

**EIGHTH SYMBIOSIS LAW SCHOOL, PUNE – INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL
TRIAL ADVOCACY COMPETITION, 2023**

VALEDICTORY CEREMONY

Symbiosis Law School, Pune (SLS-P), a constituent of Symbiosis International (Deemed University) virtually hosted the **Eighth Edition of Symbiosis Law School, Pune – International Criminal Trial Advocacy Competition, 2023 (SICTA, 2023)** from 20th April 2023 to 23rd April 2023. The Final Rounds and the Valedictory Ceremony was conducted on 23rd April 2023 on the virtual platform.

The welcome address was delivered by **Prof. (Dr.) Shashikala Gurpur, Fullbright Scholar, Jean Monnet Chair Professor (EUC-LAMP Co-founded by EU), Director, SLS-P, Dean Faculty of Law, Symbiosis International (Deemed University)**. Dr. Gurpur provided an overview of the history of SLS-P and highlighted its notable achievements, including being ranked as the third best law school in India and receiving the prestigious internationalisation award from the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in 2021.

She emphasized that SLS-P produces professionals who possess a well-rounded perspective and are committed to social upliftment. She highlighted several examples of the law school's collaborative efforts with district legal service authorities, working with the Aga Khan Palace (a centre of refugees), creating a Memorandum of Understanding with District Mental Health Care Services, and providing Unique Identification Card for elderly women. Dr. Gurpur concluded by expressing her appreciation for the outstanding teamwork and collaboration among the management, faculty, and alumni of the institution.

SICTA 2023 was honored by the presence of **Mr. Pubudu Sachithanandan, Trial Lawyer, International Criminal Court (ICC), the Hague** who graced the event as the Guest of Honour. In his address, Mr. Sachithanandan expressed his enthusiasm for the field of International Humanitarian and Criminal Law and commended the participation of South Asian students in a predominantly Euro-centric area. Mr. Sachithanandan praised the participants for their exceptional understanding of the facts and legal principles, which was evident in the competition. He expressed his eagerness to see one of the participants as his learned friend in the ICC courtroom in the future.

Dr. Aniruddha Rajput, Former Member of United Nations International Law Commission, graced SICTA 2023 as the Guest of Honour and characterized the event as an

"interesting intellectual exercise" for both him and the participants. Although participating virtually, he expressed deep delight in being present at the premises of SLS-P since both of his parents had studied there. During his address, Dr. Rajput emphasized three key essentials for succeeding in moots and other legal exercises: a comprehensive understanding of the law, knowledge of legal practice, and familiarity with legal policy. He highlighted the significance of being fully aware of these aspects and underscored their relevance to the field of law. In conclusion, Dr. Rajput extended his congratulations to all the participants, recognizing their efforts and achievements in the competition.

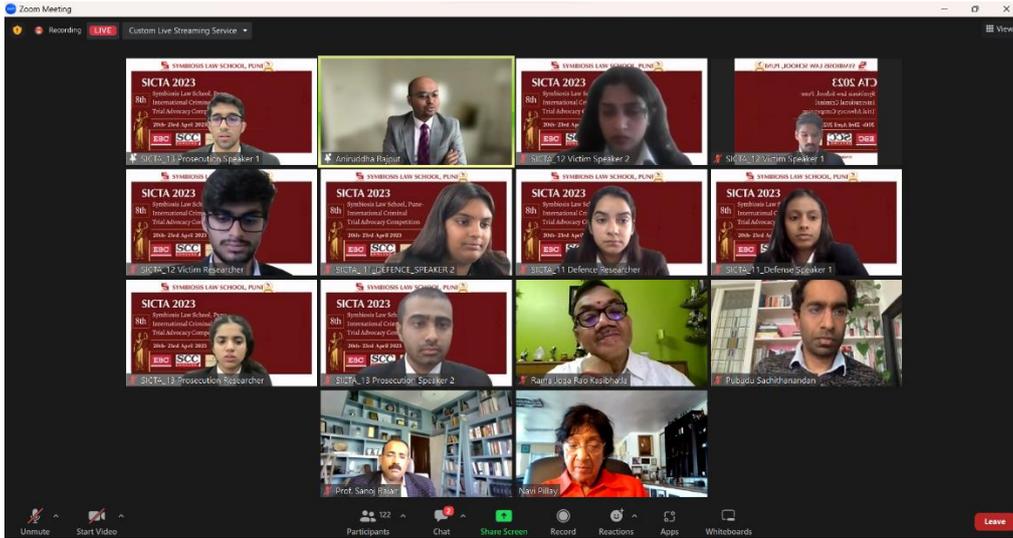
Dr. Navi Pillay, Ad-hoc Judge, International Court of Justice, graced SICTA as a Guest of Honour, is renowned as the first South African to obtain a doctorate in law from Harvard University. Dr. Pillay expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the competition and serve as a judge during the final rounds. In her address, Dr. Pillay noted the complexity of the moot court session but praised the participants for their technical expertise and competence. She commended SLS-P for its commitment to the goals of care, courage, competence, and collaboration, which inspire her. Drawing on her extensive experience as a defence counsel and participant in various moot court competitions, she lauded the quality and standard of arguments presented by the participants, who are poised to become the young leaders of tomorrow. Dr. Pillay paid tribute to the teachers who have guided and mentored the participants and encouraged the participants to continue their pursuit of excellence. Lastly, she expressed her hope for an awe-inspiring and hopeful future, based on the exceptional quality of arguments made during the competition.

The Chief Guest, **Hon'ble Dr. Justice Pushendra Singh Bhati, Judge, Rajasthan High Court**, praised SICTA 2023 as a wonderful opportunity that could serve as a turning point for the younger generation. In his address, he noted that the international aspects of law have gained momentum over the years and that the current situation is unlike the past. He recognized the relevance of the Moot Court Competition's theme to the present times. Hon'ble Dr. Justice Bhati expressed his appreciation and admiration for SLS-P and its alumni in the Rajasthan High Court, highlighting their significant contributions to the legal profession.

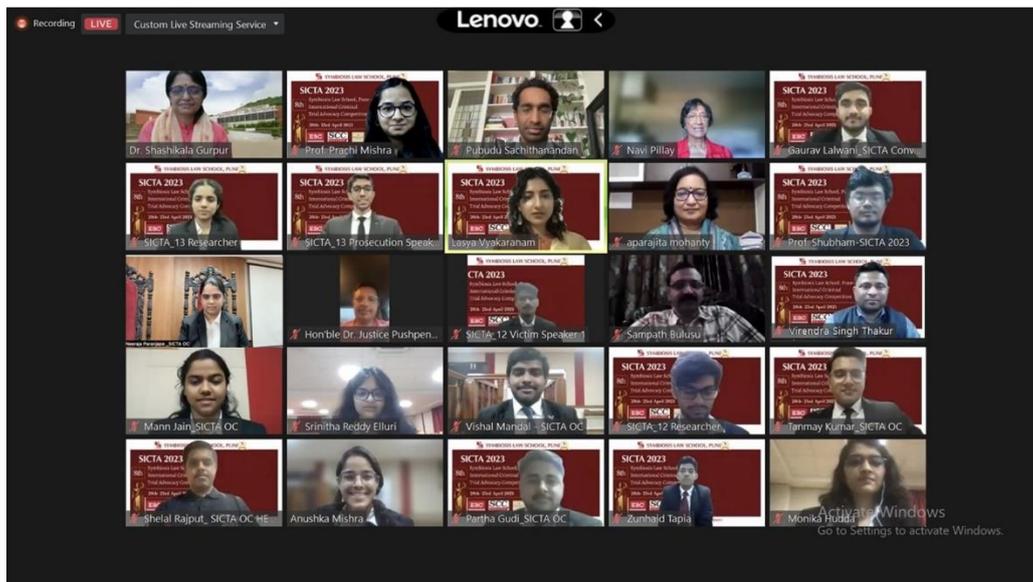
The Declaration of Awards was presided by Mr. Gaurav Lalwani, Convenor SICTA 2023. The Best Witness and Second-Best Witness awards were bestowed upon Vikrant Dwivedi and Yug Sinha, respectively, both from SLS-P. The Best Student Advocate award was presented to Nilabhro Bhattacharya, RGNUL, Patiala. The Adv. Manan Sanghai Best Defence Advocate

Award (International) and Adv. Manan Sanghai Best Defence Advocate Award (India) were awarded to Sanskar Man Singh Basnyat, from Kathmandu University School of Law, Nepal, and Hashvi Bansal, from RGNUL, Patiala, respectively, in recognition of their exceptional advocacy prowess. In recognition of his excellent performance, Nilabhro Bhattacharya also received the Shree P.V. Ramanayya Memorial Best Prosecutor Award. Manas Mahajan, from NLU, Delhi, was bestowed with the Best Advocate Award (Finals). Furthermore, the School of Law, Christ (Deemed-to-be University), Bangalore, was recognized for its exceptional memorial and awarded the Best Memorial award. The University of Johannesburg was honored with the Best International Team award, highlighting its exceptional skills and performances. *The School of Law, Christ (Deemed-to-be University), Bangalore, was named the Second Runner Up, with Jindal Global School of Law being awarded First Runner Up and National Law University, Delhi, was declared the Winner of SICTA 2023.* The event served as a testament to the high level of talent and skill in the field of criminal trial advocacy.

The Valedictory Ceremony of SICTA 2023 ended on a successful note with the Vote of Thanks delivered by **Dr. Aparajita Mohanty, Deputy Director (Academics)**, Symbiosis Law School, Pune.



Final Rounds of SICTA 2023 with esteemed judges and participants



Attendees of Valedictory Ceremony with Prof. Dr. Shashikala Gurpur, Hon'ble Dr. Justice Pushendra Singh Bhati, Dr. Navi Pillay, Mr. Pubudu Sachithanandan, Dr. Aparajita Mohanty, SLS-P Faculty Members, Students and Participants.