

“An Atmosphere of Genuine Solidarity and Brotherhood”:  
Hernán Santa-Cruz and a Forgotten Latin American Contribution to Social Rights

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The true character of the declaration was revealed in three articles [...(i)] the right to life, freedom, and personal security, [(ii) the article that] stated everyone was entitled to economic, social, and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity, and to social security [... and (iii) the article] that proclaimed the need for a just social order and a peaceful international order.<sup>1</sup>

[I]t seemed at times that the chief protagonists in the conference room were the Roman Catholics and the communists, with the latter a poor second.<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

Latin America played a crucial role in furthering the cause of human rights at the nascent United Nations (UN) when great powers were mostly interested in limiting the scope to issues of collective security. Following this line of thought, this article aims to understand the Latin American contributions to the promotion of ESCRs in both global and regional debates by tracing the figure of the Chilean diplomat Hernán Santa-Cruz and his efforts as both a drafter of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and founder of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). In Santa-Cruz’s silhouette we can find a vivid example of Latin American thought regarding social rights, marked by the intersections and contradictions of regional discourses such as social Catholicism, socialist constitutionalism, and developmentalist economic theories.

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<sup>1</sup> Hernán Santa Cruz at the debates leading to the adoption of the UDHR. Cited at William Schabas, *Universal Declaration on Human Rights: The Travaux Préparatoires* (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), 3031.

<sup>2</sup> John Humphrey, *Human Rights & the United Nations* (New York: Transnational Publishers, 1984), 66.