



The Computerworld Honors Program

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Final Copy of Case Study

Status:

Laureate

Year:

2013

Organization Name:

Human Rights & International Criminal Law Online Forum

Organization URL:

<http://uclaforum.com/>

Project Name:

Human Rights & International Criminal Law Online Forum

Please select the category in which you are submitting your entry:

World Good

Please provide an overview of the nominated project. Describe the problem it was intended to solve, the technology or approach used, how it was innovative and any technical or other challenges that had to be overcome for successful implementation and adoption. (In 300 words or less.)

The Human Rights & International Criminal Law Online Forum is a co-operative venture between the UCLA Sanela Diana Jenkins International Human Rights Project and International Criminal Court Office of the Prosecutor (ICC OTP). The main purpose of the forum is to create an opportunity for the greater legal community to engage in a dialogue covering the topics of special interest to the Prosecutor. The Internet offered the perfect platform, allowing direct involvement of legal scholars and thinkers from across the globe. UCLALawForum.com is the only place on the Internet where an average online citizen has access to the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court by simply posting his or her opinion on the Forum. This is unprecedented! The Forum runs on a custom system developed by Pipsqueak Productions LLC in Drupal (drupal.org/about). It uses all open source software. Since it's public opening, the Forum has been under continuous hacker attack from all over the world. To date, not a single attempt managed to get through. All of the content remains free and open to all, while private information is safe and secure. As an example, over 60,000 words were written as part of the Gaza

question discussion since its launch in August 2010, and this debate remains relevant to this day.

When was this project implemented or last updated? (Please specify month and year.) Has it incorporated new technologies and/or other innovations since its initial deployment? (In 300 words or less.)

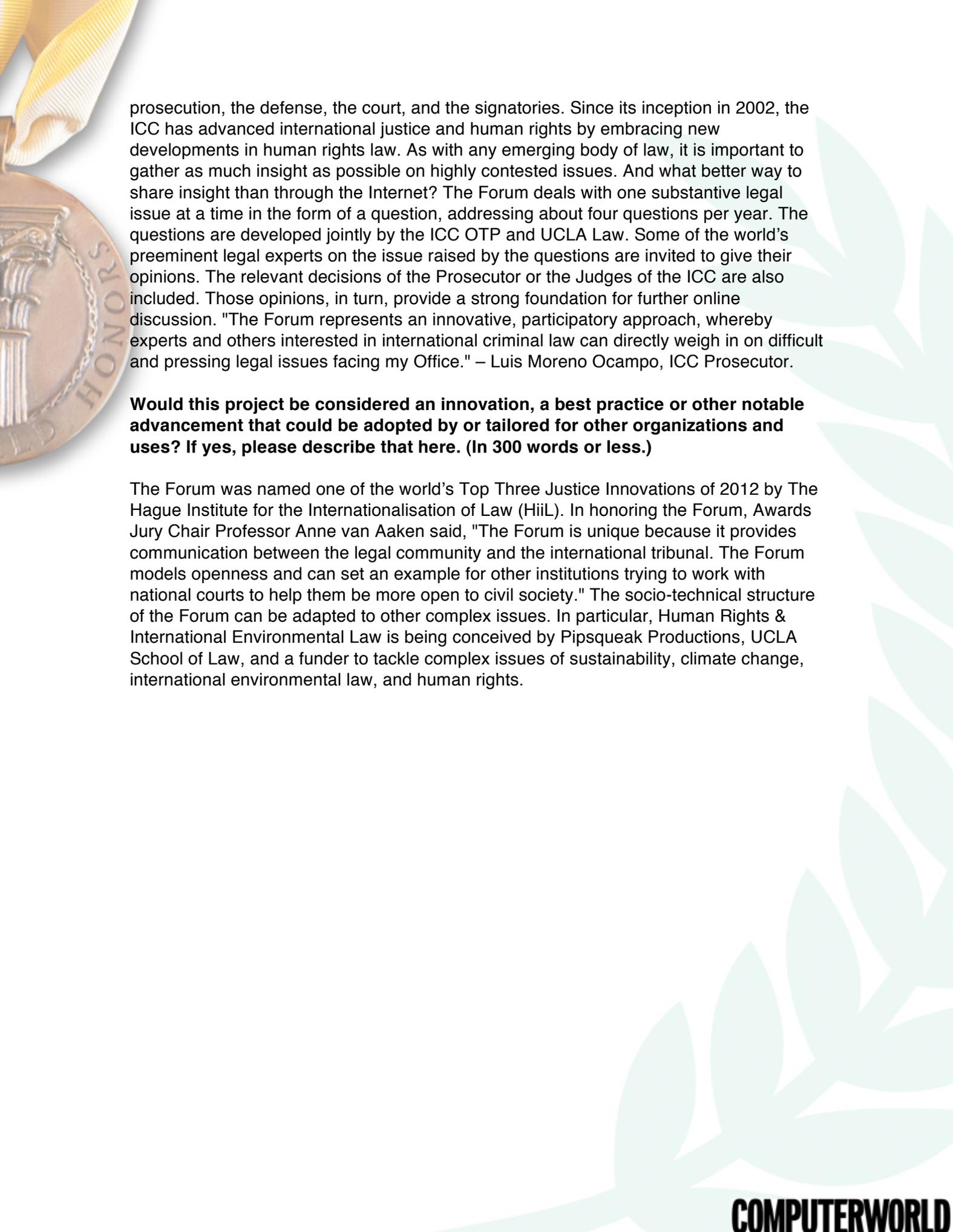
The project was conceived in 2009 and negotiated into existence in 2010. The structure of the Forum stands on the carefully balanced triad of ideas: the Prosecutor's question (together with extensive background materials), the detailed analysis of the question by the Invited Experts, and the discussion open to online public. The Prosecutor's framing of the question provides the context of the problem. The Invited Expert Opinions give in-depth points of view on the Prosecutor's question. And the online debate opens the Prosecutor's question to extensive vetting by Invited Experts, the legal scholars, politicians, and a wider audience of interested individuals. Such a structured approach creates a fertile ground for a high level analysis of the problem. There have been five debates to date and one mini issue: "Does the Prosecutor of the ICC have the authority to open an investigation into alleged crimes committed in the 2008-2009 Gaza conflict?"; "What are the obligations of Contracting Parties to the Genocide Convention to implement arrest warrants for genocide issued by the ICC, and of African Union State Parties to implement ICC arrest warrants generally?"; "What is the proper balance between the independence of the International Criminal Court and the oversight role of the Assembly of States Parties regarding the Court's administration under Article 112 of the Rome Statute?"; "Should Saif al-Islam Gaddafi be tried by the National Transitional Council of Libya or by the International Criminal Court?"; "What measures should be taken to maximize the crime prevention impact of the International Criminal Court?"; "What International Criminal Court reparations regime would be most appropriate for addressing mass atrocities and war crimes?"; and "Can the International Criminal Court (ICC) sustain a conviction for the underlying crime of mass rape without testimony from victims?"

Is implementation of the project complete? If no, please describe the project's phases and which phase the project is now in. (In 300 words or less.)

The implementation of the Forum is complete, but the work continuous. The project is getting ready for the next worldwide debate.

Please provide at least one example of how the technology project has benefited a specific individual or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work. (In 300 words or less.)

The International Criminal Court is based on the Statute of Rome, adopted at a diplomatic conference in Rome in 1998 with 139 signatories and 111 parties (United States of America did not sign) and coming into force beginning in 2002. We are at the dawn of the era governed by international criminal law. As cases are decided, the International Criminal Court at The Hague slowly clarifies its powers, its reach, and its jurisdiction. The Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) has to gather evidence and make decisions on who to prosecute. There are very limited resources and creating a shared knowledge of legal procedures and precedent is in the best interest of all parties: the

A gold medal with a ribbon is visible in the top left corner. The medal features a classical architectural design and the word "HONORS" is partially visible. A large, light green laurel wreath graphic is positioned on the right side of the page, extending from the top to the bottom.

prosecution, the defense, the court, and the signatories. Since its inception in 2002, the ICC has advanced international justice and human rights by embracing new developments in human rights law. As with any emerging body of law, it is important to gather as much insight as possible on highly contested issues. And what better way to share insight than through the Internet? The Forum deals with one substantive legal issue at a time in the form of a question, addressing about four questions per year. The questions are developed jointly by the ICC OTP and UCLA Law. Some of the world's preeminent legal experts on the issue raised by the questions are invited to give their opinions. The relevant decisions of the Prosecutor or the Judges of the ICC are also included. Those opinions, in turn, provide a strong foundation for further online discussion. "The Forum represents an innovative, participatory approach, whereby experts and others interested in international criminal law can directly weigh in on difficult and pressing legal issues facing my Office." – Luis Moreno Ocampo, ICC Prosecutor.

Would this project be considered an innovation, a best practice or other notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations and uses? If yes, please describe that here. (In 300 words or less.)

The Forum was named one of the world's Top Three Justice Innovations of 2012 by The Hague Institute for the Internationalisation of Law (HiiL). In honoring the Forum, Awards Jury Chair Professor Anne van Aaken said, "The Forum is unique because it provides communication between the legal community and the international tribunal. The Forum models openness and can set an example for other institutions trying to work with national courts to help them be more open to civil society." The socio-technical structure of the Forum can be adapted to other complex issues. In particular, Human Rights & International Environmental Law is being conceived by Pipsqueak Productions, UCLA School of Law, and a funder to tackle complex issues of sustainability, climate change, international environmental law, and human rights.