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## DEDICATION TO ROBERT ARAUJO, S.J.

ROBERT ARAUJO – PRIEST AND DIPLOMAT

*Rev. Carlos Fernando Díaz Paniagua†*

I met Fr. Araujo in February 1997, during one of the preparatory meetings of the Rome Conference on the Establishment of the International Criminal Court. It was the first time Fr. Araujo took part in a diplomatic conference. He came full of energy, fresh from his work as a Professor of Law, convinced that the Truth (with a capital T) and sound legal reasoning would win the day.

What a disappointment it was! At the time, the *Women's Caucus for Gender Justice*, a transnational coalition of feminist NGOs, was instrumentalizing the suffering of Bosnian Women to get a back door approval for an “international right to abortion”. They proposed a new crime against humanity: *Enforced Pregnancy*, arguing that not permitting a woman to have an abortion constituted a grave violation of her rights.

Fr. Araujo took pains to explain to them that no international instrument had ever recognized such crime, that it was unknown in domestic law, that there was no supporting jurisprudence, and that women would be better protected if international criminal law focused instead on the already recognized crimes of rape and detention, which are easier to prove in court. But it was of no avail. They had an Agenda. He tried to explain to them that, if such a crime were created, countries that forbid abortion would find themselves in an impossible situation and even parents that prevented their minor children from having an abortion could be prosecuted. But that was precisely what the *Women's Caucus for Gender Justice* wanted to attain.

Father Araujo then presented his sound arguments to the delegations, but many diplomats were already committed to the agenda of the *Women's Gender Caucus*. It was only with great difficulty that Fr. Araujo succeeded in having objections of the Holy See to the proposed language noted in the negotiating document. In the end, the ultimate definition of *Enforced Pregnancy* contained in the Rome Statute, although not entirely satisfactory, takes into account most of Fr. Araujo's objections and it cannot be used to promote the legalization of abortion.

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† Ph.D. (CUNY), LL.M. (Cambridge), *Lic. en Derecho* (Universidad de Costa Rica), Th.B. (Pontifical Gregorian University), Legal Advisor to the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the United Nations from 1994 to 2006. Currently a priest of the Dioceses of Tilarán-Liberia (Costa Rica) collaborating with the Secretariat of State of the Holy See.

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In the following years, Fr. Araujo became a fine diplomat. He paired his love for the Truth and legal argument with good networking abilities and a fine sense of procedural opportunities. He lost his innocence; he learnt that you cannot always trust your counterparts, that you have to also be on your guard, watch, listen and anticipate what their next move will be.

More importantly, though, Fr. Araujo never stopped being a priest. When I met Fr. Araujo, I was a young diplomat for my country, Costa Rica, dealing with legal questions, such as those pertaining to the creation of the International Criminal Court, and political issues since Costa Rica was then a Non-Permanent Member of the UN Security Council. I became his friend during those negotiations and I used to share with him my delusions about the Security Council's inability to live up to its responsibilities. How could we, as diplomats, be satisfied with adopting resolutions, when massacres were ongoing in the former Zaire and in Sierra Leone?

Latter, we worked together for five years pushing for the adoption of the Declaration to ban all forms of Human Cloning, one of the few pro-life documents agreed to by States at the United Nations. At the same time, our friendship deepened and he began to guide my spiritual life. But perhaps even more importantly, he was a real witness of dedication, devotion and holiness of life. In 2006, thanks to his guidance, prayers, good example and the witness of other priests linked to the Holy See's Observer Mission to the UN, I left the Costa Rican Foreign Service and entered the seminary, and now, I am a priest.

I'm overjoyed for the fact that this inaugural issue of the Ave Maria International Law Journal is dedicated to him and I look forward to the day when I will stand next to him before the altar of Our Lord.