

ABILA Newsletter

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LATEST INFORMATION ON INTERNATIONAL LAW WEEKEND

The ABILA's Executive Committee devoted much of its meeting on April 4 to plans for International Law Weekend (October 23-25, 2003). The theme for the conference is **"International Law in Crisis – and in Business."** Professor Philip Moremen of Seton Hall University and Charles Siegal, Esq., of the California Bar will serve as Co-Chairs of the Weekend. If you would like to organize a panel discussion for the Weekend, **please notify Professor Moremen as soon as possible.** He can be reached as follows: e-mail: moremeph@shu.edu or telephone: 973-761-9000 ext. 2517.

As noted in the February Newsletter, the Weekend will take place at the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. The ILSA Journal of International and Comparative Law will publish papers presented at the Weekend.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS: A REMINDER

Many ABILA members, if not most of you, have already renewed memberships for 2003, but some of you have not. If you are in the latter category, we would be grateful for your prompt payment of dues. As usual, additional contributions are welcome. Checks for Regular (\$75), Sustaining (\$200), or Institutional (\$80) memberships and gifts to the Branch should be made payable to the *American Branch ILA* and sent to our Honorary Treasurer: Michael Gruson, Esq., Shearman & Sterling, 599 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10022.

REGIONAL MEETINGS

During the past two months ABILA members have participated in two highly successful regional meetings. In cooperation with the Loyola University Law School in Los Angeles, the ABILA organized its second biennial International Law Weekend - West, February 7-8, 2003. That well-attended conference was followed on March 26-29 by the ILA's Caribbean Regional Conference in Barbados. Any member interested in organizing a regional meeting should contact Jim Nafziger, ABILA President (tel: 503-370-6408 or e-mail: jnafzige@willamette.edu).

ABILA COMMITTEES

Members who wish to join an ABILA committee or to organize a new committee should contact Professor Leila Sadat, Co-Director of Studies, Washington University School of Law (tel: 314-935-6411 or e-mail: sadat@wulaw.wustl.edu)

A PROPOSAL: The Right of Victims of War to Compensation

Luke T. Lee
Honorary Vice-President

Thousands of innocent civilians, particularly women and children, have been killed or wounded and their properties destroyed during the war in Iraq. What rules of international law prohibit the inflicting of casualties on civilians, whether or not intentionally? What are the legal consequences of such infliction? Are the victims of war entitled to effective remedies, including adequate compensation? Let me offer a brief proposal in response to the last question.

During the last two decades the ILA has dealt with root causes of inhumane conduct by preparing and adopting declarations of international law principles on the three topics of refugees, internally displaced persons, and mass expulsion of persons. Its next logical task should include the preparation of a draft Declaration of International Law Principles on the Right of Victims of War to Compensation. Such an effort would serve the twin objectives of justice and prevention. Compensation would help make war so costly as to leave nations with no choice but to seek peaceful alternatives. After all, if a lump sum of \$256,000 may be payable to the estate of a soldier killed in battle in Iraq (N.Y. Times, April 3, 2003, B13), and such costs must be factored into military budgets, why should they not also include compensation for the inevitable "collateral damage" to all victims of war?

International Law has been given short shrift during the current war in Iraq. Lest it should sink into total irrelevance, now is the time for sowing the seeds of a warless world through adequate compensation for all war victims.