

Principles on the Human Rights of Future Generations

This is a digital toolkit to support the launch of the Maastricht Principles on the Human Rights of Future Generations, adopted in early 2023 and endorsed by nearly 60 leading legal and human rights experts from around the world.

BACKGROUND

The world is grappling with an array of intersecting crises that pose threats to human lives, livelihoods, and rights— not only of those currently living but of generations yet to come. Courts, human rights bodies, international institutions, and governments around the world are increasingly confronting the question: What are our responsibilities to future generations?

When legal institutions grapple with new questions, the greatest source of guidance comes from the existing body of law, but often, it is challenging to crystallize existing law into new practice. In 2017, a group of legal and human rights experts from around the world undertook a six-year process to examine the landscape of human rights law as it applies to the human rights of future generations. They drew from more than a century of legal research, international treaties, national constitutions, and legislation, the knowledge of Indigenous Peoples from every continent, doctrines from major faith traditions representing the majority of the world's people, and consultations with members of key social movements and more than 200 experts spanning a wide array of legal and philosophical disciplines.

The **result is the Maastricht Principles on the Human Rights of Future Generations, adopted earlier in 2023 and endorsed by nearly 60 leading legal and human rights experts** from around the world.

 **Join us in Promoting These New Principles** 

Below, we include the following elements:

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IMPORTANT LINKS

Read the Maastricht Principles on the Human Rights of Future Generations: [English](#), [French](#), and [Spanish](#)

Check out the Principles' websites: [here](#)

Learn more about the Principles: What is their purpose? What do they say? What impact can they have?: [here](#)

Read the press release: [here](#)

KEY MESSAGES

- The Maastricht Principles are intended to clarify the state of international human rights law as it applies to future generations. They should guide decision-makers to answer fundamental questions about how to effectively incorporate the human rights of future generations into concrete laws, charters, and declarations to respect, protect, and promote the rights of future generations based on the legal architecture that has been evolving over the last 70 years.
 - The Principles clearly demonstrate that there is already a robust body of law and precedent to draw on in respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the rights of future generations.
- The Principles clarify that human rights, including the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, do not have temporal limitations. **Human rights apply fully to future generations.**
- While the full impacts of the Maastricht Principles' will develop over time, the Principles' predecessors in the Maastricht series have transformed the legal landscape previously. For example, the Maastricht III process on the Extraterritorial Obligations of States informed the work of States in developing the treaty on transnational corporations, the Ruggie Principles on business and human rights, and an array of human rights decisions.
- As States grapple with how to protect future generations, the Principles state that we must first recognize that future generations are inherently covered by the existing body of human rights law. Therefore, respecting, protecting, and upholding the rights of future generations is simply a matter of upholding the most fundamental concept in human rights law: equality and non-discrimination.
- The full set of Principles provides detailed guidance and examples of how legal regimes must protect the full array of human rights for future generations in various contexts.
 - States must eliminate all forms of direct and indirect discrimination, including intersectional discrimination.
 - States must take all necessary measures to protect the human rights of future generations against substantial risks posed by the conduct of public and private actors, including business enterprises.
 - Violations of obligations to protect the human rights of future generations by States include, but are not limited to, the failure by States to:
 - Phase out fossil fuels within the shortest possible time, with States with the greatest responsibility and capacity to move most expeditiously;
 - Avert, minimize, and address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change.
 - Future generations must be meaningfully and effectively represented in decision-making that may impact on their enjoyment of human rights.
 - Non-State actors, including business enterprises, must at the very minimum, respect the human rights of future generations, and thus refrain from causing or contributing to adverse impacts on their human rights through their activities, products or services, and prevent harm, mitigate risk and remedy such impacts when they occur.
 - Everyone has the right to an effective remedy for conduct violating their human rights.
- For more information, please visit: rightsoffuturegenerations.org

KEY HASHTAGS

#MaastrichtPrinciples #RightsFutureGenerations

#HumanRights #FutureGenerations #InternationalLaw #PowerOfLaw #ProtectOurFuture

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

KEY TAGS

Lead Organizations	Twitter Handle
Center for International Environmental Law	@ciel_tweets
FIAN International	@FIANista
Oxfam	@oxfam
Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	@GIESCR
ESCR-Net	@ESCRNet
World Future Council	@Good_Policies
Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO)	@ConferenceofNGO

UN Special Rapporteurs	Twitter handles
Michael Fakhri - UN Special Rapporteur on Right to Food	@MichaelFakhri
Oliver De Schutter - UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights	@SRPoverty
David Boyd - UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment	@SREnvironment

Main targets [Permanent Missions at the UN]	Twitter handles
Please remember to tag your Permanent Mission at the UN or your government directly in the graphic or directly in your posts.	

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Following Twitter's [latest announcement](#) on limiting the visibility of duplicative (also known as 'cospasta') Tweets, please mix and match the messages below and use them across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and more.

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
Intro	NEW	Just launched	Out today	tool in the legal toolbox!	
Main text	Today we mark the official launch of the newly adopted #Maastricht Principles, recognizing the #HumanRights of future generations. These Principles are a breakthrough for generations yet to come & for all people fighting today to protect our shared future.	60+ human rights law experts endorsed the #MaastrichtPrinciples that clarify that human rights, including the right to #HealthyEnvironmentForAll, don't have temporal limitations. #HumanRights apply fully to #FutureGenerations & to everyone who's fighting today for our shared future	Do we owe it to our great-grandchildren to take their interests into account when we make decisions today? YES! The #MaastrichtPrinciples clarify that #FutureGenerations have human rights and that States have legal obligations to protect them.	The newly adopted #MaastrichtPrinciples are clear: #HumanRights apply fully to future generations States must take ALL necessary measures to protect these rights against substantial risks posed by the conduct of public and private actors.	Today leading legal & human rights experts from around the world launched the #MaastrichtPrinciples on #RightsOfFutureGenerations — an essential tool for bringing the paradigm shifts required for the long-term preservation of people & the planet.
Call to action	READ	Learn more.	CHECK IT OUT	Discover the #MaastrichtPrinciples on the #RightsOfFutureGenerations	Find out more
Link	https://www.rightsoffuturegenerations.org/the-principles	https://www.rightsoffuturegenerations.org/	https://www.rightsoffuturegenerations.org/the-principles	https://www.rightsoffuturegenerations.org/	https://www.rightsoffuturegenerations.org/about

GRAPHICS



Download the graphics [here](#).

CONTACTS

For requests for help with this content in a digital setting, please reach out to Lani Furbank at lfurbank@ciel.org.