

IHRP FELLOWSHIP REPORT FOR KARLSON LEUNG
THE HAGUE

United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
Chambers, President's Office

<http://www.icty.org/>

After the completion of my first year of studies at the Faculty of Law, I spent my summer working as a Chambers intern in the President's Office of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), in The Hague, Netherlands from May to September 2016. The United Nations established the *ad hoc* court to prosecute the perpetrators of serious crimes committed during the wars in the former Yugoslavia.

Working as a legal intern in the President's Office afforded me a glimpse into the inner mechanisms of the Tribunal and the appeals process at the highest level. I was tasked with providing legal support to Judge Carmel Agius of Malta at the appellate level, and at times to aid with other duties associated with the Office such as the drafting and editing of speeches, memos, and research articles for the Tribunal. In particular, I have been very fortunate with the timing of this internship given that the court will be closing as per the Completion Strategy by the end of 2017 after having fulfilled its UN Security Council mandate, and as such oversaw the rendering of one appeal judgement and the drafting of another.

Aside from providing assistance with the preparation of materials for Judge Agius with the administrative functioning of the Tribunal, I worked on two cases on appeal, *Stanišić & Župljanin* and *Prlić et al.* I helped the teams with the drafting and proof-reading of decisions, orders, and parts of judgements. Through deliberations and team discussions I had the privilege of meeting and working with exceptionally perceptive and passionate legal officers and interns in debating and expanding the jurisprudence on international criminal law. On a day to day basis, I also helped obtain research materials and provided support with cite-checking documents and precision-checking with factual and legal findings. As legal interns in Chambers, we also had frequent access to the judges working on the appeals, who were highly supportive, responsive, and collaborative at every turn.



Fig. 1: Video feed snapshot of a status conference with the President, Judge Carmel Agius, as presiding judge



Fig. 2: Court gown

There have been several highlights to my first month here. I had the opportunity to visit the UN Detention Unit with the other Chambers interns to attend a briefing and tour with the Commanding Officer. It was definitely a rare glimpse into the other organs of the judicial process and a chance to see how detainees are treated while awaiting trial or appeals. Seeing detainees such as Karadžić and Prlić outside of the court context and in an entirely different environment was definitely one of the most memorable moments during my time here. During my personal visit to the Balkans, I also had the opportunity to visit a ICTY field and information office and met with the investigative team in Sarajevo, in addition to travelling with the President and the team during their field mission.

Early in my internship in May, I attended my first court session with my supervisors and Judge Agius for the status conference for *Prlić et al.*, the former Prime

Minister and head of the self-proclaimed wartime state of Herzeg-Bosnia and other leading figures. The work of my time here was definitely put into perspective when the accused walked into the courtroom and I saw the work of the court outside of the usual pen-and-paper context at the appellate level.



Fig. 3: View of the Old Bridge (*Stari Most*) in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina



Fig. 4: View of the Latin Bridge in Sarajevo

The most rewarding aspects of this judicial internship was the opportunity to work with incredibly friendly, supportive, and insightful colleagues on highly interesting issues of law in international criminal law. What I appreciated the most were research projects on unsettled areas of law for cases that the President was involved in, and policy-related recommendations relating to the functioning and operation of the Tribunal.



Fig. 5: My last day with Judge Agius

I have long held a strong interest in international relations and international criminal and humanitarian law, and as a complement to my legal work at the court there have also been many exciting visits, talks, and lectures with leading practitioners in international law in the various institutes and organisations in The Hague. In sum, my time as a summer IHRP fellow at the Tribunal has been a fantastic learning opportunity for a student early in his legal career with a passion this area of law and an excellent complement to my first year of legal studies.



Fig. 6: Main entrance of the ICTY