

### **Personal Summary**

At high school, I learned to see and interpret laws of science, which appeared to have only one correct set of rules. Learning Science, to me, meant treading over a beaten path with rules and interpretations already given. I am more inclined to question and argue what appears prima facie correct and acceptable. Pursuit of Law as a discipline offered me that avenue. The opportunity that study of law gave to think 'outside the box' was intellectually gratifying. Legal education at one of the premier law schools in India, The West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences (WBNUJS), helped me equip myself with a measure of power of reasoning and understanding of law, which I believe to be a powerful tool to effect social change.

At WBNUJS, I was inclined towards subjects that provided an international and inter-disciplinary perspective. Through study and discussions with my tutors and peers, I became aware of some key issues related to 'Compulsory Licensing' under the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS). Compulsory Licensing is an interesting exception to the laws Intellectual Property, which allows a competent government authority to license the use of an intellectual property without the consent of the right holder. This means that TRIPS as an instrument possesses the capability of saving millions of lives particularly with respect to access to affordable medicines. However, the operation of the relevant provisions is delayed due to lack of institutional capacity of least developed nations. This is further compounded by the intense bilateral trade pressures brought to bear upon developing nations. The rigid interpretation of TRIPS provisions adopted by some nations seems to have made Compulsory Licensing an impossibility for low-income nations with poor manufacturing bases and import capacities. This was my first exposure to the difficulties faced by third world nations in the international arena and I have ever since attempted to find arguments that can be used to help make the international legal regime more sensitive to the needs of such nations.

In furtherance of my inclination and work, I chose legal teaching as my career option with the objective of nurturing a stock of lawyers sensitive to such international issues. I decided to join a fledgling institution as I would have been able to exercise greater freedom in designing courses and class discussions and would not be restricted by established and rigid teaching methodology. After a rigorous interview, I secured the position of a teaching assistant at the Chanakya National Law University (CNLU) under Prof. Dr. A. Lakshminath, Professor of International Law and Jurisprudence. At CNLU, I taught students contemporary aspects in international law including international trade law affecting developing nations. I went beyond traditional classroom teaching and employed innovative techniques to help students internalize the issues at stake in development in the context of international trade. I started the International Law Society at the University, where students and faculty collaborated to organize regular workshops for international law training and to conduct weekly debates on current international legal issues. With the objective of supplementing my theoretical grounding with knowledge of International Trade Law in practice, I joined the Centre for WTO Studies (CWS) as a Research Fellow. CWS is a think-tank wing of the Ministry of Commerce, Government of India involved in advising and assisting the Ministry on key trade policy matters.

I believe I belong to a noble profession and so am compelled by a sense of service towards development of standard precepts in this field of law for the benefit of society. As a lawyer, my underlying motivation is to contribute to legal research and teaching relevant to development of developing societies. I believe that while the new generation of lawyers in my country bear the potential of advocating such pressing concerns, they are often fazed by the resistance to change that is the hallmark of all developing societies with vested interests in the *status quo*. They eventually tend to choose financially more lucrative avenues to utilize their talent. There appear very few who exhibit the courage to advocate oft-forgotten causes, a quality essential for a person aspiring to live in a society in a better tomorrow. I can proudly say that I am determined to be such a person.