

Human Rights and Humanitarian Law Summer Program

by Sarah Oppenheim*

During the summer of 1999, the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (Center) and the International Legal Studies Program (ILSP) of the Washington College of Law (WCL), along with the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM) of the University of Utrecht, the Netherlands, inaugurated an intensive three-week program in human rights and humanitarian law. The program was begun by the schools because of the dearth of human rights and humanitarian law programs in the United States. Furthermore, the intensive format was created for people with an interest in developing their knowledge in these subject areas, but without the time to spend at semester long classes. Based on the success of the 1999 program, the two schools are joining again and expanding the program for the summer of 2000.

The Center, the ILSP, and SIM are recognized in the international community as leading human rights institutions in the United States and Europe, and they have complimentary areas of expertise on human rights and humanitarian law in the Americas and Europe. WCL established the Center in 1990 to promote the development of these areas of law. Ongoing projects at the Center include the Inter-American Digest Project, which compiles decisions from the Inter-American Commission and Court on Human Rights, and the War Crimes Research Office, which provides research for the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda. The ILSP offers LL.M. degrees in international law and the program annually draws students from approximately 50 countries. SIM was established in 1981 in order to facilitate research projects, distribute information, and stimulate interest in the promotion and protection of human rights. In 1986, it became part of the Faculty of Law at the University of Utrecht and in 1992, the university designated it a research institute. It also coordinates a LL.M. program on International Protection of Human Rights for the Faculty of Law of Utrecht University and publishes the *Digest of Strasbourg Case-Law*, relating to the European Convention on Human Rights. The exceptional partnership of these two human rights centers allows the organizers of the Human Rights and Humanitarian Law Summer Program to provide an innovative and diverse program tailored to the needs of a wide range of students from around the world.

During the intensive three-week program, course schedules are flexible so that students may take only the courses that interest them, without being bound to core requirements. In addition to the classroom curricula, the coordinators schedule visits to distinguished Washington, D.C. institutions, including the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Red Cross, the Inter-American Development Bank, and non-governmental organizations, such as Human Rights Watch and the International Human Rights Law Group. Students are encouraged to arrange internship opportunities with international organizations, in order to take full advantage of their time in Washington, D.C. The program offers either law school credit or a certificate of completion at the end of the three weeks.

The 1999 program offered five courses that covered the human rights systems of Europe and the Americas, humanitarian law, human rights standards for international business, and the relationship between environmental and human rights law. Professors Fried Van Hoof and Leo Zwaak from SIM taught a course on European human rights law. Dean of WCL, Claudio Grossman, and the directors of the Inter-American Digest Project, Claudia Martin and Diego Rodríguez-Pinzón, taught a course on the Inter-American human rights system. WCL Professor and President of the Inter-American Commission on

Human Rights Robert K. Goldman taught International Humanitarian Law. Former WCL professor Katherine Gorove taught International Business and Human Rights. Finally, the director of the D.C.-based Center for International Environmental Law, WCL Professor Durwood Zaelke, taught Human Rights and Environmental Law. The program also offered two related courses that ran later into the summer: Children's Rights, taught by WCL Professor Cynthia Price Cohen, and Contracts of Adhesion and Corporate Power over the Consumer, taught by the distinguished authority on consumer rights, Ralph Nader.

Over 50 students from four continents came to Washington, D.C. for the program. Participants traveled from such places as Japan, Italy, Peru, South Africa, Colombia, and the United Kingdom, and included members of government agencies and international organizations, as well as legal practitioners, counselors to international relief agencies, and students specializing in international human rights and humanitarian law. The group offered unparalleled opportunities to network with peers from a diverse background.

The program for the summer of 2000 is scheduled to take place from May 30 to June 16. As of February 2000, the course list includes the same selection as the 1999 program and is expanding to include classes on Women and Human Rights and Issues in Human Rights Practice. Participants applying to the WCL LL.M. program may receive some academic recognition of the courses if admitted to the LL.M. program and if the courses are taken for academic credit and not for the certificate of completion. Additional information is available on the WCL Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law web page at www.wcl.american.edu/pub/humright/summer2000 and applications can be processed on-line. Students may register at any time prior to the beginning of the program for any class in which spaces remain available. ☉

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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Adalah, the first Arab-Israeli nonprofit legal center in Israel, introduced its new journal, *Adalah's Review*, in December 1999. The General Director of Adalah, Hassan Jabareen, and the Chairperson of its Board of Directors, Muhammad Dahleh, as well as staff attorneys Jamil Dakwar and Marwan Dalal, are graduates of the Washington College of Law LL.M. Program. *Adalah's Review* is intended to provoke discussion of the Israeli law, legal system, and legal discourse, specifically with regards to the status of the Palestinian minority in Israel. The journal is published in Arabic, Hebrew, and English. The English edition, containing slightly different content, provides general background for debates between the Palestinian minority and the Israeli Jewish state, and introduces Adalah's work to a broader international community. To learn more about *Adalah's Review*, visit their website at www.adalah.org.