REPORT ON THE
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW ANNUAL MEETING 2017

The American Society of International Law’s Annual Meeting was a highlight of my final semester at Berkeley Law. The conference brought together practitioners, academics, and students from throughout the United States and around the world to discuss pressing and cutting-edge issues of international law. The breadth of panels, organized by “tracks,” provided new insights in my area of interest – human rights, migration, and international criminal law – while giving me the chance to explore new international law topics.

While this was my first ASIL meeting, it seemed to me a particularly interesting year for such a gathering. With the US president’s anti-globalism rhetoric, but recent pivots on international engagement, there was much to discuss on the conference theme – “What International Law Values” – and on the value of international law. Panels discussed topics such as the legality of US air strikes on Syria and the targeting of terrorist financial assets, international cooperation on climate issues, and the promise and limitations of the recent New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Experts on these thought-provoking panels explained existing doctrine and legal regimes, but also posited outstanding questions and problems without clear-cut answers. For me, these discussions reaffirmed the role of international law in the world today. They also reminded me how truly exciting it is to participate in a field that is ever-evolving and creatively addressing new global social, political, and economic issues.

The ASIL meeting also presented valuable opportunities to connect with other students and young professionals beginning careers in international law and to meet and learn from long-time practitioners. Coffee breaks and receptions allowed ample time to ask questions of panel members and to meet and chat with other conference attendees. The conference was well attended by Boalt Hall alumni, and our very own Prof. Saira Mohamed was one of the organizers this year. It was wonderful to see Berkeley Law so well represented and to have the opportunity to meet fellow Boalties working in international law.

It was an honor to get to represent Berkeley Law’s JD program at the ASIL Annual Meeting. I am very grateful to the Miller Institute for making this special opportunity possible. The Miller Institute’s generous fellowship gives Berkeley Law students, such as myself, the chance to reconnect with former colleagues, to make new professional connections, and most importantly, to feel part of the international law community. This is a wonderful opportunity for students aspiring to a career in international law.

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