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Introduction

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Symposium

Introduction

Louis F. Del Duca*

There is today a world-wide ferment of creative activity in legal education resulting in significant part from the challenges and opportunities generated by an increasingly globalized world. The Annual Meeting of the Association of American Law Schools provides opportunities to bring together from around the world unique groups of individuals committed to this task of internationalizing legal education to accommodate these challenges and opportunities.

The articles which follow are based on papers presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Law Schools in New Orleans on January 3, 2002 at the all day symposium on *Continuing Progress in Internationalizing Legal Education – 21st Century Global Challenges*. They address leading developments around the world in Africa,** Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin America, Canada, and the United

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** The article on developments in Africa by Muna Ndulo was published in an earlier issue of the Penn State International Law Review. See Muna Ndulo, *Legal Education in Africa in the Era of Globalization and Structural Adjustment*, 20 PENN ST. INT'L L. REV. 487 (2002).

States. They discuss international programs emerging across the continents of the world to facilitate cooperation among national and regional legal organizations like the AALS, ELFA, and similar professional associations, and also among law schools. Increased student and faculty access to international and comparative education opportunities and comparative and international scholarship and research is also addressed. Specific recommendations include the need for programs to: develop comparative law teaching skills; develop an international and comparative law curriculum which will not only intellectually nurture students but also equip them to acquire vocationally relevant skills and become professionally functional in the global community; develop joint research activities in drafting teaching materials; encourage development of basic foreign language skills through training programs; facilitate achievement of regional educational reforms and goals such as those enunciated in the 1999 Bologna-Sorbonne Declaration; and utilize the experience of the Erasmus and Socrates programs in the European Union in designing inter-university cooperation in other countries.

At the outset of this symposium, the first article places into stark relief the fundamental role that law schools play in the global picture . . . and the vulnerabilities they sometimes face as a consequence. Mark Ellis, Executive Director of the International Bar Association in London, poignantly recalls his visits to law schools in Sarajevo, Belgrade, and Zimbabwe which were forced to close their doors by oppressive political regimes. He concludes that attempts by governments to tear down the legal education structure in order to destroy a fundamental pillar of the rule of law need to be confronted by the international Community to show its support of the law schools who dare to speak out against injustice. He suggests that groups like the Association of American Law Schools could draw the plight of such law schools to the attention of the world community, and thereby have an extraordinarily positive impact in countering such attacks. He concludes that creating such a mechanism would not only provide immediate assistance to law schools under attack but would also send a robust message to the world that legal education is a fundamental pillar in the maintenance of the rule of law – a foundation that the international community jealously protects.

Describing the new focus of legal education in his article, Professor Patrick Glenn notes that “Transnational legal education represents a challenge since most of the legal theory and legal education of the last centuries has been devoted to the construction of national legal systems. The challenge is to contextualize this theory and teaching and to nest it in a wider range of normativity.” The Symposium papers which follow contribute to this process. They also thereby contribute to development

of a reasoned, orderly and just transition from the era of insulated nation-states to an era of global cultural, economic, and political interchange.

