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This summer, I interned at the Danish Institute for Human Rights in Copenhagen. DIHR is a national human rights institution operating under the Paris Principles of 1991, and, as such, monitors human rights violations in Denmark, advises relevant state organs on these violations and on related human rights legislation and its implementation, educates and informs individuals and organizations in the field of human rights, carries out capacity building and human rights promotional programs worldwide, and encourages governments to cooperate with regional and international bodies and to ratify human rights instruments. The DIHR's objective, broadly speaking, is to promote and develop knowledge about human rights and to advocate for societies based on the rule of law, in which the state protects and confers obligations on individuals while still safeguarding disadvantaged and marginalized groups. In working toward this goal, the DIHR cooperates with humanitarian organizations, state organs, academic institutions, and other groups both inside and outside Denmark.

During my internship at DIHR, I worked both on its China program and on its Yemen program, devoting about six weeks to the former and about two weeks to the latter. With respect to my work on China, I was specifically involved in a project focused on revising the 1996 Chinese Criminal Procedure Law (CPL) so as to protect human rights in China. The project's objective was to increase the level of codification of, and adherence to, human rights standards with respect to criminal procedure in China, thus affecting criminal procedure both in principle and in practice. Working in cooperation with a network (or, as it is called by the DIHR, a platform) of state and non-state actors from academia and civil society, the DIHR's ultimate

goals for this project are to draw up proposals for additions or amendments to the current CPL based on analysis of the relevant problems and (in DIHR's words) "focused advocacy directed at key stakeholders," and to submit these proposals to the drafting committee in the National People's Congress responsible for revising the CPL. In addition, the platform aims to address problems related to the implementation of internal regulations, by designing and executing educational courses and training activities, and by reporting on current human rights violations in China. Within the platform, the DIHR specifically is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the entire project, managing and balancing the different inputs from different partners, contributing methodology, resources, and expertise, and ensuring high quality in the work done with respect to human rights and criminal justice principles, administrative requirements, and concrete indicators of the project's progress.

My specific role in the Chinese CPL project was to contribute to its baseline study of the current human rights situation in China, particularly focusing on how the 1996 CPL diverged from international standards and the human rights violations that resulted from those inconsistencies. I prepared a compilation of excerpts from United Nations documents relating to arbitrary detention in China, and another, similar compilation for materials relating to arbitrary executions in China. The UN documents that I read and excerpted included international treaties and declarations; reports submitted by UN Special Rapporteurs, either on an annual basis or on the basis of specific visits to China; and reports submitted in connection with the 2009 Universal Periodic Review of China.

I annotated each of my compilations by adding footnotes containing the actual text of those provisions of international law or domestic law cited in the excerpts. For those UN reports that described individual cases of human rights abuses, I wrote a summary of the cases of

arbitrary executions or detention, and added footnotes explaining which provisions of international law were violated in specific cases. In addition, I used highlighting to color-code each compilation, making it easier to for the reader to identify, within the text I had excerpted, the most important of the UN reports' findings and arguments, any positive developments in the human rights situation in China, any problems with the current Chinese CPL, and any recommendations for courses of action for the government to take to reduce human rights violations. For each compilation, I also wrote an executive summary of the current situation with respect to arbitrary execution or detention in China.

It was at a meeting with my supervisor and project manager regarding my work on these compilations, about four or five weeks into my internship, that one of the most memorable moments of my internship occurred. When I first started to work on the compilations, I was not exactly sure how my final product would fit into the baseline study. However, the conversation I had with my supervisor and project manager at this meeting helped me understand the significance of my work. It also provided me with a boost of motivation to continue what at the time seemed like a gargantuan and daunting task, given the extensive amount of UN material available on each kind of human rights abuse.

During the conversation, I came to accept that in the six weeks I worked with the China project, I would not be able to finish reading, excerpting, color coding, and summarizing all UN documents relating to all the documented human rights violations in the Chinese criminal justice system (which vary from torture and arbitrary executions to arbitrary detention and disappearances to unwarranted restrictions on citizens' freedom of speech or religion). Nonetheless, talking to my supervisor and project manager—who had a much broader and more long-term view than I did of the CPL reform project, the China program in general, and the work

of the DIHR as a whole—helped me realize that the methodology I had developed was useful in itself, and could serve as a template for future employees to use after I left the organization. I began to understand that my contribution to the criminal procedure law reform project was not simply the quantity of UN documents I read, excerpted, and analyzed, but the format and organization of the compilations I prepared. I realized that the approach I had adopted—which included, at the global level, relevant provisions of international law; at the country level, paragraphs from the Universal Periodic Review and Special Rapporteur reports about overall trends in human rights violations in China; and, at the individual level, a summary of specific cases of human rights violations submitted to the Chinese government by Special Rapporteurs, and the government’s replies for those cases—could be applied to other projects within the China program, as well as to future DIHR projects. Prior to that afternoon, it had not occurred to me that I was contributing to the DIHR’s work in this way; my conversation with my supervisor and project manager enlightened me, inspired me, and stayed in my mind for the remaining weeks of my internship.

In addition to my work on CPL reform in China, I spent two weeks of my internship working with the DIHR’s Yemen program, which operates on the basis of partnerships between the DIHR and several Yemeni organizations. This program aims to promote human rights dialogues between state institutions and civil society; human rights education at the university level (through training human rights teachers and defenders, organizing national conferences, and developing teaching materials), and data analysis and coordination concerning the current human rights situation in Yemen. In connection with this program’s objectives concerning human rights training and awareness-raising, I researched the elements of a fair trial, and then searched for programs and literature that could be used to help train or raise awareness among

Yemeni law enforcement personnel (including prosecutors, policemen, prison guards, lawyers, and judges) about a defendant's right to a fair trial. I compiled a list of the training programs and literature I found, wrote a brief summary for each program or document, and noted whether the program or document was available in Arabic.

At the time of my internship at DIHR, I had just completed my junior year of college. I would like to go to law school some time after I complete my undergraduate studies, but I am not certain whether I will go right after college or whether I will take a year or two off to work. While, at this point, I am not totally sure what type of law most interests me, after this summer I am seriously considering continuing to work in the field of human rights.

While I definitely had an extremely educational and enjoyable experience that I will remember for many years to come, I felt the Liman Program could have played a larger role in my summer than it did. There was very little communication between the Liman Program administrators and the fellows, or even among Liman fellows from different colleges, after the conference in March at Yale Law School. I think the Liman Program could have made more of an effort to put fellows and possibly administrators in contact with each other, both during the spring after the conference and throughout the summer. For instance, the Liman Program administrators could include fellows' e-mail addresses on the list of 2009 Summer Fellows that we received by e-mail, and they could send that list to fellows in early spring rather than in June. They could also initiate an electronic forum in which the fellows could share their experiences with each other and explain what they were learning over the summer.

