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ALUMNUS PROFILE

Alumna Works with World Bank to Promote Development

When Sabine Schlemmer-Schulte began her LL.M. studies at Washington College of Law (WCL) in 1993, she already had six years of experience as a practicing attorney in Germany and multiple advanced degrees. She received her initial J.D. degrees in France and Germany, and subsequently received a general LL.M. degree in European Union-law, a specialized LL.M. in European Banking Law, and an S.J.D. from the Saarland University in Saarbrücken, Germany.

After she completed a two-year law clerkship, which is required of all new lawyers in Germany, Schlemmer-Schulte worked for a corporate law firm in Cologne, Germany, as an Associate, focusing primarily on European trade and anti-trust issues. She went on to work as an Assistant Professor at the Institute for European Studies in Saarbrücken, Germany, where she taught EU-law and public international law and served as a consultant to private enterprises on trade issues related to the establishment of the European Single Market. She also assisted in advising the German government on issues of international corporate law arising from the unification of Germany and the transfer of corporations of the former Soviet Union and East Germany to the Federal Republic.

After she moved to the United States, Schlemmer-Schulte decided to pursue an LL.M. degree here because she felt she needed to learn more about common law systems. She chose WCL because its LL.M. program offered a strong focus on international trends in business but would also allow her to take courses in American law.

While she was pursuing her LL.M. at WCL, Schlemmer-Schulte served as a Research Assistant for Professor Daniel Bradlow. At that time, Professor Bradlow was formulating a proposal to create an ombudsman at the World Bank to whom individuals could complain if they were adversely affected by projects financed by

the World Bank. This suggestion and others like it coincided with similar proposals within the Bank which were part of the concerns of the new management with the efficiency of the institution's work. These concerns led to the Bank decision in September 1993 to establish the World Bank Inspection Panel, an independent body that investigates complaints from groups of individuals in borrower countries who believe that their rights or interests have been directly and adversely affected by actions or omissions of the Bank as a result of a failure of the Bank to follow its operational policies and procedures with respect to the design, appraisal and/or implementation of a project financed by it.

After graduation, Schlemmer-Schulte went to work with a World Bank affiliate, the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). She worked for a year as Assistant Counsel at ICSID, an organization that handles disputes on foreign direct investment matters between private investors from member countries with governments of other member countries, before going to work for Dr. Ibrahim F.I. Shihata, the Senior Vice President and General Counsel of the World Bank.

As Counsel and Personal Assistant to Mr. Shihata, Schlemmer-Schulte has assisted the General Counsel in a variety of areas and worked on a very wide range of institutional and operational issues facing the World Bank. She has, for example, participated in the Bank's task force which was set up to define Bank strategies in order to help combat corruption in the Bank's borrowing countries. She has also been involved in discussions on new operational policies and has worked on issues related to the review of the Bank's experience with its Inspection Panel and on issues relating to Bank membership.

Human rights issues have always been part of her work. During her work on European business matters, Schlemmer-Schulte started recognizing the

important contribution of good market rules and institutions to the societies in Europe, and particularly their human rights, a conviction that she found evidenced by the jurisprudence of the European Court of Justice (ECJ). The firm with which she was affiliated represented many cases before the ECJ, and she has also written about the Court's decisions. Schlemmer-Schulte believes that business and economic development are important to create an environment where the necessities of life are available and on the basis of which human rights protection may be better achieved. In this respect, she very much enjoys working at the World Bank, an institution that she believes has a unique record of promoting sustainable development and reducing poverty. Schlemmer-Schulte is very happy to contribute to the Bank's work in general and its promotion of human rights in particular. She wants to continue to promote the Bank's work, and help to intensify and expand, to the extent that this is consistent with the Bank's charter, the considerations of the Bank to include human rights issues.

Schlemmer-Schulte feels an emotional connection to WCL and particularly to the people she worked closely with. She found the program at WCL and its faculty to be outstanding, and particularly enjoyed the opportunity to work with excellent professors including Professor Bradlow and Dean Claudio Grossman. She is also looking forward to contributing to WCL's program by teaching EU-law at WCL this summer. ☺

