**SYNOPSIS**

On November 3, 2014, the Prevention of Human Trafficking Act was passed into law by Singapore’s Parliament. The Act was the culmination of a series of responses that the Singapore government took to combat trafficking in persons. In 2010, the government established the Singapore Inter-Agency Taskforce on Trafficking in Persons, with the express aim of implementing holistic, coordinated strategies to combat TIP, based on the four “P”s: Prevention, Prosecution, Protection, and Partnership. The establishment of the Taskforce was partly in response to the 2010 U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report (“TIP Report”), which downgraded Singapore from a “Tier 2” country to “Tier 2 Watch List” country—a group which included Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Chad, China, and Syria. Singapore has since regained its “Tier 2” status, but remains behind “Tier 1” countries like the Canada, Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Taiwan, and the U.S. In particular, the 2014 TIP Report notes that:

> Singapore is a destination country for men, women, and girls from [various Asian countries] subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor, and a transit country for Cambodian and Filipino men subjected to forced labor on fishing vessels that stop at ports in Singapore... The Government of Singapore does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so... [The government] developed an improved mechanism for case referral among government, civil society, and foreign embassies. However, it continued to face difficulties in identifying and building evidence in cases.

According to its proponents, the new Act provides a comprehensive approach to the problem of human trafficking: it adopts a definition of trafficking based largely on the UN Palermo Protocol; it outlines specific and often heightened punishments for both perpetrators and abettors; it provides the police with expanded enforcement authority; and it contains special provisions addressing victim protection and assistance. But are these provisions good enough? Are there gaps which remain? How do the provisions compare with legislation and developments in other jurisdictions?

In this roundtable discussion, various aspects of the new law will be examined: Jaclyn Neo will compare the act against international standards of prevention of trafficking and Singapore’s obligations under international law; Kumaralingam Amirthalingam will evaluate how the act’s aim of deterring and punishing traffickers comports with the scope of its penal provisions and its special provisions relating to enforcement and prosecution; Sheila Hayre will examine the twin aims of criminal prosecution and victim protection and offer a comparative look at how the legislation may play out in practice; and Jolovan Wham will examine the inadequacy of the act’s victim support and welfare provisions and how the public feedback process shaped them.

All the speakers are members of the Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore, with the exception of Jolovan Wham who is Executive Director of HOME (Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics), a non-governmental organization in Singapore known for its work in promoting the well-being and empowerment of migrant workers.

**SPEAKERS**

Assistant Professor Jaclyn Neo  
Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore

Professor Kumaralingam Amirthalingam  
Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore

Senior Lecturer Sheila N. Hayre  
Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore

Mr Jolovan Wham  
Executive Director, HOME

**REGISTRATION**

There is no registration fee for this seminar but seats are limited. To register, please [click here](http://law.nus.edu.sg/about_us/location.html) and you will receive an automated message upon submission. For enquiries, please contact Alexandria at Tel: 6601 2693 or email us at clemail@nus.edu.sg.

Registration will commence at 1pm and the seminar will commence at 1.30pm.

**Closing date:** 14 January 2015, Wednesday