



## GLOBAL CAMPUS - EXCHANGE OF LECTURERS AND RESEARCHERS Visit of Pratubjit Neelapaijit from the Asia-Pacific Programme to the Latin American Programme in Buenos Aires

Between 1-4 July, 2014, the Latin American Programme in Buenos Aires received Pratubjit Neelapaijit from the Institute for Human Rights and Peace Studies at the University of Mahidol in Thailand, a partner institution within the Asia-Pacific Programme. Pratubjit is a researcher and a human rights defender engaged in the clarification of the disappearance of her own father. Her visit was possible thanks to the support of the Global Campus, CIEP-UNSAM and the University of Sydney, as part of the global exchange of researchers, a joint activity within the Global Campus.

During her stay in Buenos Aires, and with the assistance of Lat.Ma's academic staff and students, Pratubjit visited local governmental and non-governmental institutions and held interviews with victims, human rights defenders and experts in the area of enforced disappearances.

On 1 July 2014 Pratubjit Neelapaijit visited the ESMA complex, a human rights memorial



site in Argentina linked to the commission of disappearances and acts of torture during the 1976-1983 dictatorship in Argentina. After visiting the museum and the art exhibitions now housed at ESMA, she met representatives from the Mothers of Plaza de Mayo Association, Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo Association, CELS, Historic and Social Memory Association, and the Family Members of Disappeared Persons Association, among others that spearheaded the international

campaign for the adoption of the UN Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Forced Disappearance. The meeting took place at the *Casa por la Identidad* (House for Identity) at ESMA. During the visit she had the chance to exchange experiences with Mrs. Vera Jarach –whose daughter Franca Jarach was detained and disappeared at ESMA— and with Graciela Lois –whose husband Ricardo Lois, was also disappeared at ESMA. During this intensely emotional meeting, Pratubjit related her own story as a family member of a disappeared person. Before the end of the visit she also met with authorities



from the Human Rights Secretariat of the Ministry of Justice.



On 2-3 July 2014, Pratubjit Neelapaijit participated in the conference organised by CIEP-UNSAM and the Latin American Network for Human Rights and Democratisation (REDALDH) to exchange ideas and experiences relating to truth, justice and memory for serious human rights violations, with the participation of representatives from EIUC, the ERMA and Eastern Partnership Programmes and experts from NGOs and inter-governmental organizations. Pratubjit shared her experiences in Thailand, in a panel on Truth, Justice and the

Strengthening of Democracy. She referred to the case of her own father, a lawyer who has been disappeared for a decade for political reasons. Also in the panel were Roberta Baggio –one of Lat.Ma’s lecturers and a member of the Amnesty Commission in Brazil; and Monica Pinto, Dean of the UBA Law School and former UN Rapporteur for Guatemala and Chad.

On 4 July 2014 Pratubjit Neelapaijit visited the Headquarters of the Argentine Team of



Forensic Anthropologists, a prestigious group of experts that started their work in Argentina thirty years ago, and now use their expertise in more than 50 countries around the world in connection with the identification of the remains of disappeared persons. Two of its main members –Silvana Turner and Mercedes Salado— explained their recent experiences in Thailand as consultants, as well as the protocols to be followed to work with family members in the

identification of remains. They also showed Pratubjit the genetic archives, the labs and the infrastructure required to undertake this task.

As one of the first experiences of this kind within the Global Campus, Pratubjit Neelapaijit’s visit to Buenos Aires to visit the governmental and non-governmental institutions working in the area of truth, justice and memory relating to past human rights violations, was a success and an enriching experience for all involved. She also had the opportunity to participate in a public event with other representatives from the Global Campus and international experts, and share her own knowledge and experience in Thailand, thus contributing to achieving the objectives of the Global Campus.

