

## PRESS RELEASE

### HeinOnline Introduces a New Legal Research Platform with the Release of **World Constitutions Illustrated**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**BUFFALO, NY, April 22, 2010** – HeinOnline, a product of William S. Hein & Co., Inc., recently released a new online legal research collection, **World Constitutions Illustrated: Contemporary & Historical Documents & Resources**. World Constitutions Illustrated introduces a new legal research platform by bringing together constitutional documents, books, articles, bibliographic references, and web sites all into one database.

#### **A Different Scope**

This platform presents a different scope than what is currently available for researchers studying constitutional law and political science. The initial release contains the current constitution for every country and substantial constitutional histories for the United Kingdom, France, Brazil, and Colombia. It also connects hundreds of other historical documents from other sources, presenting researchers with a historical view of a country's constitution. Ninety percent of the countries contain an English translation for the current constitution. The editors are currently working on preparing translations for the remaining ten percent. In addition to the constitutional documents, it includes more than 800 classic constitutional books from some of the greatest legal minds in history, including Aristotle, Karl Marx, Thomas Paine, and Woodrow Wilson.

With this new platform, researchers no longer have to visit multiple web sites or pull multiple sources to obtain the documentary history of the development of a country's constitution and government. Every country includes the current constitution in its original-language format, commentary about the constitutional development, reference books about the development of the government, direct links to specific chapters within classic constitutional books, links to scholarly articles that discuss the constitutional and political development of the country, links to online sources that directly relate to the constitution or the government, and a bibliography of other select constitutional works.

#### **A Modern Link to Legal History**

This platform bolsters one of HeinOnline's primary objectives. Jefri Ruchti, Lead Editor on the project, explains, "A guiding objective of the existing libraries in HeinOnline is to provide a modern approach to legal history. **World Constitutions Illustrated** is designed in that spirit, to preserve and present that heritage." He goes on to say, "Its ambition is to present a complete constitutional hierarchy for every country. The primary documentary history has a concurrent partner: the publishing history. This continuing sequence of editions, translations and commentaries has run for years, decades and even centuries after some of the subject documents themselves have lost their force."

**World Constitutions Illustrated** brings historical constitutional documents back to life in a digital form and presents them in an image-based PDF format to preserve their original form. The documents and books can be searched by a number of metadata points including the document date, promulgated date, document source, title or author. For researchers studying the current constitution, the search can be narrowed to include just the current documents that make up the

constitution for a country. Furthermore, a search can be generated across all the documents, classic books, or reference books for a specific country, or it can be more narrow in scope to include only a specific type of resource.

## **A Framework with a Vision**

When HeinOnline was unveiled to the legal research community ten years ago, it contained one library module, the Law Journal Library, that included twenty-five law and law related periodicals. At that time, HeinOnline reached out to the legal research community and partnered with libraries to build what is now the largest image-based collection of law and law related periodicals. In the past ten years, with the help of libraries and legal scholars, HeinOnline has grown to include more than 1,350 law journals and more than thirty other digital collections such as the Federal Register, CFR, United Nations Law Collection, and Treaties and Agreements Library. This success has created a new vision, and HeinOnline wants to partner with the legal scholar community again to build the world's greatest collection of constitutions and constitutional resources.

The initial release of **World Constitutions Illustrated** is only the framework for the project; it is in its infancy and will only grow. HeinOnline is seeking the help of the legal scholar community and asking scholars from all around the world to contribute to the project. With contributions from libraries, organizations, scholars, and constitutional law experts, HeinOnline's goal is to fill in the constitutional history by providing every constitutional document, commentary and supporting resource for every country. In less than two weeks since the release of the new platform, HeinOnline has had a number of contributions. Mr. John P. Zangwa, a lecturer from Zambia in Southern Africa has contributed to the project. Jootaek Lee, Reference Librarian and Assistant Professor at the University of Miami and Richard Albert, Assistant Professor at Boston College Law School are interested in becoming country editors. Another contribution included an English translation of a constitutional document, while a number of other suggestions for additional periodicals and links to articles were received from legal scholars. In addition to these contributions, the University at Buffalo, D'Angelo Law Library at University of Chicago, Robert S. Marx Law Library at University of Cincinnati, Law Library of Congress, Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Organization of American States (OAS), and Buffalo Erie County Public Library have all contributed. It is this type of collaboration that HeinOnline hopes to foster to continue building upon the framework of the project.

For more information about **World Constitutions Illustrated**, visit [www.heinonline.org](http://www.heinonline.org).

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**About HeinOnline** -- HeinOnline is a product of William S. Hein & Co., Inc. which has been serving the library community for nearly 90 years as a legal publisher, periodical subscription agent and the world's largest distributor of legal periodicals. HeinOnline is Hein's premier online product with more than 50 million pages of legal history available in an online, fully searchable, image-based format. The content includes legal journals, government documents, foreign and international law materials, legal classics, world trials and much more. All content is in PDF format, fully searchable and from inception. Now, in more than 3,200 locations in over 150 countries, HeinOnline is the world's largest image-based legal research collection and contains more than nine centuries of legal history.