



Mr Edwin Rekosh

Lecturer in Law, Columbia University

Founder, PILnet: The Global Network for Public Interest Law

Biography

Edwin Rekosh teaches human rights, law and development at Columbia Law School. He is the founder of PILnet and was its president and CEO until 2015. He continues to serve the organisation as an advisor as he works on a book addressing the closing space for civil society around the world.

The original inspiration for PILnet, which Rekosh established as a program of Columbia Law School in 1997, came from his work assisting the development of human rights groups in Romania and then elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe during the early 1990s as they sought to engage with their countries' newly emerging constitutional orders. Rekosh lived for a cumulative total of 10 years in Romania and Hungary and has assisted civil society organisations and law schools to develop public interest legal programs in China and over 30 other countries around the world. In addition, he has led global efforts to develop pro bono practice by law firms and corporations.

Rekosh also taught as a visiting professor at Central European University for four years. Prior to founding PILnet, he consulted for the Ford Foundation, worked for Global Rights in Washington, DC and Bucharest, practiced law at Coudert Brothers and co-founded the Human Rights Watch Film Festival.

Rekosh has written and spoken extensively about human rights, civil society, pro bono and the rule of law, and he received the American Bar Association's International Human Rights Award in 2009. He is a graduate of Cornell University and Columbia Law School.