

## CENTER NEWS/FACULTY AND STAFF UPDATES

### CENTER NEWS

#### CENTER HOSTS RAPID RESPONSE PANEL TO ADDRESS RECENT SURGE OF VIOLENCE IN GUINEA

On October 14, 2009, the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law organized a panel to address the human rights violations by the Guinean government during a protest in Conakry on September 28. Human rights organizations reported that more than 150 people were killed after members of the military opened fire on unarmed protesters in the city's stadium during an opposition rally. There were also reports that women were sexually assaulted in public by the military. The well-attended panel featured **Jonathan Elliott**, Africa Advocacy Director at Human Rights Watch, **Thierno Balde**, WCL alumnus and president of the board of directors of the Research Institute on Democracy and Rule of Law in Conakry, Guinea, and **Adam Nossiter**, West Africa bureau chief for *The New York Times* in Senegal. Balde and Nossiter joined the panel via phone from Africa. Following the event, Thierno Balde was detained by authorities after he and nine colleagues launched a hunger strike calling for accountability for the events of September 28. He has since been released.

#### CENTER BRINGS TOGETHER LAW PROFESSORS FOR SECOND ANNUAL TEACHING INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW WORKSHOP WITH INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

The Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), hosted the second annual Teaching IHL Workshop at the Washington College of Law on October 2 to 3, 2009. Resource faculty from various law and military schools offered techniques and substance to aid law professors from around the United States in spearheading stand-alone IHL courses or infusing IHL segments into their other classes. The workshop explored such issues as the intersection of international humanitarian law, human rights law, and international criminal law; international humanitarian

law and terrorism; and the integration of international humanitarian law into other courses, including immigration law and constitutional law. The resource faculty who led the workshop included: Professor **Gary Solis** (Georgetown University Law Center), Professor **Dianne Marie Amann** (University of California-Davis School of Law), Professor **Doug Cassel** (University of Notre Dame Law School), Professor **Kate Jastram** (University of California-Berkeley School of Law), **Phil Sundel** (International Committee of the Red Cross), Professor **Beth van Schaack** (Santa Clara Law School), **Colonel Dave Wallace** (U.S. Military Academy), and Professor **Sean Watts** (Creighton University School of Law). The workshop was part of an ongoing initiative to address the recommendations of the 2007 Center/ICRC study, *Teaching International Humanitarian Law in U.S. Law Schools*, which concluded that student demand for IHL courses is high but faculty need better resources, materials, and support to expand the teaching of IHL in law schools in the United States. The Teaching IHL Workshops are aimed to provide a space for professors of IHL or those interested in teaching IHL to think creatively about their teaching of IHL and to network with others in the field. Additional follow-up activities are planned.

#### CENTER HOSTS CONFERENCE WITH HIGH LEVEL DISCUSSION WITH EMBASSY OF THE NETHERLANDS

To celebrate four hundred years of friendship and human rights collaboration between the Netherlands and the United States, the Royal Dutch Embassy and the Center hosted an interactive roundtable discussion at WCL on October 5, 2009. Among its many distinguished guests, the panel included Netherlands Ambassador-at-Large for Human Rights **Arjan Hamburger**; Ambassador **Renée Jones-Bos**; **Larry Cox**, Executive Director of Amnesty International USA; Senior Advisor and former Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor **Michael Kozak**; and Former U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands **Cynthia Schneider**. The event was moderated by

WCL Professor **Robert K. Goldman**, and brought representatives of over ten foreign embassies to WCL.

#### PROFESSOR JUAN MENDEZ LECTURES ON TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

WCL Visiting Professor **Juan Mendez** delivered a compelling lecture addressing transitional justice at American University's Kay Spiritual Life Center. Professor Mendez is the former president of the International Center for Transitional Justice and has served as special adviser to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan on the Prevention of Genocide. Organized by the Center and the Office of the University Chaplain, Mendez's talk featured as respondent Professor **Chuck Call** of American University's School of International Service. The lecture was attended by fifty people, including a delegation of Ph.D. students visiting WCL from South Korea's Sungkyunkwan University.

#### PROGRAM ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND FORCED LABOR DIRECTOR ANN JORDAN CONDUCTS SITE VISIT TO MUMBAI

In August 2009, Program Director **Ann Jordan** spent almost three weeks in Mumbai, India, meeting with the 3,500-plus sex worker collective, Sanghamitra, which is located in India's largest brothel area, Kamithipura. A representative of the collective had been a participant in the March 2009 International Conference on Human Trafficking, HIV/AIDS, and the Sex Sector co-hosted by the Center. The purpose of the trip was to gain first-hand information on work of the collective and to assess the possibility of it becoming a model of a democratic, empowering collective that could enable sex workers to demand their rights, ensure the education of their children, prevent or slow the spread of HIV/AIDS, prevent child prostitution, and rescue trafficked women and girls. The collective is only three years old and has accomplished a great deal so far, including setting up its own bank. The Program will support the development of the collective and has already located 2 or 3 donors willing to fund capacity building and other activities.

The Program is also currently editing for publication the stories of women who presented at its March 2009 conference, co-sponsored with the Center for Gender Health and Equity (CHANGE). The conference brought four activists working with collectives of women in sex work to the United States for a series of activities highlighting the negative impact of some of the anti-trafficking and anti-prostitution policies of the last U.S. administration on the health, rights, and children of women involved in sex work. The activists presented the programs being run by sex workers and demonstrated how a rights-based approach can empower the women to improve their self-esteem and health, prevent child prostitution and human trafficking, and raise their status in society.

#### D.C. AND GAY MARRIAGE: 'TIL CONGRESS DO US PART

As the City Council of the District of Columbia finalizes a bill that would legalize same-sex marriage, the Center hosted a panel discussion on November 11, 2009 to address the legal implications of the pending bill, given both the District of Columbia's unique legislative mandate and the precedent of multiple states that have repealed similar laws. WCL Professor **Nancy Polikoff**, author of *Beyond (Straight and Gay) Marriage: Valuing All Families Under the Law*, and School of Public Affairs Professor **Chris Edelson**, former state legislative director at Human Rights Campaign, discussed the possibility of the U.S. Congress's intervening to interfere with the final result if the city council votes to pass the bill. The speakers also discussed how the bill could impact the District's broad domestic partnership status and the backdrop of current same-sex marriage debates throughout the United States.

#### CONTROVERSIAL CONVERSATIONS IN HUMAN RIGHTS ADDRESSES "DOES TORTURE WORK?"

Controversial Conversations in Human Rights is a new series of faculty-facilitated conversations that aims to give students a forum to discuss provocative, hot-button issues in human rights. The Center hosted the pilot event, titled "Does Torture Work?" on September 23, 2009 as part of International Week. The well-attended and provocative discussion was facilitated by the Center's Executive Director **Hadar Harris**. Students eagerly discussed multiple views on whether torture is an effective tactic in interrogations.

#### PROGRAM ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND FORCED LABOR HOSTS DISCUSSION ON TRAFFICKING IN MEXICO

The Program on Human Trafficking and Forced Labor hosted a well-attended discussion on "Current Issues on Human Trafficking and Migrant Women in Mexico" with **Gretchen Kuhner**, a U.S. attorney working in Mexico on the rights of migrants, including trafficking victims. Kuhner discussed her recent report on trafficking for the American Bar Association and her groundbreaking research on the status of migrant women in Mexican detention centers.

#### CENTER WELCOMES NEW PROGRAM COORDINATOR MARIA LOKSHIN

In August 2009, the Center welcomed **Maria Lokshin** as a new program coordinator for the Center. Lokshin holds a J.D. from Catholic University of America's Columbus School of Law as well as bachelor's degrees in journalism and French from Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. In 2004, Lokshin received the John R. Wilhelm Foreign Correspondence Scholarship from the Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University, and with those funds, she completed a reporting internship at The Associated Press in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Maria speaks fluent Russian and advanced French.

*Webcasts and podcasts of most Center events are available for free download on the Center's website at <http://WCLCenterforHR.org>.*

#### FACULTY AND STAFF UPDATES

**Hadar Harris** is the Executive Director of the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law. In July 2009, Harris traveled to Kosovo to work with the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the newly established Kosovo Judicial Training Institute to conduct a series of day-long trainings on gender and judicial interpretation. At least fifty judges from around the country participated in the trainings which sought to discuss both international human rights standards and their practical applications in Kosovo. The trainings also focused on deconstructing the idea of stereotyping and how that impacts judicial decision-making. In addition to the training for judges, Harris conducted a one-day training with the Agency for Gender Equality in the

Office of the President for all Gender Focal Points and Line Ministry representatives in the Kosovo government to discuss the technicalities of implementing and reporting on Kosovo's voluntary obligations under the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Recently, Harris has given guest lectures to visiting students from Japan's Ritsumeikan University and South Korea's Sungkyunkwan University. She presented in September 2009 to a board meeting of the Science and Human Rights Program of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Harris facilitated the first in a new series of Center events called "Controversial Conversations in Human Rights." This semester she is also teaching an upper-level seminar called "International Protection of Vulnerable Groups."

**Robert K. Goldman** is a Professor of Law at WCL and Co-Director of the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law. He recently published an article titled "History and Action: the Inter-American Human Rights System and the Role of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights" in the *Human Rights Quarterly* (Volume 31, Number 4).

**Richard J. Wilson** is a Professor of Law at WCL, a Co-Director of the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, and Director of the International Human Rights Law Clinic. He is on leave from WCL for this academic year, and during the fall is a Visiting Professor of Law at the Netherlands School of Human Rights Research in Utrecht in the Netherlands. In the spring, he will be a Tillar House Sabbatical Fellow at the American Society of International Law in Washington, D.C. Professor Wilson is researching and writing on the global reach of clinical legal education, and is visiting clinical programs in Holland, Spain, Hungary and Turkey. Professor Wilson also recently participated in a luncheon presentation called "The Role of International Law Experts in U.S. Litigation — A Case Study on Customary Law in a Texas Girls' Reformatory," at the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights in November 2009. He also put on a workshop series called "Issues in Clinical Teaching" for professors, supervisors, and students of the Utrecht Law School Clinical Program on Conflict, Human Rights and International Justice, Utrecht University Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance.