

2023 Children's Rights Moot Court Competition winners

The student team from the University of Pretoria has won the Children's Rights Moot Court Competition 2023, a biannual multi-day international competition for law students with a keen interest in international children's rights, co-hosted by global law firm Baker McKenzie and Leiden Law School in the Netherlands.



Image source: Getty Images

All winners are as follows:

- Winner of the Children's Rights Moot Court Competition 2023 – University of Pretoria, South Africa
- Finalist team – Tashkent State University of Law, Uzbekistan
- Best Memorial for the Applicant – Moi University, Kenya
- Best Memorial for the Respondent – Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland
- Best Oral Argument for the Applicant – University of Pretoria, South Africa
- Best Oral Argument for the Respondent – Leiden University, Netherlands
- Best Oralist (based on the Preliminary Round score) – Mallar Mitra, West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences, India

The virtual final round of the event, which concluded on 28 June, provided student teams with an opportunity to develop skills to prepare themselves for an international legal career, while raising awareness about the importance of championing children's rights and adding to their knowledge about this complex area of law. The area intersects with other legal fields and relates to many societal challenges affecting children and their families across the globe.

Organised in collaboration with Leiden Law School, the case this year focused on children's rights amidst the accelerating impacts of climate change, including violations of children's rights regarding health, education and culture.

The overall winning team was from the University of Pretoria in South Africa. The Best Oralist award was given to Mallar Mitra from the West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences in India.



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In this fifth edition of the competition, 140 students and over 300 volunteers from all over the world gathered virtually for the final rounds. Thirty-six student teams from 19 countries participated in 364 hours of competition, spread over eight days.

Commenting on the conclusion of the Children's Rights Moot Court Competition, Baker McKenzie's global chair Milton Cheng said: "Baker McKenzie congratulates the winning students and all participants for their commitment to this important cause. With our lawyers and professionals supporting and coaching the students in their journey, this Children's Rights Moot Court Competition is always special for us as a firm, as we have seen it make a lasting impact to our communities and to children all over the world. Students from around the globe participate in this initiative with enthusiasm, dedication and talent in presenting their cases. We look forward to supporting more students and inspiring future lawyers to make their mark in the years to come."

Angela Vigil, Baker McKenzie's Partner and Executive Director of Pro Bono Practice added: "It is again a great privilege for Baker McKenzie to partner with Leiden Law School to bring the Children's Rights Moot Court Competition to life. We are so proud to provide an opportunity for law students, regardless of where they study across the globe, to delve into the rights of children. This year, the case looks at child rights and global warming, both issues that are extremely relevant and timely, challenging children around the globe. It also demonstrates the great need for outstanding lawyers to take up the cause of child rights in public interest careers or pro bono matters because the protecting the human rights of children requires zealous, creative, thoughtful and capable advocates across the world. Children's rights are human rights!"

Vice-Dean of Leiden Law School who holds the Unicef Chair in Children's Rights at Leiden University, Professor Dr Ton Liefwaard, said: "Together with Baker McKenzie, we're proud once again to be able to offer students a hands-on learning opportunity that will have a lasting impact for years to come. In this global competition, they've met their peers from all over the world and received support from professionals. With this year's case focusing on climate change, we wanted to bring this topical area of children's rights to the forefront. Above all, we were impressed by how each student managed to deal with complex legal concepts and produce compelling submissions. On behalf of Leiden Law School, we congratulate all students who participated in this edition and wish them the best as they become the lawyers of tomorrow."