



PRESS RELEASE

NUS Law establishes new Centre for Asian Legal Studies

Singapore, Wednesday, 8 February 2012 -- The National University of Singapore (NUS) Faculty of Law has established a major new centre that will be a leading forum for research on Asian law. The Centre for Asian Legal Studies (CALS) is headed by Professor Andrew Harding, who joined NUS Law's permanent faculty last month.

The decision to launch the Centre is part of a strategy to position NUS Law as Asia's Global Law School. Legal developments in Asia are now of critical importance to Singapore and to the entire world.

"The Centre for Asian Legal Studies establishes NUS Law as a global centre of excellence for the study of law in Asia," said NUS Law Dean Professor Simon Chesterman. "Andrew Harding is a renowned scholar in the field who has made major contributions in Asian and comparative legal studies, as well as law and development. Together with other NUS Law faculty working in the field and our network of partners, I am confident that he will move the focus of Asian legal studies as a discipline from Europe and North America to Singapore."

The new Centre is the first of its kind to be established in Asia. It builds on NUS Law's collaborations with other law schools around the region as part of the Asian Law Institute (ASLI). This network has brought 86 visiting fellows from partner universities to NUS and organised successful annual conferences since 2004. The next conference will take place at NUS beginning on 31 May 2012 and is expected to draw around 200 delegates from more than 20 countries.

CALS will focus on cutting edge Asian law research, publications, and events. It will concentrate in particular on justice and law reform issues across Asia, seeking to foreground Asian perspectives on these issues.

In recent years, NUS Law has hired an outstanding group of younger scholars specializing on East, South, and South-East Asia. This new Centre offers the chance to capitalize on those developments and provide a critical mass for comparative work.

The Director of CALS, Professor Andrew Harding began his academic career at NUS Law, before moving on to SOAS, University of London, where he was appointed Head of the Law School, and latterly the University of Victoria in Canada, where he was Director of the Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives and Chair in Asia-Pacific Legal Relations.

“The recent opening up of Myanmar/Burma highlights the importance of the research CALS will be doing,” said Professor Harding. “NUS Law has an unrivalled cluster of scholars with relevant expertise. Having CALS as a focal point will enable us to understand the role of law in such developments — and perhaps have an influence on the role law plays in shaping the country’s future.”

CALS will play a role in developing legal scholarship in the region. It will build on NUS Law’s capacity-building work in areas such as Aceh, Indonesia, as well as offering regional scholars to spend time in Singapore to research, teach, and participate in conferences.

The Centre will also attract top students and researchers from around the world. But it is also likely to be of interest to practitioners, government, and the media for its expertise on country-specific and regional trends.

For media enquiries, please contact:

Travis LEE (Mr)
Manager, Media Relations
Office of Corporate Relations
National University of Singapore
DID: (65) 6516 6391
HP: (65) 9457 4350
Email: travislee@nus.edu.sg

KANG Bee Hua (Ms)
Associate Director
Faculty of Law
National University of Singapore
DID: (65) 6601 2114
HP: (65) 9674 1062
Email: lawkbh@nus.edu.sg

About National University of Singapore (NUS)

A leading global university centred in Asia, the National University of Singapore (NUS) is Singapore’s flagship university which offers a global approach to education and research, with a focus on Asian perspectives and expertise.

NUS has 16 faculties and schools across three campuses. Its transformative education includes a broad-based curriculum underscored by multi-disciplinary courses and cross-faculty enrichment. Over 36,000 students from 100 countries enrich the community with their diverse social and cultural perspectives.

NUS has three Research Centres of Excellence (RCE) and 21 university-level research institutes and centres. It is also a partner in Singapore’s 5th RCE. NUS shares a close affiliation with 16 national-level research institutes and centres. Research activities are strategic and robust, and NUS is well-known for its research strengths in engineering, life sciences and biomedicine, social sciences and natural sciences. It also strives to create a supportive and innovative environment to promote creative enterprise within its community.

For more information, please visit www.nus.edu.sg

About the NUS Law School

NUS Law is Asia's Global Law School. Widely regarded as the region's leading law school, it nonetheless sees itself as part of a global conversation about the study and practice of law. Its diverse faculty includes 60 full-time academics together with many adjuncts and visitors; its 1,200 undergraduate and postgraduate students include some of Singapore's top school leavers as well as outstanding scholars from all over the globe.

In addition to its teaching programme, the faculty is a major source of research on legal issues affecting Singapore, the region and beyond. NUS Law produces the leading publication on Singapore law as well as the Asian Journal of Comparative Law and the Asian Journal of International Law. Faculty regularly publish in these and other leading journals, as well as producing their own monographs and engaging with the public through mass media.

The Law School's alumni are a who's who of Singapore's legal community. Graduates include leaders in the profession, government ministers, Supreme Court judges, ambassadors, community leaders, social workers and many more. Other alumni go on to careers that take them to the heights of the profession around the world.

For more information, please visit www.law.nus.edu.sg