

Partners in Profile

Icesi University
Cali, Columbia

Dr. Vladimir Rouvinski (PhD) is an associate professor of International Relations and Director, Laboratory for Politics and International Relations (PoInt) at Icesi University in Cali, Colombia. Dr. Rouvinski studied at the Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation at Hiroshima University for his master's and Doctoral degrees in Peace Studies between 2001 and 2007. During that time, he collaborated on several occasions with the UNITAR Hiroshima Office as an associate. Originally from Russia, Dr. Rouvinski now resides in South America, actively working to strengthen the ties between Colombia and Japan. His partnership with GLH was established when he brought his students from Columbia to Hiroshima in 2012.



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What does the partnership with GLH and the connection with Hiroshima mean for you personally and professionally?

There is no better way to keep my connection with Hiroshima alive than that every day I walk past by a beautiful tree grown from an A-bomb survivor sapling from Hiroshima on Icesi campus. Being a GLH partner means a lot for me personally, since it allows me to be part of a group of people all around the world united by one goal: raising awareness of the disastrous consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. Professionally, as an international relations scholar, my links to GLH and Hiroshima have been helping me in defense of the view that International Relations as a discipline is responsible for contributing scientific knowledge to the decision makers so that we can avoid repeating a tragedy as the one that stroke Hiroshima during World War II.

What is your vision for the Hiroshima saplings on the campus of Icesi University?

Colombia is a country that has been suffering from one of the most durable internal armed conflicts in the world. There is not a single member of Icesi University's community that has not been affected by the conflict in one way or another. In this context, the presence of the Hiroshima camphor tree on campus sends an important message to our community: peace will prevail. There is no doubt that the desire of lasting peace is shared by both people of Cali and

people of Hiroshima, and a tree, which is growing taller and stronger all the time, is the best symbolic representation of this shared vision of the future that both cities seek.



What do you want your students and colleagues to learn from the GLH partnership and Hiroshima?

Although most of my students and colleagues are aware of what happened to Hiroshima in August 1945, the GLH partnership introduces an important symbolic connection with the city and serves as an invitation to think about the tragedy of Hiroshima from a perspective of the challenging contemporary international environment. At the same time, by learning about the GLH initiative, my students also have a unique opportunity to understand better the diversity of the ways to reach out to the international audience and promote ideas of peace and co-existence.

What attracted you to Hiroshima in the first place?

I had a chance to visit Hiroshima for the first time back in 1994, by the invitation of Japan-Russia Friendship Society. I fell in love with the city at first sight. I particularly enjoyed the feeling of openness and freshness because of the wide streets and many trees. Several years later, when I had to choose a place for my postgraduate studies, Hiroshima University turned out to be one of the options. My lasting memories of my first visit to Hiroshima contributed to the decision to study in Japan.

What memories do you have from your years studying at Hiroshima University?

I am thankful to Hiroshima University for providing me with an opportunity to take advantage of the best that Japan can offer to a foreign student: I had a true sensei who guided me through all of my years at the university, a wonderful international studying environment, and an extremely generous financial support. Last but not least, I learned not only from lectures in classrooms but also from practical experiences such as my internship with the UNITAR Hiroshima Office, facilitated by Hiroshima University. It opened new doors for me to a better understanding of the world of international politics and cooperation.

