

To the attention of the board of the Mitteleuropa Stiftung,

My name is Tomáš Morochovič and I am a Ph.D. candidate at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. I would like to use this opportunity to express my immense gratitude for being awarded a scholarship by your foundation. It is an honour to be selected as a recipient among the other undeniably excellent candidates. By virtue of your generosity, I have been able to successfully commence my doctoral research project at a world-class institution and fully dedicate my time to my academic development.

Coming to the end of the first year of my doctoral studies, I took some time to reflect on how my journey at the Graduate Institute has been thus far. I realised that I felt an overarching feeling of contentment – the scholarship provided by your foundation provided me with a peace of mind in regard to my financial situation. Given my background, I am particularly appreciative of the position in which I am now. I originally come from an under-developed region in the east of Slovakia – my hometown is Snina, a small industrial town of approx. 20,000 people situated only about 40km from the Ukrainian border. I completed all my primary and secondary education in Snina, attending my local Gymnasium, where the idea of going to study further than the Czech Republic was entirely unheard of. It took a lot of hard work and support from my family and wider community to get to universities in the UK, where I studied throughout my undergraduate and master's degrees. And even with that support, I had to extensively rely on part-time work while studying and a work-filled gap year in order to afford university studies. It is both exciting and truly satisfying that, thanks to the Mitteleuropa Stiftung, I was able to leave such concerns behind during the last year at the Graduate Institute.

In my research, I am focusing on the topic of human rights obligations of non-state actors. The title of my research is 'Reimagining Rights: Understanding Horizontal Human Rights Obligations of Non-State Actors through the Lens of Human Dignity'. My research area choice was vindicated once again in late April, when the Court of Arbitration for Sport handed down its judgment in the Caster Semenya case. In the judgment, the court recognised that the International Association of Athletics Federations had legal obligations in relation to Ms Semenya's fundamental rights. It is the existence and localisation of such obligations within international law which form the core of my research. A number of courses which I took this year were very instructive in relation to my research, particularly professor Schultz's course 'Law without the State'. Importantly, being a doctoral candidate at the Graduate Institute also means that I have the opportunity to be supervised by arguably the leading authority within my research area, professor Andrew Clapham.

The most rewarding aspect of the scholarship is that it allowed me to go beyond strictly school-related endeavours and engage in other rewarding activities. Thanks to the scholarship, I was able to travel to an expert working group relating to the project 'International Cyber Law in Practice: Interactive Toolkit'. As part of the working group, I co-operated in the creation of the Cyber Law Toolkit, which is a publicly accessible web-based resource for legal professionals who work with matters at the intersection of international law and cyber operations. Furthermore, I had the time to write and I submitted a number of draft journal articles to leading peer-reviewed journals. And I also managed to learn some French, which I found to be crucial in order to fully integrate in Geneva and take full advantage of the opportunities offer by this global city. All of this would not be possible without the financial

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support which I received from the Mitteleuropa Stiftung and I am incredibly grateful to have been selected by your foundation.

My personal background gives me a strong appreciation for the importance of giving – without the generosity of others, I would never have been able to succeed in my career path. That is why I have also dedicated my time to others, volunteering and providing mentoring ever since my secondary school. In April, I started a project with another international law student from Slovakia who is coming to study to the Graduate Institute next year. Our goal is to establish an NGO which would provide secondary school students with opportunities to learn about the importance of human rights and respect for the dignity of others. Despite being preoccupied with my own career, I consider it a moral duty to help others, just as others have helped me.

Thank you for your support and generosity.

Yours sincerely,
Tomáš Morochovič