

Vance News

July 2014

Vance Center and Coalition for the International Criminal Court Make Exchange

Vance Center Programs Director Marie-Claude Jean-Baptiste recently undertook a one-month research exchange in The Hague, the Netherlands with the [Coalition for the International Criminal Court \(CICC\)](#). The exchange focused on how the International Criminal Court (ICC), pursuant to the Rome Statute, can better prevent mass atrocities. The research, which considers the proactive use of the Rome Statute in ongoing conflicts, uses the Central African Republic (CAR) as a case study to assess lessons learned and make recommendations for a more effective use of ICC tools in preventing mass atrocities. The final output will be a toolkit for CICC members and other civil society actors on how best to support the ICC in preventing mass atrocities. The exchange is part of the Civil Society Exchange Program sponsored by the [Nexus Fund](#).

During her time in the Hague, Ms. Jean-Baptiste met with 1) NGOs working on international justice and the ICC; 2) representatives of the government of the Central African Republic, 3) Assembly of State Parties focus points (facilitators) on complementarity, a major issue for the research, 4) representatives of the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC, 5) the ICC Trust Fund for Victims; 6) the ICC Outreach Unit, 7) The ICC Victims Participation and Reparations Unit, 8) representatives from the Special Tribunal for Lebanon; and 7) representatives from the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Ms. Jean-Baptiste also attended meetings of the Hague Working Group of the Bureau of the Assembly of States Parties and participated in a week-long roundtable meeting between CICC members and various organs of the ICC.

The Vance Center and the CICC will continue to work together over the coming months to complete the research on the role of the ICC in preventing mass atrocities with assistance from Vance Center pro bono lawyers and law firms.



(CICC Roundtable meeting with the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC. From left to right: Antônia Pereira de Sousa, Phakiso Mochochoko, Deputy Prosecutor James Stewart, ICC



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Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda, Amady Ba and Emeric Rogier, of the Office of the Prosecutor.
(Credit: Coalition for the ICC Flickr)

Second Delegation to Guatemala

A [New York City Bar Association](#) delegation of seven lawyers from Latin America and the United States assessed judicial integrity and the rule of law in Guatemala earlier this month. The assessment followed on the August 2013 delegation that considered the impact on the rule of law from the genocide prosecution of former Guatemalan president Rios Efraim Montt and [issued a report](#) on its observations and recommendations.

Guatemala is amidst a Constitutionally-mandated process of appointing judges to the supreme and appellate courts using commissions consisting of currently-serving judges, representatives of the Guatemala College of Lawyers and Notaries and the deans of law schools. The delegation considered the efficacy of this appointments process in ensuring judicial integrity, as well as the existing system for disciplining judges, based on the experience of the Rios Efraim Montt prosecution.



Organized by the Vance Center, the delegation consisted of lawyers from Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Peru, and the United States working in private law firms and the public sector who focused on the essential feature that judicial independence represents for an effective, fair rule of law. They met with Guatemalan judicial and executive officials, civil society representatives, and the leadership of the College of Lawyers and Notaries, as well as Guatemala's principal business association. The delegation plans to issue a report in coming weeks.



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Vance Center Participates in Expert Meeting of United Nations Working Group

The **Working Group on the Use of Mercenaries**, established by the **United Nations Human Rights Council**, convened a meeting of experts from civil society to consider matters related to the Working Group's mandate. The Vance Center, which is providing legal support to the Working Group, participated in the meeting at United Nations headquarters in New York City. The Vance Center provides such legal support to several other so-called special procedures of the Human Rights Council, including the Special Rapporteurs on **Torture** and the **Rights of Indigenous Peoples** and the Independent Expert on **Human Rights and the Environment**. The Vance Center also currently is assisting the United Nations **Joint Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect**.

Vance Center Hosts Princeton-in-Latin America Participant



The Vance Center has initiated a partnership with **Princeton-in-Latin-America**, a nonprofit providing Latin American civil society organizations with recent college graduate fellows to support their work. The first PiLA/Vance Center fellow just completed a month-long orientation at the Vance Center and has begun working at **Fundación Pro Bono Colombia**, in Bogota, Colombia. A graduate of Georgetown University, Guy Mentel previously interned in Argentina and is fluent in Spanish. He will assist Fundación Pro Bono Colombia with several ongoing and new initiatives during the course of a year-long fellowship.