

Righting Wrongs

The LLM in Human Rights &
Democratisation in Africa
Alumni Association Newsletter
Issue No 5 - November 2012

DEFENDING
with **Excellence**,
ADVOCATING
with **Ubuntu**



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Faculty of Law





Righting Wrongs

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Congratulations

Centre wins AU NGO prize for human rights

Frans Viljoen
Director, Centre for Human Rights

Dear alumnae and alumni,

As you may have heard, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, on the occasion of its 25th anniversary in October, awarded its NGO Prize for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in Africa to the Centre.

While the Centre has numerous projects aimed at promoting human rights in Africa, including the long-standing African Human Rights Moot Court Competition; the numerous one-week intensive human rights courses for government officials, civil society and practitioners; the web site, African Human Rights Law Journal and African Human Rights Law Reports, it is no doubt the LLM

(Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa), presented together with our partners across the continent, that holds it all together. It is by the excellence of the LLM alumnae and alumni that the Centre is very frequently measured, and it is through you that the Centre is able to achieve the impact on human rights in Africa that it has set out to accomplish. Clearly, the award has been made to all of us, collectively.

I can therefore say, to each of you: Congratulations with this Prize!

This award is a great honour, and – more importantly – an encouragement to persevere when it is difficult, and to continue trying to make a difference to secure better human rights protection wherever we can, each in our own way, and in our own context. Let us make this award a source of inspiration and strength, and a reminder of our responsibility.

Thanks, all the best, and hoping to see you in the near future somewhere on the continent, perhaps at one of the Commission's sessions.

- Frans



Editorial

Serve well, not long

Horace Adjolohoun (Benin, 2007)
Alumni Coordinator

I cannot avoid drawing your attention to my recent experience about the shame that some of our leaders in Africa still attract on us.

It was indeed with shame but however with hope that I had to watch an international televised interview of an African head of state in full. The interview was on an international English speaking channel, known to be the leader of information in the Americas and the rest of the world, and the head of state is the president of an oil-rich central African country, who has recently wanted a famous prize be named after him for funding.

I beg you to watch that interview, which has certainly been posted on the internet. The most shameful part of the interview was that the female western journalist ridiculed the president by having him admit loudly that he does not know who Aung San Suu Kyi is.

The other degrading moment was when the 33-year world's longest serving head of state named former South African President Nelson Mandela as his hero in politics. My hope is that the new generation of leaders nurtured by the LLM HRDA programme, many of whom are already in top official positions in various institutions, represents an alternative to African leaders of the stature described above. For your information, kindly browse <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KeXKHey3OzE>

For those of us who are in the academia, I would like to share my relative disappointment about the still fair level of knowledge of the African human rights system among young law graduates in our universities. As I marked some memorials and attended oral pleadings of some teams during the 21st African human rights moot court competition that just took place in Maputo, Mozambique, I noticed a lack of knowledge of the African human rights system, of its law and jurisprudence.

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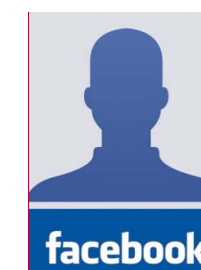
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A significant number of us are directly involved in teaching activities at law faculties in our universities and our duty is to be the ambassadors of the African human rights system.

Finally, I am glad to announce that the establishment of National Focal Groups is now a reality in many countries. However, many other national chapters are yet to nominate their National Focal Persons. NFGs operate not only as information conveyers but also proximity agencies for the coordination of alumni activities.

At this stage, there seems to be more than just being called the 'mafia' in reference to our omnipresence and contribution in any human rights and governance related initiative or activity in the continent and beyond. We need to make our work known, which may be done only by you sending information about your current engagements, involvement, and achievements.

Ubuntu



Become part of the Centre's online community
'like' us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/CentreforHumanRights



The Centre's Word

Highlights from the Gender Unit

Karen Stefiszyn
Head, Gender Unit, Centre for Human Rights

I am very pleased to have been invited to make a contribution to this edition of the alumni newsletter. I thought I would take the opportunity to share with you some highlights from the work of the Gender Unit this year.

As we have done for many years, primarily through the women's human rights clinic, we continue to promote implementation of the African Women's Rights Protocol in collaboration with the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa. With support from the Solidarity for African Women's Rights Network and UNAIDS, we convened expert working groups in Pretoria and Dakar to draft a general comment on the HIV provisions of the Women's Rights Protocol. Three alumni played integral roles in this process. We are hoping that the document we have drafted, which provides interpretative guidance on the nature and scope of article 14(1)(d) & (e) of the Protocol, in particular with respect to state obligations, will be adopted at the next session of the ACHPR in Yamoussoukro. The students in this year's women's human rights clinic worked very hard on this project. They even had to 'sacrifice' and travel to Dakar to participate in the expert working group meeting while enduring the 'hardship' of staying at the Radisson Blu Hotel!

Closer to home, the Gender Unit is leading a gender audit of the University of Pretoria (UP). This will be done



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through desk research and the development of a tool to measure gender equality throughout the institution. I am sure many of you may have noticed during your time here that UP has some work to do in this area! It is envisioned that the tool will be piloted at UP and then replicated for application at other African Universities. Should you be based at such an institution and interested in engaging in this exercise, please get in touch with me for more information in this respect.

We also recently held a one-week gender-mainstreaming training, and we are preparing for an advanced human rights course on 'the role of men and boys towards achieving gender equality' in partnership with Sonke Gender Justice. This is new terrain for us, and a learning curve for me, but I have no doubt it will plant seeds of inspiration amongst the participants to contribute to the attainment of gender equality in Africa.

On that note, I wonder to what extent each of you were inspired through your learning at the Centre to work towards gender equality in the region. I am not wondering who is doing 'gender' work; but rather who recognizes that regardless of your chosen specialization in the field of human rights law, the challenges you may be working towards alleviating on the continent will never be solved if gender inequality is not addressed? Even if you are not in a position to influence law or policy, or facilitate access to justice, you can promote gender equality in several ways. If you are a parent for example, how are you raising your boys and girls and do you aim to eliminate stereotypes that perpetuate gender inequality? Do you challenge patriarchal attitudes displayed by your co-workers, religious or community leaders, family members, or friends? Do you stand up against gender-based violence in your communities (given the shocking and dismal figures chances are it has touched your life at one point or another)? If you are in a position of decision-making, do you consider the impact of your decisions on men and women mindful that they are likely to experience the outcomes of your interventions differently? I encourage you to reflect on how you can apply your knowledge and understanding of human rights to challenge the status quo of women's inferiority.

Until our paths cross again (and they so often do at one regional gathering or another) feel free to get in touch should you wish to collaborate in the work of the Gender Unit, attend a training (or teach!), or just share your experiences and stories!



Halala Justice Mbaru!

Alumna Appointed as High Court Judge

Horace Adjolohoun (Benin, 2007)
Alumni Coordinator

Justice Monica W. Mbaru (left on the photo) is an advocate of the High Court of Kenya. She obtained a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) from the University of Nairobi, Kenya and a Masters of Laws (LLM) from the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, South Africa.

On 13 July 2012, she was sworn in as a Judge of the High Court of Kenya, Labour Relations Division (see Kenyan newspaper article <http://identitykenya.com/index.php/homepage/featured/427-long-serving-lgbt-sex-work-activist-appointed-as-a-kenyan-judge>).

Monica's professional career is sown with various outstanding achievements. She is mainly known to be a strong advocate and LGBTI activist.

She has worked within the human rights sector and just prior to her appointment as a judge of the High Court of Kenya, she was a Programme Officer for Rights and Citizenship at Hivos Foundation after several years with the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission in the Africa Office as Africa Coordinator based in South Africa, Cape Town office. She has served as consultant on disability rights with United Disabled Persons of Kenya (UDPK) working on the shadow report on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on Kenya. She has also been a consultant on law and human rights with the Medico-Legal Unit (IMLU) on torture and human rights.



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She worked with the secretariat of the African Decade for Persons with Disabilities on disability rights, and other groups on sexual health, diversity, and human rights, women rights. She was also the Programme Officer with the Kenyan Section of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ Kenya), and other civil society groups.

Monica has undertaken wide consultations on international human rights work and development on a variety of issues.

She has done research and documentation using international human rights principles on issues of torture, disability, women, sexual minorities and other marginalised communities. She specialises in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa, which has helped her as a legal practitioner before the High Court of Kenya, undertaking litigation before the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and before the United Nations' Human Rights Committee. She has also served as Rapporteur with the Independent Review Electoral Commission (IREC or Krieger commission) of Kenya that investigated and made recommendation on reforms of electoral laws, policies and practices in Kenya in 2008.

Justice Mbaru has entered the Pantheon of those alumni who make us proud. Some of those alumni cited in previous publications include Professor Lilian Chenwi, Minister Umy Mwalimu, Ambassador Doctor Mashabane, Senior Expert Patrick Eba, Professor Oladejo Olowu and Minister Marie Saine. This issue of our newsletter extends the list to Commissioner Farida Mamad (who has been sworn in), Advocate Gabriel Shumba, and Junior Lecturer Johannes Buabeng-Baidoo.



Alumni in the Field

Alumnus Backs Human Rights Based Abortion Law in Rwanda

Tom Mulisa (Rwanda, 2009)

Lecturer of International Human Rights Law,
Faculty of Law, National University of Rwanda

Was the Abortion law a compromise? Rwanda recently adopted a new penal code and at the centre of it all was the provision on whether certain grounds could be accepted to allow abortion. As consulting human rights lawyer for Health Development Initiative and Rwanda Association for Family Welfare, I had the privilege to be part of the movement mainly by preparing position papers and organising workshops for the media and civil society organisations in the advocacy programme. Many thought that the debate was on whether or not to legalise abortion but the government constantly contested this fact saying that abortion is illegal and would be only accepted under certain conditions provided for by the law.

Article 165 of the new penal code stipulates that there is no criminal liability for a woman who causes her own abortion and a medical doctor who helps a woman to abort provided that four conditions are met. The conditions include: When a woman is pregnant as a result of rape, forced marriage, incest in the second degree and when continuation of pregnancy jeopardizes the health of the unborn baby or that of the pregnant woman. The penalty for abortion without being under the above exceptions is imprisonment and paying fines. The years of imprisonment however vary depending on a number of circumstances.

Two organizations, the Health Development Initiative (HDI) and the Rwanda Association for Family Welfare (ARBEF), a local advocacy group with a few organizations developed new strategies to advance the campaign and insist on the provision of some grounds that allow women to have safe abortion without restrictions of the law. The two leading organisations prepared a legal position paper for the legislature and other stake holders explaining the need for safe abortion considering the available research carried out in Rwanda on abortion incidences. I also prepared a media strategy on how both print and visio-audio media could play a role in reporting the need for safe



abortion. The journalists were trained on how to report on reproductive health rights including abortion. Training was again organized for other civil society organizations that do not subscribe to the idea of safe abortion either based on religious grounds or on inadequate information regarding safe abortion. This assisted very much in the campaign because, although most did not support the campaign, they created less opposition. Contextualizing the debate within Rwanda's needs to achieve Millennium Development Goals 5 and 6 on reducing both maternal and infant mortality rates created a levelling ground for many to understand the need for safe abortion.

Finally, even when the forum of churches in Rwanda met the President to oppose the Bill so that the President would

not sign it into law, it was too late as the government was ready to provide grounds for safe abortion as provided for under the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol). Rwanda after adopting the law decided to lift the reservation on article 14 regarding grounds for safe abortion. This constituted part of our campaign strategy that the provision of grounds for safe abortion was part of compliance with international obligations.

The penal code was later passed and abortion remained illegal except under the four conditions provided for which are similar to the grounds provided for under the Maputo protocol.

Even if there is room for celebration, more engagement seems to be needed from civil society.

The last paragraph of the relevant provision of the new law states that the grounds provided could only be accessed in case one consults a doctor and will need a court order. This poses another problem considering the time court process usually takes to deliver a judgment. Even though it is an urgent application it will have to take not more than 3 days. In some situation, the very vulnerable groups intended to be protected have no access to a lawyer. The use of the term doctor as opposed to recognized medical practitioners renders safe abortion inaccessible to those in rural areas as there are no doctors to provide prenatal care as this is carried out by other recognised medical practitioners.

Those who sought grounds for safe abortion believed the penal code had provided a response and those who opposed the grounds for safe abortion also got away with the last paragraph that make abortion inaccessible because of the rigorous process. It seemed a compromise between those who advocated for safe abortion grounds and those who opposed any grounds for abortion.

Since there has been demonstration of the government will to improve and ensure reproductive health rights through lifting the reservations on article 14 of the Maputo Protocol, the campaigns continues today with more engagement of civil society organizations, faith based organizations and churches to understand the plight of the women who die because they are not able to access safe abortion.





From the heart of Africa

Alumna Contributes to Peace Strengthening in Darfur

Sena Noukpo (Benin, 2000)
Political Affairs Officer, United Nations
African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation, Darfur (UNAMID)

My name is Sena Noukpo. I am a Benin citizen and was privileged to be part of the 2000 class. After my training at the Centre, I applied my knowledge on human rights issues at the South African Human Rights Commission and the Inter-Congolese Dialogue held in Sun City, where I was assigned to the commission working on justice and reconciliation. Thereafter, I almost changed direction by taking up employment as Committee Assistant with the Secretariat of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) whose cardinal orientation is on poverty and development. In 2006, I got back to human rights matters after getting engaged as a Human Rights Officer by the African Union Mission in Sudan. However, since 2008, I have been working as a Political Affairs Officer in Darfur under the auspices of African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

Our work at the Political Affairs Division is basically to perform analysis on political developments in Sudan



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and the region and their impact on the on-going conflict between the Government of Sudan and the armed rebel movements of Darfur region.

A wind of hope is currently blowing in Darfur. As a human rights lawyer, I can only portray the enthusiasm demonstrated by Darfur communities since the signing of the peace agreement on 14 July 2011 in Doha. The agreement was widely endorsed and supported by the international community notably the League of Arab States, the Organisation of Islamic Conference, the African Union and the United Nations. Key international partners such as the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, etc. are also in support of the agreement. We, at the Political Affairs Division are striving to keep the hope alive as the peace agreement is not yet all inclusive. Many Darfur armed rebel groups still remain out of the peace agreement and continue to constitute a potential to perpetuate the violent conflict.

Attaining a comprehensive and an all-inclusive peace agreement in Darfur remains a challenge for the political actors and the stakeholders involved in brokering peace in Darfur. Since international efforts to end the conflict in Darfur started in 2004, fragmentation and leadership tussle have been the bane of Darfur rebel movements. Luckily, the presence on the ground of a peacekeeping mission and the humanitarian community has made a lot of difference in the lives of the civilian population. Sections, such as Rule of Law, Human Rights, Gender Advisory, Child Protection, etc. working directly with the grassroots and government institutions are making a breakthrough in capacity building, competence transfer and empowerment of vulnerable groups. For instance, an enhanced attitudinal change is being recorded on gender based violence and rape. In the past, the Islamic law being in force in Sudan, gender based violence was not reported to relevant authorities; rape, in a country where ethnic divides and traditions are deep rooted, was used as means to disgrace and degrade the opposing group. In today's world that is more and more bedevilled with armed conflicts that leave behind weak or destroyed institutions, more and more professionals in human rights and good governance are needed to rebuild confidence and develop effective and efficient democratic institutions that will put smiles on the faces of traumatised populations.

Kudos to the Centre for Human Rights that has trained and continues to train such professionals.



Back to the classroom

Interview with Dr Fikremarkos Birhanu

(Ethiopia, 2002)
Associate Professor, Faculty of Law,
University of Addis Ababa

Righting Wrongs (RW): Welcome to Pretoria and to the Centre for Human Rights, would you please introduce yourself to our readers?

Dr FB: My name is Fikremarkos Merse Birhanu. I am an alumnus of the LLM HRDA (2002) and currently teach at the Addis Ababa University, School of Law.

RW: Can you tell our readers briefly what you have been doing since you completed the LLM HRDA in 2002 at the Centre for Human Rights?

Dr FB: Time flies and it has been ten years since I completed the LLM HRDA! Immediately after completing the programme I was enrolled in a PhD programme which I completed in 2006. After that I joined the Addis Ababa University School of Law and since then I have been teaching different courses. I also served as the Dean of the School for about three years. Since I work in the academia, I have also been engaged in research and publications and have published articles and books. I also teach courses in other universities in the USA and Europe.

RW: How have the LLM and your stay at the Centre contributed to your professional life?

Dr FB: I can say that my stay at the Centre has played a pivotal role in my professional life. It has opened my mind and allowed me to view things differently. In addition to the academic knowledge I acquired, the programme has also taught me other skills that are key for a professional development such as hard work, meeting very short deadlines and discipline. Students often complain about the tight schedules and deadlines but they realise the importance of these skills once they start their career in the different fields.

RW: What role do you think human rights education can play in addressing the human development issues in Africa?

Dr FB: Most challenges of human rights relate directly to lack of human rights culture. Human rights education

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nurtures human rights values and plays an important part in promoting and protecting human rights. A rightly designed human rights education certainly contribution to the emergence of human rights culture in the continent.

RW: According to our information you are currently visiting the Centre to lecture this year's students of the LLM HRDA. How do you feel about coming back to teach on this programme almost ten years after you have completed it yourself?

Dr FB: Since 2007, I have been visiting the Centre for a lecture on a regular basis but in the last two years I have not been able to visit the Centre because of my fellowship at the Yale Law School. Each time I visit the Centre my feeling is always like coming back home with a lot of memories of my one year stay in the Programme.

RW: What is your opinion about the development of the programme and how do you think it can be improved?

Dr FB: The programme has been reviewed and revised regularly to catch-up with changing circumstances but without at the same time losing its original goals. In addition to the diversification of the modules and inclusion of a number of topics in the syllabus of the programme, the clinical programmes have also been expanded and strengthened. The Centre runs different projects and also offers a number of opportunities for graduates to pursue their PhD studies. So, a lot has been changed in the positive direction.

RW: Are you aware of the existence of the Alumni Association and what potential do you think that network has to become an advocacy force in the development of human rights and democracy in Africa?

Dr FB: I am aware of the existence of the Alumni Association which is active and visible in recent years. With the increase of graduates from this programme, establishing an alumni association was natural. The association can play a very important role by reconnecting the graduates, sharing information among them as well as by promoting human rights in the continent.

RW: What message would you like to send to other alumni of this programme?

Dr FB: We should all be proud of being the graduates of this programme and need to work closely with the Centre through the Alumni Association. We need to strengthen the Alumni Association because we all stand to benefit from a strong association.



Current year

The time of our lives

Satang Nabaneh
(LLM Student 2012, The Gambia)

At the end of the first semester, somebody remarked how evident our lives have revolved around the calendar. For the past couple of weeks, the examination period has been hectic. It has been paper after paper (thank you so much Prof Frans, as the King said on our facebook page 'no grudges'). It has been emotional and overwhelming. I have a penchant for pigeon-holding and so I do the same to chronicle our amazing 'diva moments,' a term coined by Seth from Kenya, which embodies the extraordinary in-and-out-of-book moments that we had as a class. Here's a look back at the diva moments of the first semester:

Intellectual:

The opportunity awarded to us to interact with renowned human rights personalities in the world has been phenomenal. In May, the public lectures by Ms. Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on 'Valuing Women as Autonomous Beings: Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights' at the Annual Helen Kanzira lecture; and Sir Nigel Rodley, member of the United Nations Human Rights Committee and former United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture on the UK Human Rights Act were truly inspiring.



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Skills building:

The fact that the LLM programme was truly practical was manifested in the various exercises that we had. The first of which was the human rights field trips to Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Swaziland and Venda in which we came up with our own research topics, made local contacts, conducted interviews, wrote and presented the findings. The second was the human rights clinical groups with their diverse mandates which are like the cherry on the stress cake which the Centre has already baked and heated for us. The impact we had ranged included: the submission of a case against Senegal at the ECOWAS Court of Justice, the submission of a shadow report and a communication for provisional measures against Angola to the African Commission, an advisory opinion submitted to the African Court on Human Rights, the drafting of a General Comment on the HIV article of the African Women's Protocol, and the making of a documentary 'Changing Lives: a film on youth empowerment'. The amount of skills and experience amassed is ground breaking and the actual and future impact is enormous. Natasha from Zambia asserted that 'it has been great because of how much there is to learn but extremely challenging because of the unexpected group members we all end up working with. I have learnt that no matter how complex a task may seem; it can be done.'

Cultural:

One of the events organised by the students was the 'Traditional Food Evening'. The idea was that everyone prepared their own traditional dishes and each of us has a chance to eat something from another country. It was absolutely fun packed with a variety of dishes including: 'Ejereh' from Ethiopia, 'Chapati' from Kenya and Uganda, Pepper Soup from Nigeria, 'fufu' from Ghana, and 'pap' from Malawi and South Africa. The opportunity to taste these exotic dishes was a once in a life-time opportunity for most of us. 'I am so euphoric' said Seth 'because I have just experienced another marvellous 'diva moment' - a moment that would not be possible if I was not in the LLM programme'. We danced, sang and ate as we have done many times before. It was at that instant that I realised this would be perhaps be the final times that we gathered in one place for a while. We still have not really acknowledged that we will be separating as a class for the next four months. We are going to have to face this reality soon.

The last six months have been nerve and heart-breaking and exhausting. But I liked it for many reasons: it has been colourful and comes with a loud booming noise- all very dramatic. 'I knew that it was going to be an amazing six months from the beginning' said Djibril, the first ever student from Djibouti. To also re-echo the words of Samuel from Eritrea, we have learnt that even though work is a crucial part of every individual but it is extremely vital to build good relations with people especially when you get the chance to meet so many people at once, the value of interdependence is indispensable. As the first semester ends, we thus look forward to the second to going places around Africa from Venda to Mozambique, Nigeria to Senegal and Uganda to Benin. I am glad the final moments of the semester are of everyone having fun and looking fabulous, smiling and laughing. This moment reminds me of the lyrics of Black Eyed Peas 'I am having the time of my life. I've never felt this way before. And I swear this is true'. Summed up by Natasha, 'an exceptional experience'.

Looking forward while looking back, here's to more diva moments.



Professional Prospects

University of The Gambia Congratulates Alumnus for Outstanding Contribution

Writing Wrongs publishes the Dean's message regarding Johannes Buabeng-Baidoo (Ghana, 2011), who is a Lecturer at the University of The Gambia, verbatim.

I write to happily and most gratefully report to you that our Visiting Scholar, Mr. Johannes Buabeng-Baidoo, has successfully completed the first semester of the academic year 2012-2013. The Visiting Scholar is known and highly respected for his dedication, commitment and hard work. These personal qualities of Mr. Buabeng-Baidoo are clearly reflected in his regularity and punctuality with his teaching schedules and also his highly organised and effective method of teaching. In addition to his principal assignment as coordinator of our moot activities and trainer of the faculty's moot team, Mr. Buabeng-Baidoo has effectively and successfully contributed in the preparation of the curriculum and teaching of the faculty's clinical legal education module and the eventual establishment of the first ever Legal Aid Clinic for the University of The Gambia. Currently, I have assigned him the responsibility of overseeing our law clinic as its Acting Executive Director.

Furthermore, through our collaboration with other institutions in the Gambia, Mr. Buabeng-Baidoo is making significant contribution to the promotion, development and implementation of human rights education and training programmes in those institutions.

Finally, on behalf of the Vice Chancellor of the University of the Gambia, the entire UTG family and on behalf of the Government and people of The Gambia, I wish to sincerely thank you once more for this critical intervention that you are making to help better develop and support the Faculty of Law, its various programme and the University of the Gambia in general.

Dr Abubacarr A Senghore
Dean of the Law Faculty, University of the Gambia



Alumni News

The Best Year in Human Rights Clinics?

This year, the Human Rights Clinics seem to have achieved unprecedented results. Most clinics have demonstrated the unique way in which the Centre for Human Rights can serve as a laboratory for launching or strengthening the careers of both current students and alumni. This year's achievements also showcase how alumni can contribute directly to sustainability of the LLM HRDA programme. The Human Rights Clinics were supervised by alumni of the LLM HRDA who are currently doctoral candidates at the Centre.

Women's Rights Clinic:

Draft General Comment on the HIV provisions of the Women's Rights Protocol to be adopted by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in October 2012.

Litigation Clinic, African Commission:

Communication with a request for provisional measures to the African Commission in the case of Centre for Human Rights (on behalf of David Mendes) v Angola.

Litigation Clinic, Regional courts in Africa:

- Amicus curiae submission concerning the request for advisory opinion from the African Court by non-governmental organisations under article 4(1) of the African Court Protocol;
- ECOWAS Court case of RADDHO v Senegal, concerning failure to abide by Democracy and Good Governance Protocol and human rights violations in the February 2012 presidential election in Senegal – Successful outcome in preliminary ruling.

Litigation Clinic, African Children's Committee:

Communication in the case of Senegalese Talibés v Senegal concerning thousands of children forced by their instructors to beg on the streets of Senegal.

Documentary Clinic:

'Changing Lenses, A Short Film About Youth Empowerment' was directed, produced and launched. 'Changing Lenses' is the story of Captain, Evidence and Maisara who take us on a journey, through their own photographs, to see the issues they feel are being ignored and which are important to them and to their communities in the Johannesburg townships of Hillbrow and Diepsloot.

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Alumni News

LLM Student Wins Prize in Gender Advocacy Competition

In July 2012, Gabriel Shumba (Zimbabwe, 2002) was admitted as an Advocate of the High Court of South Africa. Admission as an advocate in South Africa is the biggest achievement in the legal profession, short of becoming a Judge or Attorney General or a Minister of Justice. Alumnus Gabriel Shumba was admitted before Justice Murphy and Malopa of the North Gauteng High Court in Pretoria. Judge Murphy welcomed the fact that Advocate Shumba had a wealth of experience from Zimbabwe, where he has previously served as a Legal Practitioner, Notary Public and Conveyancer. Justice Murphy observed that his admission was an assert to the profession in South Africa.

Advocate Shumba told *Writing Wrongs* that he believes he will serve a dual role: Advancing the legal interests of South African citizens and the human rights interests of the about three million Zimbabweans in South Africa.

Advocate Shumba has struggled very hard to achieve this accolade, having spent eight years in exile. Due to the risk of torture in Zimbabwe, he has had to voluntarily de-register in his motherland so as to be admitted in his host country, South Africa. However, he continues to champion the rights of the oppressed and the democratisation of Zimbabwe through his chairing of the Zimbabwe Exiles Forum, a leading human rights organisations in Southern Africa.

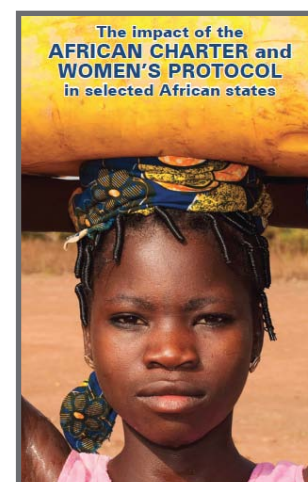
In 2009, Advocate Shumba received the Vera Chirwa Human Rights Award of the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria.



Alumni News

Alumna Obtains PhD from the University of Dar Es Salaam School of Law

A panel of ten examining professors of the University of Dar Es Salaam School of Law unanimously passed MsGrace Kamugisha Kazoba's PhD thesis on 2 July 2012 subject to minor corrections. Ms Kamugisha Kazoba conducted a research on the 'Legal and Institutional framework for combating the prevalence of counterfeit and substandard pharmaceuticals in Tanzania'. She employed a Human Rights Based Approach in her analysis while widening the scope of study to the East African context.



Alumni Publications

Book on Impact of the African Charter

A book has been published by the Pretoria University Law Press on 28 September 2012 on the 'Impact of the African Charter and Women's Protocol in Selected African States'. The book includes chapters all written by alumni of the LLM HRDA programme on the impact of these instruments in 19 African states.

Copies of the book are available at the Centre or it is downloadable in PDF format from:
http://www.pulp.up.ac.za/cat_2012_07.html



Alumni News

Lighting the Flame: Alumni Rwanda Chapter Meets

Tom Mulisa (Rwanda 2009)

National Focal Person, Rwanda Chapter

On 8 June 2012, the Rwanda Chapter of the LLM HRDA Alumni Association held its first meeting.

Build up to the meeting:

I must acknowledge that organising a meeting of the Rwanda Chapter was not an easy task considering that members are involved in diverse activities ranging from research, teaching, and advocacy to public service. I communicated through email with most of the members and this yielded results. Alumni from Rwanda who were not in the country responded and indicated their support to the group. The meeting was held in Kigali where most members are based. Members of the Chapter, both present and absent, had agreed on the following issues to be discussed at the meeting:

- Learning and sharing our own experiences;
- Discuss how the Rwandan Chapter would grow into a stronger network;
- Discuss how the Rwandan Chapter fits into the LLM HRDA Alumni Association's actions and its contribution to the general alumni network;
- Any other important issue that would strengthen and be beneficial to the LLM HRDA alumni network.

A step forward:

The meeting was successful and the participants decided to work on strategies on how to involve the entire Rwanda Chapter and share experiences. Participants agreed to another meeting before the end of year intended to make a follow up of the minutes of the first meeting. The end of year meeting is important as alumni working and living outside Rwanda will be in attendance.

Lessons: For any National Focal Group to begin its operation there is need for some leaders to spare their time and engage home based alumni. Due to professional constraints, a constant interaction on the process is quite important. The first meeting may not bring all members on board but has the advantage of setting the ground for future meetings and spreading the news.

Regional Access to Justice Meeting in Johannesburg

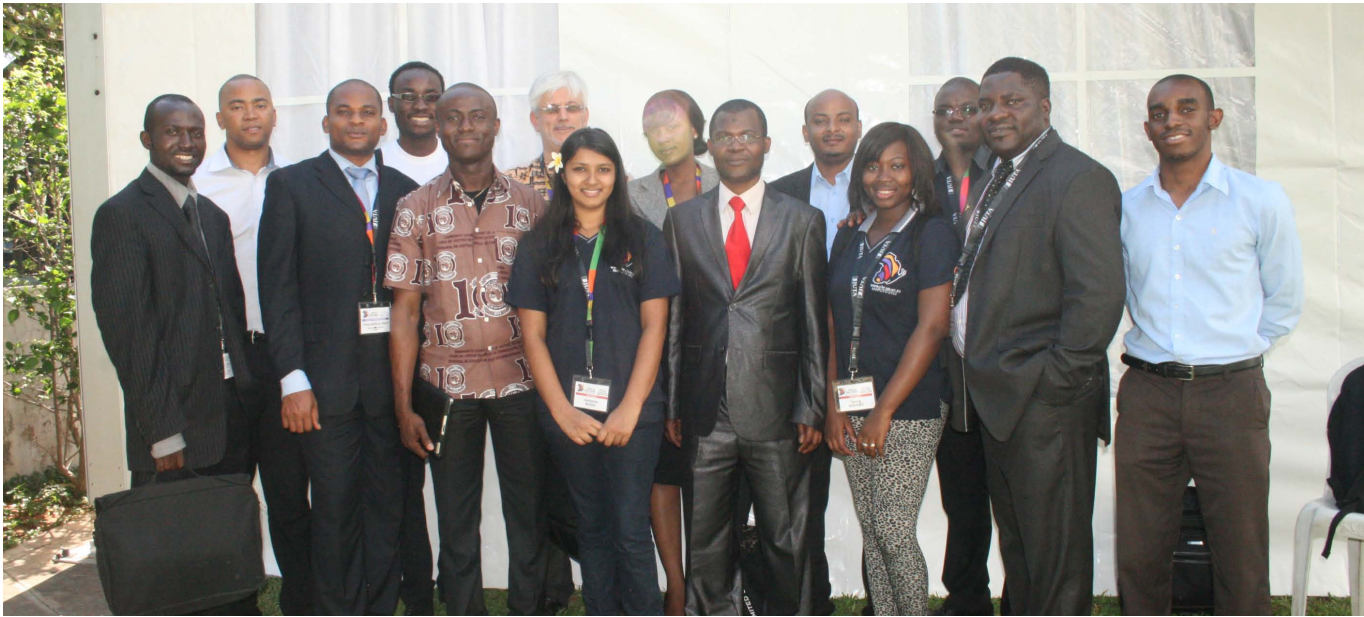
From 28-28 September, several alumni from different years attended a meeting organised in Johannesburg by the Southern African Litigation Centre on 'Regional Access to Justice'.



Left to Right: Thulani Maseko (Swaziland, 2005) – Clement Mavungu (DRC, 2006) – Japheth Biegon (Kenya, 2008) – Gabriel Shumba (Zimbabwe, 2002) – Nyasha Chingore (Zimbabwe, 2005) – Dieudonne Wedi (DRC, 2010) – Ayanda Matshali (South Africa, 2010) – Lloyd Kuveya (Zimbabwe, 2006) – Horace Adjolohoun (Benin, 2007)

Alumni at 21st African Human Rights Moot Court Competition Maputo, Mozambique, 1-6 October

From 1-6 October, several alumni and current LLM students were present at the 21st African Human Rights Moot Court Competition which was held in Maputo, Mozambique.



Left to right: Johannes Buabeng-Baidoo (Ghana, 2011) - Leopoldo de Amaral (Mozambique, 2001) - Anthony Diala (Nigeria, 2007) - Franck Maxime Yankam (Cameroon, 2012) - Horace Adjolohoun (Benin, 2007) - Frans Viljoen (South Africa, Director) - Ashwanee Budoo (Mauritius, 2012) - Isabela Warioba (Tanzania, 2011) - Redson Kapindu (Malawi, 2004) - Yonatan Fessha (Ethiopia, 2004) - Satang Nabaneh (Gambia, 2012) - Bonolo Dinokopila (Botswana, 2008) - Azubike Onuora-Oguno (Nigeria, 2008) - Emerson Lopes (Mozambique, 2010)



Social News

Baby girl in Benin

As one of the editors of the Alumni Newsletter, it gives me great pleasure to share with you the great news of the birth of the most beautiful and cutest baby girl to Horace and his wife Marthe on 17 August 2012. Horace is excellent at sharing all our wonderful achievements with the rest of the alumni but he had forgotten to share his own. So please join me in congratulating him on this wonderful achievement.

Taking the advice from Karen's article, the Centre's Word, please raise her to be an empowered woman!!! And as dad your responsibilities now extend to ensuring gender equality.

- Submitted by Revai Makanje Aalbaek
(Zimbabwe, 2003)
Editor, Righting Wrongs

Baby girl in Ethiopia

She was born on 21 April 2012 and weighed 3.15kg at birth. She is an angel wrapped in human skin, cute does not even begin to describe her, lovelier than her very lovely mother and a blessing in every way. Her name is Sishu Abraham Ayalew. Yes, our lovely Anchinesh Mulu (Ethiopia, 2009) is now a mother.

I sought for an expression of her joy and this is what she said "It is so amazing to be a mother. It is the best of all the gifts God gave me in my life. When you have a daughter, you start to see yourself in her and the feeling is overwhelming. I am loving it. I think you understand how it felt when you have your daughter/son in your hands for the first day. Her birthday was the happiest day of my life and changed my life by bringing joy and a reason to live for. That is my feeling".

- Submitted by Chinedu Nwagu
(Nigeria, 2009)

Contact Details

Righting Wrongs

Email: hrda.alumni@up.ac.za
Website: www.chr.up.ac.za/hrda

Editorial Team:

Horace Adjolohoun (Benin, 2007), Benson Olugbuo (Nigeria, 2003), Ismene Zarifis (USA, 2009), Christopher Mbazira (Uganda, 2003) and Revai Makanje (Zimbabwe, 2003).

Advisory and Review Team:

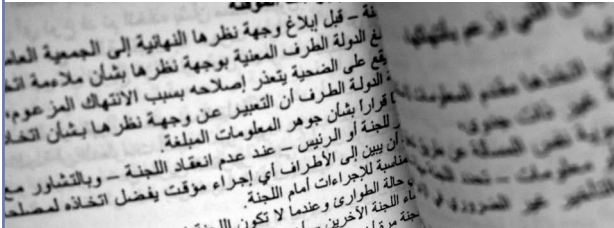
Prof Frans Viljoen, Norman Taku, Martin Nsibirwa, Magnus Killander, Yolanda Booyzen.

Alumni Dues:

To pay your dues, please obtain transfer details from Harold Meintjes (Harold.Meintjes@up.ac.za) or Horace Adjolohoun (Horace.Adjolohoun@up.ac.za)

Is your profile online? Submit your profile here:
<http://www.chr.up.ac.za/index.php/alumni.html>

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THE CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Faculty of Law
University of Pretoria
PRETORIA
0002
Republic of South Africa

Phone: +27 12 420 3810

Fax: +27 12 362 5125

Email: chr@up.ac.za

Website: www.chr.up.ac.za



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