

# Castan Centre News

## Centre Creating a Comprehensive Human Rights Case Database

The Castan Centre has recently begun work on creating a database of case notes on every individual case heard by the United Nations treaty bodies. The database will be operated by Oxford University Press and will be the first such resource on the internet.

The treaty bodies are the UN committees which hear complaints from indi-

viduals who claim that their human rights have been breached by their Government. In addition to the Human Rights Committee, which hears alleged breaches of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, there are committees who deal with torture, women's rights and discrimination. At last count, there were over 1200 cases in all. The project is being

overseen by Castan Centre Director, Professor Sarah Joseph, who is being assisted by a phalanx of Castan Centre staff and In-House Interns.

The database being compiled by OUP will also include case notes for other human rights bodies, such as the European Court of Human Rights.

## 2008 Global Internship Program Expands Again



*Tantur Ecumenical Institute, where the St Yves intern will stay in Jerusalem.*

For the first time this year, Monash Law students will travel to Israel and Cambodia as part of the Castan Centre Global Internship Program.

The position with Israel is at the St Yves Catholic Human Rights Centre, in Jerusalem. The centre is run by Bill Docherty, a Monash University alumni who was inspired to set up the centre along the same lines as the Monash-Springvale Legal Service, where he

worked in the 1970s. The centre assists the poor and marginalized and the general community in East Jerusalem while actively working to address the continuing humanitarian problems in the area.

The chosen intern will also stay at Tantur Institute of Ecumenical Studies, which welcomes scholars of all faiths.

The Cambodian internship will be with the United Nations Assistance Mission to the Khmer Rouge Tribunals. The tribunals, which are a combination of international and national courts, will try members of the former Khmer Rouge government who have been accused of war crimes. Castan Centre Global Intern Bridi Rice (who interned at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva) spent three months with the mission earlier this year.

In addition to these two positions, four other interns will travel to the Castan Centre's existing partner organisations in New York (Human Rights First), Geneva (the Australian Delegation to the Human Rights Council), Kuala Lumpur (International Women's Rights Action Watch - Asia Pacific) and the Hague (International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia).

This year, for the first time, interns will have the opportunity to attend a pre-departure cross cultural training course to prepare them for the difficulties of working in alien places and in workplaces with people from many different countries.

In addition to the travel funding that interns receive from the Monash Law Student Travel Fund, students will also receive a stipend from the Castan Centre to help them cover some of their living expenses. This assistance helps make the Program more accessible to students.

## Besen Family Heads List of Castan Centre Donors

The Castan Centre's 2007 fundraising drive was capped off recently with a generous donation from Daniel and Danielle Besen.

Daniel, a Monash Law graduate, visited the centre in June and was impressed by its commitment to human rights. He was particularly interested in the centre's attempts to increase educa-

tional and career opportunities for students through its undergraduate and graduate teaching programs and its Global Internship Program.

Castan Centre Deputy Director, Melissa Castan, said that "donations such as this one are vital to allow the centre to continue funding its suite of programs."

"We are delighted with the support we have received from Daniel and Danielle. It goes a long way towards ensuring that we can continue to provide important opportunities to young Monash Law students", said Melissa.

"We hope that we will be able to continue working with Daniel and Danielle in the future", she added.