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Interview to Adebayo Okeowo, a member of the Global Campus Visual Contest 2017

Interview to Adebayo Okeowo, Advocacy Coordinator at the Centre for Human Rights based in Pretoria, South Africa, an alumnus of the International Institute of Human Rights France, he holds an LLM from the University of Pretoria and is currently undergoing his LLD in International Criminal Law at the same institution. He is the founder of [White Code Centre](#), an organisation that creatively uses pictures, videos and multimedia tools to inspire social change and educate around issues of human rights; Adebayo Okeowo is a member of the jury of the Global Campus Visual Contest 2017.

With an expertise both in the area of law and in digital media, how important is in your experience the use of pictures, videos and media tools in human rights education?

Pictures and videos are a collective language we all understand. Not only can they break down the, sometimes, complex nature of human rights laws into very relatable forms, but they also have the power to evoke the right emotion and reaction from people. It's like bringing to life the written texts of a convention or law. Some of the atrocities our world has paid greatest attention to are the ones that had a picture or video showing the extent of violation. These images drive down the message and get people uncomfortable to the point of action and that is exactly what we need as a human rights community – to provoke people to take a stand against injustice. The field is changing and as human rights organisations we need to do less of press statements and more of visual advocacies.

As Board member of the Global Campus Alumni, one of the biggest professional networks on human rights composed of seven Alumni Associations of the Global Campus Master's programmes, what do you believe are today the main challenges to the work of human rights

activists?

There are a ton of challenges to the human rights agenda. However one which I believe to be quite critical is the threat to human rights defenders themselves, especially from suppressive governments. While human rights defenders go about protecting the rights of others, they are constantly at risk of arrests, torture, and even death. We can't afford to have human rights defenders living in fear because then we will suffer a serious setback to our pursuit of accountability for human rights violations.

You have been the winner of the first Global Campus photo contest in 2014 with the photo entitled “The Glue of Africa” and now you are a member of the Jury of the new GC Visual Contest 2017. What do you expect from this contest in terms of impact?

First of all, I consider it a privilege to have won the first edition of the GC Visual Contest. I can't forget the feeling of pride I had walking into the Monastery of San Nicolò in Lido, Italy and seeing my picture displayed on a life sized canvas. Now that I am part of the jury for this year's contest, I look forward to some riveting images. I expect to see images that creatively present a human rights issue – images that will spark conversations over dinner tables and trigger debates within the prestigious chambers of the UN. Yes it is possible!

You can follow the visual contest with the hashtag #GlobalCampusVisualContest on Facebook, Twitter, Google + and Instagram. Website: www.globalcampusvisualcontest.org