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Introduction

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THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF TWO HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATIONS

INTRODUCTION

CLAUDIA MARTIN & DIEGO RODRÍGUEZ-PINZÓN*

We are delighted to present this year's publication of the Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, which includes the three best essays in English and in Spanish submitted for the 2009 Human Rights Essay Award. This was the first time that we assigned two separate topics for each language. Participants in English wrote about the contemporary impact of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and participants in Spanish wrote about the contemporary impact of the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man. The topics were selected to celebrate the Sixtieth Anniversary of these instruments, which have become the cornerstone for the promotion and protection of human rights world wide.

The quality of the essays was outstanding making the final decision difficult. We would like to recognize everyone that participated in the competition and mainly the two winners, Julio José Rojas Baéz from the Dominican Republic and Uché Ewelukwa Ofodile from Nigeria. In addition, a final decision would not be possible without the exceptional work from the members of the Honor Jury who read and evaluated the articles.

The goal of this publication and of the competition is to provide an academic venue for scholarly legal writing by human rights experts and activists. By publishing their work, we seek to contribute quality legal writings on particular topics of relevance to the development of this dynamic area of the law. The book also reflects the diversity of cultures and languages that

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characterizes our interconnected world. By publishing articles in English and Spanish, we enhance and broaden the voices that shape international human rights and humanitarian law in the future.

We want to thank Chimnomnso Kalu, Editor-in-Chief, and Ricardo Ampudia, Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law Book Editor of the *American University International Law Review*, for their dedication and hard work which make this project a reality. Publishing in two languages is especially demanding and we would like to recognize the law review's effort in this project. It is imperative to acknowledge the vision of its editors to foresee that the future of the international community rests on our ability to enrich our views with other people's ideas and cultures.

Finally, we want to thank the staff of the *American University International Law Review* who diligently worked throughout this endeavor including Monica Bansal, Justin Carlson, Rachel Kirby, Jessica Lechuga, Zaher Lopez, Pedro Angel Martínez, Caitlin Potratz, David Wooten, and Dan Zagoren.