

GLOTHRO Final Conference:
Beyond State Obligations in International Human Rights Law –
Towards Common Principles on the Obligations of Multiple Global Actors

27 – 29 March 2014
Åbo Akademi Institute for Human Rights
Åbo/Turku, Finland

Abstract

Human rights violations occur daily, all over the world. While the violations involve various actors, conventional international human rights law limits responsibility principally to the domestic state. But what happens when the actions or inactions of states entail violations of the human rights of people living beyond their borders? Are there extraterritorial human rights obligations? What about responsibilities for human rights impairments that result from the conduct of other actors, such as companies or international organisations? The conference is the concluding science meeting of the Research Networking Programme *Beyond Territoriality: Globalisation and Transnational Human Rights Obligations* (RNP GLOTHRO), which provides a critical overview of its findings while also indicating any remaining research gaps and future research opportunities.

Scientific content

The decentered position of the state and the increased power and impact of corporations and international organisations, pose major practical and conceptual challenges to human rights law. In practice, human rights law faces a serious risk of marginalization if it fails to adapt to this changing reality. Conceptually, the decentered position of the territorial state requires us to fundamentally re-think the basic tenet of human rights law that places human rights obligations primarily on the territorial state.

Since its establishment in 2010, the RNP GLOTHRO has sought to widen the circle of human rights duty-bearers beyond the territorial state, by bringing together the separate fields of study respectively on the human rights obligations of transnational corporations, international organizations and non-territorial states while also involving other disciplines in order to identify common principles determining the human rights obligations of the respective actors within an overall human rights obligations framework.

Call for papers

At its Final Conference in March 2014 the RNP GLOTHRO provides the possibility particularly for early-stage scholars from various fields such as general international law, humanitarian law, human rights law or environmental law, but also from legal and political philosophy, international relations, globalization studies and so on, to present their views on the prospective cross-cutting legal principles relevant for the attribution and distribution of responsibility between foreign states, transnational corporations and international organisations. We strongly invite submissions that go beyond the discussion of a sole type of duty-bearer or field of study. Paper proposals should seek to explore potential principles, which would ultimately allow the development of a multi-duty bearer framework between States and non-State actors in international human rights law. Papers may explore such questions as:

- Which concepts that have been developed in other branches of international law on issues of common concern can be useful for the further development of a multi-duty bearer framework in international human rights law?
- How do the various emerging frameworks, such as the Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (May 2011), relate to each other?
- How to construct the division and/or attribution of responsibility between member States and organizations such as the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank?
- How do we distribute responsibility between the different actors considering the State is the primary duty bearer?

Authors are invited to submit an abstract of maximum 4000 characters. Full papers are not accepted and the abstracts should be suitable for blind review. Please, submit your abstract with all identifying references removed by **22 July 2013** using the on-line registration form at the conference website (<https://www.abo.fi/institution/en/humanrightsseminars>).

The selection of abstracts will be finalised by 12 August 2013. The deadline for submission of full papers, which should consist of 5000-6000 words, is 15 February 2014. The selected papers will be made available to the conference participants through the conference website and may later be processed for publication in a special journal issue.

Conference organisation and format

The conference is co-convened by the RNP GLOTHRO and the Institute for Human Rights at Åbo Akademi University. Funding is secured by a grant from the European Science Foundation under the GLOTHRO Programme.

The conference programme will consist of key-note presentations paired with panel sessions as well as paper presentations by early-stage researchers selected through a call for papers.

Registration and conference fees

Please, register for the conference by **15 February 2014** using the on-line registration form at the conference website (<https://www.abo.fi/institution/en/humanrightsseminars>).

The conference fee is 175 € (reduced fee for bachelor's and master's students 50 €). Participants whose papers are selected for presentation and who are eligible for ESF funding are exempt from the fee.

For questions, please, contact courses.imr@abo.fi. For up-to-date information on the conference, please, visit the conference website at <https://www.abo.fi/institution/en/humanrightsseminars>.

