



GAY J. McDOUGALL

Executive Director

Executive Director of Global Rights since September 1994, Gay McDougall supervises a diverse staff representing more than 20 countries and oversees the development and implementation of country and thematic programs and initiatives in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and the Americas. Ms. McDougall was awarded a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship in 1999 for her "innovative and highly effective" work on behalf of international human rights.

In 1998, she was elected to serve as an independent expert on the United Nations treaty body that oversees the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD). Ms. McDougall is the first American to be elected to the body of 18 international experts who oversee compliance by governments worldwide with the obligations established under the treaty. At its 1996 session, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights elected her to serve a four year term as a member (alternate) of the U.N. Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities of the Human Rights commission. In that capacity, Ms. McDougall also served as Special Rapporteur on the issue of systematic rape, sexual slavery, and slavery-like practices in armed conflict. She presented a groundbreaking study to the United Nations Sub-Commission on Human Rights that called for international legal standards for prosecuting acts of systematic rape and sexual slavery committed during armed conflict. Although commissioned in response to revelations concerning the more than 200,000 women enslaved by the Japanese military in so-called "comfort stations" during the World War II, the report has been cited by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia as an authoritative statement of international criminal law in a landmark sexual violence case involving the detention, torture and killing of civilians in a prison camp in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As Special Rapporteur she also toured Sierra Leone with the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights to assess the devastating impact the civil war had on civilian populations.

Prior to joining Global Rights, Ms. McDougall served as one of five international members of South Africa's 16-member Independent Electoral Commission which successfully organized and administered that country's first non-racial elections. Prior to the elections, she gave critical assistance to parties negotiating with the South African government for a transition to a post-apartheid democratic government, by providing to the negotiators analyses of comparative constitutional arrangements. She also facilitated a detailed examination of constitutional options under consideration by negotiators by organizing a series of consultations with experts from other countries with practical experience in implementing similar systems in their own countries. For the last 14 years of the apartheid era, she gave direct assistance to the defense of thousands of political prisoners in South Africa and Namibia by financing the defense and collaborating with the attorneys.

In 1989, Ms. McDougall founded the Commission of Independence for Namibia, a bipartisan group of 31 distinguished Americans who monitored in detail the 12 month process to independence mandated by the United Nations. The Commission successfully intervened to force modifications in critical legislation, such as the voter registration and election laws, which as drafted, threatened the fairness of the election process. Gay McDougall earned her JD at Yale University Law School and her LLM in public international law at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Global Rights
1200 18th Street NW, Suite 602
Washington, DC 20036
www.globalrights.org