

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF HIGHER STUDIES IN CRIMINAL SCIENCES
1972 - 1999

United Nations - Non-governmental Organization with
Consultative Status (Category II)

Council of Europe - Non-governmental Organization with
Consultative Status

FOUNDING ENTITIES

The International Institute of Higher Studies in Criminal Sciences (ISISC) was founded in Siracusa by the International Association of Penal Law (IAPL) and the City, Province and Chamber of Commerce, in September 1972. A similar *Convenzione* was subsequently entered into by the founding entities with the Sicilian Region, while a separate agreement was also signed with the City of Noto. The Sicilian Region and the other local entities are the principal funding sources of the Institute.

LEGAL STATUS

The Institute is a public foundation established by a Decree of the President of the Republic of Italy as a not-for-profit post-graduate educational and scientific institution devoted to studies, research, and the advancement of criminal sciences in the widest sense, including human rights.

A non-governmental organization in consultative status with the United Nations, ISISC has a special cooperation agreement with the Centre for International Crime Prevention - United Nations Office at Vienna (CIPC - UNOV) and it is one of the fourteen organizations comprising the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Network, which has been developed to assist Member States in strengthening international cooperation in the crucial area of crime prevention and criminal justice. Its components provide a variety of services, including exchange of information, research, training and public education. The Institute also enjoys consultative status with the Council of Europe and has cooperation agreements with a number of universities, including with the University of Catania, the University of Palermo (Italy), the John F. Kennedy University of Buenos Aires (Argentina), the DePaul University (IHRLI) of Chicago (USA) and the University of Mansoura (Egypt). Other agreements are in course of elaboration with the University of Nantes (France), the University of Malta (Malta) and the University of Rome (Italy).

SCIENTIFIC AUSPICES

The Institute, although a separate legal entity, is under the scientific auspices of the International Association of Penal Law. The importance of this relationship lies in the fact that the Association, which was founded in Paris in 1924 (with origins in the International Union of Penal Law founded in Vienna in 1889) is the world's oldest scholarly association in the field of criminal justice. The IAPL has some 3,000 members and affiliates in 97 countries and 45 national sections. The members of the Association constitute a large pool of experts from which the Institute draws support.

To further the scientific objectives of the Institute and the Association, the two organizations frequently co-sponsor activities and the Association allows the use of the *Revue Internationale de Droit Pénal* and of the *Nouvelles Études Pénales* for publication of Institute proceedings. Thus, the scientific activities of the Institute receive worldwide dissemination in the scholarly and professional criminal justice communities.

GOVERNING BODY

The governing body of the Institute is an independent 25-member Board of Directors, 16 of whom are elected by the *Conseil de Direction* of the IAPL from internationally renowned scholars.

The Board of Directors also includes 9 *ex-officio* members: the *Rettore* of the University of Catania; the President of the Italian National Section of the Association; the Mayor and two representatives of the City of Siracusa; the President and a representative of the Province of Siracusa; a representative of the Sicilian Region; and the Mayor of the neighboring city of Noto.

Current membership in the Board of Directors

M. Cherif Bassiouni: President. President of the International Association of Penal Law; Professor of Law and President, International Human Rights Law Institute, de Paul University, Chicago

Giuliano Vassalli: Honorary President. Vice President, Italian Constitutional Court; Former Minister of Justice; Professor Emeritus of Criminal Law, Rome, Italy; Vice President IAPL

Reynald Ottenhof: Vice President. Professor of Law, University of Pau, France; Secretary-General IAPL

The Mayor of Siracusa: Honorary Vice President

Alfonso Stile: Dean. Professor of Criminal Law, University of Rome "La Sapienza"; Italy; President, Italian Group of IAPL

Mario Pisani: Vice Dean, Professor of Criminal Procedure, University of Milan (Italy)

Antonino Vella: Administrative Director. Former Director Commissione Provinciale di Controllo, Siracusa, Italy

Giovanni Tinebra: Secretary. Chief Prosecutor, Caltanissetta, Italy

Other members are:

Luigi Augello, Psychiatrist, Siracusa, Italy

Adolfo Beria di Argentine: Honorary General Prosecutor, Milan, Italy; Secretary-General Societè Internazionale de Defence Sociale; President, Executive Committee ISPAC

Leonard Cavise: Associate Professor of Law, De Paul University, Chicago (USA)

Giovanni Conso: Honorary President, Italian Constitutional Court, Former Minister of Justice, Professor Emeritus, University of Turin (Italy)

Luisella de Cataldo Neuburger: Lawyer; Professor of Forensic Psychology, University "La Sapienza", Rome, Italy

Jose Luis de La Cuesta: Vice Rector and Professor of Criminal Law, the Basque University of San Sebastian, Spain; Deputy Secretary- General IAPL

Giuseppe Dell'Osso: Professor of Forensic Medicine, Representative of the Region (Italy)

Giuseppe di Gennaro: Advisor on Albania to the Minister of Justice (Italy), Honorary President of the Court of Cassation; Former Executive Director, UNFDAC

Helmut Epp: Judge; Secretary Austrian National Parliament, Vienna, Austria; Deputy Secretary-General, IAPL

Corrado Grasso: Lawyer, Siracusa, Italy

Jean-Paul Laborde: Interregional Adviser, United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, Secretary General Adjoint IAPL

Raffaele Leone: Lawyer, Mayor of Noto (Italy)

Bruno Marziano: President of the Province, Siracusa (Italy)

Francoise Tulkens: Judge, European Court of Human Rights (Strasbourg); Secretary General Adjoint IAPL

Abdel Azim Wazir: Dean and Professor of Criminal Law, the University of Mansourah, Cairo, Egypt; Deputy Secretary-General, IAPL

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

After its founding in late 1972, the Institute began its activities gradually, picking up the pace after 1976. From 1973 to 1998, the Institute conducted 234 conferences, seminars and meetings of committees of experts with a cumulative participation of about 15,000 persons from 147 countries, among whom were some 4,000 Professors from 417 University

faculties. 110 Italian, international, inter-and non-governmental organizations have co-sponsored initiatives with the Institute.

ACTIVITIES WITH THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Institute has undertaken a number of international initiatives, which include committees of experts of the United Nations and the Council of Europe held with the purposes of elaborating international instruments.

Particularly relevant are the sixteen international conferences, seminars and expert meetings organized by the Institute - in Siracusa and abroad - to foster the process which led to the establishment of the International Criminal Court by the Diplomatic Conference held in Rome, in July 1998. These meetings, attended by more than 1,000 jurists and government representatives, have produced a number of documents which formed the basis for the discussion in Rome, including the so-called "Siracusa Draft" put before the United Nations Preparatory Committee inaugurated in New York in March 1996, which paved the way to the Rome Conference. The Institute hosted in 1997 two inter-sessional meetings of the Preparatory Committee and, in 1998, an informal meeting of the Diplomatic Conference's three designated-Presidents. It should be noted that the Bureau of the Diplomatic Conference was composed of Prof. Conso, President of the Conference and member of ISISC's Board of Directors and of the IAPL, and Prof. Bassiouni, President of the Drafting Committee and President of the Institute and of the IAPL.

Another important meeting held at the Institute was the Committee of Experts which in 1977 prepared the Draft Convention on the Prevention and Suppression of Torture. This Draft was formally submitted by the IAPL to the United Nations in 1978. The General Assembly adopted the Convention in 1984.

A number of other international instruments have also been elaborated at the Institute. Those which the United Nations adopted to date are:

- * Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession;
- * Principles on the Protection of the Rights of the Mentally Ill;
- * Guiding Principles on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Context of Development;
- * Model Treaty on the Transfer of Prisoners;
- * Model Treaty on the Transfer of Criminal Proceedings;
- * Model Treaty on Extradition;
- * Model Treaty on Enforcement of Sentences.

Other international instruments are still pending before the United Nations. They include:

- * Draft Guidelines for States of Emergency and Derogations to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
- * Draft Convention on the Suppression of Unlawful Human Experimentation.

The Institute has also hosted a number of meetings of experts in cooperation with the Council of Europe or under the auspices of its Secretary-General. Activities implemented with the Council of Europe include:

- * The drafting of the Comprehensive Convention on International Cooperation in Criminal Matters;
- * A uniform curriculum for teaching the European Penal Conventions in European universities;

- * Guidelines for the Protection of Cultural Heritage in Europe (with the participation of the European Parliament);
- * Local self-government and the role of the municipal police;
- * Translation into Arabic and publication of the European Convention on Human Rights and its Protocols and the European Torture Convention.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND TRAINING SEMINARS

The Institute has conducted a number of technical cooperation and training seminars for judges and public officials from developing countries on the topics of extradition and the administration of justice, in collaboration with the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the League of Arab States, the Organization of American States and other international organizations.

Post-graduate educational activities are also organized for young scholars, such as the program of Colloquia for Young Penalists dealing with contemporary international criminal law issues.

Several hundreds of judges, prosecutors, government officials, researchers, lawyers and other scholars dealing with crime prevention, criminal justice and human rights have attended more than 30 training programs organized by the Institute in the last twenty years. These activities have not only contributed to strengthening the professional education and performance of the participants but, given their multi-national character, permitted the exchange of different experiences and the cross-fertilization among cultures.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

The *International Conferences* of experts on subjects of contemporary interest to the international scholarly community gather the world's leading authorities and experts in the criminal sciences.

The *International Seminars*, which are conducted in the form of continuing legal education programs, are attended by academics, judges, government officials, lawyers, and young law graduates.

INTER-REGIONAL PROGRAMS

The Arab Human Rights Program

Since 1985, the Institute has embarked on a far-reaching human rights program for the Arab world. In December 1985, the Institute held a conference on Criminal Justice Reform and Human Rights Education. Sixty-seven jurists from twelve Arab countries and Palestine attended this conference. As a result of that initiative, a Committee of Experts convened in December 1986 to prepare a Draft Arab Charter on People's and Human Rights. Seventy-six distinguished Arab personalities from 12 Arab countries and Palestine attended the meeting. The "Draft Arab Charter on Human and People's Rights" was submitted to the League of Arab States and to all Heads of State in the Arab World. It received the support of the Arab Lawyers' Union, which represents over 100,000 lawyers in the Arab World.

Thereafter, a series of 17 seminars have been developed on teaching Human Rights in Arab law schools, judicial training centers, police academies, and the military justice program. Three of these programs have been conducted in Egypt. As of December 1998, the

number of participants exceeded 1,600 among whom were over 350 law professors, instructors in judicial training institutes, police academies, and military justice programs from 18 Arab States. Four volumes of material in Arabic were produced. Over one thousand copies of each of the four volumes were distributed to educators and law libraries in the Arab World. Eight law schools offered human rights courses annually, exposing some 10,000 students to this subject, while judicial training institutes and police academies have also included human rights education as part of their programs.

The Institute organized 7 conferences for Jurists of the Arab World held in Cairo and Alexandria. 2000 persons participated in such conferences. The proceedings of the Cairo and Alexandria conferences resulted in three volumes.

The total number of publications in Arabic reached 11 by 1997, including a special publication in Arabic of the European Convention on Human Rights. This booklet was the first authorized publication by the Council of Europe in a language other than the Council's official language.

Additionally, in 1990-91, the Institute introduced a five-week program for Senior Graduate students from the Arab region. The goal of this intensive program was to familiarize a new generation of jurists with the concern for human rights in the Arab region.

Also, in 1993, two important conferences for Arab Judges were held. The proceedings were published in two volumes: one dealing with the Arab System of judicial training and the other with the interstate cooperation in penal matters.

In November 1997, a conference was held in Cairo on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court. Three hundred persons from 6 Arab Countries participated.

Finally, in 1998, the Arab program included 4 conferences, expert meetings and technical assistance and cooperation seminars dealing with issues such as international cooperation in criminal matters, humanitarian law and regional security, organized crime and money-laundering, which gathered more than 150 participants from 15 countries, including Parliament members, senior prosecutors, high-level government officers and university professors.

This is the world's most significant regional program in the field of criminal justice and human rights education ever undertaken and one with a great impact in light of the high-level participation, since seminars and other meetings have been attended by Parliament members, members of Governments' cabinets and the Prosecutor General's office, high-rank police and security officials, university professors and other participants whose caliber ensured that national policy and legislation benefited from their experience.

Other Regional Programs

The Institute also developed a program for African jurists, in cooperation with the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, the Centre for International Crime Prevention – United Nations Office at Vienna and the Swedish International Development Agency on Criminal Justice and Human Rights. The first program for English speaking Jurists, was held in July 1992. The second one, for Portuguese speaking jurists, was held in May 1997. These activities were attended by more than 100 participants from 32 African countries, including several Justice, Interior and Foreign Affairs high-level Officials, Chief Justices, General Prosecutors and other policy- and law-makers.

NATIONAL AND LOCAL ACTIVITIES

The Institute annually conducts a number of conferences and seminars for Italian law professors, judges, lawyers and other jurists.

The *National Seminars* for Italian judges co-sponsored with the Superior Council of the Judiciary, the National Association of Judges or the Italian Ministry of Justice, which also funds some of these activities. The Superior Council of Judges has published five books of proceedings of these seminars and has distributed them to all judges in Italy.

The *Masters* in legal psychology for judges, lawyers and other criminal justice experts, which are part of a long-standing commitment of the Institute in this field, witnessed by 13 volumes published in the series “*ISISC - Atti e documenti*” of the publishing house Cedam.

The Institute also conducts seminars in Siracusa and Noto every year for Italian professors of criminal law, criminal procedure, criminology and legal psychology.

The *Seminars for lawyers and judges of the Sicilian Region* are conducted on a topic of interest to the Sicilian Region.

Local Conferences for Lawyers and judges from Siracusa

The Italian national program has not only provided a national forum for judges, professors, government officials and practitioners, but has also been a catalyst for change. The current Code of Criminal Procedure, which entered into effect in 1989 and which has many features of the Anglo-American model of adversarial-accusatorial justice, was the subject of an ISISC seminar in 1977. The seminar was followed by a major publication on this subject and, since then, the Institute gave the project continuous impetus through various programs. Also, the 1978 Law on Decriminalization was drafted at the Institute by a committee of experts, which included parliamentarians and public officials. Still other legislative initiatives saw their beginning at the Institute, or received their scholarly impetus through conferences and publications, like the Law on the abuse of power by public officials.

SUBJECTS OF CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

Conferences and seminars conducted by the Institute cover the entire range of criminal justice studies: international criminal law; criminal law and procedure; comparative criminal law and procedure; international and regional protection of human rights; criminology and comparative criminology; legal psychology; penology; and, criminal justice policy.

The following are a few illustrations of the variety and diversity of programs offered: the codification of international criminal law; international protection of human rights in criminal justice systems; the future of violence in contemporary society; the philosophy of criminal justice; the role of the judge in a modern society; the function of modern criminal justice education; comparative criminology in the Mediterranean Basin; criminal justice and human rights education and reform in the Arab world; the role of the criminological expert in the criminal trial; and, comparative criminal procedure in the pre-trial and the post-trial phases. Even in seminars for Italian judges and professors, the subjects have included international and comparative dimensions, among them: international criminal law; extradition and judicial space in Europe; European economic penal law; monitoring of the criminal justice system; criminal justice and the mass-media; terrorism and psychological aspects of the criminal trial. Most of these programs are multi-disciplinary.

FORMAT OF CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

The extensive experience of the Institute has resulted in the development of a number of formats which have proven effective. However, the standard format used for most programs consists of one week, five working days, seven working hours per day. The participants also continue their interaction at the hotel where they reside. Usually, a seminar or conference will consist of 30-40 hours of formal discussion and many more hours of informal discussion. This is equivalent to the number of hours required for the study of a given subject in most legal education institutions.

GRADUATE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The Institute provides instructional courses at the Post-Graduate level, as well as in-depth specialization courses. In the summer of 1990, the first graduate program took place. It was a five-week-long instructional course in Human Rights and Criminal justice for Master's and Doctoral level candidates in Arab law schools and specialized legal institutes. In 1998, the Institute organized the first three-week course of a Master in Legal Psychology, which is now a recurrent activity.

The specialization program called "Master in Legal Psychology" is a 105-hour post-graduate educational course spread over a period of three consecutive months to ensure continuity and sustainability to the learning experience, as well as to allow maximum participation of the attenders, who are judges, lawyers and other criminal justice professionals. The first program was held in 1998 and was attended by 50 participants. Plans for the 1999 Master in Legal Psychology are well under way, along with the preparation of other specialization courses in International Criminal Law and Human Rights.

POST-GRADUATE FELLOWS

In addition to the Graduate Teaching Programs, the Institute offers each year one or two Post-Graduate Resident Fellowships. While in residence at the Institute, the fellows involve themselves in the activities of the Institute, participate in the various conferences and seminars which are held, and pursue an individual course of research. To date, the Institute has offered eleven Fellowships. Some of the Fellows have joined the academia and are now professors, others have pursued a professional career.

PUBLICATIONS

As of April 1999, 106 books of Institute's proceedings have been published with one in print. Some of the proceedings of the Institute's activities are contained in the *Revue Internationale de Droit Pénal* and *Nouvelles Études Pénales*, others are published in-house by the Institute in the series *Quaderni*.

The Institute also has publishing agreements with two major Italian publishing companies, Cedam (Padova) and Jovene (Naples), for Italian language publications like the series of Legal Psychology over 14 volumes. In addition, the Superior Council of Judges (*Consiglio Superiore della Magistratura*) has published five books of conference proceedings it co-sponsored with the Institute.

Major book publishers in the U. S., France, Italy, Lebanon and the Netherlands have also published some of the Institute's proceedings.

Almost all volumes produced by the Institute are the result of meetings it organized and include original contributions from the world's leading experts in criminal law and human rights issues. The scientific input given by the Institute to the debate formed the basis for the elaboration of the Statute of the International Criminal Court and is one of the most outstanding contribution to the study of international and comparative criminal law. Through its roster of experts, and that of the IAPL, the intellectual elaboration of the Institute has reached thousands of professors, policy-makers, criminal justice officers and scholars throughout the world.

PHYSICAL FACILITIES

The Institute is located in two adjoining modern and efficient three-story buildings connected by a garden in the historic city of Siracusa. Building A has an auditorium conference room that can seat 115 persons, a conference room that seats 40 persons, and another one that seats 25, all of which are equipped for simultaneous translation.

In addition to a number of small meeting rooms and offices for members of the staff and administrators of the Institute, there is a small print shop that permits the Institute to produce some of its publications in-house. Modern equipment permits rapid duplication of material for distribution during conferences, seminars and meetings of committees of experts.

Building B is in the progress of remodelling and will offer similar facilities. Once work will be completed, the Institute will be in a position to hold conferences and seminars with more than 250 participants and host several 15-20 persons parallel meetings. New offices will accommodate staff and resident fellows and will be equipped with the same hi-tech equipment already employed in the existing structure.

The city of Noto, 30 kilometers from Siracusa, has provided the Institute with an additional seat in a seventeenth century historic monument, the *Palazzo Trigona-Canicara*, which is being restored, equipped for simultaneous translation, and readied for conferences.

LIBRARY

The library consists of a collection of over 13,000 volumes and reprints in international criminal law, international criminal procedure, human rights and small collections of different countries' books on criminal law, criminal procedure and criminology. The collection card catalog is computerized for easy information retrieval.

The collection is located in five adjacent rooms, which can also be used for meetings of 10-15 persons.

STAFF

The staff of the Institute consists of 5 full-time and 2 part-time persons, whose work is coordinated and supervised by the Scientific Director and the Director of the Administration. Additionally, the Resident Fellows participate in the daily functioning of the Institute.

The members of staff are:

Dr. Alfredo Nunzi: Scientific Director

Ms. Maria Teresa Troja: Chief of the Secretariat

Ms. Luisa Modica: Secretary

Mr. Alessandro Vasquez: Technician

Mr. Sebastiano Ferla: Accountant

The President, Vice-President, Dean, Associate Dean and Secretary of the Board are all volunteers and do not receive compensation. In addition, all the persons who are called upon to direct any of the conferences or seminars of the Institute do so on a volunteer basis. All speakers at conferences and seminars volunteer their time and efforts. With the exception of speakers, participants pay their own travel expenses and the Institute covers residence costs only.

It is essentially because of this volunteer work that the Institute is able to carry out so many significant activities with its limited financial resources.

FINANCIAL SUPERVISION

Financial supervision is conducted by means of a Board of Supervisors (*Revisori*) presided over by a Judge of the Court of Accounts (*Corte dei Conti*), with the participation of an auditor from the Sicilian Region, as well as a specialist in corporate accounts from the private sector. The supervisory body produces an annual report submitted to the board, which along with the Board's Annual Report, is submitted to the various financing public entities. All financial matters are handled by the Banco di Sicilia, which acts as the cashier of the Institute. This elaborate procedure is intended to insure maximum financial integrity and transparency.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE INSTITUTE

The Institute has pursued a leadership role developing United Nations norms and standards in the field of international criminal justice and human rights. The most important achievement of this long-standing commitment is certainly embodied in the Statute of the International Criminal Court, to which ISISC greatly contributed since its inception, as part of its programs fostering the rule of law in the different international settings. Its international conferences and seminars bring together jurists from all legal systems and all parts of the world in a politically neutral environment, academically conducive to learning and to the free exchange of ideas. The Institute has and will continue to emphasize the values of universality and humanism in the pursuit of the highest intellectual, scholarly and academic goals.

In the course of its 26 years of activity, the Institute has promoted the participation of young researchers, women and scholars from all over the world and more particularly from developing countries, assisting them in finding their way into the international community of scholars. Many who came to the Institute as young research assistants are now professors in different universities around the world.

Participants have ranged in age from the early twenties to the late eighties. All share on an equal footing the intensive learning experience of the Institute's activities. Many enduring friendships and personal contacts have developed among the participants over the years. The network of ISISC's friendship extends worldwide and has had a significant effect on strengthening and supporting criminal justice reform and human rights in all regions of the world.

In addition to producing scientific work of the highest standard, the Institute has also provided an atmosphere that has promoted better understanding among peoples of the world and peace among nations. The Institute is deservedly proud of having been able to achieve this dual mission of humanistic influence and scholarly accomplishment in an environment which promotes friendly relations and cooperation. It intends to continue to do so in the years to come.

IMPACT OF THE INSTITUTE

It is difficult to evaluate intellectual impact since by its very nature it is intangible. It can, however, be observed through certain tangible features, such as the fact that an impressive number of jurists and academics have participated in Institute activities, contributed to and made use of its publications. This is an objective basis from which to project a significant multiplier effect on the thousands of jurists all over the world who have benefitted from the Institute's work.

ISISC's record of achievement, as well as its contribution to criminal justice, and in particular to international criminal justice and human rights, can be measured objectively. 234 conferences, seminars and meetings of experts were conducted in collaboration with 110 inter- and non-governmental organizations. These programs were attended by about 15,000 jurists from 147 countries, including some 4,000 academics from 417 universities. Furthermore, the Institute produced 106 volumes of publications containing conference proceedings, as well as scholarly and scientific research, all of which received worldwide dissemination.

ISISC's mission to contribute to the development of more effective criminal justice systems, while at the same time strengthening respect for, and observance of, human rights was accomplished through its training programs, which brought together government officials, judges, academics and lawyers from developed, developing and least developed countries. The presence in Siracusa and participation in its activities of high ranking officials who, in their own countries, exercise influence and authority, is another way by which the Institute's intellectual contributions reaches a wider audience and has long-lasting effects. These officials who have been at Siracusa and who have been involved in its activities include heads of state, government and parliament, cabinet members (ministers of justice, foreign affairs, defence, interior and education), chief justices of supreme courts, presidents of constitutional courts, as well as judges on these high courts, attorney-generals and chief prosecutors, members of parliaments, senior officials (judges, military and police officers and other government officials). As a result of the participation and involvement of such senior officials, major international, regional and national initiatives have been advanced, national legislation passed, ministerial initiatives and policies developed and changes in attitudes and opinions towards progressive ideas furthered.

Two examples are illustrative. The first is the development of the Arabic human rights program, which is described above and which has brought about a major transformation in the Arab world at a time when the very notion of human rights was in question. The second related to East-West relations during the "Cold War". Throughout the '70s and '80s, the Institute and the IAPL were the primary points of contact for jurists between what used to be called the Communist-Socialist countries and the rest of the world. Thus, when the "iron curtain" fell in 1989, changes in the criminal justice systems brought about in all of these countries were due in part to jurists who were members of the IAPL and who had attended Institute's activities or benefitted from IAPL and ISISC academic material. It was, therefore, particularly significant when in 1991 the Institute convened a major conference on reform of

the criminal justice systems of former socialist countries, which was attended by a significantly large number of chief justices and justices of supreme courts, attorney-generals, chief prosecutors and other high ranking officials of those legal systems.

Many of the programs conducted by the Institute on the administration of criminal justice for Arab and African countries have had a major impact in these regions, particularly in developing and least developed countries. Equally noteworthy are training activities for young jurists who, literally by the thousands and from all over the world, have met in Siracusa. From these contacts, friendship have developed, as well as a better understanding of cultural diversity. The solid human and intellectual empathy established among the Institute's network of experts and associates permits the assessment of the impact that its activities have had at both the individual and general level.

At the individual level, the Institute is proud to witness that many of those who attended, and continue to attend, its meetings have reached top position in their career, be it in the academia, in the government or in their profession. Many continued to communicate with the Institute and with colleagues they have met through it, thereby fostering the spirit of friendship and intellectual understanding created during their stay in Siracusa. The experience made at the Institute's premises has become a distinctive feature and supports a sense of belonging to the same group, which ultimately facilitates mutual understanding and international cooperation.

At the general level, the result of the Rome Diplomatic Conference, which adopted the Statute of the International Court in July 1998, would already justify decades of efforts made by any institutions. However, ISISC is also in a position to place itself among the shareholders of many other important criminal justice reforms and human rights advancements, both at the international and national level. The outcome of its activities has been the basis, often the backbone, of several international legal instruments, norms and standards, as well as the framework for national legislation and reform process. This was possible because the reputation of the Institute was such that its meetings attracted participants who were, or would then become key actors in the national and international arena. Convinced of the high value of the ideas being put forward by ISISC, they could use their influential position to support national reform.

The Institute contributed particularly to the development of norms and standards in international criminal justice through its work with the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the Organization of American states and the League of Arab States. No other academic institution in the world can match the extraordinary record of accomplishment of ISISC in this field. Its work, along with the work of the IAPL in the field of international criminal justice, for this Institute over the last 26 years, and for the IAPL over the last 75 years, is simply unsurpassed. These two organizations have contributed so much and for so long towards the establishment of an international criminal court and towards combating impunity for international crimes. The IAPL and the Institute, along with the International Commission of Jurists, developed the first text of a draft Convention against Torture, which they submitted to the United Nations in 1978, and which was adopted in 1984 with substantially similar language. As described above, the Institute also hosted many meetings of experts resulted in the adoption of deep-reaching international and regional norms and standards, which significantly affected the progressive development and application of criminal justice and which strengthened human rights.

Networking is another significant feature of the Institute's initiatives since the human relationship established among the persons who met through the Institute has an effect on their daily professional life. The networking mechanism generated by the Institute allows the thousands of people who were marked by this common experience to liaise daily and benefit

from mutual support. The "Siracusa experience" does not only mean membership in a large and high-level intellectual group, it is also a striving force constantly working for change in the academia, the government, the judiciary and the legal profession, so as to make justice more humane and effective in all countries of the world. This has given the name of the Institute, and that of Siracusa, worldwide attention and recognition.

The "Siracusa spirit" has caused many friendship to develop and facilitated numerous contacts among older and younger jurists, men and women of all nationalities, races and religions and political views, creating a network of contacts among so many that made an incalculable contribution to communication between jurists from all over the world. The intellectual and human openness of the Institute's work and spirit have set a positive example which many of the younger participants have embraced and carried with them throughout their careers.

Notwithstanding all of these contributions, the Institute has not grown into an elitist or closed institution, purposefully remaining open, accessible and service-oriented, particularly towards those with less opportunities for access to academic and scientific development.

It is said in the Torah, and both Christianity and Islam echo it, that "he who saves one life has saved all of humanity". If ISISC in its work has contributed to saving one life, or to sparing one person from torture, or making one human being's life better, then that alone would have been worth its existence. And that belief is what keeps us working at the Institute, the staff, the board, our collaborators and me.

M. CHERIF BASSIOUNI
President

For More Information Contact Us At:
Dr. Alfredo Nunzi, Scientific Director
Via Agati, 12
96100 Siracusa, Italy
Tel: 39 0931 414 515 or 414 516
Fax: 39 0931 442605
e-mail: isisc@ibmsnet.it