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of Legal Studies**

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Public Lecture

Back to the Future: A Proposal for a New Human Rights Strategy for the Twenty-First Century

Speaker
Hurst Hannum

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Central European University
Nador utca 15, Budapest 1051
Room: Quantum 101

Human rights have come under attack in recent years, not only from right-wing nationalists but from academics who believe that they are either overly utopian or overly political. While most of these criticisms should be rejected, human rights advocates themselves have often contributed to the confusion over what human rights mean and what they can accomplish. Expecting human rights to resolve all of the world's socio-economic problems, the proliferation of rights, the conflation of human rights with related but distinct issues (such as criminal law and sustainable development), justifying the use of force to stop serious human rights violations, and misunderstanding the essential role of government in protecting rights have all undermined the universal application of human rights principles. The continued influence of human rights is not inevitable, and only if these issues are resolved will it be possible for human rights to maintain their essential role as guides for behavior in the 21st century.

Hurst Hannum is a Professor of International Law at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and previously held a position at Central European University as well. Hannum has taught courses on public international law, international human rights law, minority rights, international organizations, and nationalism and ethnicity. His focus is on human rights and its role in the international legal and political order, including issues such as self-determination, humanitarian intervention, and conflict resolution. His scholarly work has been complemented by service as consultant/advisor to a number of intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, including the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and Department of Political Affairs.