

UN Human Rights Action on Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development

On the occasion of World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development 2021, the United Nations Human Rights Office is – together with partners – convening multiple public events supporting minority voices and advancing diversity in a human rights frame worldwide.



SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER: RELIGIOUS OR BELIEF MINORITY ARTISTS, VOICE AND PROTEST

JOIN THE WEBINAR ON
26 MAY 2021 | 14.00 – 16.00 CET

UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

FREEMUSE
DEFENDING ARTISTIC FREEDOM

Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Nh4q3yXpRHCpgcn-qZLHmA



How can religious literacy and freedom of religion or belief literacy inform partnerships, especially for promoting gender equality?

Join the webinar on
27 May 2021 | 15.00 – 17.00 CET



Register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcocuyspzorEtKI9PKOfCIGUkH16ec-D99B>

UN Human Rights Action on Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development

The [World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development](#), proclaimed by the UN General Assembly and celebrated annually on 21 May, provides an opportunity for mobilization on the part of all actors (governments, policy makers, civil society organizations, communities, cultural professionals) to promote culture in its diversity and in all its forms: tangible and intangible heritage, creative industries, goods and services.

On the occasion of World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development 2021, the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) is – together with partners – convening multiple public events supporting minority voices and advancing diversity in a human rights frame worldwide.

Webinar on 26 May 2021, at 2:00pm CET (to find your time zone, please click [here](#)): **“Speaking Truth to Power: Religious or Belief Minority Artists, Voice and Protest”**

On 26 May, the UN Human Rights Office jointly with the civil society organisation Freemuse and a network of alumni of OHCHR’s Minority Fellowship Programme, convenes a webinar of artists from religious or belief minorities worldwide to present their work on freedom of artistic expression, often in contexts of pressure or threat.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (www.ohchr.org) is the leading UN entity on human rights. We represent the world's commitment to the promotion and protection of the full range of human rights and freedoms set out in the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#). UN Human Rights inter alia provides [fellowships to minority human rights defenders](#).

Freemuse (www.freemuse.org) is an independent international non-governmental organisation advocating for freedom of artistic expression and cultural diversity. Freemuse has United Nations Special Consultative Status to the Economic and Social Council and Consultative Status with UNESCO. Freemuse operates within an international human rights and legal framework which upholds the principles of accountability, participation, equality, non-discrimination and cultural diversity.

The 26 May webinar is the second in a series of events supporting minority artists, voice and protest. [The first such event](#) convened earlier in 2021 and focused on artists from across a range of minority communities in the United States, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 26 May webinar aims at shifting the discussion among and between communities and individuals, including in circumstances where artists may be threatened by anti-blasphemy or anti-apostasy laws, as well as by other forces limiting civic space. It also aims to deepen the UN system’s engagement with art and artists as a powerful player in discourse and action on human rights. Discussion will include examining intersectional aspects and use of peer-to-peer methodologies. In addition to artists and members of the wider public, [UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights Karima Bennouna](#) will participate in the event.

Register here: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Nh4q3yXpRHCpgcn-qZLHmA

Webinar on 27 May 2021, at 3:00pm CET (find your time [here](#)): “How can religious literacy and freedom of religion or belief literacy inform partnerships, especially for promoting gender equality”

COVID-19 has revealed the structural weaknesses of our systems and responses to address gender-based violence, which also presents opportunities to re-build better. The UN together with governments, the private sector, civil society, religious and traditional leaders can play a key role to raise awareness on the issue and strengthen our common efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based violence during COVID-19 and in its aftermath. In 2021, [OHCHR](#), [UNFPA](#), [UNWOMEN](#) and The [Joint Learning Initiative](#) (JLI) and the [Sexual Violence Research Initiative](#) (SVRI) Faith and GBV Hub will co-host a series of webinars, using the peer-to-peer learning methodology of the [#Faith4Rights Toolkit](#).

The webinar on 27 May 2021 will focus on how religious literacy and freedom of religion or belief literacy can inform partnerships, especially for promoting gender equality. The webinar aims at stimulating a structured discussion with faith and other key actors on addressing gender-based violence in the context of COVID-19 and beyond. Participants with experience working in the field of gender equality will present experiences and lessons learnt, and identify promising practices/strategies. Human rights mechanisms will also be participating, in this webinar the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief (Ahmed Shaheed) and the Vice-Chairperson of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (Nahla Haidar).

Challenges and opportunities will be discussed in light of concrete examples. Snapshots of learning points will be extracted and options for follow-up and further collaboration will also be explored. Discussions will be guided through targeted questions on the role of faith actors in preventing gender-based violence and in challenging social norms that condone it, as well as more generally in promoting gender equality and the human rights of women and girls, in the context of the pandemic and beyond.

Register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcocuypzporEtKI9PKOfCIGUkH16ec-D99B>

Resources

- UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/CulturalRights/Pages/SRCulturalRightsIndex.aspx>
- UN Network on Racial Discrimination and Protection of Minorities: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Minorities/Pages/UNNetworkRacialDiscriminationProtectionMinorities.aspx>
- OHCHR guidance on human rights in the COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/COVID19Guidance.aspx>
- OHCHR Peer-to-peer human rights methodology: <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Press/faith4rights-toolkit.pdf>
- Freemuse State of Artistic Freedom 2021 report: <https://freemuse.org/news/the-state-of-artistic-freedom-2021/>
- Freemuse guidance and support for artists at risk: <https://freemuse.org/artist-assistance/>
- JLI/SVRI Faith and GBV Hub: <https://svri.org/faith-and-gbv-hub>
- JLI Researcher, Dr. Nora Khalaf-Elledge on the Role of Religious Actors in Gender Equality: <https://youtu.be/l1bcyLY3vno>
- JLI Faith and GBV Hub, co-authored by Dr Elisabet Le Roux and Dr Brenda Bartelink: [‘No More Harmful Traditional Practices’: Working Effectively With Faith Leaders](#)
- The Usefulness of Human Rights Framework in Addressing Gender Based Violence, by PeaceWomen: <https://www.peacewomen.org/node/90004>