

20 Years of Global Impact

ISLP Newsletter, October 2021 Edition



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Forward

Please join us on Nov. 16 at 6:00 PM ET to celebrate 20 Years of Global Impact! Details on the exciting program can be found below and on our website.

We are thrilled to report that ISLP's impact has been recognized by UNESCO, whose website highlights the invaluable legal support that our Media Law Working Group provides globally in support of Freedom of Expression. Find the link below.

Read on for the story of ISLP's very first volunteer Lewis Stone, who spent a month providing pro bono legal assistance in the war-torn Balkan city of Brčko.

Fast forward 20 years for more current ISLP impact in Panama, where our volunteers are supporting the government in its negotiation of a concession agreement for the largest foreign direct investment in the country's history.

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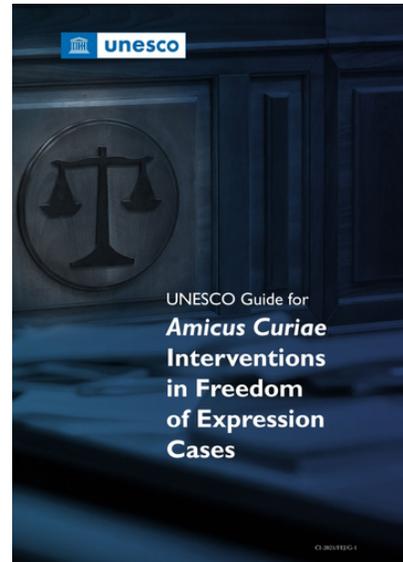
You're Invited!

Please join ISLP's staff, board, partners, volunteers, clients, and friends at a virtual gathering on Tuesday, November 16th starting at 6:00 ET to celebrate **20 Years of Global**

Impact: ISLP's 20th anniversary celebration. With keynote remarks from renowned Columbia University professor and sustainable development expert Jeffrey Sachs, as well as volunteer, client, and partner testimonials, and a very special musical performance by Thabisa Rich, it's an event you won't want to miss. [Click here](#) for more information and to register. Donations to ISLP are appreciated, but not required to join our event - so please invite your friends, family members, and colleagues to join us!

UNESCO recognizes ISLP

In our [June newsletter](#), we detailed the methodology used by ISLP's Media Law Working Group (MLWG) to defend journalists and bloggers whose right to freedom of expression is under attack by their own governments in contravention to their treaty obligations. ISLP is honored to be recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for assistance provided by the MLWG's dedicated lawyers. ISLP's *amicus curiae* briefs have swayed courts in three different countries to free those imprisoned under spurious charges which amount to chilling assaults on their right to freedom of expression. In the words of Tawfik Jelassi, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Communication and Information, "*amicus curiae* interventions are one of the pathways for civil society organizations to actively contribute to upholding the application of international human rights standards to cases related to freedom of expression, in a way which best contributes to protecting and promoting this essential human right and its corollaries, freedom of information and press freedom." Read more [here](#).



Volunteer Spotlight: Lewis Stone



Preparing for our 20th anniversary celebration has occasioned a walk down ISLP's institutional memory lane. We are delighted to share with you the story of our very first volunteer, Lewis Stone, who spent a month in Brčko, Bosnia and Herzegovina advising local lawyers on the creation of the legal framework necessary for a functioning market economy. We are

lucky to have Lew's first-hand account of his experience:

"I retired as a partner of Rogers & Wells on December 31, 1999. Two other partners, Tony Essaye and Dick Winfield, were also then retiring and organizing ISLP to utilize the expertise of experienced retirees to help countries emerging from communism,

colonialism, and autocracy to aid them to transition to democracies and market economies. I let Dick know I was open to volunteering. An early request came from Brčko, Bosnia, following the Dayton accords in 1995 which ended the Bosnian war. Brčko was the final item decided at Dayton...

[Click here](#) to continue reading Lew's pioneering story.

Assisting in the negotiation of a mining concession in Panama

ISLP is proud to be coordinating legal assistance to the Panamanian government in connection with its negotiation of a new concession contract for the Cobre Panama copper mine, the largest foreign direct investment in Panama's history. Panama's Supreme Court invalidated the original 1997 law that approved the contract for the concession with Minera Petaquilla, S.A. (currently Minera Panama S.A. - a subsidiary of First Quantum Minerals, Ltd.) due to errors in the legislative process that led to its approval. Through this negotiation, the Panamanian government is hoping to get a better deal both for its people and for the environment. It wishes to ensure that a greater portion of the proceeds from Cobre Panama benefit the citizens of Panama - consistent with comparable foreign investments - as well as to mitigate potential environmental harms connected with the mine's eventual decommissioning.

With support from the United Nations Development Program, ISLP has organized volunteers from long-time partner firm [Hogan Lovells](#) to advise the government of Panama on the legal side of the agreement. Additional partners include the [CONNEX Support Unit](#), which is providing assistance on the financial and economic components of the negotiation, and the Panamanian Ministry of the Environment, which is negotiating the environmental and technical components of the new agreement.

We are optimistic that ISLP's support will help to advance the interests of the people of Panama, and are grateful to our volunteers and to the other partners in this process.

Ways to Get Involved



About ISLP

The International Senior Lawyers Project (ISLP) is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit and non-governmental organization founded in 2000. Our mission is to provide pro bono legal assistance to governments, civil society organizations, and social enterprises in the Global South on matters that advance just, accountable, and inclusive economic development.



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For questions about donating, contact Melissa Eustace: meustace@islp.org

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