

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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What: UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights: Bay Area Community Forum
Where: St. Anthony Foundation, 150 Golden Gate Ave. San Francisco, CA
When: Wednesday, Dec. 6th 9AM – 11:15 AM

Bay Area groups to host community forum in San Francisco for UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights

San Francisco, CA - Western Regional Advocacy Project, Coalition on Homelessness San Francisco, St. Anthony Foundation, and St. Mary's Center will be hosting a community forum with the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights. The purpose of the forum is to aid the Special Rapporteur in developing his report on extreme poverty and human rights in the United States by discussing how poverty in the Bay Area affects poor and homeless people's ability to enjoy civil, political, and human rights protections.

According to the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, Professor Philip Alston, "Homelessness is not only a denial of the human right to housing, but it is also directly linked to the undermining of a range of civil rights. The reportedly high levels of homelessness in San Francisco and other parts of California and the United States are therefore of particular interest to me in the context of my mandate to explore the links between extreme poverty and human rights."

Jennifer Friedenbach of Coalition on Homelessness, San Francisco added "Here in San Francisco, we have extreme poverty. What makes that unique is the context – poverty persists amid great wealth in a progressive-minded city".

The forum will consist of panelists that will cover these issues: the impact of gentrification and displacement on the human rights of poor and homeless people, the criminalization of poverty and homelessness, and the impact of new technologies in welfare systems on the human rights of poor and homeless people.

"As more and more of our communities gentrify and displace more and more of our neighbors, it is vital that we speak with one voice, with our collective human rights at the core of what we say" said Theresa Imperial of Western Regional Advocacy Project.

The Special Rapporteur will share his preliminary observations on his US visit at a press conference on Friday December 15 in Washington DC. Mr. Alston's final report on his US visit will be presented to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva in June 2018. He is mandated by the Council to monitor, report and advise on extreme poverty and human rights around the world.

Following the community forum, the Rapporteur will join the Coalition on Homelessness on a tour San Francisco's unsanctioned settlements.

For journalists who are interested in contacting the Special Rapporteur about his visit to San Francisco, please contact: Junko Tadaki jtadaki@ohchr.org + 41 79 444 3781

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