

[Upholding the legacy of David Petrasek](#)

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Thank you David for being that independent mind and voice, and for helping countless human rights academics, activists and practitioners, including myself, to pause, reflect and think critically about what we do.



The news of the loss of David Petrasek came as a shock.

Although David and I never met in person, we were in regular contact and worked on issues of common interest over the past 5 years. David had this rare critical perspective on the international human rights system. Having been an insider himself for many years, he had acquired a unique and precious ability to identify the things which worked well, and those which can be fixed. David was a strong believer and supporter of the international order and multilateralism, including the international human rights architecture. He had this valuable ability to think critically about the role of all actors: UN, diplomats, NGOs, etc. His independence, perspicacity and focus on rights holders and victims - which [transpire through his writings](#) - were profound. I enjoyed discussing and exchanging views with David on international human rights protection.

I was - and continue to be - a fan of David's and his fellow colleagues' work at [Open Global Rights](#). OGR opens perspectives, invites authors to speak up, through their own individual perspectives, and regardless of their title or rank. OGR puts ambassadors and renowned international figures on the same level as grass roots activists or students. I am deeply fond of and supportive of this approach.

David and I most recently worked together on a [joint series of editorials about the UN Treaty Bodies](#), which David himself described in his own ("biased" he said!) words as "the best, current, diverse, and easily accessible 'state of' analysis of the Treaty Bodies."

There's not quite a single "human right champion" of our times who does not read at least occasionally, or contribute to OGR and that is a testament to David and his fellow OGR colleagues' success.

I am so glad to have had the chance to exchange and work with David. Thank you David for being that independent mind and voice, and for helping countless human rights academics, activists and practitioners, including myself, to pause, reflect and think critically about what we do.

The human rights movement globally is grateful to you.

Vincent Ploton

Image: Faculty of Social Sciences, uOttawa

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