



## COUNTERTERRORISM, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF JUDGES

*A PANEL DISCUSSION ON ABUSIVE PRACTICES AND JUDICIAL SAFEGUARDS: THE UAE CASE*

*Co-sponsored by the NYC Bar Association International Human Rights Committee and United Nations Committee as well as the NYCBA Independence of Lawyers and Judges Task Force*

**May 30, 2024, 5:30 - 7:30 pm EST**

Conference Room 321, New York University (NYU) SPS  
7 East 12 Street, New York, NY

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### Welcome Introductions

- **Prof. Carolyn Kissane**, Associate Dean, Center for Global Affairs (CGA), NYU
- **Christopher Pioch, Esq.**, Chairperson, NYC Bar Association Independence of Lawyers and Judges Task Force
- **Ramya Jawahar Kudekallu, Esq.**, Co-Chairperson, NYCBA International Human Rights Committee; *Telford Taylor Teaching Fellow/ Visiting Instructor of Clinical Law, Cardozo Law School*
- **Prof. Sophia Murashkovsky Romma, Esq.**, Co-Chair, NYCBA United Nations Committee; *Legal Writing Specialist, Graduate Writing Center of the Graduate and Professional Divisions, Touro University Law*

### Video Presentation by

- **Prof. Margaret Satterthwaite**, UN Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers; *Faculty Director, Center for Human Rights and Global Justice; Director, Global Justice Clinic; NYU School of Law*

### Panelists

- **Hon. Delissa A. (Lisa) Ridgway**, Council Member, Int'l Law Section, and Board Member, Rule of Law Institute (ROLI), American Bar Association (ABA); Member, Council on Int'l Affairs, and Founding Member, Independence of Lawyers & Judges Task Force, NYCBA; *Adjunct Prof. of Law, Cornell University School of Law*
- **Mr. Michael Page**, Deputy Director, Middle East and North Africa Division, Human Rights Watch
- **Mr. Kyle Matthews**, Executive Director, Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies at Concordia University; *Fellow, Canadian Institute for Global Affairs; Member, Advisory Board on transatlantic cooperation for atrocity prevention, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*
- **Dr. Olajumoke (Jumo) Ayandele**, Visiting Assistant Professor of Practice at NYU-CGA; *Member of the UN Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) Global Research Network*
- **Mr. Rodney Dixon, KC**, Barrister, Temple Garden Chambers (London and The Hague)
- **Dr. David Donat Cattin**, Adjunct Associate Professor of International Law, NYU-CGA [\[moderator\]](#)



## COUNTERTERRORISM, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF JUDGES

*A Panel Discussion on abusive practices and judicial safeguards: The UAE case*

### Background and Aims

The use of counterterrorism legislation and policies to curb freedom, democracy, and human rights by authoritarian regimes, dictatorships, and “illiberal democracies” is a growing phenomenon that is posing an increasing threat to the survival of democratic institutions and safeguards for human dignity in all regions of the world.

As illustrated by a recent [joint submission](#) regarding the situation in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to United Nations (UN) Member States by an impressive group of human rights mandates-holders in Geneva, politically motivated prosecutions purporting to apply counterterrorism laws can bring about the imposition of irremediable penalties, i.e. the capital punishment, as ultimate measures to suffocate dissidents and human rights defenders, including lawyers, who are trying to take action against abuses of power within the jurisdiction of UN Member States.

A key Rule-of-Law safeguard to halt these violations of fundamental rights should be represented by the independence of Judges, who must be put in a position to verify the compatibility of domestic legislation with the most basic principles and norms of International Human Rights Law, which have their legal sources in applicable treaties and customary international law. The latter source of international legal obligations may be the most relevant to the situation in the UAE, which is not a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

A panel of academics, experts, and practitioners will discuss the main challenges to protecting human rights in the context of counterterrorism on the basis of introductory presentation(s) by the UN Special Rapporteur(s) on Counterterrorism and Human Rights, and on the Independence of Judges. Panelists will be invited to reflect upon strategies to protect victims of abuses of power by States that are applying extremely broad definitions of terrorism offenses and implementing counterterrorism policies to curb basic human rights and dissent. In this respect, panelists may be invited to consider proposals for reviewing the current global consensus on counterterrorism and its relationship with the human rights monitoring system and discuss new ideas to bring about sustainable and impactful strategies of support for the mandates created within the framework of the United Nations.

### Co-sponsors:

NYC Bar Association United Nations Committee  
NYC Bar Association International Human Rights Committee  
NYC Bar Association Independence of Lawyers and Judges Task Force