

JOSE MIGUEL VIVANCO

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SUMMARY

- ***Extensive experience (30 years) promoting rule of law by strengthening international legal standards and domestic compliance*** in Latin America and the Caribbean. Supervised investigations in coordination with international agencies, governments, private sector, academia and civil society organizations.
- ***Regularly meet heads of state and ministers in Latin America, United States, Europe.*** Provide testimony before international organizations and domestic institutions. Active social media presence (238,000 Twitter followers).
- ***Executive Director Human Rights Watch (HRW).*** Supervised fact-finding research for numerous reports on gross violations of human rights. Chief strategist in selecting priorities based on law and policy for the Americas Division of HRW. Managed multi-disciplinary team, ensuring due diligence and rigorous, objective reporting.
- ***Founder, Center for Justice & International Law,*** an international civil society organization providing legal and technical assistance within the Inter-American human rights system.
- ***Adjunct Professor & Lectures*** at prestigious universities and think tanks in US, Europe and Latin America.
- ***Commentator & Analyst*** for influential broadcasting media and written press with global reach.
- ***Host, CNN in Spanish “Choque de Opinions”*** (“Crossfire”), offering a weekly debate on political issues (1998-2001).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Human Rights Watch (HRW), Washington, DC

Executive Director, Americas Division, 1994 –February 2022

- ***Served as chief strategist*** for the Americas Division, representing the organization to high-level officials in the Western Hemisphere. Set regional and budgetary priorities, directed planning and execution of research and related advocacy initiatives. Spokesperson for the Americas.
- ***Interacted with US counterparts,*** including White House, Congress, State Department, Pentagon, and Southern Command.
- ***Investigations & advocacy missions throughout the Americas and Europe*** to meet with heads of state, legislative and judicial authorities, private sector leaders and civil society to discuss policy and practices affecting human rights.

- ***Supervised decentralized staff*** and coordinated with local organizations and authorities on assessing project conditions and identifying recommendations for government action. Quality control over collection of evidence relating to human rights practices for future publication, including due diligence and compliance obligations.
- ***Regular interviews in major broadcast media:*** CBS 60 Minutes, BBC World News, Deutsche Welle, CNN International, NPR, PBS, Bloomberg News, CNN en Español, Univision, Radio Television Española (RTVE), and local/regional outlets.
- ***Widely published in numerous print media, including:*** The New York Times, The Washington Post, Financial Times, Los Angeles Times, Miami Herald, Foreign Policy, El País and other influential Spanish language media, including: La Nación, El Tiempo, Reforma, O Globo, El Comercio, El Mercurio.
- ***Testified before*** the US Congress, the United Nations, the Organization of American States (OAS), European Parliament, and governmental bodies in several Latin American and Caribbean countries.
- ***Lectures:*** U.N. agencies, World Bank, OAS, foreign governments, Ford Foundation, academic institutions including Yale University; Harvard Law School; Stanford Law School; Georgetown School of Foreign Service; University of Berkeley; Columbia Law School; Washington College of Law, Casa de America/Madrid; University of Heidelberg; Oxford University.

Important achievements as HRW Director

- Worked closely with ***US Senate Appropriations Committee*** to define foreign government performance benchmarks to receive US assistance in programs throughout the Americas.
- ***Joint investigation with Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine*** to assess the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela. ***Report was discussed in an unprecedented meeting at the U.N. Security Council.***
- Proposed recommendations to the ***European Union and OECD to promote Brazil's compliance*** with its international obligations on sustainable development, forest conservation, and rule of law in the Amazon.
- Engaged with key officials, including Speaker of the US House of Representatives, White House, Government of Colombia, AFL-CIO during negotiations of ***US-Colombia Free Trade Agreement***, including establishing tribunals to address labor union grievances.
- Assisted in creation of ***International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG)***, working with the U.N., the US government, the Guatemalan government, Judicial/Prosecutorial authorities, and international donors. Proposed terms of reference for UN entity on criminal accountability in-country to strengthen domestic institutions through international cooperation.
- ***High-level engagement with governments of Peru and Chile***, and international legal/policy experts to provide *amicus curie* brief to Chilean Supreme Court. Contributed to jurisprudence which granted ***extradition of Fujimori to Peru for human rights abuse and corruption.***
- Participated in coalition of governments, including Clinton White House at Summit of the Americas to establish a ***Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression*** in the Inter-American system of the OAS.
- ***Negotiated directly with Fidel Castro*** to obtain the release of six political prisoners in Cuba.

Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL), Washington, DC

Founder and Executive Director, 1990 – 1994

- Founded CEJIL to provide free legal representation, including access to international human rights protection in the Inter-American system.
- Established HQ in Washington, DC and decentralized offices in Brazil, Costa Rica, and Barbados. ***Within three years, raised funds from governments and private foundations, enhancing CEJIL staff to include 12 full-time attorneys.***
- Developed international human rights law by strategically selecting cases which were either emblematic of systematic human rights abuses or offered the opportunity to develop human rights standards.
- Represented 70% of the docket of the Inter-American Commission and Court on Human Rights. Cooperated with the European Commission and supported the African Commission to share regional experiences.

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, OAS, Washington, DC

Attorney, Executive Secretariat, 1987 - 1989

- Successfully represented the Commission in the first litigation before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, obtaining landmark judgment on forced disappearances as a ***'crime against humanity'***.
- For Inter-American Court cases, reviewed evidence, examined witnesses, drafted legal briefs and presented oral arguments before the Court.
- Carried out on-site investigations in Panamá and ***engaged directly with General Noriega*** to improve human rights conditions.
- ***Conducted training for police, military and legal/judicial officials in Latin America, Africa and Europe*** on the Inter-American system and its mandate, practice and functioning.

EDUCATION

Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA

LL.M., 1990

- *Harvard University, School of Law Scholarship, 1989-1990*

Salamanca Law School, Salamanca, Spain

Juris Doctor (JD), 1986

University of Chile Law School, Santiago, Chile

1979-1983

TEACHING

Washington College of Law, American University, Washington, DC

Adjunct Professor, 2015-present

Course of International Human Rights Law & Practice, including crimes against humanity

School of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins University, Washington, DC

Adjunct Professor, 1993-1996

Introductory course on International Human Rights Protection

Georgetown University Law Center, Washington, DC

Adjunct Professor of Law, 1992-1995

Course on International Human Rights Protection Mechanisms Based on Caselaw from UN and Inter-American Systems

Academic Articles:

Procedural Shortcomings in the Defense of Human Rights: An Inequality of Arms,
Oxford University Press (1998).

Disappearances and the Inter-American Court: Reflections on a Litigation Experience,
Hamline Law Review, Vol. 13, Issue 3 (1990).

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Financial Times

“Crisis of US democracy emboldens Latin American populists, says rights chief”

Vivanco warns of risks to region for the Americas

26 de enero de 2022

<https://www.ft.com/content/d39a08ec-a526-4361-a95a-73a9e8efe5a3>

“The Rule of Law is Disintegrating in Central America”

October 19, 2021

<https://www.ft.com/content/4ea8e2f7-2c34-4ccd-9e87-1ef4d904ae5d>

Washington Post

“The U.S. Can Stop El Salvador’s Slide to Authoritarianism: Time to Act”

May 18, 2021

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/05/18/bukele-el-salvador-biden-human-rights-watch-authoritarianism/>

“La Pandemia Ha Dejado al Descubierto la Brutalidad de la Policía Argentina”

November 19, 2020

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/es/post-opinion/2020/11/19/argentina-aislamiento-covid-represion-violencia-brutalidad-policial/>

New York Times

“President Bukele, Brute Force Is Not the Way Forward for El Salvador
The Head of State’s Actions Threaten Democracy in the Central American Nation”

February 14, 2020

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/14/opinion/bukele-el-salvador.html?searchResultPosition=4>

“The Hypocrisy of Evo Morales”

November 20, 2017

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/20/opinion/eva-morales-bolivia.html?searchResultPosition=8>

“Leopoldo López Is Home. But Venezuela Is Not Free”

July 11, 2017

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/11/opinion/leopoldo-lopez-venezuela.html?searchResultPosition=6>

Los Angeles Times

“The U.S. Shouldn’t Ignore Mexico’s Ongoing Human Rights Catastrophe”

December 4, 2021

<https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2021-12-04/mexico-president-lopez-obrador-human-rights-record>

“Mexico’s President and Trump Have This in Common: They Both Trample Human Rights”

July 7, 2020

<https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2020-07-07/andres-manuel-lopez-obrador-donald-trump-meeting-washington>

“Mexican Government Paralyzed in the Face of a Wave of Femicides”

March 3, 2020

<https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2020-03-03/opinion-mexico-government-femicides>

Foreign Affairs

“Maduro Cracks Down: Venezuela's Human Rights Crisis”

April 29, 2016

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/venezuela/2016-04-29/maduro-cracks-down>

La Nación

“José Miguel Vivanco: América Latina Está en un Muy Mal Momento, Probablemente el Peor de los Últimos 30 Años,” December 4, 2021 (interviewed by Rafael Mathus)

<https://www.lanacion.com.ar/el-mundo/jose-miguel-vivanco-america-latina-esta-en-un-muy-mal-momento-probablemente-el-peor-de-los-ultimos-nid04122021/>

“El Debate por la Liberación de Presos”

May 11, 2020

<https://www.lanacion.com.ar/opinion/el-debate-liberacion-presos-nid2360525/>

“¿Se Esconde en su Embajada el Príncipe Saudí?”

November 30, 2018

<https://www.lanacion.com.ar/opinion/se-esconde-su-embajada-principe-saudi-nid2197706/>

El País

“La Justicia Como Revancha”

March 23, 2021

<https://elpais.com/opinion/2021-03-22/la-justicia-como-revancha.html>

“El Luto del Periodismo en México”

June 11, 2020

<https://elpais.com/opinion/2020-06-10/el-luto-del-periodismo-en-mexico.html>

“Venezuela Está Contra Reloj”

October 28, 2016

https://elpais.com/internacional/2016/10/27/america/1477594586_639134.html

AWARDS

- Gran Premio Chapultepec, *Inter-American Press Association*, 2010
- Goler T. Butcher Medal, *American Society of International Law*, 2007

LANGUAGES

English (Fluent); Spanish (Native)