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## Prologue

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# PROLOGUE

ACADEMY ADVISORY BOARD CO-CHAIRS:

CLAUDIO GROSSMAN\* & ROBERT K. GOLDMAN\*\*

We are pleased to write this prologue for the special issue of the *American University International Law Review* featuring the winning papers from the 2021 Human Rights Essay Award, sponsored by the Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law of American University 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 "Human Rights and States of Emergency: Unexpected Crisis and New Challenges." The Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law received a tremendous number of submissions from authors representing countries all over the world. We commend all of the participating scholars for the caliber of their research and commitment to studying these vital issues.

In 2021, there were two awards for Best Paper. The 2021 Award for the Best Paper in English was presented to Roman Girma Teshome of the Netherlands for her paper titled "*Derogations to*

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*Human Rights During a Global Pandemic: Unpacking Normative and Practical Challenges.*” Ms. Teshome is currently a PhD Candidate in International Law at the University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam Center for International Law.

The 2021 Award for the Best Paper in Spanish was presented to Paula Roko of Argentina for her paper titled “El Control Estatal de la (Des)Información en Internet en el contexto de la pandemia: un análisis de las tendencias regionales bajo una perspectiva de libertad de expresión.” Ms. Roko is an Argentine lawyer and journalist. She specialized in investigative journalism at the University of El Salvador and is pursuing a Master’s degree in Constitutional Law and Human Rights from the University of Palermo. She is a researcher and consultant on issues related to the right to freedom of expression and access to public information, as well as the impact of digital technologies on these rights, with a particular focus on the Inter-American legal framework. She currently works as a legal consultant at the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Honorable Mentions for papers in English were awarded to Cláudio Cerqueira B. Netto of Brazil for his paper titled, “Reducing the Negative Effects of Counterterrorism Frameworks and Other Restrictive Measures on Humanitarian Action and Enforcing the Obligations of States in relation to the COVID-19 Vaccine,” and to Göksu Isik of Turkey for her paper titled “Confronted Emergencies for Political Prisoners in Turkey.”

Honorable mentions for papers in Spanish were awarded to María Agustina Bonella of Argentina for her paper titled “*Estados de Emergencia en el Sistema Interamericano de Derechos Humanos: Los principales retos de la pandemia de COVID-19,*” and to César Francisco Gallegos Pazmiño for his paper titled “*Crónicas coronavíricas: el derecho frente a la pandemia de autoritarización tras el COVID-19.*”

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 2021 Human Rights Essay Award Competition.

We would also like to thank the members of the Honor Jury who

joined AUWCL Faculty in evaluating the submissions: Kwadwo Appiagyei-Atua, Freya Baetens, Santiago Canton, Christian M. De Vos, Par Engstrom, Carla Ferstman, Robert Goldman, Sarah Joseph, Claudia Martin, Ariela Peralta, Diego Rodriguez-Pinzon, Graciela Rodríguez Manzo, Daniela Salazar, Ben Saul, Martín Sigal, Carmen Rosa Villa Quintana.

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 in turn, can 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 part of the LL.M. in International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law 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, 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, the Kovler Project Against Torture, 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, we 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.