British
International
Studies
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Contribution ID: **735**   Type: **Panel**

The Future of Human Rights: New Challenges in a Changing World

Wednesday, 17 June 2020 17:00 (1h 30m)

The past two decades have seen significant changes in the way human rights are conceived, implemented and studied. Conceptually, the human rights agenda has undergone a process of expansion, with the identification of new dimensions of rights and new rights holders. Economic, social and cultural rights have gained increasing importance alongside more traditional political and civil rights. These changes have emerged in response to new challenges faced by contemporary societies as well as a new geopolitical landscape. While a trend to establish new legal instruments and procedures to back implementation efforts can be observed in international fora, the attitude of different countries towards human rights is far from homogeneous and is reaching levels of polarisation and contention that were considered to have been overcome in the post-Cold War era, perhaps prematurely. This panel will explore new trends in global human rights, drawing from a range of empirically grounded cases addressing different challenges, including health and social inclusion, digital technologies and cyberviolence, indigenous rights and participatory governance and human rights diplomacy in the UK and beyond.

Track Classification: International Law and Politics Working Group