**In brief - National Order of Merit**

By decree of November 14th 2016, Jean-Paul COSTA, President of the René Cassin Foundation—International Institute of Human Rights, Honorary State Councillor, Former President of the European Court of Human Rights, was promoted to the rank of Grand Officer of the National Order of Merit. On January 17th 2017, the ceremony took place at the Elysée Palace in the presence of the President of the Republic François HOLLANDE.
On January 25th 2017, Sir Nigel Rodley is deceased at 75 years old after a devastating disease which he bores with considerable courage with Lyn, his admirable wife.

He was a faithful friend of our Institute and he has participated to numerous annual study sessions, international symposium, especially recent colloquium organised by the IIHR and the CRDH on The European Court of Human Rights, a necessary confidence for a reinforced authority (Pedone, 2016) and on The United Nations Human Rights Protection System, present and future (Pedone, to be published, 2017). His participation to this symposium in Paris on November 2016 was probably one of his last public interventions. Despite the tiredness, his speech on the utopia of a World Court of Human Rights showed his brilliant intelligence and his open-mindedness…

One year before, on January 26th 2016, the University Paris II awarded him a honorary doctorate during a very moving ceremony which was a rare public recognition of his work, with the Knight of the British Empire in 1998 and the honorary doctorate of the Dalhousie University, in Canada, in 2000. Already, the clouds of Brexit and the criticisms against the European Convention of Human Rights threatened the supranational basis of the European construction. It is clear that this year 2016 was, between numerous posthumous praises, very cruel for Nigel because of personal disappointments and political concerns. But his personal commitment on Human Rights went even further, linked with historical tragedy and endless pursuit of justice.

In the speech addressed during his doctorate, he discreetly mentioned the memories of his grandparents who died in Nazi camps. His book on Treatment of Prisoners under International Law was dedicated to them, « In memory of Richard and Minna Rosenfeld, my grandparents who were transported from Achim bei Bremen on 17 November 1941 and killed in a Nazi concentration camp at Minsk on 28 July 1942 » in the first edition. By a tragic coincidence, Nigel Rodley was born on December 1st 1941, the life has to be stronger than anxiety. Throughout his life, he always fought for human dignity, which is the heart of the United Nations Charter.

To him, there is no difference between moral liability and moral conviction. This long-life exemplary struggle was waged on three fronts, after he finished his legal studies in England, at Leeds and in United States, especially at the Columbia University and at the New York University.

From 1973 to 1990, Nigel Rodley was the first legal counselor of Amnesty International, he created this department which is a proof of a great professionalism. We often talk about the NGOs’ tribunician function but we neglect the importance of the legal and comparative law technical in their activities, and by doing so, their essential contribution to the “codification and progressive development of international law”, to borrow the terminology of the United Nations Charter. Somehow, his further responsibilities, as President of the International Commission of Jurists after the Presidency of Mary Robinson, were the direct follow-up of this commitment, providing expertise to commitment.

The year 1990 marked an important turning point in Professor Rodley’s career. After teaching at the London School of Economics since 1973, he became Professor at Essex University where he received a Chair in 1993 by contributing to the creation of the Human Rights Center that he presided for a long-time as Emeritus Professor. It would be an understatement to say that thanks to him Essex became a human rights capital who was training generations of students and researchers; this “Essex Mafia” is now present everywhere in the world.
Both experiences in the civil society and academic world could not fail to lead to international responsibilities. Sir Nigel has held several and very important terms as Independent Expert to the United Nations. First of all and in the continuation to his fight against death penalty, he was nominated by the Commission on Human Rights as Special Rapporteur on Torture for 8 years (1993-2001) during a particularly critical period.

Thereafter, he was nominated as member of the Human Rights Committee in 2001 during 16 years until December 31th 2016. His influence at the Committee was incomparable thanks to his legal rigor and moral authority, especially when he questioned as Rapporteur on United-States, Guantanamo Bay prison with a tightly argumentation on obligations of United-States in the light of the Covenant. His demise is an incalculable loss for the Committee which will not benefit before long from such knowledge and awareness. In short, he was endowed with profound gravitas, one that allowed him to face those “cold monsters” that States are. This is evidently why the latter wish to introduce term limits for members in the Committee.

It is not possible to show here the intellectual influence of Sir Nigel Rodley at the Human Rights Committee where he was President for 2 years during the challenging moment of reform of the “United Nations Human Rights Treaty System”, with the negotiation of the resolution 68/268 adopted by the General Assembly in April 2014. Committed to the main principles of independence of experts and treaty bodies, mastering all the subtleties of legal technical, he was an eloquent and a formidable spokesperson, a sort of “statue du Commandeur” in international forums but what was the most notable was his profound human qualities – his straightness, his attention, his simplicity and his kindness – which was link to his huge experience and his legal rigor and contributes to his leadership.

This three key threads form a whole. His numerous personal, individual and collective works prove it such as the Volume of the Mélanges in his honor *The Delivery of Human Rights* which was published at the initiative of Françoise Hampson in 2010. More than everything, the three editions of his reference work *Treatment of Prisoners under International Law*, published by Oxford University Press in 1987, 1999 and 2009 show the fruitful back-and-forth between theory and practice. He has contributed to overcome fragmentation of international human rights law by fully integrating the developments of international humanitarian law and international criminal law. A new *Encyclopedia of Human Rights*, in process under his direction, will be an ultimate testimony of his sense of teamwork.

He has always been able to combine scientific rigor and practical commitment by contributing to defend a demanding conception of international human rights law as a full part of international public law and it was the exceptional quality of the distinguished career of Sir Nigel Rodley. In the best british legal tradition, he will continue to be an intellectual and moral reference in the field of human rights. In times of major threats, his demise is an incalculable loss to everyone who knew, loved and admired him.

Emmanuel DECAUX

Professeur émérite à l’Université Panthéon-Assas Paris II
Membre et ancien président du Comité des disparitions forcées
On January 20th 2017, the René Cassin Foundation and the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (CNCDH) organised a day in tribute to René Cassin which took place at the European Court of Human Rights. Around fifty people participated to this event.

The very rich program of this day began with the opening speeches of Guido RAIMONDI, President of the European Court of Human Rights; Jean-Paul COSTA, President of the René Cassin Foundation and Former President of the EHCR and Christine LAZERGES, President of the CNCDH, Emeritus Professor at the University Panthéon Sorbonne (Paris I). Various personal testimonies follows these welcoming words thanks to the presence of Nicole QUESTIAUX, Honorary President of section of the « Conseil d’Etat », Former Minister and Member of the CNCDH; Alain BERTHOZ, Honorary Professor at the Collège de France, Member of the Academy of Sciences; Jean WALINE, Former President of the International Institute of Human Rights, Emeritus Professor at the University of Strasbourg and Jean-Bernard MARIE, Former Secretary General of the International Institute of Human Rights, Director of researches at the CNRS. This day gave also the opportunity to highlight the action of René Cassin as main contemporary. Claude HENRY, Vice-President of the Federal Union of War Veterans gave a speech on « René Cassin, combatant during the two world wars »; Charles LEBEN, Emeritus Professor at the University Panthéon-Assas (Paris II) has made an intervention on « The place of Judaism in the construction of the secular republican and the action of René Cassin as leader of the « Alliance Israélite Universelle » and then Valentine ZUBER, Director of Studies at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Member de la CNCDH, showed « the philosophical dimension of the work of René Cassin ».

The day in tribute to René Cassin has put forward the topicality of the work of René Cassin.

Emmanuel DECAUX, Emeritus Professor at the University Panthéon-Assas (Paris II) gave a speech on « International lessons, the United Nations »; Sébastien TOUZÉ, Professor at the University Panthéon-Assas (Paris II), Director of the René Cassin Foundation and Member of the United Nations Committee against Torture, focused on the « European lessons »; Patrick WACHSMANN, Professor at the University of Strasbourg, has made an intervention on the « Constitutional lessons » and then Catherine TEITGEN-COLLY, Professor at the University Panthéon Sorbonne (Paris I), Member of the CNCDH, gave a speech on the « Administrative lessons ».

This day concluded with the conclusions of Laurence BURGORGUE-LARSEN, Professor at the University Panthéon Sorbonne (Paris I).

These interventions will be published.
Our next training sessions

48th annual study session - Health and International Human Rights Law

The 48th annual study session of the Fondation René Cassin will focus on the theme « Health and International Human Rights Law » and will take place from July 3 to 21, 2017 in Strasbourg (France).

Registration are open until May 15, 2017.

Created in 1970, the annual study session last three weeks and consists in courses and conferences provided by international experts.

This training session allows to participant to deepen their knowledge in international and comparative human rights law but also to familiarize themself to specific issues linked with the topical subject of the annual study session.

You can find all the information about registration and archives on our website.

Registration on our website.

Programme

Booklet

20th Summer Course on Refugee Law

The French Representation of the UNHCR and the Fondation René Cassin will organise a 20th Summer course on Refugee Law. This two weeks course will take place from June 6 to 17, 2017 at the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, France.

Courses will be provided in french by UNHCR experts and institutional, academics and judicial specialists.

Programme and registration on our website

Registration

Programme
Our next training sessions

4th training session in Yaoundé (Cameroon)

With the support of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom and the MINUSMA, the René Cassin Foundation will organise a 2nd training session abroad in Yaoundé (Cameroon). This thematic session will focus on “The justiciability of economic, social and cultural rights” and will take place from 10th to 15th of April 2017. Registration on our website.

1st training session in Buenos Aires (Argentina)

The 1st training session in Buenos Aires (Argentina) will take place from 7th to 17th of March 2017 and will focus on international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international criminal law. General courses will be supplemented by thematic courses on international protection of women rights, protection of indigenous people or the United Nations Committee against torture.

The provisional program is available on our website.

Timetable of training sessions abroad 2017

From 6th to 11th February 2017: 4th training session in Bamako (Mali)

From 20th to 25th February 2017: 1st training session in Lima (Peru) followed by a private seminar in Cuzco (Peru)

From 7th to 17th of March 2017: 1st training session in Buenos Aires (Argentina)

From 10th to 15th April 2017: 2nd training session in Yaoundé (Cameroon)

September 2017: 8th training session in Dakar (Senegal)

October 2017: 1st training session in Pretoria (South Africa)

November 2017: 5th training session in Abidjan (Ivory Coast)

December 2017: 6th training session in Port-au-Prince (Haiti)

May 2017: 5th international training session "Mona Haddad" of human rights in Beirut
Our Past training sessions

4th training session in Bamako (Mali)

The 4th training session in Bamako (Mali) took place from 6th to 11th of February 2017 and explored the theme « Challenges of the International Criminal Court ». This session was organised by the René Cassin Foundation and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, with the support of the MINUSMA.

The program focused on the international criminal law, international humanitarian law, international human rights law and specific issues of the protection of refugees rights.

1st training session in Lima (Peru)

From 20 to 23 February 2017, the René Cassin Foundation and the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru organised a first training session on international human rights law in Lima. Courses were provided in French and Spanish, a simultaneous translation of French courses was organised.

This training session was completed by an international symposium on the prohibition of torture and inhuman and degrading treatment in international human rights law. This symposium took place on February 25th, 2017.

René Cassin European Pleading Competition on Human Rights
22-23-24 March 2017

The René Cassin Foundation organise the 32th Edition of the René Cassin Pleading Competition which will take place on 22, 23 and 24 March 2017 at the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights. 30 teams of French-speaking universities were selected on the basis of their thesis and will faced each other before professionals and academics. The theme of this new edition is « Health and European Human Rights Law ». More information: http://concours cassin.eu/
Continuing training

Winter School - Human Rights as a Horizontal Issue in EU External Policy

From January 9 to 13, 2017, the Fondation René Cassin, the University of Bologna and the Higher School of Economics of Moscow, organised a Winter School which took place in Forli (Italia). The theme was « Human Rights as a Horizontal Issue in EU External Policy ». This Winter School was made in the context of a partnership between the Fondation René Cassin, the University of Bologna and the Higher School of Economics of Moscow. On 2015, a first Spring School was organised by the three partners in Strasbourg on the theme « Family Law in the European Legal Framework ».

Information on our website.

Human Rights Clinic

Students of the Human Rights Clinic had the opportunity to assist to a seminar in February:

**On February 9th,** Delphine LENEUTRE, legal associated with the UNHCR Representation to the European Institutions in Strasbourg, gave a speech on “The protection of refugees in Europe”
Depuis octobre 2012, la France a initié une vaste campagne mondiale pour l’abolition universelle de la peine de mort. Si celle-ci n’est plus appliquée en Europe, bien des nations, et notamment certaines grandes puissances démocratiques comme les États-Unis, l’Inde ou le Japon, la pratiquent encore. A ce jour, 99 États ont aboli la peine de mort pour tous les crimes, 8 l’ont aboli pour les crimes de droit commun, et 33 respectent un moratoire sur les exécutions, soit 140 États au total ne la pratiquent plus. Pourtant, 58 États et territoires l’appliquent toujours malgré la pression internationale. La coopération et le dialogue avec ces derniers États ainsi qu’une action efficace et pragmatique sont donc indispensables.

Dans ce contexte et face à ce défi, la Fondation René Cassin - Institut International des Droits de l’Homme, à l’initiative de la Représentation permanente de la France auprès du Conseil de l’Europe, a organisé, en octobre 2014 au Costa Rica, une conférence mondiale réunissant de nombreux spécialistes de plusieurs pays. Focalisée sur les concepts des droits de l’homme liés à l’abolition de la peine de mort, cette manifestation avait plus largement pour ambition de participer à une prise de conscience de l’opinion publique et du rôle que les praticiens du droit ont à jouer dans l’abolition “du plus prémédité des meurtres”. Ainsi, cette manifestation a permis de mener une réflexion sur le sens et la fonction des peines alternatives et, plus globalement, sur le fonctionnement du système pénal et judiciaire.

Le système européen des droits de l’homme a été et se voit actuellement confronté à plusieurs défis majeurs cristallisés par une opposition de plus en plus sévère et ferme portée par plusieurs gouvernements européens.

Si le défi de l’« efficacité » et de la rationalisation de la gestion du contentieux devant la Cour est en passe d’être gagné après des années d’efforts, d’autres, plus redoutables, pointent à l’horizon. Ces défis se rapportent tous, bien que formulés dans des expressions diverses et des cadres internes distincts, au thème de la souveraineté tel qu’il est perçu au niveau judiciaire, et singulièrement par les cours suprêmes et constitutionnelles nationales, ainsi qu’au niveau politique dans de nombreux États.

L’objectif de cet ouvrage qui rassemble les réflexions de juges européens, d’avocats, de conseils des États et d’universitaires, est d’identifier de manière précise les causes de ces positions juridiques et politiques et de contribuer à la réflexion sur des solutions permettant de pérenniser le système de contrôle et de restaurer une confiance nécessaire pour l’affirmation de l’autorité de la Cour européenne et de sa jurisprudence.
Agenda of the President

January

13th of January: Wishes of the Prefect of Region
16th of January: Solemn Reassembly of the Appeal Court of Colmar
17th of January: Ceremony of the French National Order of Merit at the Elysée Palace
19th of January: Reception of the Ambassador, French Permanent Representation to the Council of Europe
20th of January: Day of Tribute to René Cassin at the European Court of Human Rights
25th of January: Solemn Reassembly of the Administrative Court of Strasbourg
26th of January: Seminar at the European Court of Human Rights and Solemn Reassembly of the ECHR

February

8th of February: Conference at the Faculty of Law of Aix en Provence
9th of February: Course at the Faculty of Law of Aix en Provence
17th of February: Administrative Board of the National and University Library of Strasbourg
22th of February: Meeting with Mr. Ohnet, Notary Public of the Foundation

Agenda of the Director

January

6th of January: Conference at the University of Grenoble on the torture and the fight against terrorism
20th of January: Intervention during the day in tribute to René Cassin organised by the René Cassin Foundation and the CNCDH
26th of January: Meeting of installation of the Compliance Officer of the Region Grand Est

February

10th of February: Meeting of the drafting Committee of the Revue générale de droit international public
From 18th to 27th of February: Courses during the first training session of the René Cassin Foundation in Lima and international colloquium in Cusco
There will be no peace on this planet as long as human rights are being violated, regardless of where in the world it is happening» René Cassin

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