

Proposal of INTERNATIONAL LAWYERS ASSISTING WORKERS (ILAW) NETWORK, a project of the Solidarity Center, to participate in NYU Law School's Pro Bono Intensive Research Week Program.

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Description of the ILAW Network

Solidarity Center is a Washington, D.C.-based, non-profit, non-governmental organization affiliated with the U.S. labor movement, whose mission is to promote worker rights in approximately 60 countries throughout the world.

In 2018 Solidarity Center launched a new global network of international union and worker rights lawyers and scholars to facilitate the sharing of information and expertise, more effective collaboration, and joint strategizing over issues and cases that increasingly transcend national boundaries.

The International Lawyers Assisting Workers (ILAW) Network operates both online through a members-only website (www.ilawnetwork.com) and phone app, as well as in-person through regional and global meetings and conferences. The platform provides materials in English, Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and Arabic and we hope to be able to offer additional languages over time, as resources permit.

ILAW is staffed with five U.S.-based attorneys as well as five regional attorneys, based in Kenya, Colombia, Brazil, Bangladesh, and the Republic of Georgia. An ILAW Advisory Board consisting of 22 lawyers from 22 different countries provides guidance.

ILAW offers a variety of services to its member lawyers, including a global directory of labor and worker rights lawyers and allied legal professionals; a library/clearinghouse of news, research articles and case materials in the fields of labor and employment law; a space for blog-format and listserv discussion and debate on legal developments; a forum for webinars and other topical educational and training opportunities; a biannual journal (the Global Labour Rights Reporter); a wiki-style database of model legislation and regulations on various labor and employment issues; and a strategic litigation fund that awards modest grants to ILAW members to support impactful worker rights-related litigation in various countries.

At present, ILAW is focusing on several broad topic areas including: climate change just transition; the impact of new technologies in the workplace; gender-based violence; global supply chain accountability; migrant worker rights; the fissured employment relationship; employment discrimination all its forms; the informal economy; occupational health and

safety; issues stemming from the regulation of remote work/telework; and organizing and bargaining with multinational employers.

Given the global nature of work and common trends that affect workers worldwide, an international network of union and worker rights lawyers is needed now more than ever to effectively represent workers in these areas.

In the seven years since its creation, ILAW has grown to include approximately 1500 worker rights lawyer members in over 100 countries.

Overview of the LLM Pro Bono Research Project

ILAW normally invites LLM students to choose their pro bono assignments from among several of the research projects that ILAW has ongoing at any given time.

Over the past three years, for example, NYU LLM students have spent their pro bono research work engaged in projects concerning: 1) the impact of health and-safety-related worker rights in the context of the COVID pandemic; 2) a comparative survey of laws and regulations regarding workplace scheduling issues in various countries; 3) a comparative survey of national arbitration laws; 4) the discriminatory impact of paternity leave benefits on women; 5) litigation, legislation, and regulation of workers' just transition in the context of climate change; and 6) recent developments regarding the effects on workers of AI and other new technology in the workplace; 7) a comparative survey of the gender pay gap in countries that have adopted a pay equity approach addressing the principle of equal pay for work of equal value; 8) a review of domestic workers' rights in various countries; 9) the right to strike in various countries; and 10) the mechanisms and prevention of gender based violence and harassment in domestic and informal economy work.

In this semester we expect to offer a continuation of some or all of the following ongoing projects:

1. **The Right to Strike comparative global survey.** This project involves researching the laws, regulations, court decisions, and practices in a student's home country or another country and completing a template that ILAW has developed on the subject.
2. **The Informal Economy project.** The African Commission on Human Rights has passed a resolution calling for the development of guiding principles to be followed by "soft law" in a number of informal economy sectors -- domestic work, agricultural work, home work, waste picking, etc. In this project, students will be researching other countries for model laws and regulation in these sectors, and contributing to ILAW's submission on the guiding principles.
3. **Worker protections in Kenya's Gig Economy.** ILAW is assisting the Kenyan labor movement in an attempt to regulate the country's platform economy sector, and in furtherance of these efforts is conducting a global survey of worker protections in other countries, reviewing such areas as wage theft, intellectual property issues, professional

development, exploitative contracts, occupational safety and health concerns, royalties, impact of AI, and more.

4. **The European Court of Justice.** ILAW is currently attempting to identify landmark decisions/recommendations of the European Court of Justice to share with our member lawyers. We select relevant cases and prepare brief factual summaries along with the Court's reasoning. These case briefs are intended to support our allies in using ECJ arguments in their own litigation practices. Once all the briefs are prepared, we will organize them systematically based on the key legal issues addressed in each case. The final compilation will then be presented online and distributed to our members.
5. **Voting rights and civic participation.** ILAW is embarking on a global survey of how workers are affected by laws relating to voting rights and civic participation in different countries. Students would be asked to conduct research primarily in their home countries or regions.

Frequently, we ask the students to focus their research on their home countries, or at least on their home regions, particularly where native language and familiarity with the legal structures of their own countries would be helpful.