International Institute of Human Rights

Newsletter of the Institute

July-August 2014

The International Institute of Human Rights works for the promotion and protection of human rights through training and research. In order to keep you informed about our activities, and acquaint you with our members, we have started a bi-monthly Newsletter.

International Conference

Conference on the Universal Abolition of the Death Penalty in Costa Rica

The project was initiated by the Permanent Representation of France to the Council of Europe and French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The International Institute of Human Rights was put in charge of organising this International Conference on the Universal Abolition of the Death Penalty in Costa Rica. This project receives financial support from Governments of France, Germany and Netherlands. The conference will take place from 9 to 11 October 2014 at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (ICHR) in San José. The Location of this conference was chosen not only because the Headquarters of the ICHR are in San José but also because Costa Rica was one of the first States of the American continent to abolish the death penalty at the end of the 19th century. This event aligns with the French diplomatic action for the establishment of a generalized moratorium.

The Conference aims, on the one hand, at raising awareness among the international community on the importance of this moratorium, first step towards the universal abolition of the death penalty; on the other hand it aims at informing legal practitioners on the possibility of “a judicial moratorium”.

It will gather lawyers, judges and diplomats working at the international level to identify best practices in terms of abolitionist and reductionist strategies. The event will take place in French, Spanish and English. The application process will be communicated by the end of July 2014.
Our training sessions

In this section, you will find the latest news about our training sessions.

Training sessions in France

46th annual study session on “Children and International Human Rights Law”
The 46th annual study session will address the “Children and International Human Rights Law”. It will take place from 6 to 24 July 2015 in Strasbourg. The session will cover topics such as the UN Convention on Child Rights, protection of children in armed conflict, protection of children against sexual exploitation, protection of children and new technologies or the fight against forced child labour. The application process will be open in September on our website.

Seminar for Italian law practitioners
In September 2014 in Strasbourg, the International Institute of Human Rights and the Catholic University of Milan will organize, under the supervision of M. Michel de Salvia, IIHR Vice-President, a seminar in Italian designed for Italian lawyers and law practitioners.

Training sessions abroad

6th training session in International Human Rights Law in Dakar
From 22 September to 2 October 2014, the IIHR and the Representation in West Africa in Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Liberty, with the support of French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, will organize their 6th training session in Dakar on International Human Rights Law. This session, taught in French, is designed for magistrates, lawyers, court clerks, police force, NGOs, civil society, researchers and specialized students from West and Central Africa. It aims at promoting Human Rights within national judicial and administrative systems. For more information, please visit our website. The application process is closed.

3rd training session on International Humanitarian Law in Abidjan
From 15 to 20 November 2014, the IIHR and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Liberty in partnership with UNOCI will organize, for the third time, a training session on International humanitarian Law in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire. Taking into account the development of Human Rights teaching, the Institute aims at responding to a local need from key regional actors for improving knowledge in International Human Rights Law. This session, taught in French, is designed for police force, NGOs, IOs, magistrates
and lawyers. The main objective is to strengthen participants’ knowledge in International Humanitarian and Criminal Law. For more information on the programme and the registration process, please visit our [website](http://www.iidh.org). The application process will close on 10 October 2014.

1st training session in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

The IIHR will organise, in partnership with the French Embassy and the EU Delegation in Republic of Congo a training session on "the rights of vulnerable persons and groups". The session will take place from 1 to 5 December 2014 in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. The session is designed for legal practitioners, magistrates, NGOs members, Civil servants from relevant administrations, Public forces from the Congo and Central America. The application process will close on 15 September 2014. For more information on the programme and the registration process, please visit our [website](http://www.iidh.org).

What happened during our previous training session?

45th Annual Study Session on the topic “Sport and International Human Rights Law”

The IIHR 45th Annual Study Session took place from 7 to 25 July 2014 in Strasbourg. The session addressed the theme “Sport and International Human Rights Law”. It covered topics such as the protection of children’s rights, corruption, violence and doping in sports.

17th Summer Course on “Refugee Law”

The 17th Summer Course in Strasbourg on International Refugee Law, jointly organised by the IIHR and the Representation in France of the High Commissioner of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), took place from 23 June to 4 July. The courses were given by UNHCR experts, specialists from the academic, institutional, judicial worlds and from NGOs. Participants deepened their knowledge on the issue of refugees at the universal and regional level. This two-week course was taught in French. The session welcomed more than 70 participants from around 40 countries.

Participant’s testimony

Sébastien BRISARD, Rapporteur at la Cour nationale du droit d’asile (National Court for right of asylum) in France and PhD student in Law at the University of Szeged in Hungary.

Participating in a training session on refugee law when you are a professional working in this field could seem irrelevant. On the contrary, that is in my views a necessary step.
Indeed, this training session offered the opportunity to share personal experiences, ideas and to compare the different views of asylum specialists from various nationalities and backgrounds. This was necessary for a better understanding of the various backgrounds of asylum seekers we have met through our work.

To my opinion, it is exactly what I expected from a training organised by the International Institute of Human Rights (IIHR) and the UNHCR.

The courses, given in a studious and friendly atmosphere, were rich in terms of debates and questions they raised among participants and even provoked verve which sometimes pertubated the speakers and the coordinators, even though the good spirit remained.

The availability and accessibility of those last ones allowed participants to follow with serenity all the courses.

While it is certain that I liked the substantial enlightenment brought by the speakers on Refugee Law and the UNHCR approach worldwide, my favorite part of the training session was the moot court exercise which consisted of an asylum seeker’s request.

This moot court was prepared in a relaxing atmosphere within different working groups (judges, lawyers/State, and lawyers/applicant) and addressed several topics including political opinions, social group, internal asylum and exclusion. This exercise really strengthened the existing community spirit among participants and even led to create friendships.

Therefore I would like to address my thanks to the IIHR and the UNHCR, and more specifically to the coordinators and the interns, for organizing this summer course have contributed to my personal and professional enrichment.

Our contribution to research

In order to contribute to the advancement of research in the field of Human Rights, our representatives participate in several events. We regularly issue scientific publications and organise academic events.

The diaries of the President and the Secretary General
Throughout the year, our President and our Secretary General take part in conferences, symposiums, round-tables and other events.

The President’s diary – July and August

23 June: Opening Ceremony for the Summer Course on Refugee Law jointly organised by the IIHR and UNHCR
25 June: Sponsoring of a master 2 class in Procedural Law, Angers University
7 July: Opening Ceremony for IIHR Annual Study Session
9 July: Meeting with the President of the ‘Communauté Urbaine de Strasbourg’
23 July: Presentation to a group of students from a US University in the IIHR Offices
25 July: Closing Ceremony for IIHR Annual Study Session

The Secretary General’s diary – July and August

23 June: Opening Ceremony of the Summer Course on Refugee Law jointly organized by the IIHR and UNHCR
7 July: Opening Ceremony of IIHR Annual Study Session
25 June: Closing Ceremony of IIHR Annual Study Session

Our latest publications
You will find below a list of our latest publications. Within “The Publications of the International Institute of Human Rights”, Pedone editions:


The IIHR annual symposium
The IIHR annual symposium was held in Aix-en-Provence on 12 and 13 June and addressed the topic "the Criticisms of International Human Rights Law". It gathered experts in the field of Human Rights, in order to debate and deepen research on this subject. It was organised in collaboration with the Faculty of Law and Political Science of the Université Aix-Marseille and the CNRS, and with the support of the CERIC, the Centre de Philosophie du Droit and the UMR 7318. This event, placed under the scientific supervision of Professors Hélène Tigroudja and Ludovic Hennebel, brought a critical analysis, with a theoretical, normative and institutional perspective, on the regional (European, Inter-American, African) and universal Human Rights protection mechanisms. You can see the picture of the event on Facebook.
Our educational activities

Training young students through internships
The IIHR welcomes and trains interns within the framework of its activities. This year the IIHR welcomes numerous interns including 3 assigned to support the organization of the Annual Study Session in July.

Testimony of the 3 interns assigned to the Annual Study Session
“A room cluttered with books, pamphlets, and a large crowd of participants speaking all at the same time and in multiple languages, "Où se trouve la résidence? " "The classes, are they given in English?" "Mi wifi no funciona!", a lecturer comes looking for the amphitheater. To top it all off, the phone rings: a participant is stuck at the airport.

A chaotic scene? Not at all! Just a typical day as an intern at the annual IIHR study session we’ve been helping organize, that is to say, to prepare and supervise the logistics and well functioning of the session.

We, Eric Munch, Felipe Tello and Miriam Heipertz, are three students with different backgrounds, but each committed and passionate about international human rights law. Eric is a graduate student in International Relations in the city of Strasbourg, Felipe obtained his master's degree in human rights law at the University of Strasbourg and Miriam will be soon returning to Germany in order to pass the state law examination, after a year of Erasmus studies in Toulouse.

Obtaining this highly sought internship is an important step in our journey as students in law and international relations. It offers us the opportunity to observe the inner workings of a prestigious organization such as the IIHR and to work on a number of major human rights issues raised by the latter.

During the first four weeks, our work was focused on the preparation of bibliographic and documentary background needed for the session. We also worked on the creation of multilingual digital media as well as setting-up the classes and activities’ schedules.

This internship has allowed us to gain valuable experience working as a team. On the other hand, It has also provided us with the opportunity to work independently and to take the necessary initiative in order to meet the diverse demands of participants and lecturers during the course of the session.

Furthermore, we have had the benefit of attending a large part of the classes as well as the opportunity to discuss and learn from the experience and background of lecturers and participants. Thus, expanding our knowledge and experience in the field of human rights law.

We especially appreciated the warm welcome we were given at the institute and the valuable knowledge they shared with us on how to organize an event of such magnitude.
We strongly recommend this internship to any motivated student desiring a unique experience that is both intellectually and professionally rewarding.

Our institutional activities

IIHR Executive Board
On 14 June, the IIHR Executive Board (EB) took place in Aix-en-Provence after the IIHR Annual Symposium. The EB addressed IIHR current issues including the project of legal transformation of the IIHR (currently association) into a Foundation.

Adhesion of the City of Strasbourg to the IIHR
During its deliberation on 23 June 2014, Strasbourg City Council approved unanimously the adhesion of City of Strasbourg to the International Institute of Human Rights.

Transformation of the Institute into a Foundation
On 17 June 2014, Jean-Paul Costa (IIHR President) and Jean-Pierre Wacker (IIHR Treasurer) met with the French Presidency. They had a meeting with Mr. Matthieu Peyraud, Adviser for Global issues at the Diplomatic department and Mr. Pierre Valleix, Adviser for justice issues to the President’s Office. They addressed in details with the French President’s Advisers the project of transformation of the Institute into a Foundation recognized as being one for public purposes. Mr. Peyraud and Mr. Valleix expressed a strong interest for the IIHR and its Project. They also stressed that we could mention this meeting, and they guaranteed to Mr. Costa and Mr. Wacker that it will be followed by contacts with the appropriate state services to inform and encourage the realization of the project.

Amongst our members

The International Institute of Human Rights has about 300 members across the globe who advocate for Human Rights. This section highlights the work of our members and their contribution to the promotion of Human Rights. If you are a member of the IIHR and if you would like to appear in our next edition "The Letter of the Institute", please contact us by email at administration@iidh.org
In this edition, discover:

Yannick Lecuyer

Doctor from the Université de La Rochelle and Lecturer in Angers, I teach International Relations, Fundamental Rights Law and European Human Rights Litigation. I wrote several publications of vulgarization on those subjects. I got acquainted with the Institute in 2007 by the intermediary of the prestigious Jean-François Flauss, unfortunately deceased. The current IIHR Secretary General, Sébastien Touzé honored me by asking me to give courses on the ECHR Convention during the summer session and during training sessions abroad, more specifically for the Dakar session in September 2012. The Institute also supported several projects organized in Angers including 2 training sessions designed for legal practitioners on “the usefulness of International and European Human Rights Law in litigation (2012)” and “Referral to the European Court of Human Rights (2014)”. For the future, this collaboration should lead again to fruitful and numerous projects.

The ‘Cassin’ Institute is a great tool for Human Rights promotion. Working with the Institute and even more when in close collaboration, lead me to fulfill two requirements. On the one hand, you must meet expectations in terms of scientific and technical rigor for which the Institute is highly reputed. On the other hand, participating in the IIHR activities, in particular its training sessions abroad, force you to a critical self-introspection which regular research work does not really require. Indeed, the Institute reveals its members’ humanity. Those two qualities are incarnated in the current IIHR President Jean-Paul Costa. He is in charge of, as perceived by IIHR members, an open and dynamic house with a mix of cultures, disciplines and guided by a humanist and sympathetic intelligence. The Institute is the only one of its kind as it gathers great personalities committed scientifically, politically and professionally to a simple cause which is too frequently put into question: the universality of the human dignity and all the essential rights and liberties it implies.

Former Lawyer at La Rochelle Bar association, I unfortunately often witnessed the abyss between academic teaching of European and International Human Rights Law and its practice. This is the abyss the Institute contributes to put an end to, through events and the work of its members in France and abroad. This is why I am proud to claim I am closely linked to the Institute.

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