Fondation René Cassin

Created in 1969 by René Cassin, Nobel Peace Prize, the association International Institute of Human Rights contributes to the promotion and the protection of human rights.

True to the vision of René Cassin and to develop its activities thanks to sponsorships, the International Institute of Human Rights became a state-approved foundation in December 2015: the Fondation René Cassin - International Institute of Human Rights.

This Fondation is chaired by Jean-Paul COSTA, former President of the European Court of Human Rights and led by Sébastien TOUZÉ, Professor at the University Paris II Panthéon-Assas and Member of the United Nations Committee against Torture. The objective of the Fondation René Cassin is to develop the training in the field of human rights and to support the research to ensure effective application of these rights.

In brief - New procedure of registration for our training sessions and academic events

In order to simplify registrations and payments, the Fondation René Cassin modernised its website. Now, all registration to our training sessions and scientific events should be done through your personal account. This account will allow you to manage your personal information, to modify it easily but also to pay online, by bank transfer, on the spot or by cheque your registration fee to participate to our events.

To create your personal account, please read the instructions available on the homepage’s website by clicking on the button:
49th Summer School « Human Rights Defenders »

The 49th Summer School of the René Cassin Foundation will take place from 2nd to 20th of July 2018 and will focused on the theme « Human Rights Defenders ». To celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and as a tribute of the Fondation’s founder, René Cassin, the Summer School will highlight the work of human rights defenders and will focus on the challenges of this specific status.

Registration is open until May 11th, 2018
More information on our website.

21th Intensive Training on Refugee Law

The former Summer Course on Refugee Law became the Intensive training on Refugee Law. Organised by the René Cassin Foundation - International Institute of Human Rights and the French Representative of the UNHCR for 20 years. This two weeks training will take place from 18th to 29th of June 2018.

This training aims to promote training in international refugee law and to develop the knowledge of international principles about the international protection of persons under the care of the UNHCR. It also seeks to develop a common understanding of new challenges of the international protection of refugee and asylum seekers and actions which...
Our next training sessions abroad

1st training session in Tunis (Tunisia)

International Human Rights Law and Migration

The René Cassin Foundation et the Laboratory of international law, international jurisdictions and comparative constitutional law - thanks to the support of the French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE), the House Hermès, the Caisse d’Epargne Alsace Lorraine Champagne and the Adenauer Stiftung, Tunisia/Algeria Office - will organized a 1st training session in Tunis. The theme will address « International Human Rights Law and Migration ». This training session will take place from 30 April to 5 May 2018.

2nd training session in Buenos Aires (Argentina)

International Human Rights Law and Women’s Rights

The René Cassin Foundation and the Faculty of Law of the University of Buenos Aires will organize a 2nd training session which will take place from 18 to 29 June 2018. This training session will address the theme « International Human Rights Law and Women’s Rights ». This training session is organized thanks to the support of the French Embassy in Argentina, the Institut Français de Buenos Aires, the House Hermès, the Caisse d’Epargne Alsace and the Banque Populaire Alsace Champagne Lorraine.

Registration fees: 300 euros

Deadline for registration : 20 May 2018

2nd training session in Tbilisi (Georgia)

International Criminal Justice

From 11 to the 15 June 2018, the René Cassin Foundation - International Institute for Human Rights of Strasbourg (France), in partnership with the European University of Tbilisi and the International Black Sea University, and with the support of the Country office of the International Criminal Court in Georgia and the French Institute, is organizing its second decentralized training session in Tbilisi. The session will be conducted in English. This project is designed to strengthen participants’ knowledge of regional and international instruments for the protection of human rights, and to provide them with adequate legal reflexes to prevent and deal with violations of fundamental rights. International humanitarian law, international criminal law and refugee law courses will provide them with helpful tools to manage conflictual and post-conflict situations.

Registration fees: 100 €

Student discount: 50 €

Deadline for registration : 27 May 2018
Our past training sessions

2nd training session in Lima (Peru)

Interamerican Human Rights Protection System and public policies for vulnerable groups

The René Cassin Foundation and the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú organize a 2nd training session in Lima which take place from 19 February to 9 March 2018. The theme of this training session is « Interamerican Human Rights Protection System and public policies for vulnerable groups ».

3rd training session in Yaoundé (Cameroon)

The fight against discrimination

The René Cassin Foundation, the International Relation Institute of Cameroon (IRIC), the Ecole Citoyenne et Politique de Yaoundé (ECPY) organized a third training session in Yaoundé (Cameroon). This training session took place from 2 to 7 April 2018 on the theme "The fight against discrimination".

This training session welcomed 71 participants, of whom 31 were women (44%). We noted a broad representation of legal professionals: magistrates, lawyers, bailiffs, members of International Organizations and members of civil society organizations and students.

Schedule of training sessions 2018

From 30 April to 5 May 2018: 1st training session in Tunis (Tunisia)

From 11 to 15 June 2018: 2nd training session in Tbilisi (Georgia)

From 18 to 29 June 2018: 2nd training session in Buenos Aires (Argentina)

From 18 to 29 June 2018: 21th Intensive Training on Refugee Law in Strasbourg (France)

From 2 to 20 July 2018: 49th Summer School on « Human Rights Defenders » in Strasbourg (France)

From 17 to 28 September 2018: 9th training session in Dakar (Senegal)

From 11 to 15 June 2018: 6th training session « Mona Haddad des droits de l’homme » in Beirut (Lebanon)

From 22 to 26 October 2018: 2nd training session in Pretoria (South Africa)

From 3 to 13 December 2018: 7th training session in Haiti
Young Cameroonian and holder of a master 2 in international litigation of the International Relations Institute of Cameroon, I am currently working for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Cameroon. The protection and promotion of human rights have always been one of my primary areas of interest.

Taking part to the 3rd training session in Yaoundé (2018) after a participation in the Summer Course on Refugee Law in 2014 and the training session in Bamako (February 2016) gave me the opportunity to reimmerse in human rights universe that I really appreciate.

I welcome the initiative of the Fondation René Cassin - International Institute of Human Rights and its partners to organize these training sessions and especially the Yaoundé one. It is an opportunity for a wider audience to participate in these high-level human rights training sessions.

The pleasant and friendly setting of this 6 days training session allows to enhance the capacities of participants through fruitful discussions. The strength of this training session is to be not strictly limited to international human rights courses but to include international criminal law, refugee law and international humanitarian law courses.

We appreciate the harmonious choice of academics and professionals speakers. I also really liked the way in which speakers have dealt with the thematic issues, this has helped me be the laureate of this training session. I will take the opportunity offered by the Fondation René Cassin to participate in the 49th Summer School in Strasbourg to strengthen my human rights capacities.

Knowledge gained in the field of the fight against discrimination will be extremely useful in my daily work on promotion and protection of refugees’ rights and I would like to thank the Fondation René Cassin and its partners.
The 2018 Edition of the René Cassin Pleading Competition took place from 4 to 6 April 2018. The Semi-Finals were organised at the Council of Europe and the Finals at the European Court of Human rights. The theme of this edition was: **Whistleblower and European Human Rights Law**.

128 participants (32 teams) were selected on the basis of a thesis by the scientific council to participate to the oral hearings of the René Cassin Pleading Competition. Jurys of the half-finals were lawyers, academics and civil servants of the Council of Europe and European Court of Human Rights. This year, the René Cassin Pleading Competition welcomed french and european teams: University of Neuchatel, University de Poitiers, University of Maastricht, University Paris 3 Sorbonne nouvelle, University of Limoges, Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien, University of Valenciennes, University of La Réunion, University of Artois, University of Grenoble Alpes, University of Tours, University Paris Saclay, University Cergy-Pontoise, University Lille 2, University Caen Normandie, College of Europe in Bruges, University of Toulouse 1 Capitole, UFA, University of Strasbourg, University Paris Descartes, University of Rennes I, University of Montpellier, University of Bucharest, University Lumière Lyon 2, University Evry Val d’Essonne, University Paris I Panthéon Sorbonne, Collège Universitaire Français de Moscou, University Aix Marseille, University Saint Louis Bruxelles, University Panthéon Assas Paris II, University of Angers and the University Jean Monnet of Saint-Etienne.

The President of the jury of the final was the french journalist, Harry Roselmack. The two finalist teams were the **University of Angers** (applicant) and the **University Jean Monnet of Saint-Etienne** (Defendant). The **University Jean Monnet of Saint-Etienne** won this 33rd Edition of the René Cassin Pleading Competition.

The **Prize for the best thesis (applicant)** was awarded to the University of Angers, the **Prize of the best thesis (defendant)** was awarded to the University of Rennes I. The **Prize of the best litigant of the final** was awarded to Yannis Berthelier (University Jean Monnet of Saint-Etienne) and the **Prize of the best litigant of the semi-finals** was awarded to Cécile Huard (University Panthéon-Assas Paris II).
The contest has two different phases: first a written and then an oral part.

The first phase took place from September to February. As students in the 3rd year of bachelor in Law, we had to discover the European human rights law by ourselves. It was for us a unique approach of a legal issue by the drafting of a structured and concrete statement of defence. This first part has substantially contributed to our legal training due to the requirements of clarity, synthesis and rigour.

The second step consists in an intensive preparation to the pleading exercise through oral exercise three or four times per week. These exercises help our litigants to make important progress and to develop communication methods with our legal counsellor, who was a central and essential element in our pleadings.

During the oral phase of the Competition, working together was essential for our pleadings: it was imperative to us that each member of our team was active and provide assistance to the litigant to help him focus on his pleading and to answer to each question of the jury which enables us to rebound on essential issues of the concrete case.

This oral phase also was an opportunity for a rich diversity of interactions with the members of jury but also with the other participants in a friendly and open atmosphere – far from the competitive and rivalry atmosphere we were expecting. This stay in Strasbourg was a true human adventure in an idyllic setting.

The closing ceremony at the Region Grand Est was not the end of this adventure. On the initiative of the team of the University of La Réunion, we shared a final meal with all participants. Thanks to this warm atmosphere, we lived this experience far from hostility.

Full of emotion, we came back to Saint-Étienne and a big surprise was waiting for us! Our Faculty of Law had organized a ceremony to our honour.

At this end of this adventure, if we had to describe in few words what we felt, we would have responded in chorus “pride” and “gratitude”.

Stephen FAVRE-BULLY, Yohan BOUCHER, Yannis BERTHELIER

Students, Bachelor (Université Jean Monnet, Saint-Étienne)

Laureates of the René Cassin Pleading Competition, 33rd Edition
Annual Symposium of the Fondation René Cassin
Human Rights and Sea
Le Mans, 24 and 25 May 2018

The Fondation René Cassin’s annual symposium will take place from 24 to 25 May 2018 at the Faculty of Law of the University of Le Mans on the theme “Human Rights and Sea”. This symposium is organized thanks to the support of: Le Mans Métropole, Themis, Université Bretagne Loire and Le Mans Université.

Registration and information
https://droitshommemer.sciencesconf.org/

Abstract (in french)
La mer est un espace sur lequel s’exerce le pouvoir de l’Etat de manière spécifique: si l’exclusivité de l’Etat territorial est la règle dans la mer territoriale, il n’en va plus de même lorsque l’on s’éloigne de ses côtes où préside la règle de la liberté, seul l’Etat du pavillon ayant un pouvoir sur les activités qui s’y déroulent. Les seules exceptions concernent la répression des activités illicites, mais elle semble destinée à protéger les Etats et leurs navires sans qu’aucune dimension de protection des droits de l’homme en mer ne soit prévue.

Plus largement, aucune règle du droit de la mer ne peut être perçue comme obligeant les Etats à protéger les droits fondamentaux, conférant par là-même des droits aux individus. En effet, le droit de la mer apparait de prime abord comme un droit exclusivement interétatique, comme le démontre le refus persistant de reconnaissance de l’effet direct sur les personnes privées de la Convention des Nations Unies sur le droit de la mer adoptée à Montego Bay en 1982.

Or le droit de la mer est un enjeu véritable pour l’homme et la protection de ses droits fondamentaux. Les rapports entre les droits de l’homme et le droit de la mer ont besoin d’être interrogés, à la lumière des drames actuels de migrants en Méditerranée, mais aussi d’affaires récentes mettant en cause les droits de l’équipage, du capitaine, de l’armateur ou du propriétaire suite à des arraisonnements. Les activités en mer peuvent avoir de lourdes conséquences sur la protection des droits fondamentaux des personnes en mer, mais aussi la terre des Etats côtiers, et ce d’autant plus si l’on admet l’existence d’un droit international à des conditions de vie dignes et d’un droit à un environnement sain. L’impact sur l’écosystème des activités de pêche et autres activités d’exploitation conduites en milieu marin le démontre car il peut en effet conduire à priver certaines populations de ressources indispensables à leur survie et porter atteinte à la biodiversité.

Ces considérations soulèvent les problématiques croisées de l’application des droits de l’homme en mer et de l’émergence de règles de droit de la mer protectrices des droits de l’homme, que ce colloque propose d’interroger. Pour l’homme et en relation avec les droits de l’homme, la mer apparaît tout à la fois comme un espace de liberté, une zone de survie et un moyen de subsistance: ces trois points constitueront les grands axes de la manifestation.
Our past scientific events

Seminar on enforced disappearances

On the initiative and thanks to the support of the Consulate General of Japan, the Fondation organized a seminar on enforced disappearances which took place on 27 February 2018; this gross violation of human rights which is widespread in the world and can be a crime against humanity lead to the creation in 1980 of a Working Group on Enforced Disappearances and the adoption in 2006 of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. This Convention came into force in 2010 and a monitoring is done by the Committee on Enforced Disappearances.

This seminar was a great success: almost 100 participants, of whom many were ambassadors and members of permanent representations; and high-quality speeches (and discussions) of eminent specialists of the Committee (a former President, Emmanuel Decaux, the current President Suela Janina, a former member Prof. Yakushiji), specialists of the Working Group, Representatives of the Council of Europe, Legal Officers of the Registry of the European Court of Human Rights which has a jurisprudence on enforced disappearances.

Objectives of this seminar were: to raise awareness about the magnitude and the gravity of this phenomenon; to encourage the ratification of the Convention (only 58 States have ratified the Convention) especially by Member States of the Council of Europe (only 20 on 47); engage synergy between national, regional and universal levels.

Symposium - Comparative Human Rights - Researching the Universality of Human Rights

The European Court of Human Rights, the University of Strasbourg, the International Academy of Comparative Law and the René Cassin Foundation organized a symposium on “Comparative Human Rights - Researching the Universality of Human Rights” which will take place from 8 to 9 March 2018.

Find the programme on our website.
Agenda of the President

March

6 March : Meeting with Prof. Deguchi (Kyoto)
8 and 9 March : Participation to the symposium on Comparative Human Rights at the European Court of Human Rights and closing speech
13 March : Participation to the workshop on Human Rights and Sport at the Council of Europe
19 March : Meeting in Paris with Mr. Harry Roselmack and Sébastien Touzé
20 March : Hearing at the ENM in Paris on entrance examination reform
29 March : Meeting with the Ambassador of Georgia to the Council of Europe

April

3 April : Reception, Bar of Strasbourg (René Cassin Pleading Competition)
6 April : Reception, Permanent Representation of France (René Cassin Pleading Competition)
6 April : Participation to the jury of the final of the René Cassin Pleading Competition
29 April : Departure to Tunis
30 April : Opening speech, first training session of the Fondation René Cassin in Tunis

Agenda of the Director

March

14 March : Forum of trainings, University Panthéon Assas Paris II, Paris
14 March : Conference at Sciences Po Paris on the UN Committee against Torture, Paris
19 Mars : Meeting with Harry Roselmack to prepare the René Cassin Pleading Competition, Paris
23 March : Meeting of the Public Law Department, University Panthéon Assas Paris II, Paris
28 March : Hearing at the European Affairs Committee of the French National Assembly on the Rule of Law in the UE, Paris
29 March : Presentation of the 2017 Report of the Ethics Officer, Plenary Assembly, Région Grand Est, Metz

April

3-6 April : René Cassin Pleading Competition, Strasbourg
4 April : Speech at the Council of Europe on the articulation between the ECHR and the International Humanitarian Law
11 April : Meeting with Mrs. Valérie Debord, Vice-President of the Région Grand Est, Paris
11 April : Doctoral workshop, Paris Human Rights Centre, University Panthéon Assas Paris II, Paris
12 April : Seminar on the prevention of torture in the framework of the United Nations, University Paris Saclay
17 April : Signature of the three-year contract between State and Alsatian local communities in the presence of the French President
23 April—18 May : Session of the UN Committee against Torture
« 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