

Pioneering a Networked Approach to International Justice from Boston: A Discussion of *Georges v. United Nations*

MAY 7, 2015

A Boston-based collaboration of nonprofit and large firm lawyers are spearheading what the *New York Times* called "the most serious challenge yet" to international organization immunity, while pioneering an innovative model for 21st century human rights advocacy. The Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti (IJDH) and WilmerHale are pursuing a cutting edge tort suit on behalf of the victims of the cholera epidemic that the United Nations introduced to Haiti in 2010 through reckless disposal of waste at a peacekeeper base.

The suit is part of a broader campaign that has galvanized scholars, scientists, students, activists and political leaders in Haiti, the United States and elsewhere to apply pressure on the UN to install the infrastructure necessary to control cholera and compensate the estimated 8,800 killed and 700,000 sickened so far. The highly-networked, lightly-structured campaign relies on social media and other emerging technologies to apply persistent pressure through the press, the US Congress, the UN system and on the streets of Haiti and New York. It has generated *amicus curiae* briefs from top international law authorities, support from the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, letters from more than 100 members of Congress, and two documentaries that have won an Emmy Award, a Peabody Award and other recognition.

Panelists will discuss the lawsuit, *Georges v. United Nations*, currently before the Second Circuit, and explore how private sector pro bono lawyers and nonprofit lawyers can effectively collaborate on initiatives that combine legal and political objectives. They will also discuss how legal strategies can form the centerpiece of a broader campaign, driving media, science, grassroots activism and politics far from Boston.

WilmerHale Partner John J. Regan will be a featured speaker.

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Speakers



John J. Regan

RETIRED PARTNER

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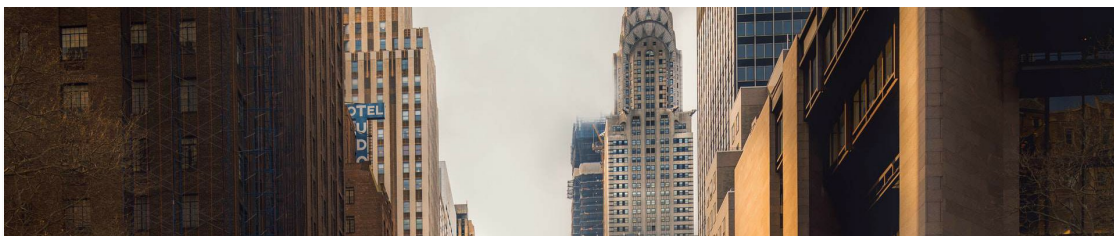
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