

New York University Master's Program in  
**GLOBAL PUBLIC HEALTH**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Author, human rights activist and noted scholars to  
present global treaty to eradicate hunger at New York  
University on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009**

*New York, NY (January 7, 2009)* - In the more than half a century since the right to be free from hunger was established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the world has struggled to end hunger without the similarly crucial tool of strong law. The aid and development programs we've relied on instead have proven insufficient to eliminate malnutrition, which still results in a staggering annual death rate and continues to afflict more than 900 million others. And it's not just the malnourished dying slow deaths who suffer - hunger also fuels overpopulation, which in turn inflicts corollary damage on the world's environment, economy, and urban, regional and international stability.

As part of its ongoing event series *Conversations in Global Public Health*, the New York University Master's Program in Global Public Health is pleased to present **John Teton**, founding director of the International Food Security Treaty (IFST) Campaign, who will speak on "**The Treatment Of Paradigm Paralysis: Eradicating Malnutrition with High-Dosage Human Rights Law.**" A panel discussion with questions from the audience will follow his remarks, including:

**Richard J. Deckelbaum, M.D.** - Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition (in Pediatrics), Mailman School of Public Health; Director, The Institute of Human Nutrition, both at Columbia University.

**Janet Poppendieck, Ph.D.** - Professor of Sociology, Hunter College and author of *Sweet Charity: Emergency Food Aid and the End of Entitlement*

The presentation and discussion will be moderated by New York University's own **Niyati Parekh, Ph.D.** -Assistant Professor of Nutrition and Public Health within the NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development.

Based on the International Bill of Rights, the International Food Security Treaty (IFST) aims to establish enforceable international law guaranteeing the human right of freedom from hunger. Mr. Teton will discuss the evolution of the IFST, support for the Treaty in Congress and elsewhere, and next steps for the public health community and the United States to assist in the advance of the Treaty.



Supporters of the IFST describe it as the critical missing link in the world's efforts to overcome hunger, the world's most widespread public health problem with more victims than all the world's crimes and wars combined. The proposed treaty strengthens safeguards against famines and delineates the responsibilities of nations to prevent starvation and malnutrition, with enforcement provisions to ensure that they are carried out. Examples of legally-prohibited activity include the use of starvation as a weapon, as happened in Somalia in 1992, and channeling famine-preventing food supplies away from civilians to support military forces, as has occurred in North Korea and the Sudan.

United Nations Undersecretary-General Maurice Strong, an expert in global commerce and international law, has stated "I'm very sympathetic to (the IFST)...as the centerpiece of a whole system by which the capacity of the earth to feed its people is translated into a real commitment to do something, because there's no fundamental need for hunger now, and certainly none for starvation." Statements from members of Congress, legal scholars, and public health experts, along with information about the Treaty itself, can be found at [www.treaty.org](http://www.treaty.org)

Mr. Teton's appearance at NYU continues a series of presentations on the IFST at major universities, including Johns Hopkins, the law schools of Harvard and at the University of California campuses in Los Angeles and Berkeley, and at four briefings on Capitol Hill for members and staff of Congress. A filmmaker and writer, Mr. Teton is the author of the novel *Upsurge*, the early research for which gave rise to the IFST years before the book's publication in 2006, and the related novel *Appearing Live at The Final Test*.

The January 23<sup>rd</sup> event marks the first presentation of the IFST in New York. The program will take place at 6:00pm in the Lester Pollock Colloquium Room at the NYU School of Law's Furman Hall, located at 245 Sullivan Street, between Washington Square South and West 3rd Street.

The public is welcome and admission is free, but seating is limited. Press coverage is invited.