

Podcast Series 1 - Engaging with Human Rights Scepticism

Episode 1 - Clearly unclear Lotte Leicht and Guy Haarscher

Hi, this is To The Righthouse, a new podcast series by the Global Campus of Human Rights. From scepticism to hope, from utopia to empathy, we discuss human rights, riding waves, but also signaling where the light is. This podcast was recorded in Venice, Italy, on the island of Lido at the Global Campus headquarters.

George Ulrich (GU) - Today is the opening debate in a newly launched podcast series organised by the Global Campus of Human Rights on engaging with human rights scepticism. In the course of the coming weeks, we will explore different expressions of scepticism: some are academic in nature, and target the concept and underlying philosophical premises of human rights; other sceptics are concerned more with the practical application of human rights. A characteristic expression of scepticism views human rights as expressions of Western values that are instrumentalized by powerful states to assert geopolitical influence in a post-colonial, post-Cold War era. However, profound concerns about the value base associated with human rights are also widespread in the Global North. Some expressions of scepticism are articulated from a right wing political standpoint, and may be associated with illiberal trends. However, there is also a long standing scepticism about human rights in left wing political circles. These are all issues that will be further explored in future podcasts. Our aim today is to chart the territory, as it were, explore what is at stake. We will begin with an examination of the simple questions: Why engage? What might human rights advocates gain by seeking to establish a dialogue with critics and exponents of divergent views? When is this strategically opportune? And when might it be more appropriate to adopt a principled and uncompromising stand, for example, by naming and shaming human rights detractors?

To explore these questions, we're joined today by two eminent human rights experts who, however, come at the issues from rather different perspectives. One is an experienced practitioner, the other academic scholar. Lotte Leicht has until recently served as director of the Human Rights Watch office in Brussels, and has decades of experience with human rights advocacy on the ground and in multilateral diplomatic fora. Guy Haarscher is a Professor Emeritus of the Free University of Brussels, a prominent legal scholar and public intellectual, who has continuously devoted academic attention to emerging challenges to human rights and democracy. I'm George Ulrich, Academic Director of the Global Campus of Human Rights.

Let's begin with you, Lotte, in what ways challenges posed by human rights sceptics impacted your advocacy work, and how have you addressed them? Please be as concrete as possible.

Lotte Leicht (LL) - In many different ways, and I would say very often not in good faith ways, in terms of voicing scepticism about the international framework of human rights, international human rights law, but also its application. I think the good faith arguments have come primarily from survivors of gross abuses, both communities, individuals, as well as witnesses in that what is there in terms of international human rights law - be it civil and political rights or economic, social and

cultural rights - is not enough to address the abuses they suffer or the concerns that they have. In the same vein of addressing critiques, I faced a lot of partisan criticism. And that means, particularly when I've been part of documenting abuses in conflict areas, but also then when advocating justice for abuses, one side would argue immediately against the research, the facts, the legitimacy if you will of the abuses documented, if they're committed by one side; and when you document abuses by that other side, you would get the same kind of negative feedback. So that I actually have often taken as a compliment, because I very often felt: 'well, that means I do something right'. It doesn't mean that I've been part of trying to establish balances of abuses, but just facts-based research and subsequent advocacy. I would also say that there has been a lot of 'what about-ism', meaning: 'why do you particularly document or advocate for solutions in this particular situation? why not this one?' and most often, that's just a mechanism to divert discussion and not to focus on this issue. It doesn't mean that I wouldn't be, or the people I've worked with, wouldn't be involved also in many other situations. But very often, that has been used as criticism.

And then, finally, I would say that, particularly in the international foras, we have seen very partisan positions, particularly by governments - when it's friends or allies of theirs who are committing atrocities or abuses of international human rights law in not wanting to address that. That I have seen by both democracies and autocracies, a sort of protection effort to protect friends and allies. And that means that the human rights law is important, but it's only important when it's foes that are violating it. So it's sort of a wide range of interventions, pro and against. But I would just say that as a real basis, my core experience has been that it is incredibly important to have an objective set of international standards, that doesn't change with political whims or government changing, but actually is this objective set of standards that we can rely on, that we can base facts on, and that courageous survivors, communities and affected people can trust and move ahead on the basis of.

GU - Great, thanks so much Lotte Leicht for kicking us off in such strong observations. I mean, you're immediately putting on the table a distinction between good faith contestation and bad faith objections to the human rights agenda. And I think this is something we should really keep in mind and probe deeper. I also hear you, at least implicitly, raising the question of potential double standards and how human rights issues are being addressed and pursued, and whether that's something that might compromise work being done in the field. Now, before we go forward with these particular issues, Guy, I would like to invite you too, to maybe elaborate a little bit on how have issues of human rights scepticism arisen in your work over many years?

Guy Haarscher (GH) - Well, thank you, I could begin with an experience I had in Beijing. Actually, I came first there with the EIUC (The European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation) in 2013, with Florence Benoît-Rohmer and we gave some conferences on human rights in Beijing. And then I came again in 2015 and I taught, I had to teach - that was the programme - the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) at the UIBE (University of International Business and Economics), which is a university in the north of Beijing. It is important because I could see a certain change in the way human rights are dealt with in China, but it's more general. In China, when I gave the course it was in 2015, in the beginning of Xi Jinping rule, so things were decided before, I think, because I don't think these kinds of courses could exist today. And that's my point. Nobody would criticise human rights as such. So I gave a list of human rights, the list that is in the Declaration, and when I spoke of a foreign country, whatever problem, even

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is very difficult to deal with (for) our students in Europe, it was 'okay', you know, the Chinese don't care and they would discuss it as they would discuss about Waterloo and other problems - in a very distanced and objective way. Now, whenever I would speak of China, or Hong Kong or Tibet, or the Xinjiang Uyghur (Autonomous Region) so on and so forth, I had always students who came forward with texts that were not translated into English, so I couldn't check it; saying that: 'well, China respects perfectly human rights, there is a propaganda against China'. But you know, if you had read these texts, you would understand that China perfectly respects human rights. So that was, of course, something I couldn't control because I don't read Chinese. And anyway, it's a matter of manipulating facts and not criticising the value of human rights. They said: 'okay, human rights are good', 'we respect human rights, you're wrong when you think and when you say that we don't respect them'. Then you have the present situation, the present situation is very different.

I don't know whether or not you have heard Xi Jinping speaking at the opening of the Winter Olympic Games in Beijing. And he said, 'China, and maybe Russia', because he was with Putin, 'are more evolved, developed than the Western countries, we have superior values, we have different and superior values'. And so that's the problem of Asian values, Islamic values, all these ideas that human rights are a Western concept, and that other countries and other regimes cannot be judged, and assessed and appreciated in the name of a notion that is a Western notion, as that is not universal. And so you have for instance, if we speak of the Asian values, the idea of harmony versus individualism, the idea of authority, Confucius, all these elements that show another view of the values, and that, of course, is a direct attack on human rights. I don't know whether or not it is in good faith. I think it is massively a certain manipulation of concepts.

And that's my point just to begin, and then I'm finished for the moment, my point is that the perspective of these other values, Asian values, African values (and their) authenticity, (as) Mobutu (Sese Seko) said, Islamic values, Russian Orthodox values, etc. - it depends on the interlocutors we have. If you speak with people who have the power, they will defend these values, because it is a way for them not to be criticised in the name of human rights. But if you speak with people at the basis of society - of course, it's very difficult to hear these voices, because there is sort of a screen, which is 'a power' between us and them - then you would hear people, maybe they wouldn't speak of human rights in a sophisticated language, like political philosophy and so on, but they would say that they don't want to be attacked and to be ruled by an arbitrary leader, and that they want to have a job and not to be dependent on the power, and that they want the police not to be arbitrary in the arrests, and the judges to be independent and elections to be fair, and so on, and so forth. And so you would listen to people who would defend human rights, even if they don't really understand the notion. And I think that is a discrepancy. So what I want to insist on, is this for the moment, (it) is just this difference between: 'we accept human rights, but don't criticise us because we have the facts and we respect human rights', or 'we have different values and don't criticise us, because your values are not the criterion we accept'.

GU - Thanks, Guy, even if you approach the issues from a different angle and perspective, in many ways, I hear you sort of coming towards the same point, which is really, as I hear you at least, saying that many of the criticisms and sceptical objections to human rights that are being voiced in the international political arena, have an element at least of bad faith in them, that they're protecting ulterior motives in some sense or another. They're protecting power, they're protecting

the privileged interests and so on. At least that seems to be a clear theme, and I just like to challenge or push that a little bit, you know, are you sure there isn't an element of, let's say alienation from people? For example, if you take the Asian values debate, people on the ground feel, to some degree, a certain sense of affinity, loyalty with existing value systems that may at least be perceived to have some element of conflict with individualistic international human rights. And is there an element of justification in governments' claim that they are prioritising collective interest, for example, growing the economy, reducing poverty, whatever it might be, as a priority that somehow takes precedence to the compliance with the international human rights agenda. Are these totally bogus claims or how do we respond?

GH - I wouldn't say they are totally bogus claims. I think that there is a part of justified resentment, especially in China, in the way China was treated by the Europeans and, generally speaking, there is a lot of resentment about the West. Some of these criticisms addressed to Western policies are completely justified, some of them. The problem is that some of them are attacking a certain domination: cultural domination or economic domination or geopolitical domination by the West, by attacking human rights, which is a very important problem, because you mentioned the certain value of 'the community' and which is emphasized not only by the Chinese, but in other parts of the world, the notion of 'more solidarity'. But actually, I think that if I look at these countries, the majority (of them), they criticise the West as being individualist, and oppose individualism to certain values of social harmony, hierarchy, peace, solidarity, and not the brutality of the market. But actually, I think there is a confusion between two forms of individualism.

The majority of the countries in the world have accepted capitalism, and even capitalism that is less regulated than in the Western states, social states, but at the same time, they are very authoritarian. And that's the mix of authoritarianism and capitalism, that is so present today, problematic and very complex, but I think that the criticism of human rights, is a criticism of what I would call 'the ethical universal individualism', which means each individual has certain rights, and it has nothing to do, it's not the same as possessive individualism, which is related to capitalism. And I think that these countries - it's an hypothesis - these countries, which defend community, solidarity, harmony against individualism, accept - I would say - the bad individualism, you know, the possessive individualism, egoism, and so on, the neoliberalism and total primacy of the market, but at the same time, they don't accept the basic value of human rights, which is to defend vulnerability of the individual. And I think there is a confusion. I don't know whether I made myself understood.

GU - I think very clear and very interesting point, in fact, but I'll immediately hand it over to you Lotte to hear your reaction, both to the question and to the response that we've just heard.

LL - Very often, when we talk about human rights, there is this perception that everybody thinks about their rights all the time and defines both their existence, but also how they go about life on that basis. I don't think that is true for those who actually enjoy their rights. And sometimes that is also an enjoyment that means being lifted out of poverty, having access to school, having access to clean water, and so on and so forth, and far more in the economic and social rights framework, rather than in the civil and political rights framework.

I think the issue individually comes home once you become a victim of wrong or your family is wronged, or something happens that you are unable to address. When the school where your child went every day suddenly collapses, people die because of government corruption in the building regulations and you don't have access, one to speak about this, access to redress, to ensure that those who are responsible for this will never do it again and will be held accountable in an independent court of law; once all of that comes home, you suddenly define your rights in a different way and when they are violated and you can't speak, you're being silenced, your neighbours are being silenced, your child needs medical assistance that is now depending on your silence, you cannot be sure that this will not happen again, your communities affected by the crime, then you, you live these rights violations suddenly in a different way.

And that's where that takes over. So I think we need to also understand that human rights actually are lived by individuals, not only in benefiting from those rights, but particularly when they're challenged. And the challenges are impossible, simply because of all violations. And that's where values and rights are sort of coming against each other. And this is part of the work that I have done for many, many years, where we actually see that that's where people suddenly know rights from wrongs, they don't necessarily know whether it's in that convention, or whether it's laid down in these and these laws, that's not important. They usually know wrongs when they happen.

GU - So again, to be a little bit the devil's advocate, maybe let me start from a slightly different viewpoint, I've been working for decades as a human rights educator. And we happen to have a monastery, which is the seat of the Global Campus of Human Rights. We have 90 very, very enthusiastic and dedicated and talented students here every year and we have 60 or 70 professors who come to teach here and my feeling is the professors generally tend to be very much invested in, and supportive of, the human rights agenda. So are the students, and I have a slight concern that we become a bit of an echo chamber, that we are all affirming the same message. And being even in the monastery, there's a slight, I don't want to say 'cultish feel' to it, but there is, at least I feel, there's really a need sometimes to open up our eyes and ears to what's being said outside of these premises. And to maybe also assume that there is an element of good faith and there might be something to be learned. It's not to justify wrongs, as you're talking about wrongs Lotte; it is not to justify political manipulation and abuse, but it's simply to say: might there be elements of insights that we could take on board that also come from the side of the critics? And listening to you, for example, Guy, making a conceptual distinction between a possessive individualism and an ethical universal individualism, I think, it is very interesting and I'm wondering: is there a discussion here? And for example, the way the African Charter on Human and People's Rights really tries to emphasise the importance of the community, explicitly, as a counterpart to a concept of universal individual rights: is there something there that we also in the European context could take on board and learn from?

GH - Well, I think that is an interesting point you made, it's the same I have in Bruges at the College of Europe: everyone is in favour of Europe. And in a certain way, at a certain point we don't take into account some arguments by Eurosceptics, and sovereignists, and whatever. Because some of these arguments might be valid. And we are not there. We are not a church, a secular church, like you know, we want to promote Europe, it's not our job. Our job is to create a certain capacity of critical thinking in the head of our students. Now, it's pretty much the same about human rights, of course, everybody who comes to the monastery is in favour of human rights, but

that's important. It is important because if you have a notion, everybody agrees about the notion, it becomes at a certain point, that's an argument by John Stuart Mill, in the 19th century, it becomes something ossified, you need these kinds of criticism. And you're right. In the first part of my speech, I emphasised something which is present, which is the bad faith and the manipulation. And we couldn't use that in order just to discredit all these criticisms, and not taking into account some elements that are valid.

In particular, you mentioned the idea of solidarity or the community. Actually, this is important. I noticed that the notion of first generation rights, civil and political liberties and civil and political rights, is more difficult to accept in the world by leaders, because some of these leaders, or many of these leaders, don't respect civil and political rights, which means especially that if you are not elected you must leave the power, and so on and so forth. And you must respect some rights or powers not absolute, and so on. Whereas when you speak of social rights, or access to water, or even environmental rights, this is something that doesn't involve the criticism of an illiberal government, because it's a matter of efficiency: you give work to people, you have the possibility of having clean air and something like that. It's not like civil liberties. The power can be criticised by freedom of expression, and free elections, and so on, and so forth. So maybe we should deal with these accents made by the community, which is a good thing. But at the same time, we should be very cautious because it could be a way of privileging social, cultural rights, etc, etc. and not respecting the thesis of human rights, first generation of human rights. So it's an excuse sometimes, but there are some good elements in the criticism of the market and neoliberalism and the idea of communities.

GU - Thanks, Guy, I think, (it is) quite clear. Again, Lotte maybe, let's hear you on the same point.

LL - I absolutely agree. And I think it is important that when we talk about human rights, when we educate about human rights, and when we document violations that we pay due attention, both to civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights, and we don't draw a distinction and saying one set of rights are more important than the other, because it really depends on life circumstances, what matters most to you. I do think, however, it is important in these discussions also to recognise - and I think Guy you said this at the very beginning - much of this debate about human rights (as) not being relevant, or being sort of a concept that was invented by one part of the world over another part of the world. These are the bad faith arguments that I simply don't buy. And I think they serve one thing, and that is to legitimize abuses and to facilitate power holders to stay in power without checks and balances included. But I think it is important in this discussion to distinguish between that, and criticism of the implementation and the application of rights. And that's where criticism, I think, is legitimate, it's important and that's where we really need to engage, because rights need to be lived, they need to be implemented, they need to be taken seriously by those who have to deliver on those rights and those who live their rights.

And that is really, the core criticism that I see from people and communities around the world that I have worked with. It is: 'well, my rights are not taken seriously'. And very concretely, this is where double standards come in. We now have in Europe, a concept where a number of countries simply have taken an *à la carte* approach to rights and said: 'well, when it comes to migration and the right to seek asylum, guess what, you know, no, that's not so much of a right, that's something that is

political negotiable for us, and we can just outsource those rights and we can pay someone else to do both protection work and to hear the rights of people who seek asylum'. This is a disgusting and outrageous sort of proliferation, I would say in privileged countries saying: 'well, we can just pick and choose, too, what we believe is important'.

These are issues that need to be addressed. And at the same time, we also see new issues. And Guy, I think you addressed this as well, in really good ways. There are new issues evolving where we need rights to develop further and particularly where we need to have maybe also more of a common solidarity framework to address those concerns. Global health, I mean, has become a real issue through the pandemic. And we have not seen the solidarity that was needed to have equal access to vaccines, even where those vaccines could be produced. The TRIPS (Trade-related Intellectual Property Rights) waivers at the World Trade Organisation had been blocked by the EU and key EU countries, which is outrageous and denied many, many people around the world access to the manner to the vaccines and to the treatments that are being developed. I think we are seeing an emergence of an urgency to address climate change, and rights surrounding climate change, that are applicable to communities that are not responsible for climate change. This is again, where 'global' not just solidarity, but responsibility and accountability need to come in.

So I think there are new challenges. I want to defend what we have achieved in terms of human rights law. But I also want to recognise that it can never be static, that it needs to be further developed to address new problems, emerging problems and problems that affect more people around the world than ever before, including global health and climate change. So these are new issues. And that is where I think we should focus the discussion rather than having a discussion about chipping off certain rights that are now laid down in law through exceptionally hard work for the past many, many years. Because those are sort of more based on political whims and power struggles whereas what we really need is to focus on developing that framework further and not leaving it to political negotiations and thoughts about who should be protected or not, but really having it laid down in law, so that it's applicable, whether you're poor, whether you're rich, and that rich countries will start paying their dues and their responsibilities to global problems, such as global health and climate change.

GU - So thanks. Thanks, again, Lotte. And I didn't want to interrupt you because it was just so articulate and clear, the message you were presenting. And I think, in many ways, what I hear you do at least, is you shift from a conceptual and normative discussion about human rights to what I'm also going to call 'questions concerning the practical application', which sometimes are questions that are being raised on the more pragmatic nature. And I think that's very interesting. And those will be themes that will try to further pursue also in subsequent podcasts.

Maybe, for the final little bit of our discussion, I'd like to put on the table what I often think of as 'political expressions of human rights scepticism', and they come from two different points of view. One talks about how human rights, at times at least, are being invoked in a way by unelected and unaccountable experts to interfere with the legitimate exercise of parliamentary governance, so that parliaments very often feel that whether it's the international experts or courts, or organisations, that they bring up human rights in a way that isn't opportune or convenient in the local context and they feel there is an overreach, that this is not politically legitimate. In many

European countries even, you get strong criticisms of the European Court of Human Rights and saying: 'we want to opt out of the Council of Europe or the European Convention' and so on and so forth. From the other side, you have left wing politicians who say: 'the human rights framework is simply ineffective in changing global inequality, is based on a notion of formal, of equal treatment of a formal equality, but it does not generate substantive equality, it doesn't really seriously challenge or affect the new Liberalism economic world order. In fact, they coexist quite harmoniously and in some ways, it becomes even a kind of smokescreen or instrument to perpetuate global power structures. Do you see any value in either of those two expressions of scepticism? And what do we take away from that?

LL - Again, I have problems with those kinds of arguments. I mean, the first one, I do think that we all need to recognise that part of democracies, part of living human rights means also that you put your finger in the wound when wrongs are being committed, or when policies are, in your view, wrong. And that can be inconvenient, it can be a pain to politicians saying: 'well, we're trying to achieve this' and yet you come with your facts and you sort of want to interrupt the discussion. Well, that's just life, you know. And that's, in my view, how it should be. And that's exactly the checks and balances, including independent courts are actually saying: 'well, hold on a minute, when you make these political decisions, you're actually violating your own laws, or the international laws, which you are now obliged to'.

GU - But the argument is that the experts are not just expressing a contrary opinion, they're telling the politicians what they can and cannot do.

LL - Yes, which is true, and this is where I would say, 'okay', and if politicians then say: 'well, we choose to ignore that' and actually, in that process, then (they) violate their own laws and standards to which they're committed, they can be held accountable for those actions. I believe that's important. These are checks and balances that we have, that also in politics, not everything is negotiable. There are certain bases on which you make political decisions and for the purpose of delivering to your people and observing your role in the world.

I would say to the other argument that what we have is simply not sufficient in addressing huge problems of inequality and poverty. I don't disagree with that. But I don't think that it's because what we have is wrong, I think it is because we need more. And we need (for) those who are particularly responsible for perpetuating inequality, we need standards that would limit their ability to continue to do so. And these are urgent issues. And there are issues that are also part and parcel of what I mentioned before, vis-à-vis climate change and global health. I mean, those who are most responsible are actually not stepping up and doing what they need. And of course, now we have taxation rules that actually are not equipped to deal with the new world where we have big multinational companies that do not pay taxes anywhere simply because the rules are not up to par with developments of how these companies operate. That kind of lack of solidarity is in my view, inexcusable and unacceptable, and that needs to be addressed, but not just through politics, through new laws that will actually make that happen.

GU - Thank you Lotte. Guy, maybe you'd weigh in on the same debate?

GH - Yes, I would answer the two questions. The first question about the overreach by experts, international organisations, judges also, and some sovereignist saying that they are deprived of the possibility of expressing the popular will, because these international experts or judges sometimes say the contrary. It is an argument that was developed very recently, and it's very important, by Poland. A lot of procedures in Poland were condemned by the European Court of Justice. The (European) Commission doesn't give Poland the money Poland is entitled to because Poland doesn't respect the rule of law. And you can see that since 2015, when they came to power, when the party of Kaczynski came to power, they pretty much destroyed the independence of the judiciary. And that's something fundamental and when they were condemned by Luxembourg, they said: "all these experts and judges say something that is against our Constitution, our constitution will disappear, etc, etc".

But you know it's not preserving the identity of a country like preserving some values - being against, for instance, gay marriage, which is the case in Hungary and in Hungary they even have the possibility of changing the constitution because they could have done it with a two-thirds majority, they have a special majority - but you know, the rule of law must be a common value, because without rule of law, you don't have fair elections, and you cannot see what the will of the people is. Because if you do not have the rule of law, well, you know, you can eliminate opponents like they did in Nicaragua, you know, they arrested them, or expelled them. And during the election process, you know, there is a lot of fraud, real fraud, not like Trump would say, in the United States. And so if you don't have independent instances, and judges, being able to organise all those elections, without human rights they don't mean anything. And so I think that the argument, all these experts telling us that 'we must respect human rights, the rule of law as a part of human rights', I think it's a bogus argument because without the rule of law and the independence of a judiciary, you cannot have human rights and fair elections.

The second thing I would say, (is) about the left. Today you have the woke movement, for instance: they begin with very, very important problems, you must be awake because there are discriminations you haven't seen before and as you said, you haven't dealt with. So you have the *#themetoo* movement, you have *Black lives matter*, you have the movements in the university, and you have the cancel culture, and so on and so forth. I agree that there are real problems that were not dealt with before. The problem is that it must not be done at the cost of classical human rights: presumption of innocence, freedom of expression, (as) you can destroy reputations on the internet in two or three clicks. And if you don't have that possibility of people being able to defend themselves because sometimes the accusation might not be sustainable, then it will go overboard. So I would say, let's deepen human rights by looking at new problems, but not at the cost of freedom of expression or presumption of innocence.

LL - Let me just say that I absolutely agree with this. And I think this is exactly why it's so important to understand some of these attacks, or not to give in to attacks by undermining what we have. But if there are needs for further developments, then to engage on that basis. Also, I would just add to what Guy was just saying, it is also important to recognise that human rights is not just 'by majority', I mean, the majority can't rule over minorities and in that way undermine their rights. And that is particularly important. I mean, also, as we are seeing in the Polish debate now, how suddenly - and that's not a majority/minority's decision - but how suddenly some of these violations particularly affected LGBTQI people, but also, indeed women and women's control over their own

bodies. I mean, these are issues, this is where the borderline is. I mean, even if you would have a political majority that will say: 'well, from now on, we will start to make these decisions on behalf of women, whether they should have access to abortion or not, we will make decisions about whether LGBTI people will have access to jobs and to express themselves and be who they are without discrimination', that's where it ends. I mean, majorities cannot make decisions and say: 'well, we will just violate the rights of minorities because we are in majority'. This is exactly where human rights are so important. It's also to protect you against majority politics and decisions that will simply say: 'well, because we are more than you, we have a right to violate your rights'.

GU - I could listen to both of you for much longer. I must say I feel it's very interesting and I have to say the premise of engaging with human rights scepticism is completely fulfilled, but it's a very critical engagement from both of you. You're adopting a very critical view of many of the sceptical arguments that are out there from different points of view. And I think this is an interesting starting point for us, we will continue to probe some of the same questions with other discussants in the coming weeks. But I think you've really set the stage in a very challenging and interesting way. And I hear you both strongly defending the hard won human rights architecture under international and regional law.

LL -I would just end my remarks by saying: 'it's also important that we do not get bogged down in simply defending what we have'. That's important, but we also need to spend time on developing the human rights framework and the implementation mechanisms, accountability mechanisms further. And I think part of this process of keeping us on the continuous just defense is also a way of saying: 'well, that would stop us from thinking further ahead and actually develop the framework further'. We need to make a conscious decision in saying: 'we will do both'.

GU - We all agree, I think. Yes, I would like to thank both of you warmly. It is a great pleasure to have you involved in this initiative and meeting both of you again, and to those of you listening to the podcast I once again welcome you warmly to the Global Campus podcast series and look forward to welcoming you in the coming weeks as well.