level. We also have many challenges related to right to housing and have relied on comments and reports by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing.

We also note the lack of human rights education and do many popular programs such as Human Rights Day at the annual legislative session to raise awareness as well as coordinate a series of human rights defenders that speak to elected officials and their legislative assistants. On the city level, we also adopted UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women CEDAW City Resolution for Honolulu. We organized on similar pattern

Hawaii is an island state so we concentrate on climate change. Hawai'i adopted the UN Paris Agreement. When the national administration decided to withdraw from the world, Hawai'i Governor became the first State to proclaim, We Are Still In and sign the law to enter into force. Also in 2018, Hawai'i Senate Majority agreed for the UN Sustainable Development Goals to be priority package introducing 18 bills. There was also resolution 11 introduced by HIHR to localize the SDGs that was adopted.

Hawai'i also works with the US Human Rights Network in the National Human Rights Cities Alliance to encourage more cities and states to partner together to advance the 2030 Agenda as well fundamental freedoms for all. This has been helpful in UPR and Human Rights Treaty Body reviews of the United States. We have encouraged Mayors, Governors, Attorney Generals to participate in the national reviews.

2.

Hawai'i is hosting its 14th Annual Human Rights Day in March around International Women's Day to promote human rights. The all day festival for fundamental freedoms features forums and film festivals on important and imminent issues in our islands. The annual Human Rights Day happens during the legislative session that lasts from January through May. Last year, we organized an Earth & Human Rights Day to feature the UN Sustainable Development Goals at the closing of the session around Earth Day in April toward the conclusion of the session.

We also coordinate a Human Rights Series featuring global guests that discuss initiatives with our elected officials on how to organize to ensure optimal equality and equity.

We are interested to create a Human Rights and Resilience Commission modeled after the National Human Rights Commissions featured in many countries based on the Paris Principles. Hawai'i will continue building a culture of human rights with the aspiration of a Hawai'i Human Rights and Resilience Commission to focus on human rights education in popular forms as well as using creative social media to illuminate human rights in Hawaii to all constituents.

3. and 4.

Hawai'i is focusing on greater cooperation among advocates in civil society and academia in colleges to share their expertise to assist elected officials.

With the introduction of the UN Sustainable Development Goals legislation to amend the Hawaii Revised Statue and the subsequent adoption of Executive Order and Resolution 11 in 2018, the Global Goals are significant to our State of Hawai'i. We also have a coalition partnering of civil society and government along with business in the Hawaii Green Growth.

Another important initiative is with Hawaii Association of Nonprofit Organizations (HANO). We matched 200 civil society associations with the UN SDGs. We have a website featuring each of the 17 goals with the different NGOs focusing on each goal. We also have created feature where one can look at each goal and see which NGOs mission and activities assist to achieve the 2030 Agenda. We also have matched faculty and their expertise with specific Global Goals so they can be reached to assist in achieving the 2030 Agenda in Hawaii.

We also have created videos with high school students from Iolani and Waipahu to create 17 short videos sharing youth perspective on the UN Global Goals that are showed to fellow students and community groups. We will post them on our Hawaii World We Want website. We are also hosting an art contest where youth are creating Hawai'i logos for each of the 17 SDGs so better accepted among the citizenry. We are also working with Kanaka Maoli to indigenize the Global Goals so each of the 17 SDGs are translated into Olelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian language) with a unique traditional design to represent the goal.

Our main aspect of implementation is a Voluntary Local Review (VLR). We are following lead of New York City and also combining with Helsinki and Pittsburgh to create a participatory and proactive process for the UN SDGs in Hawai'i. We hosted Kiribati government to share how they coordinated campaign for their Voluntary National Review and adapted to a VLR in Hawai'i. We are in contact with civil society and public officials in handful of cities to communicate promising practices and pioneer how local government can spearhead the global SDG initiative. We are organizing with academia and advocates to create a VLR for HLPF 2019.

5.

Hawaii Institute for Human Rights urges the upcoming UN Social Forum to focus on Local Government and Human Rights. We believe the UN Social Forum would allow for creative conversations and communication to examine and explore best models among local governments around the globe. HIHR will volunteer to assist to ensure a successful UN Social Forum with fellow local actors engaging with administrators.

One of the best examples of engagement was National Human Rights Cities Alliance and US Human Rights Network. We coordinate a UPR Birmingham event with the Mayor to focus on human rights issues in Alabama commemorating the Selma March Anniversary. We are aiming to host a dozen more UPR City events with local government prior to the UPR 2020 of the United States. Hawai'i will be one of the hosts before the April 2020 review.

We have been fortunate to also connect with UCLG on the global level. It has been great assistance in partnering with administrations.