

## UNAI MEMBER ACTIVITY REPORT 2016/2017

### International University "MITSO"

#### Belarus

During the 2016/2017 reporting period, International University "MITSO" undertook a number of activities that underscore its commitment to UNAI and its principles. The following examples stand out as particularly noteworthy:

#### **Activities and projects the International University "MITSO" has undertaken in the past year addressing some of the ten UNAI principles:**

1. XII International Law Competition «Youth for Peace» September 25-29, 2017 International University «MITSO» held XII International Law Competition «Youth for Peace». The Competition is held annually since 2006 as a part of the UN Global Initiative «Academic Impact» and contributes to the implementation of the commitments of the Republic of Belarus to implement the Geneva Conventions of 1949 to disseminate knowledge of International Humanitarian Law. The main goal of the Competition – to disseminate among young people the idea of tolerance and intercultural dialogue, demonstrating the importance of peaceful coexistence of nations.



The program of the Competition usually includes events (thematic lectures, round tables, conferences), to which eminent international law experts are invited as jury members and guests.

Students and experts in the field of international law from 10 countries (Armenia, Belarus, Great Britain, Spain, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Netherlands, Russia, Ukraine and France) took part in the XII International Law Competition «Youth for Peace». 11 teams of law students from leading universities such as the MGIMO University (Moscow, Russia), the BPP University (London,

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Great Britain), the Russian-Armenian University (Yerevan, Armenia), the Kazakh Academy of Labor and Social Relations (Almaty, Kazakhstan), the Institute of International Relations of Moldova (Chisinau, Moldova), the National University «Odessa Law Academy» (Odessa, Ukraine) and others competed their knowledge of International Law.

The choice of specific issues and problems that were reflected in the topic of the tasks was due to the following realities of world development. In particular, modern international law ensures international peace and security, as well as the cooperation of states which are very different. The human rights law guarantees the protection of freedom of conscience and religion, ensuring respect for views, including religious. Along with the preservation of the traditional way of life and traditional religions of some groups of the population, our civilization is making huge strides forward in the field of computer technology. Much to our regret, religious disagreements can lead to armed clashes, and computer technologies can be used as weapons. International law originated in the era of traditional wars and its generally humane basis, which provides protection for all victims of armed conflicts, remains relevant. The question is whether today's general international law and international humanitarian law are ready to respond adequately to the challenges that the wide penetration of computer technology in our lives poses to humanity.

## 2. The Days of International Law

On September 25, 2017 International University «MITSO» held the Days of International Law.

Highly qualified experts made for students such open public lectures:

- Professor of International Relations at the Center for Diplomatic and Strategic Studies (France), Lecturer at the Paris Descartes University, PhD in International Relations and Diplomacy Michael J. Strauss: «Practical Challenges of Distinguishing between Civilians and Combatants in Armed Conflict»;
- Senior Lecturer in International Laws of Armed Conflict at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, LLM in International Law David Turns: «Time Sensitive Targeting and International Humanitarian Law: Some Implications of the Use of Cyber and Autonomous Technologies»;
- Senior Researcher at the T.M.C. Asser Instituut (the Netherlands), member of the ILA Committee on Space Law, PhD in International Law Olivier Ribbelink: «Certain IHL/ICL aspects of the destruction of cultural property during armed conflict. The case of the Scythian Gold»;
- Visiting Fellow of London South Bank University (the United Kingdom), President of the Solicitors International Human Rights Group, LLM in International Law and Human Rights Lionel Blackman («Why Do Asylum Seekers Risk Their Lives to Come to the United Kingdom? The Reality of the Legal Challenges They Face»).

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This year for the first time in order to expand the knowledge of international humanitarian law among secondary-school students, the organizers also invited to the lectures students of Minsk of gymnasiums, lyceums and the Law College of BSU.

**Academic research that is currently undertaken at the International University "MITSO" which could help in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals:**

**3. The Second Round Table of the Belarusian Branch of the International Law Association**

On September 25, 2017 International University «MITSO» held the Second Round Table of the Belarusian Branch of the International Law Association on the theme «Multidimensional Human Rights Protection during Armed Conflict». The partner of the event was the Council of Europe Information Point in Minsk. Among the honoured guests and participants of the discussion there were foreign International Law experts – members of the jury of the XII International Law Competition «Youth for Peace», the invited expert of the Council of Europe, Philip Gaffe (France), representatives of the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, the National Centre of Legislation and Legal Research of the Republic of Belarus, the Belarusian Red Cross Society, the UNHCR in Belarus as well as experts from the Academy of Public Administration under the aegis of the President of the Republic of Belarus, the International Relations Faculty of the Belarusian State University, the Academy of the Interior Ministry of the Republic of Belarus and the Belarusian Military Academy, Border Guard Service Institute of Belarus and others.

In the course of Round table there were discussed such topical issues as human rights protection during armed conflicts; new trends in State Privatization and their impact on human rights protection, means of accountability and reparations for unilateral coercive measures, obligation of state to suppress terrorism and its structure, women rights protection during armed conflicts and peacebuilding period.

**4. Essay competitions and a conference of young scientists on combating international terrorism**

From February till March, 2017, the International University «MITSO» together with the Belarusian Red Cross Society and the National Center of Legal Information of the Republic of Belarus held a set of events to recall mind exactly to the problem and directions of the fight against international terrorism. Namely, the Contest for the best essay among applicants on the topic «1000 words AGAINST Terrorism», the essay Contest «Fighting against International Terrorism: Current Trends and Problems» among students, as well as the Conference of Young Scientists «Fighting against International Terrorism: Current Trends and Problems» that was

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held on May 5, 2017. By results of these three events, a book of articles of essay competitions' winners and the Conference participants' was published.

**Some issues facing the city/country/region where the International University "MITSO" is located :**

Insufficient partners in the world awareness on the real state of things and educational opportunities of the Republic of Belarus

**Three suggestions on how UNAI can better support the International University "MITSO":**

- Suggestion one: Share among UNAI members information about academic events of our University held in the field of International Humanitarian Law.
- Suggestion two: Support by UNAI realization of the XIII International Law Competition "Youth for Peace" (September from 24 till 28, 2018).
- Suggestion three: Support participation of UNAI members' students teams in academic events held in the field of International Humanitarian Law.

**Links:**

<https://www.mitso.by/>

<https://international.mitso.by/>

<https://www.facebook.com/universitymitso/>

<https://international.mitso.by/international-law-competition-youth-for-p...>

[https://www.facebook.com/YouthforPeaceMITSO/?ref=aymt\\_homepage\\_panel](https://www.facebook.com/YouthforPeaceMITSO/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel)

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