

2015

Prologue

Claudio Grossman

American University Washington College of Law

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/auilr>



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Grossman, Claudio. "Prologue." *American University International Law Review* 30 no. 2 (2015): 171-174.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Washington College of Law Journals & Law Reviews at Digital Commons @ American University Washington College of Law. It has been accepted for inclusion in *American University International Law Review* by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ American University Washington College of Law. For more information, please contact fbrown@wcl.american.edu.

PROLOGUE

CLAUDIO GROSSMAN*

I am pleased to write this prologue for the special issue of the *American University International Law Review* featuring the winning papers from the 2014 Human Rights Essay Award, sponsored by the Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law of the Washington College of Law.

Since 2003, the Academy has presented the annual Human Rights Essay Award to support and recognize scholarly research concerning international human rights law. Year after year, lawyers from around the world with extensive experience and knowledge of international human rights law submit works of extraordinary rigor and insight. Selected from a highly competitive pool of submissions, awards and honorable mentions are granted to the best articles. Recipients of the award receive a full scholarship, including tuition, travel, and living expenses, to study at the annual Program of Advanced Studies on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.

This year's submissions addressed the topic "Persons with Disabilities and International Human Rights Law." The Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law received a tremendous number of submissions from authors representing countries all over the world. I commend all of the participating scholars for the caliber of their research and commitment to studying these vital issues.

In 2014, there was one award for the best paper. This award was presented to Vida Eugenia Gómez Asturias for her paper titled *Nuevos retos para el derecho internacional de los derechos humanos: protección de la libertad personal de las personas con discapacidad mental*. Ms. Gómez Asturias is a Salvadorian lawyer currently working as a legal expert at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador. She attained a Master's Degree in Constitutional

* Dean, American University Washington College of Law, and Raymond Geraldson Scholar for International and Humanitarian Law.

Criminal Law from the Universidad Centroamericana José Simeón Cañas (UCA) and wrote her master's thesis on crimes against humanity in the Salvadorian domestic law. Ms. Gómez Asturias has also collaborated as an intern at the Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations.

Honorable mentions for papers in English were awarded to Ana Elena Abello Jiménez of Colombia for her paper *Criminalizing Disability: The Urgent Need of a New Reading of the European Convention on Human Rights*, Kerstin Braun of Australia for her paper "Nothing About Us Without Us": *The Legal Disenfranchisement of Voters with Disabilities in Germany and the Compliance with International Human Rights Standards on Disabilities*, and Louis O. Oyaro of Uganda for his paper titled *Africa at Crossroads: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Honorable mentions for papers in Spanish were awarded to Rafael Barreto Souza of Brazil for his essay *Capacidad jurídica: un nuevo paradigma desde la Convención de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos de las Personas con Discapacidad* and Amaury A. Reyes-Torres of the Dominican Republic for his essay *La Protección de las personas con discapacidad en la Convención Americana sobre Derechos Humanos desde el enfoque de las capacidades: de la igualdad de trato a la igualdad de oportunidades*. The law school community congratulates all of these scholars for their exceptional articles and appreciates the contributions of all the participants in the Academy's 2014 Human Rights Essay Award Competition.

I would also like to thank my fellow members of the Honor Jury: Robert Dinerstein, Eric Rosenthal, Theresia Degener, Ronald McCallum, Hadar Harris, Jorge Araya, María Soledad Cisternas Reyes, Alison Hillman, Facundo Chávez Penillas, Gloria Cano, Ariela Peralta Distefano, Claudia Martin and Diego Rodríguez-Pinzón.

The Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law established the Human Rights Essay Award as part of its broader mission to help address the need for specialized legal training in the practice and theory of international human rights. The Academy, which evolved from the law school's core commitment to promoting human rights and humanitarian law, has emerged as a premier forum

for advanced training and analysis concerning the most salient topics in these critical legal fields. Participants acquire valuable knowledge and skills through the examination of issues shaping the world within a context that emphasizes the practical roles and contributions of human rights rules and mechanisms. Such engagement strengthens the professional community that can, in turn, help to better address the pressing needs of people around the world.

The Academy's Program of Advanced Studies on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law is held each summer in Washington, D.C., at American University Washington College of Law. The Program's faculty includes the most distinguished scholars and practitioners of human rights and humanitarian law. Courses address a diverse range of key topics including, *inter alia*, impunity and justice, implementation of human rights in domestic law, women and international human rights law, regional systems of human rights law (Africa and Europe), the rights of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, and the United Nations human rights system.

Additionally, numerous activities further enrich the participants' experience in the Program, including panels and discussions on key topics and site visits to important institutions such as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Organization of American States.

The Academy's activities are an important component of the law school's numerous initiatives reflecting its longstanding commitment to strengthening the rule of law and human rights around the world. Other elements include extensive course offerings and externship opportunities, a variety of student-run publications, and law school programs including, *inter alia*, the Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, War Crimes Research Office, United Nations Committee against Torture Project, Clinical Programs, Office of Public Interest, Summer Law Program in the Hague, Impact Litigation Project, the annual trilingual Inter-American Human Rights Moot Court Competition and the LL.M. in International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.

All of these initiatives reaffirm our community's commitment to helping protect and promote human dignity through the rule of law. The law school will continue to foster and support this core value in future generations of lawyers and to collaborate with institutions,

programs, and countries around the world. In this spirit, I would also like to express our deep appreciation to the *American University International Law Review* for its dedication and contributions to publishing vital international law scholarship, including this special issue each year, which sets forth papers in both English and Spanish concerning key topics in international human rights law.