

PRESS RELEASE

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NUS Law Students Win Third International Mooting Competition in 2001

NUS law students have kept up the University's excellent track record in international moot competition. Their latest victory was in the Second International Maritime Arbitration Moot Competition, which was held in Hong Kong from 22 to 28 June.

The International Maritime Moot Competition is organised by the Centre for Maritime Law and the Australian Institute of Foreign and Comparative Law of the University of Queensland. NUS were also champions in the inaugural competition, which was held at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia in July 2000. The 2001 Competition was co-organised and hosted by the Faculty of Law of the University of Hong Kong.

The 2001 NUS team comprised four final year students (Mark Christopher Koh, Loh Wai Yue, Teo Ke-wei and Walter Thevathasan) and one third-year student (Martin Ng). In addition to winning the top prize, one of the NUS speakers, Loh Wai Yue, was named the Best Oralist in the Final Round of the Competition. Loh Wai Yue was also a member of the NUS team which won the inaugural competition in 2000.

The International Maritime Law Arbitration Moot Competition is based on a complex commercial dispute between two companies that arises out of the carriage of goods by sea. The 2001 problem involved issues of contract law, tort law, commercial arbitration, conflict of laws and shipping law. The Problem in the 2001 Competition was distributed to participating teams on 15 January 2001. The NUS team began working on the problem in January, and they submitted a written memorandum for the Claimant Company in March, 2001. After completing their examinations in mid-April the NUS team then began preparing for the Oral Hearings in Hong Kong.

In the Oral Hearings, each team of two speakers has 30 minutes in which to present oral arguments to a three-member panel of arbitrators. During the Oral Hearing in Hong Kong, the arbitration panels comprised maritime lawyers, retired judges, professional arbitrators and legal academics. Each team had four Preliminary Rounds over three days, two on behalf of the Claimant, and two on behalf of the Respondent. The top four teams at the end of the four Preliminary Rounds proceeded to the Semi-Final Rounds. The top two teams then proceeded to the Final Round.

Six teams took part in the 2001 Competition in Hong Kong - three from Australia and one each from Hong Kong, India and Singapore. In the Semi-Final Rounds, the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) defeated the National Law School of India, and the National University of Singapore (NUS) defeated the University of Queensland.

The Final Round between NUS and UTS was held in the High Court on 27 June 2001. The arbitral panel comprised Mr. A Salter, a leading Australian maritime lawyer from Melbourne; Mr. P Yang, a professional arbitrator from Hong Kong, and Mr. J Lister, the director of a marine insurance company (P & I Club) in Hong Kong.

The Third International Maritime Arbitration Moot Competition will be held at the University of Queensland, Brisbane in July 2002. The organisers from the University of Queensland have requested that the Faculty of Law of the University of Singapore host the Fourth Competition in July 2003.

NUS law students have won two other international moot competition in 2001. In March they won the Asia-Pacific Regional Round of the Manfred Lachs Space Law Moot Court Competition, and in April they became the first school to win the Philip C Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition for the fourth time. Associate Professor Robert Beckman served as the coach of all three teams.

Please find at [Annex A](#), comments and quotes from the team members.

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Walter Thevathasan:

"I think that I came out of the competition all the more richer because of the experience. This was not just the experience of mooting at an international level in Hong Kong, but also the experience that I had during the preparations in Singapore. Ultimately, I realized that the only way we could get the best out of this exercise was to work, not as individuals, but closely as a team. Each of us had a distinct role to play and each member's contribution was crucial. Not only did we become good friends amongst ourselves, we also developed many precious friendships with the members of other teams who were competing with us in Hong Kong."

Ian Teo Ke-Wei:

"It was a high honour to represent the University in an international moot competition. The opportunity to interact and exchange with law students and legal practitioners from different jurisdictions was indeed enriching. As the defending champion, there was some pressure and expectations to deliver again. However, with excellent teamwork and great coaching from Professor Beckman, we were able to bring back the trophy once again."

Martin Ng:

"Mooting in Hong Kong was an exhilarating experience. I learnt a lot and I forged lasting friendships. I certainly hope that more law students can be exposed to such invaluable learning."

Mark Christopher Koh:

"Speakers, Thinkers, Coach. We all did our part and brought back the Cup."

Loh Wai Yue:

"Having represented the University in last year's inaugural competition in Brisbane, I had thought that the experience in Hong Kong would be somewhat similar. However, the standard of this year's competition was much higher, both in terms of the quality of the advocates we met, as well as the complexity of the moot problem. It was an arduous fight to win the competition for the second time, and I must credit our success to teamwork and the guidance of our Vice-Dean and Coach, Associate Professor Beckman. More importantly, the exposure to the very bright legal minds from foreign jurisdictions was an invaluable experience."