e-RG

Electronic Resource Guide

International Human Rights Law

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of International Law

This electronic resource guide, often called the ERG, has been published online by the American Society of International Law (ASIL) since 1997. Since then it has been systematically updated and continuously expanded. The chapter format of the ERG is designed to be used by students, teachers, practitioners and researchers as a self-guided tour of relevant, quality, up-to-date online resources covering important areas of international law. The ERG also serves as a ready-made teaching tool at graduate and undergraduate levels.

The narrative format of the ERG is complemented and augmented by EISIL (Electronic Information System for International Law), a free online database that organizes and provides links to, and useful information on, web resources from the full spectrum of international law. EISIL's subject-organized format and expert-provided content also enhances its potential as teaching tool.

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I. Introduction

This chapter will attempt to provide a guide to the ever-expanding area of international human rights law. The focus will be on the electronic sources available for this topic, regardless of the format. This chapter will include general tips for doing research as well as for locating necessary documents and materials. The scope of this chapter will encompass both primary and secondary

sources (including documents from non-governmental organizations). The emphasis will be on English-language materials, but the availability of resources in other languages is noted.

II. Brief History

The concepts of humanitarian intervention, self-determination, and providing relief to the wounded and other victims of armed conflicts can be viewed as the roots of human rights law. Modern international human rights law dates from World War II and its aftermath. The United Nations Charter (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/aunchart.htm), signed June 26, 1945, sought to acknowledge the importance of human rights and established it as a matter of international concern. Article 1(3) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/chapter1.html) specifically states that one of the purposes of the UN is "[t]o achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion". Articles 55 and 56 (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/ chapter9.html) of the Charter set out the basic human rights obligations of the UN and its member states.

The rights and obligations enumerated in the Charter were codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/b1udhr.htm). This was the first instrument to really articulate the fundamental rights and freedoms of all people. Following the Declaration, the UN Commission on Human Rights drafted the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/b3ccpr.htm) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/b2esc.htm). Together, these three documents (with the Optional Protocols to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) comprise the International Bill of Human Rights (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/auob.htm).

For more information on the history of human rights, see Thomas Buergenthal et al., International Human Rights in a Nutshell (4th ed., St. Paul, MN: West, 2009) (http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/457152764). For an online overview of the history of international human rights law, see Dinah Shelton, An Introduction to the History of International Human Rights Law (August 2007) (http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1010489). More general information on human rights is available through the Encyclopedia of Human Rights (Oxford, 2009) (http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/252584097). This encyclopedia is also available online by subscription (http://www.oxford-humanrights.com/). For information on human rights terminology, see Connie De La Vega, Dictionary of International Human Rights Law (2013) (http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/856795504).

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III. Methodology of Human Rights Research

When first starting out, researching international human rights law can be a confusing mess of treaties and documents. The materials (for the most part) are not set out in a coherent, well-organized fashion. The sources of information range from recognized treaty law to more ephemeral materials from non-governmental organizations. There are a few things to keep in mind when doing human rights research: the interdisciplinary nature of the topic; the complexity of the topic and the materials; and the challenge of locating and accessing materials issued by a variety of organizations. The researcher needs to be resourceful, creative, and never become daunted by the task. Just when you are ready to give up is when you might find the needed material.

IV. Where to Start

A. Bibliographic Databases and Online Catalogs

Human rights law and related commentaries are growing at an amazing rate. Therefore, the best place to begin any research is by checking to see what is available on your topic. Today, we can search the catalogs of our own libraries as well as catalogs of libraries from around the country (and even around the world).   WorldCat (http://www.worldcat.org/) allows searching of more than 10,000 library catalogs. Most bibliographic databases and online catalogs use standard Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH). The Library of Congress Classification Outline is available on the web (http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/lcco/lcco.html). Since the print LCSH volumes are a bit unwieldy, most catalogs provide keyword searching. Keyword searching allows the user to locate some items on point and then determine the appropriate subject heading. The following are the most commonly used subject headings for locating information on human rights.

For general or comparative books on human rights, use the subject headings HUMAN RIGHTS; CIVIL RIGHTS or CIVIL RIGHTS (INTERNATIONAL LAW). Some books on human rights cataloged before 1987 may be found under CIVIL RIGHTS.

Add a geographic subdivision to the subject headings above if interested in human rights in a particular country or region, HUMAN RIGHTS--FRANCE or HUMAN RIGHTS--INDONESIA--TIMOR.

It is also possible to search by topic or group, ASYLUM, RIGHT OF; WOMENS RIGHTS or INDIANS OF SOUTH AMERICA--BRAZIL--CIVIL RIGHTS.

Many libraries make their catalogs available via the web. Many of these catalogs can be accessed at the Library of Congress (http://lcweb.loc.gov/z3950/gateway.html#other), or Libdex: The Library Index (http://www.libdex.com). These sites offer access to national libraries (including the Library

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of Congress and national libraries of other countries) as well as to other library catalogs. You can also search the [Library of Congress Catalog](#) via the web (http://catalog.loc.gov/).

B. Research Guides and Bibliographies

There are many guides and bibliographies available to direct the human rights researcher. Many of these guides can be located through bibliographic databases by using the following subject headings: HUMAN RIGHTS--LEGAL RESEARCH; HUMAN RIGHTS--BIBLIOGRAPHY or HUMAN RIGHTS--LIBRARY RESOURCES. Periodical indexes are also an excellent source for locating research guides and bibliographies.

1. Guides and Bibliographies Available through the Web

Buhle Angelo Dube, [Forced Evictions and Disability Rights in Africa](#) (Ausgust 2013) (http://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/Forced_Evictions_Disability_Rights_Africa1.htm).

[Guide to Forced Migration Resources on the Web](#) by Elisa Mason, updated July 2006. (http://www.forcedmigration.org/webguide/webguide.pdf). Other related research guides are available on the [Forced Migration Online](#) website (http://www.forcedmigration.org/guides/).

Marci Hoffman, [Researching International Human Rights Law](#) (revised January 2014) (http://libguides.law.berkeley.edu/content.php?pid=426416&sid=3487468).

Marci Hoffman, [Researching Global Migration Issues](#) (revised September 2011) (http://www.law.berkeley.edu/library/dynamic/guide.php?id=58).

Marci Hoffman, [Researching International Humanitarian Law](#) (revisedJanuary 2014) (http://libguides.law.berkeley.edu/internationalhumanitarianlaw).

Marci Hoffman, [Researching Refugee Law](#) (revised September2013) (http://libguides.law.berkeley.edu/content.php?pid=290483).

Library of the European Parliament, [Getting Started with Human Rights Information Research](#) (December 2012) (http://libraryeuroparl.wordpress.com/2012/12/12/getting-started-with-human-rights-information-research/).

Elisa Mason, [Update to Guide to Country research for Refugee Status Determination](#) (http://www.llrx.com/features/rsd2.htm) and [Update to Annex: Human Rights, Country and Legal Information Resources on the Internet](#) (http://www.llrx.com/features/rsd_bib2.htm).

Elisa Mason, [Guide to International Refugee Law Resources on the Web](#) (revised March 2009) (http://www.llrx.com/features/refugee.htm).

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Elisa Mason, [Researching Forced Migration: A Guide to Reference and Information Sources](http://forcedmigrationguide.pbwiki.com/) (http://forcedmigrationguide.pbwiki.com/).

Steven C. Perkins, [Researching Indigenous Peoples Rights Under International Law](http://intelligent-internet.info/law/ipr2.html) (2013) (http://intelligent-internet.info/law/ipr2.html).

International Women's Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, [Women's Human Rights in the Context of International Law Research](http://www.law-lib.utoronto.ca/resguide/women2.htm). A useful guide from the Bora Laskin law Library, University of Toronto (http://www.law-lib.utoronto.ca/resguide/women2.htm).

Ellen Schaffer, [The Inter-American System of Human Rights](http://wcl.american.libguides.com/human_rights) (February 2014) (http://wcl.american.libguides.com/human_rights).

[United Nations Documentation: Human Rights](http://research.un.org/en/docs/humanrights) by the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library (http://research.un.org/en/docs/humanrights). There is also a specialized research guide on [International Law](http://research.un.org/en/docs/law) (http://research.un.org/en/docs/law).

2. Other Guides and Bibliographies

[UNBISnet](http://unbisnet.un.org/) (http://unbisnet.un.org/). The primary index to United Nations documentation published since 1979, or earlier for selected documents. It also includes the catalogue of the collections of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library. One file provides detailed voting records of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and Security Council. Another file contains speech citations for the main United Nations organs, the General Assembly (38th session, 1983-), the Security Council (38th session, 1983-), the Economic and Social Council (1983-), and the Trusteeship Council (1982-).

C. Periodical Indexes

One of the best places to begin research on a human rights topic is with periodical literature. Articles will provide information about a topic, provide bibliographies and lists of sources, and are often useful for locating citations and other information about publications and documents.

Current Law Index (Los Altos, CA: Information Access Corp., 1980-): indexes over 800 English language legal journals from the U.S. and the Commonwealth. Contains a subject heading "human rights." It is available online as Legal Resource Index (LRI database on WESTLAW Classic and Next). It is also available as Legaltrac on the Web from [Thomson Gale](http://www.gale.cengage.com/pdf/facts/legal.pdf) (http://www.gale.cengage.com/pdf/facts/legal.pdf). Updated monthly. There is some debate as to whether all versions (paper, online, or the web version) are identical.

[Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals:](#) A Subject Index to Selected International and Comparative Law

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Periodicals and Collections of Essays (Chicago: American Association of Law Libraries, 1960-): covers selected legal periodicals on public and private international, comparative, and domestic law of countries other than the U.S., the British Isles, and the British Commonwealth. "Human Rights (International Law)" is the subject heading for articles on human rights. Also available in print, but the electronic index links to many full-text articles on HeinOnline.

Index to Legal Periodicals (New York: H.W. Wilson, 1929-): covers some journals not covered by Current Law Index and provides more historical coverage. Available on the Web from EBSCO Host (http://www.ebscohost.com/academic/index-to-legal-periodicals-and-books). An expanded version of ILP on the Web contains historical coverage from 1908-1981.

Legal Journals Index: indexes approximately 485 journals from the UK & Europe. Coverage is from 1986 to present. The print versions of this index (Legal Journals Index and European Legal Journals Index) discontinued in 1999. Legal Journals Index (LJI) is also available on WESTLAW Classic and Next.

Peace Palace Library, Online Catalogue (http://catalogue.ppl.nl/IMPLAND=Y/SRT=YOP/LNG=EN/), search for books and articles from the library of the Hague Peace Palace.

Public International Law: A Current Bibliography of Articles (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1975-) (http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/525862351). Lists articles from over 1400 journals and collected works, prepared by the Max Planck Institute. Human rights articles are listed under the classification number "14." Updated twice annually. Information about this publication is available on the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law website (http://www.mpil.de/ww/en/pub/news.cfm). Some of the more recent articles can be searched by using the Online Documentation of Articles (http://www.mpil.de/ww/en/pub/library/catalogues_databases/doc_of_articles/pil.cfm).

Public Affairs Information Service (PAIS) (New York, NY: Public Affairs Information Service, 1972-). Covers economic, political, and social issues on an international and national level. The index covers over 1600 periodicals and journals, as well as books, directories, reports, and government documents. The print equivalents are PAIS Bulletin, PAIS Foreign Language Index, and PAIS International in Print. PAIS is also available on the Web from CSA (http://www.csa.com/factsheets/pais-set-c.php)

There are several other more general periodical indexes available in both print and on the Web. To locate other relevant indexes, use the following Library of Congress Subject Headings: LAW--PERIODICALS--INDEXES or SOCIAL SCIENCES--PERIODICALS--INDEXES.

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V. Primary Sources

A. Compilations of Human Rights Instruments

International human rights law is treaty based. These treaties are promulgated by international organizations such as the United Nations and its specialized agencies, the Council of Europe, and other organizations. Therefore, locating the necessary instruments is usually the first place to begin research in this area. A good strategy is to begin with the body that promulgated the instrument.

This section will outline the major electronic sources for human rights instruments as well as the sources that provide information about the issuing body itself.

1. United Nations (UN)

Compilations of instruments can be found in a variety of sources. While there is an abundance of paper sources available, the Web also offers many sites for obtaining the full text of the most important instruments. Many electronic sources offer an advantage over the paper by allowing a researcher to search the full text of the document. Even if there is no searching mechanism available directly at the website, certain Web browsers offer some basic finding features that allow for word string searches.

a. websites

[United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/WelcomePage.aspx) (OHCHR) (http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/WelcomePage.aspx).

This should be the first place to begin research for UN human rights documents and information. It contains information on the human rights activities of the UN. The most important human rights instruments are available full-text under the section called [International Law](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/InternationalLaw.aspx) (http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/InternationalLaw.aspx), but they lack complete citations and there is no search mechanism for the treaties separate from the rest of the website. Primary features of this site include: the [Human Rights Bodies](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRbodies/Pages/HumanRightsBodies.aspx) (http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRbodies/Pages/HumanRightsBodies.aspx) section which contains information about Charter-based Bodies as well as the Treaty-based Bodies. The Charter-based Bodies include information and documents regarding the Human Rights Council. The Treaties-based Bodies section of the website provides extensive information on each of the eight human rights treaty bodies (or committees). To locate documents from these bodies, use the [Treaty bodies Search](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/) (http://www2.ohchr.org/english/). Researchers can search this collection by treaty, country, type of document, and document symbol. The homepage also offers access by human rights issue, by country, or by professional interest.

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See also the research tool which has just been launched called [Universal Human Rights Index of United Nations Documents](http://www.universalhumanrightsindex.org/) (http://www.universalhumanrightsindex.org/). It is designed "to facilitate access to human rights documents issued by the UN human rights treaty bodies and the special procedures of the Human Rights Council." Search by country, by rights and by human rights body. A fairly sophisticated advanced search is also available. This tool has been developed by the Institute of Public Law of the University of Bern, Switzerland in collaboration with LexUM.

On this site, there is a page for the [Human Rights Council](#). It contains information about the body, background documents, rules of procedure, and other documents (http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/). See the [Universal Periodic Review](#) (UPR) section of the site for information and documents related to the human rights record for each UN Member State.

[United Nations Home Page](http://www.un.org) (http://www.un.org). This page is maintained by the Department of Public Information. It provides information about the UN (history, list of member states, the UN Charter, the ICJ Statute, an online tour, and a calendar of conferences and observances), information about publications and databases and access to UN news and documents. From the UN homepage, you can link to the [Human Rights](#) page for more links and information on human rights (http://www.un.org/rights/).

An important feature is the [United Nations Treaty Collection](http://treaties.un.org/Pages/Home.aspx?lang=en) (http://treaties.un.org/Pages/Home.aspx?lang=en). This site provides access to the full text of treaties contained in the United Nations Treaty Series (UNTS) as well as The Status of Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General and Recently Deposited Multilateral Treaties. The treaty section offers access by a variety of searching options (type of agreement, signature date, entry into force date, subject terms, popular name, title words, and registration number). The Status of Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-general offers more up to date status information than the paper version. See [UN Treaties: A Research Guide](#) by Leah Granger for more information on searching this database as well as other UN treaty collections (http://libguides.law.berkeley.edu/content.php?pid=335839&sid=3550368).

There is also a selection of official documents from the [Secretary-General, the General Assembly, the Security Council, and the Economic and Social Council](http://www.un.org/documents/) (http://www.un.org/documents/). This site also offers access to [UN-I-QUE](#) (a database offered by the UN Dag Hammarskjold Library designed to provide quick access to document symbols -- http://lib-unique.un.org/lib/unique.nsf) and a research guide on [UN documentation](#) (http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/). See also the catalog of UN publications and documentation indexed by the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöd Library and the Library of the UN Office at Geneva, [UNBISnet](#) (http://unbisnet.un.org).   For more

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information on researching the United Nations, see the UN chapter of this guide (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=un).

University of Minnesota Human Rights Library (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/). The University of Minnesota Human Rights Library contains a collection of many of the most important international human rights treaties and other instruments. These documents can be accessed by subject matter (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/ainstls2.htm), instrument list (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/ainstls1.htm), or by using one of the search mechanisms available at this site (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/searchdevices.htm). Two search devices are available from to the Library; a meta search engine that allows users to search for documents on multiple human rights websites from a single form (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/lawform.html) and a local search device that allows more efficient searching of the documents in the Library (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/localsearch.html). The Human Rights Library also provides a new research collection - Human Rights Topic Guides - that provide introductions to various topics and include links to relevant documents and resources. Topics include freedom of religion, the rights of refugees, and sexual orientation and human rights. Most of the documents in the Library contain authoritative citations and many of the instruments are available in French, Russian, Spanish, and some Arabic (with complete citations). Where possible, this site links to authoritative ratification information.

The United Nations Human Rights Treaties (http://www.bayefsky.com). This site provides access to documents and information from the UN human rights treaty system. Materials include the text of treaties, documents from the UN treaty bodies, information on reform of the system, and other information. Documents issued by the treaty bodies are arranged by state, by category, and by theme or subject matter. This last category (by theme or subject) is something not available on other websites.

A website aimed at enabling researchers to locate human rights documents issued by the UN human rights treaty bodies and the special procedures of the Human Rights Council is called the Universal Human Rights Index (http://www.universalhumanrightsindex.org/). This website can be searched or browsed by country, UN human rights body, and right. According to the site, "[e]ach country-related observation and recommendation of treaty bodies and special procedures is classified – paragraph by paragraph - by country, by right, by body and by affected persons. The result is called an annotation." Each annotation has an excerpt from the original document, the right concerned, the persons affected, and a link to the source document. The documents are also available in several languages.

Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM), Human Rights Treaties

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(http://sim.law.uu.nl/SIM/Library/HRinstruments.nsf/(organization)?OpenView).

This is a good collection of primary treaties and instruments from several human rights systems, including the UN.

The UN Secretary-General's Database on Violence Against Women
(http://webapps01.un.org/vawdatabase/home.action). A database created pursuant to a 2006 General Assembly Resolution calling for States to eliminate all forms of violence against women. The database includes laws, policies, programs, institutional mechanisms, research, statistical data and other information. There are country pages, good practices collection, and a search mechanism.

b. Subscription Databases

For information about the cost to subscribe to these services, please contact the companies directly. The links below do not offer access to the databases for searching, rather they provide information about the services and how to contact the companies.

LEXIS (http://www.lexis.com/). LEXIS offers several libraries and files that contain the full-text of important United Nations instruments and documents. An advantage of using this service is the robust searching capabilities. The International Law Library or INTLAW Library consists of many sources related to international and foreign law. Of importance to the human rights researcher are the treaties and agreements. ILMTY file contains treaties and agreements from International Legal Materials from January 1975. International Legal Materials is an excellent source for documents and information. In addition, U.S. treaties are now available on in the U.S. Treaties file (including academic subscriptions). Another advantage of LEXIS is the wide range of journals, newspapers, wire services and other news files. Legislation and case law from other countries is growing as well.

WESTLAW (http://www.westlaw.com/). WESTLAW allows for the same kind of searching that is available on LEXIS (boolean and "natural language"). It also offers access to International Legal Materials (ILM database identifier) from 1980 as well as to U.S. Treaties and Other International Agreements (USTREATIES database identifier) from June 1979. WESTLAW also offers a large number of newspapers, wire services and journals.

HeinOnline Treaties and Agreements Library (http://www.heinonline.org/). HeinOnline is another subscription database providing access to PDF versions of treaties contained in many print collections, such as United States Treaties and Other International Agreements (UST), Treaties and International Act Series (TIAS), International Legal Materials, and several other publications. Treaty guides and indexes are also available as well as some books on treaties. HeinOnline has a good collection called the United Nations Law Collection which includes the League of Nations Treaty Series and the United Nations Treaty Series

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(http://www.heinonline.org/HeinDocs/UnitedNations2.pdf).

2. International Labour Organization (ILO)

The ILO was established on June 28, 1919 by Part XII of the Treaty of Versailles. Its [Constitution](http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/constq.htm) (http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/constq.htm) became operative on April 11, 1919. It was recognized by the UN as a specialized agency in 1946. Among the issues to which the ILO devotes itself are: hours of work, adequate living wages, protection of the worker, recognition of the principle of freedom of association, recognition of the principle of equal renumeration for work of equal value. The ILO has adopted many conventions over the years, several of which relate to the area of human rights.

a. websites

[ILO website](http://www.ilo.org/) (http://www.ilo.org/).

The researcher can access the [conventions](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:12000:0::NO:::) (http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:12000:0::NO:::) and the [recommendations](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:12010:0::NO:::) (http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:12010:0::NO:::) by number or by searching the list of documents. Or begin by accessing the [International Labour Standards](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/norm/index.htm) page (http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/norm/index.htm). It gives background information on international labour standards and the ILO conventions on fundamental human rights. From this page access to the ILO's legal information services is available:

- [NORMLEX](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:1:0::NO:::): a database on International Labour Standards (http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:1:0::NO:::).

- [NATLEX](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex_browse.home): a bibliographic database featuring national laws on labour, social security and related human rights (http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex_browse.home).

- Many other databases are available, see [ILO Databases](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/support/lib/resource/ilodatabases.htm) (http://www.ilo.org/public/english/support/lib/resource/ilodatabases.htm). Examples include: HIV/AIDS laws and policies, social security worldwide, and case law form the ILO Administrative Tribunal.

[University of Minnesota Human Rights Library](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts).

[Employment and Forced Labour](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/auon.htm) contains the full-text of several ILO conventions. (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/auon.htm).

[Multilaterals Project](http://fletcher.tufts.edu/multilaterals) (Tufts University) (http://fletcher.tufts.edu/multilaterals). Contains a variety of

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treaties full-text, including some of the ILO conventions.

3. United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

UNESCO is a specialized agency of the UN. Its [Constitution](http://www.icomos.org/unesco/unesco_constitution.html) (http://www.icomos.org/unesco/unesco_constitution.html) was adopted by the London Conference in November 1945, and entered into effect on 4 November 1946. The main objective of UNESCO is to contribute to peace and security in the world by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and human rights and fundamental freedoms.

a. websites

[UNESCO Official Web Server](http://www.unesco.org/) (http://www.unesco.org/). Provides information about the organization, current events, publications, programs, documentation and databases. There is a section called [Standard-Setting Instruments](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=12024&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) (http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=12024&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) which provides access to conventions, recommendations, and declarations. Each instrument is available in English and French in HTML, as well as links to PDF files from UNESCO's official documents collection in the six official languages.

In the section called [Human Rights](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/human-rights/about-human-rights/) (http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/human-rights/about-human-rights/), there is information on UNESCO's work in this area and it also provides access to documentation resources, official documents, statistics, and more.

[University of Minnesota Human Rights Library](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/). Provides the full-text of a few instruments from UNESCO's Standard-Setting Instruments.

4. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The institution for dealing with refugees has a long history. The first such institution was created in 1921 by the League of Nations. The Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees took over the duties of the earlier organizations in 1951. The office was mandated under the [Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/v1crs.htm), 189 UNTS 150, entered into force April 22, 1954 (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/v1crs.htm). Refugees are defined as those who have fled or are outside their country of origin because of a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, and who are unable or unwilling to return.

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a. websites

Refworld "is the leading source of information necessary for taking quality decisions on refugee status" (see homepage). It contains a collection of reports relating to situations in countries of origin, policy documents and positions, and documents relating to international and national legal frameworks (http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain).

The UNHCR website provides access to research, publications, statistics, and more information about refugees and related issues (http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home).

University of Minnesota Human Rights Library (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/). Provides the full text of documents related to refugees and asylum (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/auov.htm).

5. Council of Europe (COE)

Established in 1949 by a group of western European nations, the Council of Europe's aim was "to achieve greater unity between its members," safeguarding common principles and heritage, facilitate their economic and social progress. Article 3 of its Statute (http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/001.htm) provides for the acceptance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Council of Europe promulgated two important human rights treaties: the European Convention of Human Rights (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/z17euroco.html) and the European Social Charter (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/euro/z31escch.html).

a. websites

Council of Europe (http://www.coe.int/). This site contains information about the COE, its activities and the treaties of the Council of Europe (http://conventions.coe.int). In addition to human rights treaties, the site contains treaties related to social matters, bioethics, penal, public and international law and other subject areas. Of great importance is the signature and ratification information for each member State. The information is available in French and English.

Council of Europe, Directorate General: Human Rights and Rule of Law (http://www.coe.int/t/dgi/default_en.asp). The DGI focuses on information and activities related to human rights. There are direct links to major documents as well as background information on the instruments. See also, Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/trafficking/default_en.asp).

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[European Court of Human Rights](http://www.echr.coe.int) (http://www.echr.coe.int). The official website of the court contains general information on the court, pending cases, judgments and basic texts (such as the Rules of Court). Languages: English and French. An important feature on the Court's site is [HUDOC](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/Pages/search.asp) (http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/Pages/search.asp). (http://cmiskp.echr.coe.int/tkp197/search.asp?skin=hudoc-en), a web-based system for searching the case-law of the control bodies established under the European Convention on Human Rights. Languages: English and French.

Council of Europe, [European Committee for the Prevention of Torture](http://www.cpt.coe.int) (http://www.cpt.coe.int). This page contains information about the Convention for the Prevention of Torture as well as information about the activities and reports of the Committee. Under Reference Documents, you will find the convention, background information, rules of procedure and other information related to the convention. Languages: English and French.

6. Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Union (AU)

The OAU was established on May 25, 1963 by the representatives of 23 African nations. Its aims are to promote African unity, development, eradicate all forms of colonialism, and harmonize economic and social policies. One of the primary documents related to human rights is the [African (Banjul) Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/z1afchar.htm) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/z1afchar.htm).

The OAU was replaced by the African Union on May 26, 2002. The mandate and scope of the AU is much more broad than that of the OAU.

a. websites

[African Union](http://www.au.int/) (http://www.au.int/). This is the official site for the African Union (AU). The site contains information about the organization, its members, official documents, news, and more. The Resources section contains links to decisions, OAU/AU [treaties](http://www.au.int/en/treaties), news and more (http://www.au.int/en/treaties).

[African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights](http://www.achpr.org/) (http://www.achpr.org/). Provides access to legal instruments and documents.

[African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights](http://www.african-court.org/) (http://www.african-court.org/). Official website for the Court.

[African Human Rights: Case Law Analyser](http://caselaw.ihrda.org/) (http://caselaw.ihrda.org/). Provides access to cases from the African human rights system. Allows for browsing by country or article of the African convention and searching by number of complaint.

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[African Human Rights Resource Center](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/africa/index.html) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/africa/index.html). This site is a joint project of the Makerere University Human Rights and Peace Center and the University of Minnesota Human Rights Center. This site contains the full-text of many important documents promulgated by the OAU or related to human rights in Africa.

[Africa Action](#), Africa Policy Information Center (APIC) (http://www.africaaction.org/index.html). The APIC site provides a variety of documents related to human rights, democracy, and other critical issues.

[Coalition for an Effective african Court on Human and Peoples' Rights](http://www.africancourtcoalition.org/) (http://www.africancourtcoalition.org/). Documents and information about the Court.

7. Organization of American States (OAS)

The OAS is a regional inter-governmental organization and includes all sovereign nations of the Americas. The branch of the OAS which deals with human rights is commonly referred to as the Inter-American Human Rights System. It has two primary legal sources: [Charter of the OAS](http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/charter.html) (http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/charter.html) and [American Convention on Human Rights](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/oasinstr/zoas3con.htm) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/oasinstr/zoas3con.htm).

a. websites

[Organization of American States](http://www.oas.org/) (http://www.oas.org/). This is the official homepage of the OAS and is available in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese. It contains a great deal of information: about the OAS, its charter, resolutions, annual report of the Secretary General, treaties and conventions, speeches and statements and press releases. The [OAS Documents](#) contains links to pages containing the full text of resolutions, treaties and conventions, and reports (http://www.oas.org/documents/eng/documents.asp). The homepage provides a search mechanism and access to information by specialized areas, such as human rights. This page links to the Inter-American System, which provides links to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Available in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.

[Inter-American Commission on Human Rights](http://www.cidh.org/DefaultE.htm) (http://www.cidh.org/DefaultE.htm). The Commission page contains links to speeches, history, members, and [publications](#) (such as annual reports from 1970-2003 as well as some country reports) (http://www.cidh.org/publi.eng.htm). There is also a link to [Basic Documents](#) (http://www.cidh.org/Basicos/English/Basic.TOC.htm) which contains the full text of the Inter-American human rights instruments as well as status and ratification information.

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[Inter-American Court of Human Rights](http://www.corteidh.or.cr/) (http://www.corteidh.or.cr/). This page contains information about the Court, jurisprudence (Decisions and Judgments, Advisory Opinions, Provisional Measures, Supervision of Compliance Decisions, Jurisprudence by Country), press releases and other information. Usually, decisions are available on the Spanish site first.

Inter-American Human Rights Digest Project, [A Jurisprudential Repertoire of the Inter-American System of Human Rights](http://www.wcl.american.edu/humright/repertorio/index_en.cfm) (In Spanish only) (http://www.wcl.american.edu/humright/repertorio/index_en.cfm).

The Digest consists of excerpts selected primarily from decisions, reports, and resolutions from the Inter-American Commission and Court. These excerpts are indexed and analyzed according to the terms of the American Convention on Human Rights and the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man.

[Inter-American Commission of Women](http://www.oas.org/cim/default.htm) (http://www.oas.org/cim/default.htm). This site contains information on the Inter-American conventions relating to women as well as some [documents](#) and other information about the Commission (http://www.oas.org/cim/English/Basic%20Documents%20Index.htm). The principal Inter-American women's [conventions](#) are available from this page (http://www.oas.org/cim/English/Conventions.htm). A recent addition to the site is a [Law Update](#) page that contains a listing of regional laws regarding violence and quota laws (unfortunately, not the text of the laws) (http://www.oas.org/cim/English/LawUpdateIndex.htm). There is also status and ratification information for the Inter-American Convention the on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women.

[University of Minnesota Human Rights Library](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/regional.htm) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/regional.htm). This site contains information about the [Inter-American Court on Human Rights](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/iachr/iachr.html) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/iachr/iachr.html) and the [Inter-American Commission on Human Rights](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/cases/commissn.htm) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/cases/commissn.htm). It contains the basic documents and the case law of the Court. The decisions of the Commission are contained in its annual reports and this site has the 1991-2002 annual reports. More decisions will be added as they become available.

8. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

Originally known as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), this organization became the OSCE in 1994. This is not a strictly European organization since the United States and Canada are also members. The CSCE was created by the [Helsinki Final Act](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/osce/basics/finact75.htm) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/osce/basics/finact75.htm) in 1975. Two principles outlined in the

Act address human rights. Principle VII states "respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief" and principle VIII addresses the "equal rights and self-determination of peoples."

a. websites

[OSCE Homepage](http://www.osce.org) (http://www.osce.org). This site contains general information, news, documents, and information about the OSCE institutions. There is information on the OSCE field activities, institutions and negotiating bodies. The [Documents Library](#) contains documents, journals and decisions issued by various CSCE/OSCE negotiating bodies during different events and meetings, which took place between 1973 and present (http://www.osce.org/documents/). The site is available in various languages: English, French, German, Italian, Russian, and Spanish.

[University of Minnesota Human Rights Library](#)--OSCE Documents (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/osce/basics/oscebasc.htm).

Contains some of the basic documents of the OSCE: the 1973 Final Recommendation, Helsinki Final Act, as well as the Budapest Document of 1994.

9. Humanitarian Law

There is much debate as to whether humanitarian law is distinct from human rights law. It can be defined as "the human rights component of the law of war." The principle legal sources are the [Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the two later protocols](#) (http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/genevaconventions).

a. websites

[International Committee of the Red Cross](#) (http://www.cicr.org/eng). This is the official ICRC site. It contains weekly news items, operations by country and a section on international humanitarian law. The documents here are quite good: basic rules of humanitarian law, the Geneva conventions, and humanitarian law issues (war at sea, landmines, famine and war, etc.). Of particular interest are the [IHL databases](#). The first one is a collection of treaties and texts, commentaries on the four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, an up-to-date list of signatures, ratifications relating to IHL treaties and full text of reservations (http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/ihl-databases/index.jsp). Another important database is the [National Implementation Database](#) (http://www.cicr.org/ihl-nat). This database contains national laws, regulations, and case law on the implementation of humanitarian law accessible by State or keyword. The last collection is on [customary international humanitrian law](#) (http://www.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/home). The database is the online version of the print set called [Customary International Humanitarian Law](#)

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(Cambridge University Press, 2005) plus updated content (http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/58455274). These sites are available in Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

[International Humanitarian Law Research Initiative](http://www.ihlresearch.org/) (http://www.ihlresearch.org/). This site's "E-Library" contains full-text documents on humanitarian law topics arranged by topic or region. Documents include reports and analysis, legal instruments, resolutions and directives, and judicial decisions.

[University of Minnesota Human Rights Library](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/auoy.htm) -- Humanitarian Law of Armed Conflict (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/auoy.htm). Contains the full text of all four 1949 Geneva conventions and the two 1978 protocols, plus many other related instruments. Many are available in French and English.

[International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies](http://www.ifrc.org/) (http://www.ifrc.org/). Current information on humanitarian issues around the world. Contains links to other Red Cross/Red Crescent organizations on the Internet. Of more interest is the World Disasters Report and the Code of Conduct.

[ReliefWeb](http://reliefweb.int/home) (http://reliefweb.int/home). ReliefWeb is a project of the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA). It provides current information on the humanitarian relief operations. There is also a library filled with reports related to population, migration, world's emergencies and many others. See also the archive on natural disasters.

United States Institute of Peace, [Peace Agreements Digital Collection](http://www.usip.org/library/pa.html) (http://www.usip.org/library/pa.html). This site contains a growing collection of the full text of peace agreements related to worldwide state conflicts since 1989.

United States Institute of Peace, [Truth Commissions Digital Collection](http://www.usip.org/publications/truth-commission-digital-collection) (http://www.usip.org/publications/truth-commission-digital-collection). Collection contains decrees establishing truth commissions and similar bodies of inquiry worldwide, and the reports issued by such groups.

For more in-depth information on researching humanitarian law, see the [international humanitarian law](http://www.asil.org/ihl1.cfm) chapter of this Guide (http://www.asil.org/ihl1.cfm).

10. Other Sites

[EISIL](http://www.eisil.org) (Electronic Information System for International Law) (http://www.eisil.org).

ASIL developed EISIL so that web searchers can easily locate the highest quality primary materials,

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authoritative websites and helpful research guides to international law on the Internet. To this end, EISIL has been designed as an open database of authenticated primary and other materials across the breadth of international law, which until now have been scattered in libraries, archives and specialized websites. Users can access primary materials and websites as well as value added information, such as legal citations, summaries of documents, entry into force dates, and more. See the section of EISIL that focuses on [International Human Rights](http://www.eisil.org/index.php?sid=894484002&t=sub_pages&cat=185) (http://www.eisil.org/index.php?sid=894484002&t=sub_pages&cat=185).

Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM), [Documentation Site](http://sim.law.uu.nl/SIM/Dochome.nsf?Open) (http://sim.law.uu.nl/SIM/Dochome.nsf?Open). A good collection of primary treaties and instruments, contained in the "Library." Provides information on signatures and ratifications.

[International Legal Search Engine: Human Rights & Humanitarian Law](http://www.whatconvention.org/index.php?page=rechercher) (http://www.whatconvention.org/index.php?page=rechercher). Covers 200 human rights and humanitarian law treaties and allows searching by country, topic or theme, and date. A unique feature is the ability to search articles of treaties by topic.

Human rights crosses over into many other areas -- economic law, criminal law, environmental law, and humanitarian law (to name just a few). See other chapters of this [Guide](http://www.asil.org/erghome.cfm) for more information (http://www.asil.org/erghome.cfm).

B. Status of Human Rights Instruments

Locating the status of an instrument is of primary importance in international human rights law. The Web has become a primary source for obtaining up-to-date status information. Listed below are some of the primary websites.

UN, Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General as at ..., UN Doc. ST/LEG/Ser.E/, UN Sales No. F.95.V.5. This source is available in paper with updates on microfiche. The electronic version on the web is called [United Nations Treaty Collection](http://treaties.un.org/Pages/Home.aspx?lang=en) (http://treaties.un.org/Pages/Home.aspx?lang=en). The site consists of several components: [Status of Treaties](#), which contains the detailed status of over 470 multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary General; the [UN Treaty Series](#), which consists of over 158,000 treaties registered with the Secretariat; and the [League of Nations Treaty Series](#). The information can be searched by a title or, via the advanced search engine, by subject or participant. For each treaty there is a citation, entry into force and registration dates, status, and signature and ratification information. Often the reservations are also printed. One of the biggest advantages of using this tool online is that it is more current than the paper version.

[UN High Commissioner for Human Rights](http://www.ohchr.org/english/) (http://www.ohchr.org/english/) For each treaty, there

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is a link to status and ratification information from the UN Treaty Collection website. Declarations and Reservations are also available. Ratification status information is also available [by country and by treaty](#) (http://www2.ohchr.org/english/).

[The United Nations Human Rights Treaties](#) (http://www.bayefsky.com/docs.php/area/ratif). Provides ratification information by treaty and by state. The information includes the following:

1. whether a state has signed the treaty;
2. whether a state has ratified/acceded/succeeded to the treaty;
3. whether the state has accepted any optional provisions of the treaty;
4. whether the state has ratified/acceded/succeeded to any amendments to the treaty; and
5. whether the state has ratified/acceded/succeeded to any Optional Protocol to a treaty. Limited to the UN human rights treaty system.

[Basic Documents Pertaining to Human Rights in the Inter-American System](#) (http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/mandate/basic_documents.asp). This site offers signature and ratification information for several of the Inter-American human rights treaties. Unfortunately, it does not offer this information for all of the basic documents on human rights. Other OAS treaty signature and ratification information can be accessed through the [Treaties and Agreements](#) section of this site (http://www.oas.org/dil/treaties_and_agreements.htm).

Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM), [Human Rights Instruments](#) (http://sim.law.uu.nl/SIM/Library/RATIF.nsf/Country?OpenView). Provides information on signatures and ratification information for many treaties and instruments from various human rights systems. Access to the information is by treaty or country. Reservations and objections are searchable.

Many IGOs publish status information on a fairly regular basis or makes the information available on their websites. Many of the sites mentioned in other sections include sources for status information:

- [Ratifications of ILO Conventions](#)
(http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11001:0::NO:::).

- ICRC Ratifications are part of the [IHL database](#) (http://www.icrc.org/ihl).

- Each treaty included on [Council of Europe treaties page](#) includes signature and ratification information (on the same page as the text of the treaty) (http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/ListeTraites.asp?CM=10&CL=ENG).

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- If the U.S. is a party to the agreement, consult other tools such as Treaties in Force (http://www.state.gov/s/l/treaty/tif/index.htm) and the Treaty Actions section in the U.S. Department of State website (http://www.state.gov/s/l/treaty/c3428.htm).

For more information on these sources as well as useful phone numbers, see the Treaties Chapter (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=treaties) of this Guide.

C. Reservations/Declarations

This information can sometimes be difficult to locate, especially the most current information. If it is a UN instrument, you are likely to find this information contained in UN documents (see also the United Nations Chapter of this Guide (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=un).. Some information is available through electronic sources.

United Nations Treaty Collection (http://treaties.un.org/Pages/UNTSOnline.aspx?id=1). Contains the declarations and reservations of many treaties registered with the Secretary General of the UN, including human rights, refugees, and status of women instruments. The declarations and reservations are full-text and were made upon ratification, accession or succession. The drawback is obviously that this information is limited to those treaties registered with the Secretary General.

The United Nations Human Rights Treaties (http://www.bayefsky.com/docs.php/area/reservations). Provides information on UN human rights treaties by treaty or by state. Information is from the UN's Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary- General.

OAS -- Basic Documents Pertaining to Human Rights in the Inter-American System (http://www.cidh.org/Basicos/English/Basic.TOC.htm). Contains reservations and declarations to these documents.

See also the websites mentioned above under status information for reservations and declarations.

D. Jurisprudence, Case law, Decisions and Reports

This section contains information from adjudicative bodies, like the European Court of Human Rights and the Human Rights Committee. Keep in mind that not all of this information is available in electronic form. Some of the information is still only available in publications from the issuing body (UN, ILO, etc.) or reprinted in other sources, such as International Legal Materials, Human Rights Law Journal, International Human Rights Reports, etc.

1. United Nations

To obtain reports of States parties, concluding observations or comments, general comments and

recommendations, and other basic documents submitted to and issued by the human rights treaty bodies use the [Treaty bodies Search](http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en) (http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en). While this search mechanism allows the researcher to select options from drop-down boxes, there is no way to do keyword searching.

For more detailed information about the types of documents issued by these bodies, see [United Nations Documentation: Human Rights](http://research.un.org/en/docs/humanrights) (http://research.un.org/en/docs/humanrights).

Use the following tools to locate the UN document number and date of the document.

- [AccessUN](http://infoweb.newsbank.com) (1945-present) (http://infoweb.newsbank.com) (by subscription only)

- One of the indexes available for locating UN documents by keyword, author, title or UN symbol. Contains some full-text documents.

- [UNBISnet](http://unbisnet.un.org/) - UN Bibliographic Information System. Catalogue of UN publications and documentation indexed by the United Nations Dag Hammarskjold Library and the Library of the UN Office at Geneva, and non-UN publications held in the collection of the Dag Hammarskjold Library. Also includes voting records and index of speeches. Some full-text documents are available (http://unbisnet.un.org/).

- [UN-I-QUE: United Nations Info Quest](http://lib-unique.un.org/lib/unique.nsf). Good for identifying documents for certain categories of materials (http://lib-unique.un.org/lib/unique.nsf).

- [ODS](http://www.un.org/en/documents/ods/) (Official Document System of the United Nations) (http://www.un.org/en/documents/ods/). " ODS covers all types of official United Nations documentation, beginning in 1993. Older UN documents are, however, added to the system on a daily basis. ODS also provides access to the resolutions of the General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council from 1946 onwards."

a. Human Rights Council (replaced the Commission on Human Rights in 2006).

[HRC website](http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/) (http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/)

[University of Minnesota Human Rights Library](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/hr-council.html) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/hr-council.html)

[Documents and Resolutions](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/Documents.aspx) (http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/Documents.aspx)

[University of Minnesota Human Rights Library](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/commission/commission.htm) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/commission/commission.htm)

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b. Human Rights Committee (HRC).

Committee Homepage (http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CCPR/Pages/CCPRIndex.aspx)

University of Minnesota Human Rights Library
(http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/hrcommittee/hrc-page.html)

The United Nations Human Rights Treaties (http://www.bayefsky.com/bytheme.php/index/article)

CCPR: Centre for Civil and Political Rights (http://www.ccprcentre.org/)

c. Committee Against Torture (CAT).

Committee Homepage (http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cat/pages/catindex.aspx)

University of Minnesota Human Rights Library (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/cat/cat-page.html)

The United Nations Human Rights Treaties (http://www.bayefsky.com/bytheme.php/index/article)

d. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Committee Homepage (http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cedaw/pages/cedawindex.aspx)

University of Minnesota Human Rights Library (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/cedaw/cedaw-page.htm)

The United Nations Human Rights Treaties (http://www.bayefsky.com/bytheme.php/index/article)

e. Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Committee Homepage (http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/index.htm)

University of Minnesota Human Rights Library (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/crc/crc-page.html)

The United Nations Human Rights Treaties (http://www.bayefsky.com/bytheme.php/index/article)

f. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD).

Committee Homepage (http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CERD/Pages/CERDIndex.aspx)

University of Minnesota Human Rights Library (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/country/cerd-page.html)

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[The United Nations Human Rights Treaties](http://www.bayefsky.com/bytheme.php/index/article) (http://www.bayefsky.com/bytheme.php/index/article)

[World Conference Against Racism](http://www.racism.gov.za/) (http://www.racism.gov.za/) Note that this site is no longer active, but is being retained for research purposes.

g. Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR).

[Committee Homepage](http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cescr/pages/cescrindex.aspx) (http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/cescr/pages/cescrindex.aspx)

[University of Minnesota Human Rights Library](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/esc/esc-page.htm) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/esc/esc-page.htm)

[The United Nations Human Rights Treaties](http://www.bayefsky.com/bytheme.php/index/article) (http://www.bayefsky.com/bytheme.php/index/article)

h. Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW).

[Committee Homepage](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cmw/index.htm) (http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cmw/index.htm)

[The United Nations Human Rights Treaties](http://www.bayefsky.com/bytheme.php/index/article) (http://www.bayefsky.com/bytheme.php/index/article)

i. Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

[Committee Homepage](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/CRPDIndex.aspx) (http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/CRPDIndex.aspx)

j. Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED)

[Committee Home page](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CED/Pages/CEDIndex.aspx) (http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CED/Pages/CEDIndex.aspx)

See also International Human Rights Instruments, Compilation of General Comments and General Recommendations Adopted by Human Rights Bodies (New York: United Nations, 1994-). The most [current version](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc/comments.htm) is U.N. Doc. HRI/GEN/1/Rev.9 (Vol. I) and HRI/GEN/1/Rev.9 (Vol. II) (available in PDF) (http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc/comments.htm).

2. International Labour Organization (ILO)

a. [Triblex](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/triblex/triblex_browse.home) (a database containing a thematic analysis of the case law of the ILO Administrative Tribunal) (http://www.ilo.org/dyn/triblex/triblex_browse.home).

b. [Digest of Decisions of the Freedom of Association Committee](http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/digestq.htm) (http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/digestq.htm).

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3. European System (Council of Europe)

a. [European Court of Human Rights](#) (general information, basic texts, access to pending cases and judgments) (http://www.echr.coe.int/).

b. [European Court of Human Rights Portal, HUDOC](#) (a searchable database of the case-law of the European Convention on Human Rights) (http://www.echr.coe.int/Pages/home.aspx?p=caselaw/HUDOC&c=).

c. [Case-Law Analysis](#) (http://www.echr.coe.int/Pages/home.aspx?p=caselaw/analysis&c=).

4. Inter-American System

a. [Inter-American Commission](#) (http://www.cidh.org/publi.eng.htm). Select the "Cases" tab for documents and decisions. Some older reports, 1970-1980, are available in English or in Spanish only.

b. [Inter-American Court](#) (http://www.corteidh.or.cr/). Select the "Jurisprudence" tab.

c. [Inter-American Court on Human Rights Advisory Opinions and Contentious Cases](#) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/iachr/iachr.html).

d. [Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, Annual Reports](#) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/cases/commissn.htm).

e. [Inter-American Human Rights Database](#) (http://www.wcl.american.edu/pub/humright/digest/index.html). Contains annual reports, session reports, and special reports of the Inter-American Commission.

5. Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Union (AU)

a. [African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights](#) (http://www.african-court.org/en/). Official website for the Court. Contains information about the Court, cases, and basic documents.

b. [African Human Rights: Case Law Analyser](#) (http://caselaw.ihrda.org/). Provides access to decisions from the African Human Rights system.

6. Collections of Decisions

INTERIGHTS, [Commonwealth and International Human Rights Case Law Databases](#) (http://www.interights.org/database-search/index.htm). This database contains over 2,800 summaries of significant human rights decisions, from both domestic Commonwealth courts, and from tribunals applying international human rights law such as the African Commission on Human

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and Peoples' Rights, the European Court of Human Rights and more.

Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM), Case Law Database
(http://sim.law.uu.nl/SIM/Dochome.nsf?Open). This website provides access to databases
containing summaries of the case law of the Human Rights Committee, the Committee Against
Torture, and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. There is also a database
containing information on judgments of the European Court of Human Rights and the concluding
comments of the United Nations treaty bodies have been made accessible. Coverage varies. Users
must register to use the databases, but there is no charge for access.

International Courts & Tribunals Library (WorldLII) (http://www.worldlii.org/int/cases/). A
searchable collection of international courts and tribunals, including those that focus on human
rights. Coverage for each court and tribunal varies.

The Project on International Courts and Tribunals (http://www.pict-pcti.org). Provides the full-text
of selected cases and decisions from various international courts and tribunals, including the
European Court of Human Rights, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and the
International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia.

University of Michigan Law School, Refugee Caselaw Site (http://www.refugeecaselaw.org/). This
site collects, indexes, and publishes selected recent court decisions that interpret the legal definition
of a "refugee." Contains cases from the highest national courts of Australia, Austria, Canada, France,
Germany, New Zealand, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Oxford Reports on International Law (ORIL) (http://www.oxfordlawreports.com/). A subscription
database that provides case law from the following bodies: African Commission, European court of
Human Rights, UN Committee against Torture, UN Committee on the Elimination of
Discrimination against Women, UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and
the UN Human Rights Committee. There is also a module for international criminal law.

Refworld (UNHCR) (http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/). Search for case law from
various human rights courts and dispute settlement bodies. Allows more flexibility when searching
for human rights cases, including UN Treaty body jurisprudence.

7. Other

Global Health and Human Rights Database: A Free Online Database of Health and Human Rights Law
(http://www.globalhealthrights.org/).

International Court of Justice website (http://www.icj-cij.org/).

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[International Criminal Court](#) (http://www.icc-cpi.int/Menus/ICC/Home).

[International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia](#) (http://www.icty.org/). See also the [Topical Digest of the Case Law](#) (http://www.hrw.org/node/11277) (Human Rights Watch).

[International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda](#) (http://www.unictr.org/). See also [Digest of the Case Law](#) (http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2010/01/12/genocide-war-crimes-and-crimes-against-humanity) (Human Rights Watch).

[Special Court for Sierra Leone](#) (http://www.sc-sl.org/).

[Special Court for Lebanon](#) (http://www.stl-tsl.org/).

[Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia](#) (http://www.eccc.gov.kh/en).

[Gender Jurisprudence](#) (http://www.genderjurisprudence.org/index.php/gender-jurisprudence-collections).

[Cambodia Tribunal Monitor](#) (http://www.cambodiatribunal.org/).

LEXIS provides access to the European Human Rights Reports from 1960 and ICJ decisions (subscription only).

WESTLAW provides access to ICJ, ICTY and ICTR cases (subscription only).

[UNODC Human Trafficking Case Law Database](#) (http://www.unodc.org/cld/index.jspx).

[World Court Digest](#). A compendium of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (http://www.mpil.de/ww/en/pub/research/details/publications/institute/wcd.cfm).

There are many topical collections of jurisprudence from various human rights bodies and institutions, such as housing rights, reproductive rights, minority rights, economic and social rights, etc. These collections are available from IGO and NGO websites, books and articles. For example, see [Forced Labour and Human Trafficking: Casebook of Court Decisions](#) (ILO, 2009) (http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_106143.pdf). Search by keyword using Google to locate relevant web collections. See the [above sections of this guide](#) for information on locating books and articles.

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VI. Secondary Sources

A. Country Reports

An important element in human rights research is documenting the human rights conditions in various countries. Many of the sites listed below provide current country condition information.

Amnesty International Country Reports (http://web.amnesty.org/library/engindex).

Asylumlaw.org (http://www.asylumlaw.org).

SuperSearch - search 15 human rights databases at once (http://www.asylumlaw.org/cgi-bin/texis.cgi/webinator/metanew4).

Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board, Research sections contains country of origin research and national documentation packages (http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/research/index_e.htm).

Center for Gender and Refugee Studies (http://cgrs.uchastings.edu/).

European Country of Origin Information Network (http://www.ecoi.net/).

Forced Migration Online (http://www.forcedmigration.org/).

Human Rights Watch, World Reports (http://www.hrw.org/node/79288). Reports by issue or country (http://www.hrw.org/en/publications/reports).

ICRC Country Reports (http://www.icrc.org/eng/operations_country).

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Country Reports (http://www.cidh.org/publi.eng.htm). See also annual and thematic reports.

Inter-American Human Rights Database, Selected Country Reports (http://www.wcl.american.edu/pub/humright/digest/inter-american/index.html).

International Crisis Group (http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm).

Refworld (http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain).

Reliefweb Countries (http://reliefweb.int/countries).

Religious Freedom World Report (International Coalition for Religious Freedom) (http://www.religiousfreedom.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47&Itemid=56).

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[Resources for Researching Country Conditions](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/research/) (University of Minnesota, Human Rights Library) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/research/).

[UNDP Human Development Reports](http://hdr.undp.org/) (http://hdr.undp.org/).

[UNICEF State of the World's Children](http://www.unicef.org/sowc/index.html) (http://www.unicef.org/sowc/index.html).

[U.S. Dept. of State Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](http://www.state.gov/g/drl/hr/) (http://www.state.gov/g/drl/hr/).

[U.S. Dept.. of State, Annual Report on International Religious Freedom](http://www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/) (http://www.state.gov/g/drl/irf/).

[U.S. Dept. of State Country Reports on Trafficking in Persons](http://www.state.gov/g/tip/) (http://www.state.gov/g/tip/).

University of Minnesota Human Rights, [Meta Search Engine for Searching Multiple Human Rights Sites](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/lawform.html) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/lawform.html).

Newspapers are also an excellent source for human rights conditions in various countries. See [Online Newspapers](http://www.onlinenewspapers.com) (http://www.onlinenewspapers.com) which provides links to newspapers from all over the world.

B. Periodical Literature

As mentioned in above, periodical literature is a very good source for information on a human rights topic. Some relevant periodicals are available on LEXIS, WESTLAW, and the Internet. There are a few places on the Internet which provide links to such electronic publications. See the [The University of Minnesota Human Rights Library](http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/links/journals.html) (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/links/journals.html). While some journals are available full-text electronically, many more are only available in print. For information on locating periodical literature, see the [Periodical Indexes](#) section above.

C. Blogs

Lists and newsgroups have long been considered valuable tools for the human rights researcher. They provide a mechanism for communicating with other researchers and activists as well as provide information on action alerts and documentation. There are some that are dedicated to international law, such as [Opinio Juris](http://www.opiniojuris.org/) (http://www.opiniojuris.org/). Useful blogs include [Human Rights First](http://blog.humanrightsfirst.org/category/blog/) (http://blog.humanrightsfirst.org/category/blog/) and the blog by human rights scholar William Schabas called [PhD Studies in Human Rights](http://humanrightsdoctorate.blogspot.com/) (http://humanrightsdoctorate.blogspot.com/). Other related blogs include [Grotian Moment: The Saddam Hussein Trial Blog](http://www.law.case.edu/saddamtrial/) (http://www.law.case.edu/saddamtrial/) and IntLawGrrls

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(http://intlawgrrls.blogspot.com/index.html). To locate other blogs of interest, see [Blawg: Your Source for Law and Legal Related Weblogs](#), a searchable directory of blogs (http://www.blawg.com).

Another useful blog for human rights researchers is [UN Pulse](#) (http://un-library.tumblr.com), created by the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library, UN Pulse provides information on new reports, documents, and publications. It's a useful tool for keeping up on new UN human rights documents. Along the same lines, see Elisa Mason's [Forced Migration Current Awareness Blog](#) (http://fm-cab.blogspot.com/), a good source for information on new books and research tools on migration and related issues.

VII. Other Relevant Websites

With so much information on human rights available on the web, this guide only scratches the surface of what a researcher might need. A new tool for searching over 5000 human rights websites is [HuriSearch, the human rights search engine](#) (http://www.hurisearch.org). The websites listed below are good places to begin one's research since they link to many other relevant sources.

[Amnesty International Online](#) (http://www.amnesty.org/). This is the official Internet site for AI. It contains the most up-to-date information -- new document summaries, publications from AI (including the annual country reports), and links to other sites.

ASIL, [Electronic Information System for International Law](#) (EISIL) (http://www.eisil.org/).This is a database launched by ASIL and features 13 subject areas, including human rights. EISIL links to primary documents (international instruments and documents), important websites, and research guides. An added feature of EISIL is the information available by clicking "more information" -- here you will find citations, summaries of the resources, and more.

[Avon Global center for Women and Justice](#) (Cornell Law School) (http://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/womenandjustice/). Provides access to treaties and agreements, statues and cases from around the world related to gender-based violence.

[Derechos -- Human Rights](#) (http://www.derechos.org/). This website offers a variety of human rights information including reports on human rights violations, actions, links and documents. Information is organized by country and by issue; an index and a search engine allow for easy finding of materials. There is a focus on Latin America and many of these documents are only available in Spanish.

[ESCR-Net Caselaw Database](#) (http://www.escr-net.org/caselaw/). The caselaw database makes ESCR-related pleadings, commentary and decisions available.

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European Union, Fundamental Rights (http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/fsj/rights/fsj_rights_intro_en.htm). This page contains information and documents related to the EU's work on fundamental rights.

Flare Index to Treaties (http://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/flag/introtreaties.htm). A searchable database of over 2,000 multilateral treaties from 1856- present. Includes links to the text, citation information, and other information.

Forced Migration Online (FMO) (http://www.forcedmigration.org/). This website provides access to online resources dealing with the situation of forced migrants worldwide. These resources include journal articles, full-text documents, and other web resources.

Global Health and Human Rights Database (http://www.globalhealthrights.org/). A free collection of health and human rights law, including cases and international and regional instruments. Also includes a collection of national constitutions.

Human Rights & Constitutional Rights (http://www.hrcr.org/). Lots of links to sites and documents, arranged by country reports, international links, regional links, national links, and documents.

Human Rights Internet (http://www.hri.ca/). Human Rights Internet is an international network of human rights organizations, documentation centre, and publishing house. This site contains a lot of everything including UN documents, education materials, resource guides and lists of links.

The Human Rights Web Archive @ Columbia University (http://hrwa.cul.columbia.edu/). This is a searchable collection of archived copies of human rights websites created by non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions, tribunals and individuals. Collecting began in 2008 and has been ongoing for active websites. New websites are added to the collection regularly.

Human Trafficking Search (http://www.humantraffickingsearch.net). The National Multicultural Institute has created a new site focusing on human trafficking. The four areas of the site are human trafficking, child labor, bonded labor and sex slavery.   The site can be searched or browsed and much of the content is full text.

HURIDOCS (http://www.huridocs.org/). HURIDOCS (Human Rights Information and Documentation Systems, International), established in 1982, is a global network of human rights organizations concerned with human rights information. It establishes basic tools for handling and managing human rights documents, provides training, and advice on software. It has developed a search tool called Hurisearch (http://www.hurisearch.org/). This search engine aims to "provide one point access to all human rights information published by human rights organizations worldwide;

create a level playing field on which all human rights organisations can have their sites indexed knowing fully the indexing and ranking techniques used and knowing that the search engine operations are overseen by their peers."

Legislationline.org (http://www.legislationline.org/). This is a free online service that compiles international documents and domestic legislation (for OSCE countries) on a variety of issues: citizenship, fair trial, migration, independent judiciary, trafficking of human beings, and more.

Minority Rights Information System (MIRIS) (http://miris.eurac.edu/mugs2/index.jsp?TopBarItem=Home). The database provides access to domestic legislation, international documents, case law, country information, reports, and treaties for issues related to minority rights.

Protection Project (http://www.protectionproject.org). The project documents and disseminates information about the scope of the problem of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, with a focus on national and international laws, case law, and implications of trafficking on U.S. and international foreign policy.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/projects/mmt/udhr/index.html) (Columbia University) This site focuses on the influence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on international and domestic law, politics and affairs over the last half century. Multimedia features provide information on the history and development of the UDHR and fundamental norms.

University of Minnesota, Human Rights Library, United States Military Medicine in War on Terror Prisons (http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/OathBetrayed/index.html). A unique of government documents pertaining to the roles Armed Forces Medical Personnel who worked in US Armed Forces prisons in Iraq, Afghanistan, and at Guantanamo Bay from 2001 to 2006.

Women's Human Rights Resources (http://www.law-lib.utoronto.ca/Diana/). This site continues to be one of the best resources on women's human rights. The site has been reorganized and the materials are now available in a new resources database. The materials are organized into articles, documents and links. Other useful materials are available as well, such as fact sheets, publications, and research guides.

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In addition to coordinating and providing international research and reference services at UC Berkeley Law Library, Marci teaches foreign and international legal research and is the liaison to the international journals, programs, and clinics. She is also responsible for selection and collection development for the foreign, comparative and international collections.
Marci has written many articles and lectured on researching international and foreign law. Marci and Professor David Weissbrodt at the University of Minnesota Law School are also responsible for creating and designing the **University of Minnesota Human Rights Library** (http://www.umn.edu/humanrts). Marci continues to serve as the co-director of project with Prof. Weissbrodt. Marci is also involved in other web projects with the American Society of International Law and other organizations. She was one of the Project Managers for the ASIL sponsored **Electronic Information System for International Law** (EISIL) (http://www.eisil.org). Marci is the co-author of two publications on research: *International Legal Research in a Nutshell* (with Robert Berring, 2008) and *International and Foreign Legal Research: A Coursebook* (with Mary Rumsey, 2d ed., 2012).

Marci is General Editor of the Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals (http://www.law.berkeley.edu/library/iflp/) and the Foreign Law Guide (http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/foreign-law-guide).

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