

Consultation on mental health and human rights
23 October 2024, room XVII Palais des Nations

Speakers & Moderators

Mr. Alex Reinecke de Alverga



Alex Reinecke de Alverga is a professor of Psychology at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte. He has experience in the following areas: human rights, mental health, prevention and combat against torture, and deinstitutionalization. He currently works as Chief of Staff at the National Secretariat for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, part of the Ministry of Human Rights and Citizenship in Brazil, where he has been involved in the development and implementation of the National Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Ms. Magda Casamitjana y Aguilà



Magda Casamitjana y Aguilà is a Catalan Philologist and politician. Graduate in Catalan Philology from the Autonomous University of Barcelona - UAB (1988). Worked as a language teacher Catalan at the French Lyceum of Barcelona and, later, as conversation assistant in preschool and primary schools (CEIP) and at the secondary education institute (IES) of Roses, Girona. She has been a councilor of the City Council of Roses (Girona) (1999-2007 and 2011-2013) and mayor of Roses (2007-2011). She is the President of Consorci de la Costa Brava. She was a deputy in the Diputació de Girona (2003-2011) and in the Parliament of Catalonia (2015-2017). At the Department of Health, of the Generalitat of Catalonia, she has directed, for three years, the program to comprehensively address highly complex mental health and addiction cases – PAICSaMAEC (2019-2021). Since November 2021, she has held the position of director of the program for the development of the National Mental Health Pact of Catalonia, in the Department of the Presidency.

Mr. Dainius Pūras



Dainius Pūras is professor of child psychiatry and public mental health at Vilnius University, Lithuania. He is also a consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist at the Child Development Center of Vilnius university Hospital. Among positions he was holding, Dainius Pūras was President of Lithuanian Psychiatric Association, Dean of Medical Faculty of Vilnius University, Director of the Human rights monitoring institute. During the years 2007-2011 Dainius Pūras was a member of the UN Committee on the rights of the child. During the years 2014 – 2020 he was serving as a UN Special Rapporteur on the right to physical and mental health.

Mr. Mario López de Alba



Mario López de Alba is a clinical psychologist with over 8 years of experience working in the MHPSS field with the medico-humanitarian NGO, Doctors Without Borders. His work spans both emergency contexts and long-term projects in countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, and Palestine where he has been involved in the integration of MHPSS services into community-based interventions, primary healthcare centers, and second-level hospitals. Mario has also specialized in addressing the mental health needs of migrants and refugees, with hands-on experience in locations such as Lesvos and the Mexican borders. He works closely with multidisciplinary teams to provide holistic care in complex environments, trying to improve mental health in vulnerable populations.

Ms. Tlaleng Mofokeng



Dr. Tlaleng Mofokeng is the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. Dr. Tlaleng Mofokeng is a Global health expert with experience in legislative reform, policy, healthcare provision, and health communication. She advocates specifically for sexual and reproductive health rights (including adolescent health, transgender affirming health and abortions). She is the co-chair of the O’Neil Commission on racism, structural discrimination and global health. Dr Tlaleng Mofokeng is an adjunct Professor of Law at Georgetown Law centre and is distinguished lecturer at O’Neil Institute for National & Global health law.

Dr. Tlaleng Mofokeng is distinguished lecturer at O'Neil Institute for National & Global health law and Extraordinary lecturer at Stellenbosch University's Africa Centre for HIV/AIDS Management.

Mr. Víctor Lizama Sierra



Víctor Lizama Sierra is a technical consultant and activist for the rights of people with disabilities. He is a spokesperson for the Red Orgullo Loco México and a member of the Technical Consultation Committee on the Independent National Monitoring Mechanism of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the National Human Rights Commission in Mexico. He is a lecturer on the topics related to mental health, psychological disability, legal capacity, and access to justice for people with disabilities in various institutions and forums in Mexico and abroad. He was the Co-Director of the regional organization RedEsfera Latinoamericana por las Culturas Locas, Diversidad Psicosocial, la Justicia, el Buen Vivir y el Derecho al Delirio. He collaborated in the Mexican organization Documenta, análisis y acción para la justicia social A.C. where he was Coordinator of the Team of Facilitators of the Disability and Justice Program. He has been an instructor in psychoeducational courses for people with psychosocial disabilities within civil association Voz Pro Salud Mental and has conducted awareness workshops on disability for public servants at the Institute for People with Disabilities of Mexico City (INDISCAPACIDAD CDMX). He is a member of the Network of Students and Graduates with Disabilities of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (REED UNAM); the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Human Rights and Mental Health; the international group of justice facilitators and intermediaries, Knowledge Hub for Fair Participation; the Disability Arts Showcase Network for the Americas; and the advisory board of the Psychiatry Commission on Psychosis in the Global Context of The Lancet journal.

Ms. Clara Amulen



Clara Amulen is a Human Rights Officer working at the Research and Compliance Division of the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights. Since joining the Commission on 6th January 2020, she has supported the Commission's research and interventions on disability rights, including leading the drafting of responses to calls for inputs on the status of disability rights in Kenya; drafting the disability rights sections of the Commission's alternative reports to regional and international human rights treaty bodies; and supporting the Commission's partnerships with organizations of persons with disabilities. On the legislative front, she has contributed to the review of disability-related bills and policies and the preparation of

advisories on the same, and tracked and reported on parliamentary engagements around disability rights. Lastly, she has led the preparation of statements on the general human rights situation in Kenya to regional treaty bodies and prepared the Commission's statements marking the World Mental Health Day and the World Suicide Prevention Day. Clara holds a Masters' Degree in Human Rights and a Bachelor's Degree in International Relations and Diplomacy.

Mr. Soumitra Pathare



Soumitra Pathare is a psychiatrist and the Director of the Centre for Mental Health Law & Policy (CMHLP), Indian Law Society, Pune, India. His primary interests are in the areas of mental health policy, scaling up mental health services, suicide prevention, and rights-based care & legislation. In the past, he has provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, in drafting India's new Mental Healthcare Act, 2017, which takes a rights-based approach to mental health care. He was a member of the Mental Health Policy Group appointed by the Government of India to draft India's first National Mental Health Policy released in October 2014. Soumitra has served as a WHO consultant in many low- and middle-income countries including Botswana, Seychelles, Lesotho, Samoa, Vanuatu & Eritrea, Guyana, Grenada among others, to assist them in drafting and implementing mental health legislation and national mental health policies.

He is currently the co-PI on multiple projects at CMHLP including suicide prevention projects such as Outlive, ENGAGE, SPIRIT and Contact And Safety Planning (CASP). Soumitra has conceptualised and steered various innovative community-led mental health interventions and strongly believes all persons with mental illness should be able to fully participate in society, as everyone else!

Ms. Tina Minkowitz



Tina Minkowitz played a key role in the drafting and negotiation of the CRPD as the primary representative of the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry. She is an international human rights lawyer and a survivor of psychiatry, and has continued to contribute to the normative framework resulting from that Convention, recently being honored with the Ketil Njaa Solberg Human Rights Award for her work. She is president and founder of the Center for the Human Rights of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry, which brings a survivor perspective to international law, including a focus on reparations.

Mr. Carlos Ríos Espinosa



Carlos Ríos Espinosa is an expert on international disability rights, serving on the CRPD Committee (UN treaty body) from 2011 to 2014, including as Vice Chair for 2 years. In this role, he was very involved in the Committee's jurisprudence on legal capacity, torture, right to liberty and access to justice. Carlos is a lawyer and expert on criminal justice, and has been involved in criminal procedure reform in Mexico since 2004. In 2013, the Mexican Senate appointed him as National Commissioner for Victims, where he oversaw the activities of the special committees against torture and kidnapping. Since 2015, he has worked with the Human Rights Clinic of Mexico's National University to litigate human rights abuses against people with disabilities. He has also served as a board member of the Mexico City Human Rights Commission. Carlos has a law degree from Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico, and a Masters in comparative criminal systems from University of Barcelona, Spain. He speaks Spanish, French and English. In his spare time, he loves to read literature, go to concerts and enjoy his family.

Ms. Richa Sharma-Dhamorikar



Richa Sharma-Dhamorikar, is a dentist turned researcher and disability rights advocate. She identifies as a person with psychosocial disability and hails from India, currently residing in the UK. Always interested and curious about wellbeing, communities, culture and disability rights, she found her calling in the field of psychosocial disability inclusion research and advocacy. She has over 10 years of experience of working with grass root organizations in Asia, Pacific, Africa and Latin America towards documenting their programs, capacity building and strengthening the movement of persons with psychosocial disabilities. With a keen inclination in everything to do with reading and writing, she has been intensely engaged with producing process documentation reports, technical reports, qualitative analysis write ups, research manuscripts, position statements, advocacy reports, critiquing documents to name a few. She represents TCI in key global advocacy forums such as Conference of the State Parties, CEDAW Committee sessions, Global Coalition of Deinstitutionalization and DFAT Expert Reference Group.

Mr. Omar Salih Rasheed



Omar Salih Rasheed is a clinical psychologist with experience in Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in humanitarian contexts. Over the years, he has worked with various organizations across the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. Throughout his career, he has undertaken a range of MHPSS roles, including psychologist, advisor, delegate, program manager, and coordinator. Each of these positions has deepened his understanding and expertise in addressing the MHPSS needs of individuals and communities affected by crises. Currently, Omar serve as the MHPSS Programme Coordinator at the ICRC, where he leads the MHPSS program across ICRC missions globally, working with a dedicated team to ensure the delivery of effective support.

Ms. Grecia Guzmán Martínez



Grecia Guzmán Martínez is an expert researcher by experience, currently assigned to the Center for Interdisciplinary Research in Sciences and Humanities of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, where she develops a study on the right to decide regarding mental health care and support. She has worked as a project coordinator in the third social sector, as well as an independent consultant, on issues of mental health, activism, human rights, feminism, among others. It is part of national, regional and international organizations of people with psychosocial disabilities, such as the Red Orgullo Loco México, the RedEsfera Latinoamericana por las Culturas Locas, la Diversidad Psicosocial, la Justicia, el Buen Vivir and el Derecho al Delirio, and ActivaMent Catalunya Associació. She also co-edits the website Lokapedia: crazy culture and feminism.

Moderators

Michelle Funk



Dr Michelle Funk is the Head of the unit on Policy, Law and Human Rights team at the World Health Organization in Geneva and has global responsibility for this area of work. She also leads the WHO QualityRights Initiative which builds capacity of stakeholders to understand and promote human rights and recovery approaches, and supports countries to develop services, policies and laws in line with international human rights standards. Dr. Funk has produced landmark guidance including mental health, human rights and legislation launched in 2023; on person centred-rights based community mental health services (2021), the WHO QualityRights training, guidance and transformation in mental health (2019) and is currently in the process of developing new guidance on mental health policy and strategic actions for the mental health sector as well other key government sectors. She has published extensively on these topics in peer review journals.

Alberto Vásquez Encalada



Alberto Vásquez Encalada is a Mad/disability activist with nearly 20 years of experience in disability rights and mental health policy. He is the co-director of the Center for Inclusive Policy (CIP) and has been a consultant for several UN agencies. He graduated in Law from the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru and holds a Master's degree in Disability Law and Policy from the National University of Ireland, Galway. He also chairs Sociedad y Discapacidad – SODIS, is a founding member of the RedEsfera Latinoamericana por las Culturas Locas, la Diversidad Psicosocial, la Justicia, el Buen Vivir y el Derecho al Delirio, co-chairs the Disability Rights Fund, and is an honorary researcher at the University of Essex.