

Editorial Note

Does a human rights-based approach to human development enjoy advantages over traditional development strategies? In the first article of this issue of the *Nordic Journal of Human Rights*, 'Human Rights for Human Development: The Rhetoric and the Reality', Dan Banik critically discusses whether an increased focus on international human rights can be useful in promoting overall human development at national and regional levels. He asks whether the growing popularity of the linkage between human rights and poverty reduction in the development discourse is more an exercise in rhetorical appeal than one of real impact. Banik claims that the human rights community primarily is preoccupied with events taking place in UN headquarters and in donor capitals where good intentions are reiterated without appreciation of the traditional practice of states to pay lip service to human rights language. He then applies human rights in analyses of empirical evidence from India and Malawi.

In the second article of this issue, 'Persecution in the Home: Applying the Due Diligence Standard to Harmful Traditional Practices within Human Rights and Refugee Law', Cecilia Bailliet notes that violence against women and children in the form of harmful traditional practices (HTP) remains one of the most pressing challenges facing the international human rights community. Dilemmas relating to discriminatory legislation and social norms, as well as non-responsive courts and police complicate the assessment of a state's willingness and ability to protect victims within asylum determination. Ironically, following the Arab Spring women in Egypt were severely punished, inter alia by means of 'virginity testing' as reprisal for their political engagement. Bailliet explains that HTP often are linked to cultural, religious hierarchical/patriarchal orientations, which perpetuate inferior roles of women and girls within the family and society, and thus exemplify the merger of public and private dimensions of human rights protection. She presents the due diligence obligation in relation to HTP, highlighting both progress and protection gaps within the field of human rights and refugee law.

In the third article, 'Some Psycho-Social Correlates of US Citizen Support for Torture', David L Richards, Mandy M Morrill and Mary R Anderson explain that while there exist widely-agreed-upon findings regarding the state-level determinants of government respect for human rights such as torture, much less is understood about either the distribution or formation of individual citizens' attitudes about human rights. The authors thus use an original survey to both ascer-

tain US citizens' attitudes about the use of torture, and to explore why they have these views. In the survey, the authors ask respondents about their attitudes towards particular torture techniques. Based on the information gathered, the authors construct a Torture Acceptability Index (TAI) to measure individuals' overall level of acceptance of torture. Intriguingly, they find that there exists a statistically significant relationship between several psycho-social factors and individual attitudes towards torture.

The three articles highlight new perspectives on the theory and practices of human rights. We invite our readers to continue to submit such cross-disciplinary studies. Cross-disciplinary studies clearly inspire academic critique and new analysis of the many-faceted field of human rights.

The Editors