Dignity in International Human Rights Law: Potential Applicability in Relation to International Recognition of Animal Rights

By Jane Kotzmann & Cassandra Seery

“[C]ircus animals are being forced to perform unnatural tricks, are housed in cramped cages, subjected to fear, hunger, pain, not to mention the undignified way of life they have to live ... Though not homosapiens, they are also beings entitled to dignified existences and humane treatment sans cruelty and torture ... If humans are entitled to fundamental rights, why not animals?”

Recent decades have seen momentum build towards some form of international legal recognition of animal rights. This article considers whether, in line with the approach taken to international human rights recognition, such recognition should be based on a concept of animal dignity.
A Country at War: No One Can Agree What to Do with Australia’s Trees

By Andrew Kemmer

In New South Wales, Australia, new legislation came into effect that changed the regulations for vegetation-clearing. Vegetation-clearing is extremely important for farmers who would rather use their land to grow crops than trees. Farmers have long believed they had too little say over what they could do with their land. Farmers have continuously clashed with the government on its vegetation-clearing policies, and this topic has become highly political. This new legislation could give farmers more latitude to clear vegetation on their land; however, these regulations are unfinished, hard to understand, and have environmentalists in an uproar.

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Kenyan Supreme Court: Election Fraud Stops Now

By Max Mittleman

Kenya joins many other countries left questioning the authenticity of election results. The Supreme Court of Kenya, for the first time, got involved in the 2017 election and annulled the election due to “irregularities and illegalities.” The Supreme Court blamed the electoral commission for the fraud that took place. The Supreme Court’s decision has two visible effects, one immediate and one long-term. It appears that Kenyan democracy has been given a new jolt of energy which may provide legitimacy to future elections.

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Venezuela’s Controversial Constitution Rewrite

By Alexandra Stafford

Is it possible to rewrite a constitution? Is it possible to do so avoiding volatile public upheaval? Venezuela is facing these issues after the announcement by President Nicolas Maduro to rewrite the Venezuelan Constitution.

“Venezuela has brought itself from wealth and democracy to the brink of collapse.”

President Maduro inherited a country whose economy was on the decline. On May 1, 2017, Maduro announced his intentions to rewrite the Venezuelan Constitution in order to “bring peace to Venezuela.” However, several countries have rejected Venezuela’s constitutional rewrite, including the United States.

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