



A Credible Human Rights System

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Overview

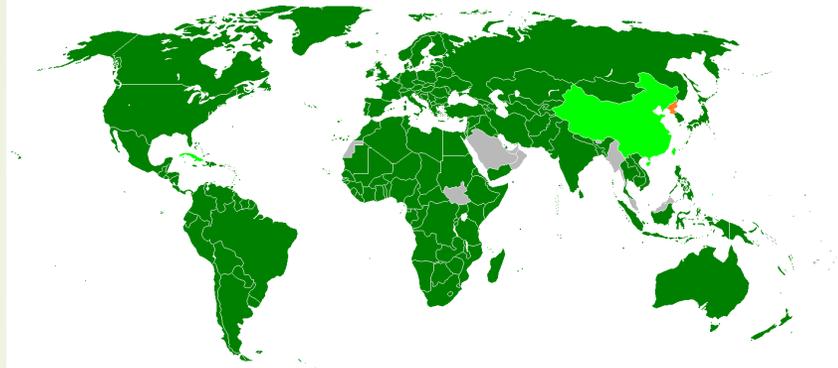
- ▶ Brief history of the UN human rights system
 - ▶ The current human rights system
 - ▶ Problems with the current system
 - ▶ Joe's proposals for change
 - ▶ A little about my own research at the Human Rights Council
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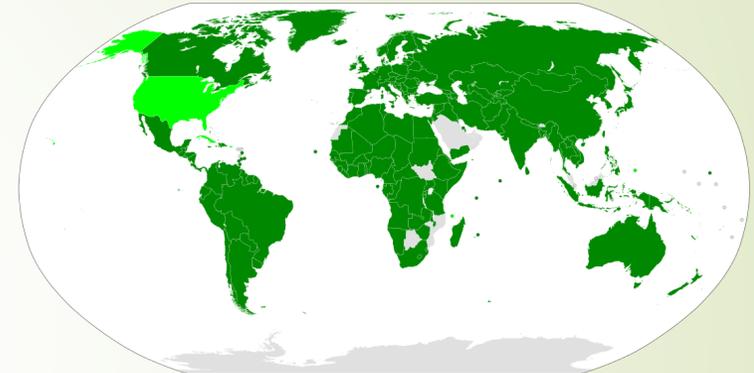
Nine core human rights treaties

- ▶ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)
- ▶ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
- ▶ International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966)
- ▶ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979)
- ▶ Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984)
- ▶ Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- ▶ International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990)
- ▶ International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (2006)
- ▶ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)

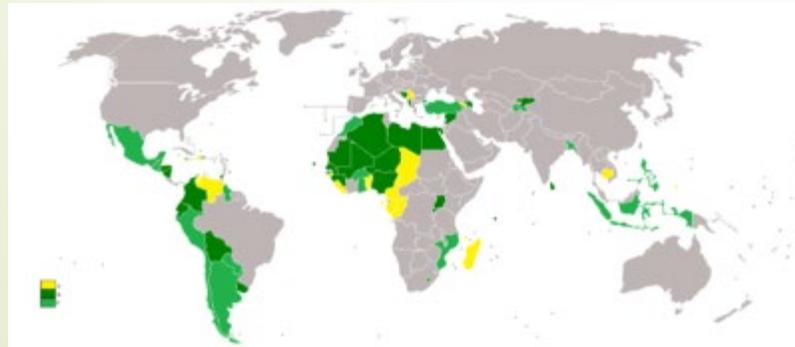
Variation in Ratification of Treaties



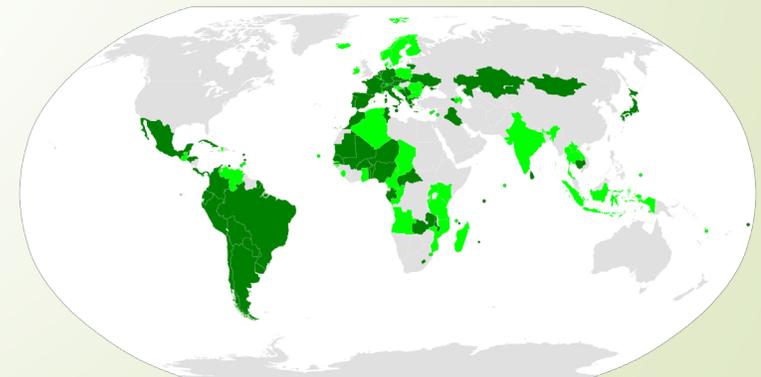
ICCPR



ICESCR



Rights of Migrant Workers



Against Enforced Disappearance



Joe's proposals for reform: 1- Structure

- ▶ Make HRC a principal organ of the UN, on a par with GA and SC
- ▶ Reduce the membership from 47 to 36 → increase efficiency
- ▶ Improve geographic representation by shifting from 5 regions to 12 regions
 - ▶ Two members from each region (→ 24)
- ▶ Improve gender balance
 - ▶ Of those two – one should be male, one female
- ▶ Add specific representation of indigenous people
 - ▶ Two members from indigenous groups – one male, one female
- ▶ 10 members to be elected 'at-large'
- ▶ Enable members to focus on human rights not country interests → grant them immunity, and if necessary, sanctuary
- ▶ Nominees must have human rights expertise – should be elected because of their qualifications more than their country – vetted by OHCHR



Joe's proposals for reform: 2 - Procedures

- ▶ Give HRC more time for debate – expand regular sessions and have more additional sessions as necessary
- ▶ Keep the voting system as is – one member, one vote
 - ▶ No need for weighted voting as Joe's other proposals would ensure that debate is based on principle, not on politics.
- ▶ Improved transparency and accountability
- ▶ Strengthen and regularise participation of NGOs
- ▶ Increase funding for the HRC



A little about my research...

