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ANZSIL Zoom Keynote Lecture Series

We are pleased to present the ANZSIL Zoom Keynote Lecture Series featuring six ANZSIL members across five lectures during the week commencing 29th June at 1pm AEST/ 3pm New Zealand time. Our speakers will share their research and current thinking on contemporary issues with ANZSIL members wherever they are located.

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| 29 June | Professor Steven Freeland  Western Sydney University | *The Geopolitics of Outer Space and International Law: Square Peg in a Round Hole?’* |
| 30 June | Associate Professor Treasa Dunworth, University of Auckland | *International Law on Biological Weapons: Fit for Purpose?* |
| 1 July | Professor Tim Stephens  University of Sydney | *Transboundary harm and the Pandemic – Lessons from state responsibility and international environmental law* |
| 2 July | Professor Chester Brown  University of Sydney | *An international fact-finding commission of inquiry into COVID-19?* |
| 3 July | Victoria Hallum, International Legal Adviser, Divisional Manager, Legal Division  New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade| Manatū Aorere  New Zealand  Sue Robertson, First Assistant Secretary, Office of International Law, International Division  Attorney-General's Department, Australia | *International Law in the time of COVID* |

Abstracts, bios and zoom details are provided overleaf. Please note, you require a password to access the lecture. The password is noted in the zoom details. If you require additional log-in details (such as via a mobile phone) please contact me directly ([karen.scott@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:karen.scott@canterbury.ac.nz)).

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| 29 June | Professor Steven Freeland  Western Sydney University | *The Geopolitics of Outer Space and International Law: Square Peg in a Round Hole?’* |

*Abstract*

We stand at the forefront of quite remarkable technological developments that have the potential to make this coming decade a turning point as regards humankind’s activities in space. Coupled with this, the challenges associated with the increasing proliferation of space debris raise an imperative for us to alter the current ‘business as usual’ model, in an attempt to address the risk of a ‘tragedy of the commons’ scenario in space. The myriad challenges and opportunities of space call for a more collective and cooperative approach to applying and further developing the international framework to manage (and prioritise) our future activities in space. Despite obvious ‘terrestrial’ tensions and geopolitical differences, the major space faring States generally have very significant common interests in maintaining a stable space environment. The decisions that we take now about whether, and how, to cooperate and reach some form of international understanding on the forthcoming ‘big’ space issues, rather than tending towards viewing space in a binary fashion, will determine how we move forward as a humanity. This lecture will address the role of the international legal framework – complemented by national space law specific to each country’s unique requirements – in emphasizing the common interests of all space faring (and other) States in acting in a manner that supports the safety, security and sustainability of space, rather than reinforcing the multi-polar stances that are seen in the current geopolitical context.

*Bio*

Steven Freeland is Professor of International Law at Western Sydney University, specialising in Commercial Space Law, and previously the Dean of the School of Law. He also holds Visiting or Adjunct positions at Universities/Institutes in Copenhagen, Vienna, Toulouse, Hong Kong, Montreal, Kuala Lumpur and London and is a Member of the Advisory Group of the Australian Space Agency. He has been an advisor to the Australian, New Zealand, Norwegian and several other Governments on issues relating to national space legislative frameworks and policy and has represented the Australian Government at COPUOS meetings. He has been appointed by COPUOS to co-chair multilateral discussions on the exploration, exploitation and utilisation of space resources at the forthcoming meeting of the COPUOS Legal Subcommittee. He is a Director of the International Institute of Space Law (IISL), and a Member of the Space Law Committees of both the International Bar Association (IBA) and International Law Association (ILA).

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| 30 June | Associate Professor Treasa Dunworth, University of Auckland | *International Law on Biological Weapons: Fit for Purpose?* |

*Abstract*

The scale and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is demonstrating how vulnerable our communities are to outbreaks of contagious disease and we are seeing first-hand the way in which disease can wreak social and economic havoc. It is for these reasons that, for at least a century, international law has prohibited the use of disease as a weapon of war. In my presentation I explore whether existing international law for dealing with hostile uses of biological agents (that is, biological weapons) is fit for purpose and in particular I consider the implications of the way in which such hostile use has been traditionally framed as a security, rather than a public health, issue.

*Bio*

Dr Treasa Dunworth is an Associate Professor in Law with the University of Auckland, where she teaches a range of public international law related courses, including a course devoted exclusively to disarmament law. In 2017, Treasa joined the delegation of United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) at the negotiations for a Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty. She has recently published *Humanitarian Disarmament: An Historical Enquiry* with Cambridge University Press.

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| 1 July | Professor Tim Stephens  University of Sydney | *Transboundary harm and the Pandemic – Lessons from state responsibility and international environmental law* |

*Abstract*

Although the precise circumstances surrounding the origins of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic remain unclear, we do know that it originated in the territory of China and thereafter was rapidly spread to other states. There is growing speculation as to whether this situation may give rise to an international claim by affected states. Do norms of state responsibility, especially as elaborated in international environmental law, provide any basis for such a claim?

*Bio*

Tim Stephens is Professor of International Law at the University of Sydney Law School and a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law. He is the immediate past President of ANZSIL.

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| 2 July | Professor Chester Brown  University of Sydney | *An international fact-finding commission of inquiry into COVID-19?* |

*Abstract*

On 18 May 2020, the World Health Assembly of the World Health Organisation (“WHO”) unanimously adopted a resolution in which it requested the Director-General of the WHO to “initiate, at the earliest appropriate moment”, a process of “impartial, independent and comprehensive evaluation” in order to “review experience gained and lessons learned from the WHO-coordinated international health response to COVID-19”.  The World Health Assembly’s resolution is to be welcomed, although it leaves a number of questions unanswered.  These include the precise scope of the fact-finding inquiry, the timing of when any such inquiry would take place, and who would be charged with carrying out this investigation.  This webinar presentation will consider these issues, as well as the role of fact-finding in international dispute resolution more generally, and other pressing issues of international health governance facing the international community in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

*Bio*

Professor Chester Brown is Professor of International Law and International Arbitration at the University of Sydney Law School, and the Law School’s Director of Global Engagement.  He is also a Barrister at 7 Wentworth Selborne Chambers, Sydney, and an Overseas Member of Essex Court Chambers, London.  He teaches and researches in the fields of public international law, international dispute settlement, international arbitration, international investment law, and private international law.  He also maintains a practice in these fields, and has been involved as counsel in proceedings before the International Court of Justice, the Iran-United States Claims Tribunal, inter-State and investor-State arbitral tribunals, as well as in inter-State conciliation proceedings and international commercial arbitrations.

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| 3 July | Victoria Hallum, MFAT, NZ  Sue Robertson,  Attorney-General’s Department, Australia | *International Law in the time of COVID* |

A conversation between ANZSIL President, Karen Scott and Victoria Hallum of the New Zealand Ministry has of Foreign Affairs and Trade and  Sue Robertson of the Australian Attorney General’s Office touching on:

- how international law has responded to the COVID 19 pandemic; and

- how government international lawyers have had to adapt and change their ways of working in these unprecedented times.

**Questions**

This session will revolve around a Q&A format. Please send your questions in advance to [karen.scott@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:karen.scott@canterbury.ac.nz). A selection of questions will be put to Sue and Victoria.

*Bios*

**Victoria Hallum**

Victoria Hallum is the Chief International Legal Adviser of the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Legal Division provides advice to the New Zealand government on all aspects of international law including trade, environment and natural resources, and peace and security issues.

Victoria has had diplomatic postings to United Nations where she represented New Zealand in the Sixth Committee, as well as covering oceans and law of the sea and disarmament, and Paris, where she was Permanent Representative to UNESCO and Deputy Head of Mission of the New Zealand Embassy to France. She has been Vice-Chair of the Sixth Committee at UNGA 54 and Chairperson of the Legal Committee of UNESCO in 2011. She was New Zealand’s Commissioner to the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation from 2017- 2019 and the Ministry’s senior official responsible for developing the Christchurch Call to Eliminate Terrorist and Violent Extremist Content Online.

She has also led the legal team at Maritime NZ, New Zealand’s maritime regulator and compliance agency responsible for safe, secure and clean seas.

Career highlights include appearing as counsel in the Nuclear Tests case before the International Court of Justice in 1995 and serving as chief legal counsel for the New Zealand-China Free Trade Agreement negotiations from 2004-2008.

Victoria holds a Master’s degree in Public International Law from the London School of Economics (which she completed as a recipient of a Commonwealth Scholarship), and a Master’s degree in Law from Victoria University of Wellington. She is a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand.

**Sue Robertson**

Sue Robertson is the First Assistant Secretary of the International Division of the Commonwealth Attorney-General’s Department. In that role she heads the Office of International Law, responsible for advising cabinet on a broad range of legal issues including international security, law of the sea, trade, environment and human rights. She is also responsible for Australia’s international crime cooperation involving extradition and mutual legal assistance.

Sue has previously worked for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade including as the international legal adviser at the Australian Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York. Prior to that she occupied various international legal and policy roles in the United Nations. She has worked in Egypt (UN High Commissioner for Refugees), Bhutan (UN Development Programme) and Sudan (Department of Peacekeeping Operations).

Sue holds a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) and a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) from the University of Melbourne and a Masters of International Law from the Australian National University (Dean’s Prize).