



Everyday human rights - the route to a better UK

Conference report: summary

8 November 2023

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“Anti-poverty policies must be grounded in everyday rights”, this was one of the key messages from Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights at our conference ‘[Everyday human rights – the route to a better UK](#)’ held on 8 November 2023.

Five years on from former UN Special Rapporteur Philip Alston’s visit to the UK, our conference was attended by over 150 delegates, who heard from speakers on the state of poverty, inequality and human rights in the UK, the negative consequences of ignoring our everyday rights and the major role these rights can play in creating a fairer and more just society for all.

Delegates heard evidence that poverty and inequality remain persistent in the UK, and for some it has got a lot worse, that UK Government and public authorities have a duty to uphold existing human rights obligations and are failing, and it is time for us to bring our everyday rights – like housing, healthcare, and education – into our domestic law across the UK.

There was also a sense of optimism as Emma Roddick MSP set out how Scotland is blazing the trail for domestic incorporation of our everyday rights, and her hope that this would mean “further realisation of rights across the UK and the world”.

Jess McQuail, Director of Just Fair, concluded by stating “Just Fair hopes this conference marks a turning point in the campaign to recognise everyday rights as the permanent, lasting solutions to poverty and inequality”, and invited everyone to join Just Fair in working to protect, respect, and fulfil these rights across the UK.

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Feedback from delegates included:

- *“Excellent in-depth presentations about the application of rights in reality and the importance of continuing to pursue direct incorporation”*
- *“I have not so clearly heard poverty, food and homelessness framed as human rights issues before, this will be very useful in campaigning work.”*
- *“The coming together of like-minded people, in similar areas of work, brought a sense of hope”*
- *“Hearing Helen Flynn, Jess, Rory speak of the goals was uplifting. UN Rapporteur Olivier, MP Byrne, MSP Emma and KC Jamie shows that at the highest level these issues are getting voiced. Gives me hope as parent and lived experience of injustices that change will come, though may be a little way off due to system government ‘stuck in the mud’ mindset”.*

This brief summary is to be read with reference to Appendix 1, which includes:

- The agenda
- Speaker biographies
- Presentations
- Question and answer sessions
- Related media coverage



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