

COMMUNICATION

China

1. On April 17, 2015, Wuhan University hosted the Forum on the Judiciary of Powers and Chinese International Civil Procedure Law Reform.
2. On April 14, 2015, the Premier of the PRC, Li Keqiang addressed the 54th Annual Session of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (“AALCO”), held in Beijing. He appealed for the enhancement of the international rule of law. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC and the Chinese Society of International Law also jointly held the international meeting on “the United Nations and the International Order in the Postwar” as a part of the AALCO annual session.
3. On April 7, 2015, an international workshop titled, “London v. Shanghai: the East-West Dialogue on the Rule of Law of International Financial Center” was conducted at the Shanghai Jiaotong University.
4. On December 7, 2014, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the PRC was authorized to release the Position Paper of the Government of the People’s Republic of China on the Matter of Jurisdiction in the South China Sea Arbitration Initiated by the Republic of the Philippines. This position paper systematically elaborated on the legal basis for China’s position, in that the Arbitration Tribunal has no jurisdiction in this case, and that China will stand by its principled position of neither accepting nor participating in the South China Sea arbitration, initiated unilaterally by the Philippines.
5. On November 22, 2014, the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Chinese Society of European Law was held at East China University of Political Science and Law. This meeting focused on the legal problems of the China-EU bilateral investment treaty negotiations,
6. On October 31, 2014, a research seminar, “International Law and the Use of Force: New Challenges” was conducted in Peking University.
7. On October 25, 2014, the workshop on the legal guarantee for the “One Belt and

One Road” strategy was held at the Northwest University of Political Science and Law.

Prof. Xiangqian Gong (Beijing Institute of Technology)

Japan

1. The 2015 Annual Conference of the International Law Association (“ILA”) – Japan branch was held at the University of Tokyo (Hongo Campus in Bunkyo city, Tokyo) on April 18, 2014. The focus the conference was “Law and Policy of Outer Space.” The 2016 Annual Conference will be held on April 23, 2016.
2. The 2015 Annual Conference of the Japanese Association of World Law was held at Doshisha University (Imadegawa Campus in Kyoto city, Kyoto) on May 16, 2015. The topic of the conference was “International Judgement and Dispute Settlement.”
3. The 118th Annual Conference of the Japanese Society of International Law (“JSIL”) will be held on September 18-20, 2015. The main topic of the conference is “70 years after the World War II and Changing International Law.”
4. On May 15, 2014, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo held a press conference upon receipt of a report from the Advisory Panel on the Reconstruction of the Legal Basis for Security, an advisory body to the Prime Minister. The conference was regarding the exercise of the right of collective self-defense, in that the Japanese Self-Defense Forces would use arms to counter an attack on an allied State. He said that the government would study the proposal further with a view to permitting it in a limited manner.

The report by the advisory panel noted that Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution “makes no mention of the right of self-defense or collective security.” The provision of the first clause of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution “should be interpreted as prohibiting the threat or the use of force as means of settling international disputes to which Japan is a party,” it said, and the provisions “should be interpreted as not ... imposing any constitutional restrictions on activities that are consistent with international law,” including participation in peace keeping

operations (“PKO”) and collective security measures taken by the United Nations. Further, the report positively evaluated the right of collective self-defense: “Enabling the exercise of the right of collective self-defense would strengthen relations with other trustworthy States and would lead to tactically diminishing the possibility of international disputes by enhancing deterrence.” It recommended that “the exercise of the right of collective self-defense should be permitted,” by interpreting “the minimum extent necessary” to include not only the right of individual self-defense, but also the right of collective self-defense.

5. The “Agreement between Japan and Australia for an Economic Partnership” came into effect on January 15, 2015.
6. “The Arms Trade Treaty” was signed on April 2, 2013. Its written acceptance was deposited on May 9, 2014 by the Government of Japan, and the treaty came into effect on December 24, 2014.
7. The “Convention between Japan and the United Arab Emirates for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income” was effectuated on December 24, 2014.
8. The “Protocol amending the Convention between Japan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital Gains” came into force on December 12, 2014.

Prof. Tsuruta Jun (National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies)

Korea

A. General

Korea, China and Japan held three-way talks on May 15, 2015 with a view to enhancing cooperation in counter-terrorism, cybersecurity and extremism. These talks were followed by the meeting on counter-terrorism between the foreign ministers of Korea, China and Japan on March 21 of this year for the trilateral consultation. These counter-terrorism talks commenced in 2012.

The new Korea-US Nuclear Agreement was signed on April 22, 2015 for nuclear-energy cooperation as well as nuclear research in Korea. This Agreement allows Korea to research a nascent area of nuclear-reprocessing technology known as 'pyroprocessing' that may eventually provide fuel for reactors.

B. The YIJUN Institute of International Law

On March 15, 2015, the new scholarly journal, CHINA AND WTO REVIEW was launched by the Institute. The first issue contains six papers, all on the focus of the Review.

Chairman Jay-kun Yoo met Mr. Donald Gregg, the former US Ambassador to Korea and Chairman emeritus of the Korea Society on May 19, 2015. He consulted with Ambassador Gregg on matters of international law and security around the Korean peninsula.

Mr. Tae-yong Shinn, senior advisor of the YIJUN Institute and Chairman of the Korea Importers Association ("KOIMA") organized the KOIMA delegation to visit Latin America accompanying President Park Geun-hye in April of 2015.

Dr. Il-yung Chung, senior advisor of the YIJUN Institute passed away on January 19, 2015.

C. KSIL

The Korean Society of International Law held a colloquium with Professor Donald Rothwell of the Australian National University on February 1, 2015.

D. KSIEL

The Korean Society of International Economic Law hosted the 2015 Conference on the Korea-China FTA on May 15, 2015.

E. International Law Association – Korean Branch

The International Law Association-Korean Branch held a conference titled, "Role of International Law for Peace and Prosperity of East Asia" on April 22, 2015.

F. Personal News

Professor Seryon Lee was appointed to hold an additional position as Dean at the

Faculty of International Studies at Chonbuk National University (“CBNU”), Korea. She is now the professor of International Law at the Law School of CBNU.

Professor Sun-young Oh was appointed as a new Korean correspondent of Journal of East Asia and International Law. She is an assistant professor in the Department of Global Commerce of Soongsil University.

Prof. Sun-young Oh (Soongsil University)

Singapore

A. *Society of International Law, Singapore – Transnational Dispute Resolution Committee*

1. The Society of International Law, Singapore (“SILS”) is an independent non-profit organisation established by Ambassador-at-large Tommy Koh and other legal luminaries with a shared interest in international law. Currently, SILS has partnerships with sister chapters in Korea and Taiwan and is based at the Singapore Management University (“SMU”). It is a node for international law research, writing and practice, and is dedicated to the study, practice and promotion of public and private international law in Singapore. Its members include judges, government and public service lawyers, practitioners, academics and students.
2. SILS members were instrumental in the establishment of the Asian Society of International Law (“Asian SIL”), which was established at the time of a growing number of people who recognised the need for adopting a Global South, Asian and Third World Approach to international law (“TWAIL”). Asian SIL continues to facilitate the networking and collaborative opportunities among international lawyers in Asia.¹ SILS is the national chapter for Asian SIL.
3. Moving forward, SILS intends to examine Singapore’s relationship with international dispute resolution. The field of transnational litigation, arbitration, and dispute resolution encompasses substantive and procedural aspects of public

¹ See generally Onuma Yasuaki, *The Asian Society of International Law: Its Birth and Significance*, 1 ASIAN J. INT’L L. 71-82 (2011).

and private transnational dispute resolution in a variety of institutional settings, ranging from national courts to *ad hoc* arbitral tribunals and permanent international courts and tribunals.

4. In this regard, SILS recently formed a “Transnational Dispute Resolution” committee (hereinafter the Committee), which is headed by Ms Charis Tan, Senior Associate with Eversheds LLP, Dr Gerardine Goh Escolar, the Legal Adviser to the President of the Iran-United States Claims Tribunal, and Ms. Foo Yuet Min, a Director with Drew & Napier LLC. Among other things, the Committee will explore ways of increasing awareness of public international law, its application to lawyers and non-lawyers alike.

5. SILS chose “Transnational Dispute Resolution” as the focus for its activities due to cross-border disputes becoming increasingly relevant in Singapore. In this vein, Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon has stated that public international law can no longer be considered a remote area of law and is now relevant to practitioners of private commercial law.² Singapore currently is home to world-class dispute resolution institutions for cross-border litigation, arbitration and mediation. In 2014, the Singapore International Mediation Centre was established to provide mediation services targeting needs of parties in cross-border disputes, particularly those based in Asia. This year, the Singapore International Commercial Court (“SICC”) was established, in connection with the growth of Singapore’s legal services sector, and the internationalisation and export of Singapore law.³ The SICC boasts an impressive list of international judges that will hear cross-border disputes.⁴ The Singapore International Arbitration Centre (“SIAC”) has become one of Asia’s premier centres for arbitration. Many of its cases are international in nature. SIAC’s panel of arbitrators are represent individuals who are experienced in cross-border arbitration and litigation disputes.

6. These developments, in tandem, with the country’s well-developed legal system

² Chief Justice Sundaresh Menon, *Lecture jointly organised by the International Council of Jurists and the University of Mumbai*, ¶ 26, available at <https://www.supremecourt.gov.sg/data/doc/ManagePage/4701/The%20Impact%20of%20Public%20International%20Law%20in%20the%20Commercial%20Sphere%20and%20Its%20Significance%20to%20Asia%20%28Final%29.pdf> (last viewed on May 8, 2015).

³ Ministry of Law (Singapore), *Report of the Singapore International Commercial Court Committee* (November 2013) ¶ 1, available at <https://www.mlaw.gov.sg/content/dam/minlaw/corp/News/Annex%20A%20-%20SICC%20Committee%20Report.pdf> (last visited on May 8, 2015).

⁴ For the complete list of judges, see Singapore International Commercial Court, Judges, available at <http://www.sicc.gov.sg/Judges.aspx?id=30> (last visited on May 8, 2015).

and strong infrastructure, places Singapore in pole position to be Asia's premier dispute resolution hub. SILS, through the Committee, aims to fuel interest in international law in Singapore; the Society promotes continued discussions that are pertinent to Singapore's changing legal landscape. With these initiatives, SILS hopes to continue to be a forum of excellence for international law in Singapore.

B. The International Law Association - Singapore Branch

7. The International Law Association ("ILA"), based in the UK, will set up a local branch later this year (hereinafter ILA-Singapore). Its secretariat will be based on the National University of Singapore's ("NUS") Faculty of Law. The founding committee of the ILA- Singapore comprises of academics, professionals, and members of the International Affairs Division ("IAD") of the Attorney-General's Chambers ("AGC"). The ILA provides a network of international law practitioners and scholars to whom students, alumni, faculty and associates of NUS and SMU can look to for career guidance and research collaboration.

8. The Strategic Objectives of the ILA (Singapore) are:

- (a) To promote international law;
- (b) To promote networking amongst practitioners and academia of international law; and
- (c) To provide a gateway to the global international law community.

9. Ten scholars and practitioners of public and private international law who are based in Singapore compose the pro tempore committee of the ILA (Singapore).⁵

10. SILS, as is the Centre for International Law ("CIL") at NUS, is involved in the establishment of the ILA (Singapore) and the coordination of international law-related events that will be held.

C. 2015 ILA - American Society of International Law Asia-Pacific Research Forum

11. Professor Walter Woon, Chairperson of SILS and the Deputy Chairperson of CIL

⁵ The list of scholars and practitioners are as follows: 1. Pang Khang Chau (IAD); 2. Daphne Hong (IAD); 3. Robert Charles Beckman (NUS/Centre for International Law); 4. John Christopher Thomas, QC (NUS/Centre for International Law); 5. Mahdev Mohan (SMU/SILS); 6. Loretta Malintoppi (Eversheds LLP); 7. Arun Balasubramaniam (Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP); 8. Paul Tan (Rajah & Tann); 9. Jaikanth Shankar (Drew & Napier LLP); and 10. Kelly Forbes (ILA Australia).

at NUS, spoke at a plenary session “Transnational Legal Order and the Asia Pacific.” Assistant Professor Mahdev Mohan from SMU, the Executive Director of SILS spoke at a panel titled, “International Economic Law: Trade and Investment.” He spoke about the recent award in *Hesham T.M. Al-Warraq v Republic of Indonesia*. Assistant Professor Pasha Hsieh, from SMU and a member of SILS addressed at the panel titled, “International Economic Law: Asian FTAs” covering trade agreements in the context of the ASEAN Economic Community. Finally, Professor Robert Beckman, who is the Director of CIL at NUS spoke at a panel titled, “Law of the Sea: South China Sea” and touched upon the pending arbitration case of *The Republic of the Philippines v The People’s Republic of China*, relating to the dispute between the two states in the South China Sea.

D. Conclusion

12. Going forward, SILS hopes to distinguish itself in the field of transnational dispute resolution, and to work closely with the ILA, CIL, Asia SIL and its sister international law societies.

Jaya Anil Kumar* & Chong Hui Ying**

Taiwan

1. The 2015 ILA-American Society of International Law (“ASIL”) Asia-Pacific Research Forum held on May 25-26, 2015 at the Regent Taipei Hotel in Taiwan.
2. The theme of the Research Forum is “Integrating the Asia-Pacific: Why International Law Matters?” The Research Forum will provide a chance for academics, practitioners, and policy-makers to examine a wide range of international and transnational law issues confronting the Asia-Pacific. The full programme and list of speakers may be available at: <http://csil.org.tw/2015-research-forum/files/Tentative-Program-0401.pdf>
3. The Research Forum is organized by the Chinese (Taiwan) Society of International

* Fellow, Singapore Management University Asian Business and Rule of Law Initiative.

** Hon. Secretary of SILS. We would like to thank Ms. Charis Tan and Dr. Gerardine Goh Escolar for their valuable comments.

Law, which is the Taiwan Branch of the ILA, in partnership with the ILA, the ASIL Law in the Pacific Rim Region Interest Group and the Research Center for International Legal Studies, National Chengchi University.

Prof. Michael Sheng-ti Gau (National Taiwan Ocean University)