

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Newsletter of the Association of American Law Schools
Section on International Human Rights Law

Fall 2007

A Message from the Section Chair

This issue of the newsletter for the AALS Section on International Human Rights Law focuses on human rights programs and meetings during the upcoming annual meeting in New York. Of particular interest are opportunities to submit proposals for possible presentation during the “New Voices in Human Rights” panel, which will highlight international human rights law issues and provide an important opportunity for professors who have not previously had an opportunity to present at the AALS annual meeting. Please submit proposals by September 26, 2007.

We also invite section members to submit proposals for poster presentations at the 2008 AALS Annual Meeting in New York, New York (January 2-6, 2008). Please send your proposal by e-mail to Gehan Girguis, AALS Executive Assistant at ggirguis@aals.org. The poster should state your name, the name of your law school, the Section for which you are submitting (“the AALS Section on International Human Rights”), a title of the poster, a description of what you will be presenting, and an actual copy of the poster itself. Your proposal will be sent to the Section Chair and Chair-elect and they will review and select the posters that will be presented as the Section's posters at the 2008 AALS Annual Meeting. This is an opportunity to share your work with the larger academic community. Get more information on deadlines and submission procedures at www.aals.org/am2008/posters.html.

The section is also a co-sponsor of two panels put forward by other sections. One panel involves International Human Rights and the Rights of Older Adults; the other panel involves Disability Human Rights, including the new U.N. Convention. Information about those panels—and other programs of interest during the annual meeting—is found in this newsletter and on the AALS website (www.aals.org).

Since its inception, the AALS Section on International Human Rights has provided many opportunities for new leaders to become actively involved. If you or your colleagues are interested in assuming a more active role in the section, I urge you to contact me—and Robert Blitt, the Section Chair-Elect—in advance of the annual meeting to make your interest known. (You can find contact information for all of the section officers on the last page of this newsletter.) The section will hold a separate business meeting and section strategy session, and elections for the new officers will take place during that business meeting.

On a sad and somber note, the Section notes the passing earlier this year of a former member of its Executive Committee, Father Robert F. Drinan. He was a human rights activist and law professor at the Georgetown University Law Center for more than 25 years. He was a friend, role model, and mentor to countless professors, students, and human rights activists around the world. His scholarship was widely recognized and truly inspirational, including works with such powerful titles as *The Mobilization of Shame: A World View of Human Rights*. That book recognized that in the absence of international enforcement powers over sovereign nations, one of the more important enforcement mechanisms available to human rights activists is the ability to mobilize public opinion in a way that shames wrongdoers into correcting their misdeeds and avoiding them in the first place. His work and scholarship was extensive, and many readers, students, and colleagues took away many lessons from his life and work. He was a former member of Congress for 10 years, representing the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. He was active in many associations, including the American Bar Association. He died on January 28, 2007 in Washington, D.C., leaving a void in human rights advocacy that will be impossible to fill. He is and will continue to be dearly missed by all of us in the Section on International Human Rights.

Mark E. Wojcik
The John Marshall Law School, Chicago

Call for Papers: ***New Voices in Human Rights***

The International Human Rights Law Section will repeat its popular “New Voices” program to assist faculty members and other scholars who have not previously had an opportunity to present a scholarly paper at an AALS annual meeting. The program will be Friday, January 4, 2008, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. This is a “prime time slot” at the AALS annual meeting, during which new scholars will summarize recent scholarship and academic works in progress. Individuals who are interested in being considered for the “New Voices” panel should submit an abstract of one to three pages describing their research or scholarship.

Abstracts of 1-3 pages of a topic for presentation should be submitted by **Wednesday, September 26, 2007** to Section Chair-Elect, Robert C. Blitt, at the University of Tennessee College of Law, (865) 974-6855 or rblitt @ utk.edu. You may also send a copy to the current Section Chair, Mark E. Wojcik at The John Marshall Law School in Chicago, at 7wojcik@jmls.edu. Abstracts will be reviewed by a special committee and selections made for the final program presentation. We hope to maximize the number of possible presenters.

A completed paper is not necessary, only the abstract setting forth the main ideas of the presenter. The committee hopes that eliminating the requirement of submitting a finalized paper will encourage the submission this year of more “works-in-progress” and will also allow the final papers to incorporate comments and answer questions raised during the “New Voices” panel. This is expected to be a popular and supportive panel to promote human rights scholarship. Proposals chosen will have about 10 minutes to present their paper, to be followed by discussion of all the presentations.

Co-Sponsored Program: International Human Rights Law and the Rights of Older Adults

The International Human Rights Law Section is a co-sponsor of a program called “Gray’s Autonomy: How International Law Advances the Rights of Older Adults.” The program, organized by the AALS Section on Aging and the Law, will be held on Friday, January 4, 2008, from 8:30 to 10:15 a.m.

Co-Sponsored Program: Disability Human Rights

The International Human Rights Law Section is also a co-sponsor of a program on Disability Human Rights. The program, organized by the AALS Section on Disability Law, will also be held on Friday, January 4, 2008, from 8:30 to 10:15 a.m. Yes, we know it is at the same time as our other co-sponsored program. Among topics to be discussed in this program will be the International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities (the “Disability Convention”), which was approved by the U.N. General Assembly on December 13, 2006.

International Human Rights Section Business Meeting and Strategy Session

The International Human Rights Law Section will hold a business meeting and strategy session on January 3, 2008, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. The separate meeting is intended to allow professors who are interested in the International Human Rights Section to have sufficient time to discuss ideas and plans for future section activities, publications, and programs. Persons interested in becoming active in the section leadership should contact the current chair, Mark E. Wojcik at The John Marshall Law School in Chicago, 312-987-2391, or the Chair-Elect, Robert C. Blitt, at the University of Tennessee College of Law, telephone (865) 974-4241 or email rblitt@utk.edu.

Joint International Breakfast

The AALS Section on International Human Rights Law will have a joint breakfast with the AALS Section on International Legal Exchange and the AALS Section on North American Cooperation. The breakfast will be on Friday, January 4, 2008. It is a ticketed event, and advance purchase is necessary.

AALS Human Rights Section Annual Meeting Highlights

This guide will help you maximize the international human rights programs and activities at the 2008 Annual Meeting. Room locations and a full list of speakers will be printed in the final AALS program and on the AALS website.

Thursday, January 3, 2008

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Full day program “International Cooperation and the Role of U.S. Law Schools” (AALS Committee on International Cooperation). The program includes a teaching panel on teaching at 9:00 a.m. and a joint luncheon (ticketed) with former Associate Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor

6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Business Meeting and Strategy Planning Session for the AALS Section on International Human Rights.

Friday, January 4, 2008

7:00 to 8:30 a.m. **Joint Breakfast with the Sections on International Human Rights, International Legal Exchange, and North American Cooperation (ticketed event)**

8:30 to 10:15 a.m. Panel on International Law and the Rights of Older Adults (Section on Aging and the Law, Co-Sponsored by the Section on International Human Rights)

8:30 to 10:15 a.m. Panel on Disability Human Rights (Section on Disability Law, Co-Sponsored by the Section on International Human Rights)

10:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. **Section on International Human Rights Panel on “New Voices in Human Rights”**

4:00 to 5:45 p.m. Section on International Law Panel on “A Century of Humanitarian Law: Hague 1907 to Darfur 2007”

6:00 to 8:00 p.m. AALS Gala Reception at the Rainbow Room

Saturday, January 5, 2008

7:00 to 8:30 a.m. Breakfast of the Section on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Issues (ticketed event)

8:30 to 10:15 a.m. Section on Poverty Law Program on “Rights, Religion, Revolution: Theories of Advocacy for the Poor”

10:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Section on Islamic Law Program on “Islam, Slavery, and Human Trafficking: What Remains to be Done?”

10:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Section on North American Cooperation Program on the United Nations Diplomatic Agendas of Mexico and Canada

1:30 to 3:15 p.m. Section on Federal Courts Program on the Federal Courts and the International System

1:30 to 3:15 p.m. Section on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Issues Program on LGBT Law Students

Sunday, January 6, 2008

9:00 a.m. to noon Comparative Law Section Program on “Enriching the Law School Curriculum in an Increasingly Interrelated World.”

Section Leadership

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