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M. Cherif Bassiouni

We are honored to dedicate this issue of the *Journal* to an indefatigable champion of human rights, Cherif Bassiouni.

Professor Bassiouni was born in Egypt in an aristocratic family of distinguished lawyers. During his formative years, he prepared himself for a life of dedication and commitment to the cause of human rights and peaceful resolution of international disputes. As a teacher, a scholar and an activist, Professor Bassiouni has touched many lives and inspired many to follow his path. And, he has consistently remained true to the cause of peace, justice and human rights.

Professor Bassiouni began his teaching career at DePaul University College of Law in 1964. He specialized in international criminal law and has taught the subject since 1974. He published his first book on criminal law in 1969 and since then he has been a prolific writer, having authored or edited 65 books and over 200 law review articles in scholarly journals published in many countries and in several languages. His works have been relied upon by the highest courts in several countries and the United Nations as definitive authority.

Among Professor Bassiouni's stellar accomplishments, which are many and varied, we will highlight a selected few. He served as chair of the UN Commission of Experts to investigate violations of international humanitarian law in the former Yugoslavia; the Commission's exemplary work was done, although underfunded and understaffed by the UN, with his own efforts to raise the necessary resources from governments and private foundations. The Commission served as a model for the later Rwanda Commission. Professor Bassiouni was the youngest Secretary-General of the prestigious International Association of Penal Law and now serves with distinction as its President. He founded the International Institute of Higher Studies in Criminal Sciences in 1972 in Siracusa, Sicily, which has become a premier center for conferences, seminars and training sessions for jurists from all over the world. It was there that, in 1977, he co-chaired a Meeting of the Committee of Experts that drafted what subsequently became the 1984 UN Convention Against Torture. Since the 1980s the Institute has trained over 2000 jurists from almost every Arab country, Central and Eastern European Countries, and Russia, on human rights and international criminal law and criminal procedure.

In 1990, Professor Bassiouni founded the DePaul International Human Rights Law Institute and he serves still today as its President. The Institute has been particularly active in support of the UN's work for establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC), a cause that he has long advocated. Even in the Cold War era, when most observers thought it was hopeless to seek the establishment of an ICC, Professor Bassiouni was its most ardent proponent. Later he was unanimously elected to chair the drafting committee of the UN diplomatic conference that produced the treaty and statute for the ICC.

Professor Bassiouni has served as a Special Rapporteur for the United Nations

Commission on Human Rights and has been a consultant with the US Department of State and the United Nations. He has actively sought peaceful settlement of the Israeli - Palestinian conflict since the 1960s. In 1975 he and Professor Morton Kaplan of the University of Chicago presented the guiding principles of peace for a comprehensive framework agreement to be implemented in peace agreements between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinians. Since that time, he has vigorously and ceaselessly continued his efforts, working with the White House, the Department of State, and several governments and leaders in the Middle East.

Cherif Bassiouni has a warm, charming, energetic, and engaging personality. In 1999 he delivered the distinguished McDougal Lecture at the University of Denver College of Law. In introducing him, Ved Nanda, Professor of International Law at DU and faculty advisor to this *Journal*, paid tribute to his longtime friend Professor Bassiouni as "a man of vision, a man of courage, and a man of action." We salute Professor Bassiouni with this dedication.

