

Call for Edited Collection Chapters

Charting the Council's Future: Reflections on the United Nations Human Rights Council at Twenty

Editors: Dr Amna Nazir (Associate Professor in International Human Rights Law, Birmingham City University, UK), Dr Michael Lane (Lecturer in Law, University of Worcester, UK).

The year 2026 will mark the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), a milestone that offers an important opportunity for reflection, critique, and forward-thinking analysis. Since its inception in 2006, the Council has become a central organ of the international human rights system: producing resolutions, convening special sessions, mandating investigations, and serving as a global forum for the contestation and articulation of human rights norms through its innovative peer review mechanism, the Universal Periodic Review. Yet it has also faced sustained criticism for politicization and variable impact.

This edited volume will bring together interdisciplinary scholarship to assess the evolution, performance, and future of the UNHRC at this critical juncture. We invite contributions that critically examine the Council's role in global governance, its successes and failures, and its capacity to navigate an increasingly multipolar and fragmented international landscape. Themes may include (but are not limited to):

- The institutional evolution of the Human Rights Council since 2006,
- The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism: achievements, limitations, and innovations,
- Regional and political bloc dynamics within the Council (e.g., Global South agency, P5 influence),
- The Council's response to contemporary crises (e.g., Myanmar, Ukraine, Palestine, Sudan),
- Engagement with civil society and non-governmental actors,
- The politics of special procedures and fact-finding missions,
- Critiques of selectivity, politicization, or duplication with other UN mechanisms,
- The relationship between the HRC and other international and regional bodies,
- The role of the HRC in the broader UN human rights architecture,
- Futures of the Council: reform proposals, legitimacy debates, and new directions.

We welcome submissions from scholars and civil society representatives working in international law, human rights, political science, international relations, and related disciplines. Contributions from Global South scholars and early-career researchers are particularly encouraged.

Submission Details:

Submissions can be made here: <https://forms.office.com/e/2gxdAs6JDs>.

Project Timeline & Details	
6th October 2025	Deadline for Chapter Abstracts (500 words Maximum)
13th October 2025	Decisions Communicated
1st June 2026	Deadline for Draft Chapters
2nd June 2026 – 19th June 2026	Peer Review of Draft Chapters
W/C 22nd June 2026 (TBC)	Contributor Workshop (to share drafts and feedback)
31st July 2026, 5pm	Deadline for Final Draft Chapter
Word Limit	8000 (including footnotes)
Reference Style Guide	OSCOLA

Any questions can be sent to the editors: amna.nazir@bcu.ac.uk and m.lane@worc.ac.uk.