

FACULTY ANNOUNCEMENT

23 May 2008

The Fifth ASLI Conference returns to its roots in Singapore

The 5th Asian Law Institute (ASLI) Conference, set in the sprawling Campus at Bukit Timah amid the tropical vegetation of the Singapore Botanic Gardens, was held on 22 & 23 May 2008. The conference was in a sense a return to ASLI's roots, given that NUS was the venue for the Inauguration of ASLI in 2003 and its first Conference in 2004. ASLI has since gone from strength to strength in achieving its aims to facilitate academic exchanges as well as research and teaching collaborations among law schools in Asia.

The conference attracted about 210 academics and experts on Asian Law from 21 countries. Over the two days, 150 papers were presented at panel sessions covering areas such as Human Rights, Constitutional & Administrative Law, Corporate Law & Governance, International Business Law, Legal Pluralism, Environmental Law, Competition Law, Intellectual Property Rights, International Law and Criminal Law.

The conference was opened by Professor Tan Cheng Han'87, SC, Dean of the Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore. This was followed by a welcome address from Professor Johannes Chan, Chairman of the ASLI Board of Governors, and Dean of the Faculty of Law, University of Hong Kong. The Director of the Asian Law Institute, Associate Professor Gary F. Bell, Director of ASLI since its inception in 2003, made his farewell speech, and introduced his successor, Associate Professor Kumaralingam Amirthalingam.

The second Open Forum for New ASLI members was held during the lunch break on the first day of the conference. Dean Johannes Chan welcomed the five new members who had joined ASLI since the last conference. Associate Professor Bell also welcomed the new members warmly. He then informed members of some of the decisions made at this year's Board of Governors' meeting, which had immediately preceded the conference, and Associate Professor Kumaralingam Amirthalingam informed the meeting of some proposals for ASLI's future development.

The Opening Dinner at the end of the first day of the conference was held at *The Legends Fort Canning Park*. Rich in history, the colonial edifice housed the British Far East Command Centre in World War II. The western sit-down dinner, set in the grounds under a marquee, offered participants a panoramic view of the surrounding greenery and cityscape. The event was graced by the Solicitor-General of Singapore, Mrs Koh Juat Jong'88, the Guest-of-Honour for that evening, who gave a speech on the growth and importance of ASLI, which she observed was also a reflection of the remarkable growth and increasing importance of Asia and the need to understand transnational legal norms and traditions. Such understanding is indispensable for the efficient growth of our economies and enterprises. The participants also enjoyed cultural performances by the NUS Ilsa Tari and NUS Chinese Orchestra.

At the closing ceremony on the last day of the conference, Associate Professor Kumaralingam Amirthalingam, the incoming Director, gave an introductory speech about his proposals for the future development of ASLI. Thereafter, Professor Johannes Chan presented a video clip of The University of Hong Kong - the next ASLI Conference venue - to give the participants a taste of what to expect in Hong Kong.

The conference ended with an optional sunset dinner cruise on board a replica of the famous Ming Dynasty imperial vessel, *Cheng Ho*. Participants enjoyed a view of Singapore's city skyline while unwinding from the eventful conference.

The next ASLI conference will be hosted by the Faculty of Law, University of Hong Kong. It will be held on Thursday and Friday, 21st and 22nd May 2009.

ASLI Board of Governors



First row from left to right: Prof Dr Liu Xiaohong, Dr Ann Black, Assoc Prof Gary F. Bell, Dean Tan Cheng Han, Prof Ago Shin-ichi, Dean Chan Man Mun, Johannes, Dean Cheong May Fong, Dean Zaleha Kamarudin, Assoc Prof Margaret A Fordham, Assoc Prof Kumaralingam Amirthalingam.

Second row from left to right: Dr Chase Li Chengming, Assoc Prof Alan Tan Khee Jin, Assoc Prof Zhang Zhiyong (representing Dean Zhu Suli), Dean Moon Hyuck Ho, Assoc Prof Hwa-Jin Kim, Dean Tithiphan Chuerboonchai, Prof Kent Anderson, Dean Ming-Cheng Tsai, Assoc Prof Andrew Jen-Guang Lin, Dean Marvic M.V.F. Leonen, Prof V. Vijayakumar, Dean Hikmahanto Juwana.