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Faculty/Staff News

Bina Desai

American University Washington College of Law

Michelle Domke

American University Washington College of Law

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reporting annually to the Commission and preparing a draft report on the subject of violence against women for the Economic and Social Council. Her authority allows her to visit states to investigate allegations of violence against women and to issue urgent action appeals to governments to end abuses against women. As Special Rapporteurs are generally considered to be highly effective in their ability to bring issues to the forefront of international awareness, Ms. Coomaraswamy's appointment may have a significant impact in decreasing violence against women.

In the American hemisphere, the Organization of American States (OAS) approved the Inter-American Convention in June 1994. This document is significant as under Article 12, it provides for individual standing before the Inter-American Commission. It also represents an important contribution to the growing

concern for violence against women in stating that the "recognition and full respect for all rights of women is an essential condition for their development as individuals and for the creation of a more just, united and peaceful society." The Inter-American Convention's requirement that it be ratified by only two OAS members in order for it to take effect further emphasizes the growing commitment of states to women's equality.

Women's rights activists maintain that the international community has yet failed to address the importance of state responsibility for private actions that violate human rights. Recent events indicate that this criticism may be gaining acceptance. In March 1994, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women considered testimony from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on the discriminatory effects of judicial practices adopted by states in prosecuting private acts of sexu-

al violence. Witnesses testified that extensive evidentiary requirements, refusal to accept the testimony of the victim as credible, demands that the victim prove her chastity, and disproportionately low rates of conviction foster an environment in which women are discouraged from reporting sexual assaults. As evidenced by increasing numbers of NGO testimonies and reports, there is a growing international concern over the issue of state accountability for private acts of violence.

As described by the United Nations, women's inequality flows from the family to all levels of society and is caused by the systemic nature of discrimination. Consequently, mechanisms employed to remedy women's equality must seek to effect change among all strata of society and strike at the heart of the causes of women's subordination and abuse. ☉

FACULTY/STAFF NEWS

by *Bina Desai and Michelle Domke*

Upendra Baxi, visiting Professor of Law of the University of New Delhi in India, published *Inhuman Wrongs and Human Rights, Mambino's Helmet? Human Rights for a Changing World* in 1994, and, with Dr. Oliver Mendelssohn of Latrobe University in Australia, *Rights of Subordinated Peoples*. Baxi is also working on the development of the UN "Plan of Action" for a Decade of Human Rights Education.

Thomas Farer, Director of the J.D./M.A. Joint Degree Program in Law and International Affairs, consulted and commented on a draft constitution for Uganda in early 1994. Farer is now completing work on a project for the Inter-American Dialogue on "Collectively Defending Democracy in the Western Hemisphere," and is contributing to and editing a forthcoming book from this project which discusses how external actors can promote democracy in Latin America.

Lauren Gilbert, Executive Director of the Women and International Law Program (W&ILP), along with Ann Shalleck, organized the Conference on the International Protection of Reproductive Rights [see related story, page 2] where she presented a

paper on "The Reproductive Rights of Refugee Women."

Robert K. Goldman, Professor of Law, Louis C. James Scholar, and Co-Director of the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, continues to be involved in the issue of judicial reform in Peru (see story in *The Human Rights Brief*, vol. 1, no.2). Goldman is a Senior Consultant on a joint project of the International Human Rights Law Group and the American Society of International Law, undertaken for the UN Secretary General's Special Representative on Internally Displaced Persons, to compile international law norms applicable to internally displaced persons, identify possible deficiencies and gaps in the law, and suggest possible remedies.

Claudio Grossman, Dean of Graduate Studies, Professor of Law, Raymond I. Geraldson Scholar in International and Humanitarian Law, and Co-Director of the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, is currently a member of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. In May 1994, Grossman travelled to Haiti on a Commission mission to study the human

rights situation in that country. In September 1994, he participated in a training conference for human rights lawyers and activists organized by the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights in Santiago Chile. Grossman recently published two articles; one concerning the anniversary of the Inter-American Court on Human Rights and the future of the Inter-American system, and the other discussing individuals and cases currently before the Inter-American Court.

Mark Hager, Professor of Law, travelled to Guatemala this past summer to meet with labor lawyers, union activists, and labor organizations who are documenting labor rights abuses and litigating them before international tribunals. Hager also represents Haitian refugees in political asylum cases and trains WCL students to assist in the preparation of cases.

Nicholas Kittrie, Professor of Law and Edwin A. Mooers Scholar, is the founding chair of the American Society of International Law's Interest Group on the Status of Minorities and Other Communities. In July 1994, Kittrie was elected to the executive

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY

23 PROSECUTING WAR CRIMES IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA.
Featuring War Crimes Tribunal Prosecutor Richard Goldstone

Sponsored by the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law
For information, contact Robert Guitteau at (202) 885-2719

APRIL

10-11 CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

Sponsored by the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, the Washington College of Law, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the American Red Cross

For information, contact Robert Guitteau at (202) 885-2719

APRIL

TBA WORKSHOP ON INTERNATIONAL LAW AND GENOCIDE

Sponsored by the International Institute of Genocide and the Washington College of Law

For information, contact Professor Nicholas Kittrie at (202) 885-2621

TBA CONFERENCE ON THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS SYSTEM

For information, contact Andrew Hamm at (202) 885-3600

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committee of the International Institute of Genocide. Under the auspices of the International Association of Penal Law, Kittrie traveled to the Czech Republic, Poland, and Ukraine in August 1994 with a human rights fact-finding mission. Kittrie's upcoming book, *The War Against Authority: Causes of Discontent and the Search for New Legitimacy*, will be published by the Johns Hopkins University Press.

Diane Orentlicher, Associate Professor of Law, advised the Ethiopian government on prosecution of the prior regime's human rights violations on behalf of the UN Human Rights Center. In September 1994, she participated in a workshop dealing with war crimes and genocide in Rwanda, sponsored by the United States Institute of Peace, and in a briefing at the State Department with Justice Richard Goldstone, Prosecutor for the Yugoslavian War Crimes Tribunal, and WCL Professors Herman Schwartz and Robert Goldman.

Eric Rosenthal, Director of Mental Disability Rights International (MDRI), presented a summary of MDRI's forthcoming report on Uruguay's mental health system at an advocacy conference in Montevideo, Uruguay, on August 18 and 19, 1994 [see related story, page 5]. He also lectured on the rights of the mentally disabled at the European Regional Conference of Rehabilitation International in Budapest, Hungary, and at the First International Conference on Health and Human Rights at the Harvard School of Public Health in September 1994.

Herman Schwartz, Professor of Law and Co-Director of the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, worked with the Georgian Constitutional Committee on a Bill of Rights and Constitutional Court on behalf of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). In September 1994, he participated in a seminar in Kosice, Slovakia on Practice and Procedure in the United States Supreme Court, and presented a paper on "Decommunization Decisions of the New Eastern European Constitutional Courts" at a conference on the East European Constitutional Courts in Warsaw.

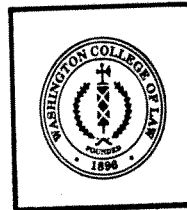
Ann Shalleck, Professor of Law, Director of the Women and the Law Program, and Co-sponsor of the W&ILP, organized a conference on "Women, International Law, and the Law School Curriculum," sponsored by the W&ILP in June 1994. She also organized the Conference on the International Protection of Reproductive Rights along with Lauren Gilbert.

Rick Wilson, Director of the Washington College of Law International Human Rights Clinic, presented "A Litigator's Introduction to the Inter-American Human Rights System" at the Inter-Sectional Meeting of the Lawyers' Support Networks, Amnesty International Canada and U.S.A., in Ottawa, Ontario in September 1994. Wilson was elected Chair of the Legal Support Network of Amnesty International, USA, in October, 1994. ☉



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Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law
Washington College of Law
The American University
4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016

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