

# WAR CRIMES RESEARCH OFFICE NEWS

THE WAR CRIMES RESEARCH OFFICE (WCRO) celebrated its 10th anniversary with a conference on September 30, 2005, which examined *International Criminal Tribunals in the 21st Century*. Aryeh Neier, President of the Open Society Institute, opened the conference with a presentation entitled "Approaching the Next Era of War Crimes Tribunals." Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Luis Moreno-Ocampo, gave the luncheon keynote, where he spoke about integrating the work of the ICC into local justice initiatives. The conference received an overwhelming response. More than 250 experts, practitioners, and students of international criminal and humanitarian law attended the event. Among the participants were representatives of the governments of the United States, Canada, Switzerland, Brazil, the Philippines, and Peru, as well as numerous international multilateral and non-governmental organizations, including the United Nations, the Organization of American States, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and

Human Rights First.

In January 2006 Mélanie Masse, a third-year student from the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law, joined the Office for one month to conduct legal research and writing on issues of international criminal and humanitarian law for WCRO client institutions. She was the second student to participate in the *WCRO and the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law January Term Exchange Program*, which was launched in 2005.

A WCL team organized by the WCRO was recently selected to compete in the Jean-Pictet Competition, a week-long series of simulated diplomatic negotiations involving the application of international humanitarian law. This will be the third time in four years that WCL will be represented at the competition. The team, consisting of Katharine Brown, Christian M. De Vos, and Elizabeth "Elle" Walker, will travel to Vrnjacka Banja, Serbia and Montenegro, from March 4-11, 2006, to participate in the competition.

Finally, The War Crimes Speakers Series continues this spring with guest speakers Martina Vandenberg and Geoffrey Corn. Ms. Vandenberg, an associate at Jenner & Block LLP, spent five years with Human Rights Watch's Women's Rights Division, where she documented the trafficking of women for forced prostitution, war crimes, and other forms of gender-based violence. She will be discussing issues of human trafficking related to UN peacekeeping on February 28, 2006. Professor Corn teaches at the South Texas College of Law and is a former Special Assistant to the US Army Judge Advocate General for Law of War Matters. He will discuss the legal issues surrounding the role of civilians, such as contractors, in military operations. The event will be on March 29, 2006, and will be co-sponsored by the National Institute of Military Justice.

For more information about the work of the War Crimes Research Office, please contact [warcimes@wcl.american.edu](mailto:warcimes@wcl.american.edu) or (202) 274-4067. *HRB*



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