

Media Alert:
Pittsburgh Activists to Address United Nations Leaders in an “Appeal to the World” for Human Rights
October 22, 2023

Community leaders from Pittsburgh will travel to New York City on October 23rd to be part of the Pittsburgh Human Rights City Alliance’s delegation to the [People’s UPR](#), addressing United Nations members about the state of human rights in the U.S. Joining participants from around the country, community organizers Jaime Martinez from Casa San Jose and Leeretta Payne from the Hill District Consensus Group, will describe local impacts of U.S. human rights violations and urge foreign ambassadors to hold the U.S. government accountable through the UN’s [Universal Periodic Review \(UPR\)](#). The UPR exposes the human rights records of every member government to global scrutiny every five years. It helps strengthen global accountability to human rights standards worldwide.

At a time when U.S. political leaders claim to be “making America great again,” we see worsening human rights conditions as those at the highest levels of government blatantly disregard the rule of law. The Trump administration’s refusal to participate sets a shameful and alarming precedent that will embolden violations of human rights globally. The rise of right-wing hate movements and anti-immigrant sentiment, the loss of affordable housing, and the failure of governments to confront discrimination are global concerns, and global leaders can be allies in our efforts to defend human rights at home.

Pittsburgh delegates will join activists from communities nationwide to address representatives of UN member governments. They will reveal the human face of the violations outlined in more than 150 formal stakeholder reports submitted by community advocates, including [“Discriminatory Taxation Policies Obstruct the Realization of Economic and Social Rights in the United States,”](#) submitted by a national coalition of groups including the Pittsburgh Human Rights City Alliance.

The [People’s UPR](#) takes place Thursday October 23 from 12:00-2:30PM (EDT) and will be live streamed ([Register for link](#)). Following this kick-off event, organizers will expand local efforts to bring attention to human rights in the U.S., including work to engage state and local governments in the UPR.

Leeretta Payne noted that “rising rents have meant that many long-term residents of the Greater Hill District are being forced to leave behind years of friendship and a sense of community. The People’s UPR gives us a chance to amplify our message and push for meaningful change to end displacement of our communities.”

For more information on the UN and UPR and on global responses to the human rights situation in the United States, see:

- [“We need to safeguard 80 years of progress on freedom, equality and justice”](#) -- Statement from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

- [U.S. Human Rights Organizations Demand Leadership in Face of U.S. Attempts to Destabilize World Human Rights Framework](#)
- [UN Rights Council Should Act to Preserve Universality of Rights Review](#)
- [State and Local elected leaders criticize U.S. federal government's non-cooperation in the United Nations UPR](#) (Letter from 111 U.S. State and Local Elected Officials to the President of the UN Human Rights Council)
- Statement by [dozens of UN Special Procedure representatives expressing alarm at U.S. attacks on international human rights system](#)