

## **7TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE ASIAN SOCIETY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW**

From Aug. 22-23 2019, the 7th Biennial Conference of the Asian Society of International Law (“AsianSIL”) was held in Novotel Manila Araneta Center in Cubao, Quezon City. With the theme “Rethinking International Law: Finding Common Solutions to Contemporary Civilizational Issues from an Asian Perspective,” the conference brought together more than 400 delegates from around the world, including foreign ministers, judges, policy-makers, lawyers, researchers, public servants, members of the academe, and students.

AsianSIL is comprised of regional chapters and national societies in Asia which include the Philippine Society of International Law (“PSIL”). In line with its goal of fostering and encouraging Asian perspectives of international law and promoting awareness of and respect for international law in Asia, AsianSIL serves as a forum for scholars and practitioners to promote research, education, and practice of international law. The Biennial Conference is one such way the goal of the institution is achieved. Major conferences are organized every two years, with the 6th Biennial Conference taking place in Seoul, South Korea in 2017.

The main conference was preceded by a Junior Scholars Conference (“JSC”) that took place on Aug. 21, 2019, in the University of the Philippines College of Law. The JSC featured over 75 junior academics, academic fellows, post-doctoral fellows, and graduate students, who presented their papers on the same topics included in the parallel sessions of the main conference. The scholars were further guided by the main conference theme, “Rethinking International Law: Finding Common Solutions to Contemporary Civilizational Issues from an Asian Perspective.” Notable senior academics and international law practitioners were also in attendance to moderate the sessions, with a keynote speech delivered by Professor Jean Allain, the Associate Dean for Research of the Monash University Faculty of Law.

The two-day global conference included an opening session, over 30 plenary and parallel sessions addressing a wide range of topics in international law, and a closing session.

International Court of Justice (“ICJ”) Judge Iwasawa Yuji delivered the keynote address during the opening ceremony. Department of Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin, Jr., Supreme Court Justice Francis Jardeleza, then

AsianSIL President Harry Roque, and PSIL President Prof. Elizabeth Aguilino-Pangalangan also delivered remarks to welcome the delegates.

Various panel sessions were then conducted to discuss the papers of participants on a broad range of topics, including: International Law and Domestic Courts in Asia; International Law Aspects of Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Judgments in Asia; ASEAN Integration and International Law; Corporations and Human Rights in Asia; Trans-boundary and other Environmental Harms and International Law in Asia; and Challenges to Women and Gender in International Law.

A special panel session was also held in honor of Justice Florentino Feliciano on the spirit of international legal scholarship and judicial theory. Speakers during this panel included retired ICJ Judge Hisashi Owada, Judge Jin-Hyun Paik of the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea, Judge Raul Pangalangan of the International Criminal Court, and retired Ambassador Lilia Bautista. Moreover, the conference also served as the launch of the UP Law Center Publication “Treaties: Guidance on Practices and Procedures” which was the result of the collaborative efforts of Department of Foreign Affairs Undersecretary J. Eduardo Malaya and UP Institute of International Legal Studies Director Prof. Rommel J. Casis. The conference also served as the venue for the 7th AsianSIL General Meeting and the 21st AsianSIL Executive Council Meeting, which were events exclusive to AsianSIL members.

After the plenary and panel sessions, a closing dinner and fellowship night marked the end of the Biennial Conference. The dinner included performances sponsored by the Tourism Promotions Board of the Philippines as a means of showcasing Philippine culture to the delegates. Members of the Philippine planning committee were also recognized, namely: Dean Merlin Magallona, Prof. Upendra Dev Acharya, Prof. Elizabeth Aguilino-Pangalangan, Undersecretary J. Eduardo Malaya, Prof. Concepcion Jardeleza, Atty. Romel Bagares, Prof. Rommel Casis, Atty. Maricel Seno, Atty. Melissa Anne Telan, and Atty. Modesta Chungalao.

All in all, the conference was a recognition of the invaluable role the Asian region plays in shaping international law. It also presented the opportunity for delegates from diverse backgrounds to come together in pursuit of common solutions to common issues through a deeper understanding and appreciation of international law.

## 7<sup>TH</sup> BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE ASIANSIL PHOTOS



Kick-off ceremony of the 7th Biennial Conference of the Asian Society of International Law (AsianSIL) at the Department of Foreign Affairs in Pasay City. In the photo are: (L-R) Foreign Affairs Assistant Secretary for Treaties and Legal Affairs Secretary J. Eduardo Malaya, Philippine Yearbook of International Law Associate Editor Rommel Casis, Supreme Court Associate Justice Mario Victor Leonen, Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro L. Locsin Jr., AsianSIL President Harry Roque, Philippine Yearbook of International Law Editor-in-Chief Merlin Magallona, Philippine Society of International Law President Elizabeth Aguilung-Pangalangan, and Papal Nuncio and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps Gabriele Caccia.



International Court of Justice Judge Iwasawa Yuji delivering the Keynote Address at the 7th Biennial Conference of the Asian Society of International Law (AsianSIL).



Opening Ceremony of the 7th Biennial Conference of the Asian Society of International Law (AsianSIL). In the photo are: (L-R): Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro L. Locsin Jr., Philippine Society of International Law President Elizabeth Aguilin-Pangalangan, International Court of Justice Judge Iwasawa, Supreme Court Associate Justice Francis Jardeleza, AsianSIL President Harry Roque.



First Plenary Session of the 7th Biennial Conference of the Asian Society of International Law (AsianSIL). In the photo are: (L-R) AsianSIL President Harry Roque, Professor B. S. Chimini, Professor Kawano Mariko, Professor Congyan Cai, Professor Carsten Stahn, Professor Ago Shin-Ichi.



7th Biennial Conference of the Asian Society of International Law (AsianSIL). In the photo are: (L-R) Foreign Affairs Assistant Secretary for Treaties and Legal Affairs Secretary J. Eduardo Malaya, Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) Secretary-General Dr. Kennedy Gastorn, Secretary General of the Hague Conference on Private International Law Christophe Bernasconi, Philippine Society of International Law President Elizabeth Aguilin-Pangalangan, International Criminal Court Judge Raul C. Pangalangan, International Court of Justice Judge Iwasawa, Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro L. Locsin Jr, International Court of Justice Judge President Judge (Ret.) Hisashi Owada, AsianSIL President Harry Roque, Supreme Court Associate Justice Francis Jardeleza, International Criminal Court Judge Chang-Ho Chung, Supreme Court Associate Justice Ramon Paul Hernando.



Junior Scholars Conference ("Rethinking International Law: Finding Common Solutions to Contemporary Civilizational Issues from an Asian Perspective") that preceded the 7th Biennial Conference of the Asian Society of International Law.