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2009 Symposium

Iraq at the Crossroads: Protecting Refugees, Rescuing our Allies, and Empowering Iraqi Law

On October 24, 2008, leading scholars, legal practitioners, policy makers, and members of the NGO Community gathered at Rutgers Newark Law School to examine the humanitarian and refugee crises in Iraq. Organized by the Rutgers Law Record and its Editor-in-chief, Kevin Murphy, this conference explored issues such as the rule of law in Iraq, the origins of sectarian violence in Iraq, the Iraqi refugee crisis, and ongoing efforts to remedy the Iraqi humanitarian crisis.

Prominent speakers included:

Congressman Bill Pascrell (D-NJ)]
- Judge Ra'id Juhi, Chief Investigative Judge of the Saddam Hussein trial
- Eric Blindermen, Proskauer Rose LLP]

Rajiv Chandrasekaran, National Editor, The Washington Post]
- Kirk Johnson, founder of The List Project]
- Professor Haider Hamoudi, Univ. of Pittsburgh School of Law]
- Dan Stigall, U.S. Army JAG]
- Erik K. Gustafson, EPIC Director]
- Jessica Chico, Human Rights First]
- Hilary Ingraham, U.S. State Department]

The idea for the Symposium arose out of the experiences of Rutgers Law Record's Editor in Chief, Kevin Murphy, when he was stationed in Iraq as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division. Throughout his deployment, Mr. Murphy witnessed first hand the plight of Iraqi civilians and refugees. The 2008 symposium was designed to bring together the many groups who are working to help Iraq refugees and to ease the humanitarian crisis in Iraq.

Rajiv Chandrasekaran, the National Editor of The Washington Post, delivered the opening keynote speech. Rajiv Chandrasekaran was the Washington Post's Bureau Chief in Baghdad from April 2003 to October 2004. Mr. Chandrasekaran is the author of Imperial Life in the Emerald City, a bestselling account of the bungled American effort to reconstruct Iraq. The book, which provides a first hand account of life in Baghdad's Green Zone, was a finalist for the National Book award and was named one of the top ten books of the year by the New York Times.

In addition, the symposium will be the focus of an upcoming documentary by Principle Pictures entitled The Promise of Freedom: The Iraqis Who Believed Most in America Are Now Running For Their Lives. Who Will Save Them?