

AUKUS and Nuclear-Powered Submarines: Exposing Weakness in the International Legal Framework on Nuclear Security

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Chairperson: Ms Nivedita S, Centre for International Law, NUS

DATE, TIME & VENUE

Thursday, 12 October 2023
1.15pm to 2.15pm
NUS Law (Bukit Timah Campus), Federal Bartholomew Conference Room (FED-01-02)

ABSTRACT

In 2023, the plan for Australia to acquire nuclear-powered submarines under the Australia-UK-US (AUKUS) trilateral security partnership looks to be going ahead. The notion that a non-nuclear weapon state like Australia will have nuclear powered vessels in its navy gives rise to a raft of legal and political issues relating to nuclear non-proliferation. By examining relevant international law relating to nuclear weapons and nuclear energy, this paper explores the legal status of nuclear-powered submarines and critiques the implications of AUKUS for nuclear non-proliferation. There are significant gaps and other weaknesses in the nuclear non-proliferation legal regime that will allow Australia to acquire nuclear-powered submarines despite the danger this poses for global security. The paper engages with the idea that the nuclear-related international legal regime is flawed by design. This regime gives maximum flexibility to states to exploit loopholes and broad provisions that actively undermine the non-proliferation objective. The paper explores whether and how international law could be strengthened to prevent the normalization of nuclear-propulsion in military activities and attendant non-proliferation dangers.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER



Monique Cormier is a Senior Lecturer at Monash University Faculty of Law (Melbourne) where she teaches Criminal Law and International Law. Her primary research interests include jurisdiction and immunities in international criminal law and legal issues relating to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Her monograph *The Jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court over Nationals of Non-States Parties* was published by Cambridge University Press in 2020. In addition to her academic scholarship, Monique undertakes legal advisory work on nuclear non-proliferation issues for the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, the Australian Red Cross and the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability.

Monique has a PhD from the University of Melbourne, a Master of Laws from Columbia University, and undergraduate degrees from the University of Adelaide. Monique is Treasurer of the Australian and New Zealand Society of International Law, and a member of the Board of Experts for the Asia Pacific Journal of International Humanitarian Law.

REGISTRATION



There is no registration fee for this seminar, but seats are limited. Refreshments will be provided on a first-come-first-served basis.

Visit <http://bit.ly/3sXCL0G> or scan the QR Code to register by Monday 9 October 2023, 12.00pm
For enquiries, please contact the ASLI Secretariat at asli@nus.edu.sg