

Christchurch Conference on International and Transnational Legal Frameworks

Dispute Resolution and Private Law in an Interconnected World

Conference Host

Faculty of Law, University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Programme Partners

International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)
United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)
The Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH)

Principal Sponsors

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung 

New Zealand Law Foundation 

Tourism New Zealand 

Conference Partner

Arbitrators' and Mediators' Institute of New Zealand (AMINZ)



Programme

DAY 1 | Thursday, 12 March 2026

TIME	STREAM A	STREAM B	STREedgarAM C
08.00-09.00	<i>Registration</i>		
09.00-09.15	<p>WELCOME <i>Host: Dr. Olivia J. Erdélyi Faculty of Law, University of Canterbury</i></p> <p><u>Mihi Whakatau</u></p> <p><u>Opening</u> Prof. Cheryl de la Rey <i>Vice-Chancellor, University of Canterbury, New Zealand (tbc)</i> Prof. Petra Butler <i>Executive Dean & Professor of Law, University of Canterbury</i></p>		
09.15-09.45	<p>OPENING ADDRESSES <i>Host: Dr Olivia J. Erdelyi Faculty of Law, University of Canterbury</i></p> <p><u>Opening Addresses</u> Prof. Ignacio Tirado <i>Secretary-General, International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT),</i> Anna Joubin- Bret <i>Director United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), (tbc)</i> Dr. Christophe Bernasconi <i>Secretary-General, The Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH),</i></p>		
09.45-10.35	<p>PLENARY PANEL: THE ROLE OF PRIVATE LAW IN UNCERTAIN TIMES <i>Chair: Justice David Goddard Singapore International Commercial Court -</i></p> <p>Discussion of contemporary issues and recent work and developments in private international law, international commercial law, and international private law, and how each of these areas of law adapt and influence the modern world.</p> <p><u>Opening Addresses</u> Daniel Kalderimis, K.C. <i>Barrister, Thorndon Chambers, Wellington</i> The Hon. Justice Vui Clarence Nelson <i>Senior Judge, Supreme Court of Samoa</i> Prof. Ignacio Tirado <i>Secretary-General, UNIDROIT</i> Wendy Miles, K.C. <i>Barrister, TwentyEssex, London</i></p>		

TIME	STREAM A	STREAM B	STREedgarAM C
10.35-11.00	<i>Morning Tea</i>		
11.00-12.30	<p>SESSION A1: RECENT WORK OF THE C.I.S.G. ADVISORY COUNCIL Chair: Professor Milena Djordjevic University of Belgrade</p> <p><i>Consideration and discussion on the recent work of the C.I.S.G. Advisory Council and topical C.I.S.G. issues.</i></p> <p><u>Panellists</u> Em Professor Ingeborg Schwenzer, <i>Codes of Conduct in CISG contracts.</i> Professor Ulrich Schroeter University of Basel, New Zealand's current position in global CISG practice, with proposed explanations Professor Hiroo Sono University of Hokkaido, The right to cure (repair and replacement) from a Sustainability Perspective Benjamin Gottlieb Partner, Schellenberg Wittmer, Zurich, CISG and services</p>	<p>SESSION B1 KEYNOTE _ WHAT THE CRISIS IN THE MULTILATERAL TRADE REGIME MEANS FOR OCEANIA</p> <p>Chair: Dr Michelle Zang <i>Victoria University of Wellington</i></p> <p>KEYNOTE: em Professor Jane Kelsey</p> <p><u>Commentary</u> Krista Nadakavukaren Schefer <i>Co-Head Legal of Legal Services, Swiss Institute of Comparative Law, Lausanne</i></p> <p>Shaheen Ali <i>Ministry of Commerce Trade Tourism and Transport, Suva</i></p>	<p>SESSIONS C1: RESOLVING CROSS-BORDER FAMILY LAW ISSUES Ruth Ballentyne University of Canterbury</p> <p><i>Discussion topics relating to international family law disputes, including but not limited to the H.C.C.H. Conventions and Protocols on Marriage, Divorce, and Maintenance, Child Abduction and foreign surrogacy laws</i></p> <p><u>Panellists</u> Ai Kuroda <i>Principal, Ai Kuroda Law Office, Osaka</i> Alex Summerlee <i>Partner Parry Fields, Christchurch</i> Margaret Casey, K.C. <i>Barrister, Mills Lane Chambers, Auckland</i></p>
12.30-14.00	<i>Sponsored Lunch</i>		

TIME	STREAM A	STREAM B	STREedgarAM C
14.00-15.00	<p>SESSION A2: CONFLICT OF RULES AND BODIES IN INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION</p> <p>Chair: Daniel Kalderimis KC <i>Barrister Thorndon Chambers, Wellington</i></p> <p><i>Discussion to centre on the proliferation of arbitration bodies and rules as well as consideration of the factors involved in making choices.</i></p> <p><u>Panellists</u> Anna Holloway <i>Senior Counsel, ICSID, Washington</i> Samuel Leong <i>Singapore International Arbitration Centre, Singapore</i> Anna Kirk <i>Barrister, Bankside Chambers, Auckland</i> Michael Greenop <i>Counsel WilmerHale, London</i></p>	<p>SESSION B2: TRADE IN AGRICULTURE IN THE NEW PROTECTIONIST WORLD</p> <p>Chair: Rebecca Scott <i>Barrister, Canterbury Chambers</i></p> <p><i>Discussion of topical legal issues and trends arising from trade barriers in agriculture, including but not limited to existing and new quotas and tariffs, as well as the use of administrative and S.P.S. measures as trade barriers.</i></p> <p><u>Panellists</u> Thomas Hayward <i>LL.B. & B.Com. Student, University of Canterbury,</i> Dr. Brett Williams <i>Principal, Williams Trade Law, Sydney</i> Kirsten Todd <i>Partner, Tavendale & Partners, Christchurch</i></p>	<p>SESSION C2: MODERN SLAVERY IN INTERNATIONAL SUPPLY CHAINS</p> <p>Chair: Annette Gittos <i>MBIE, Wellington</i></p> <p><i>Discussion topics relating to compliance and verification of modern slavery, forced labour, and related issues in international supply chains, including but not limited to the effects of the I.L.O. Conventions on Forced Labour and Child Labour and private sector driven instruments.</i></p> <p><u>Keynote Speaker</u> (tbc)</p> <p><u>Panellists</u> Dr. Felicity Gerry, K.C. <i>Barrister, Crockett Chambers, Melbourne</i></p>
15.00-15.30	Afternoon Tea		

TIME	STREAM A	STREAM B	STREedgarAM C
15.30-16.45	<p data-bbox="389 213 1406 240">PLENARY PANEL: USE OF A.D.R. MECHANISMS IN INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES</p> <p data-bbox="389 252 539 279">Chair: (tbc)</p> <p data-bbox="389 357 2056 416"><i>Consideration and discussion on the use of A.D.R., particularly mediation, in cross-border disputes, as well as the acceptance and application of the Singapore Convention on Mediation.</i></p> <p data-bbox="389 451 595 478"><u>Keynote Speaker</u></p> <p data-bbox="389 489 1312 517">Prof. Nadja Alexander <i>Professor of Law, Singapore Management University</i></p> <p data-bbox="389 552 506 579"><u>Panellists</u></p> <p data-bbox="389 590 1485 617">The Hon. Justice Ambeng Kandakasi, C.B.E. <i>Deputy Chief Justice of Papua New Guinea</i></p> <p data-bbox="389 628 1167 655">Mary Walker, O.A.M. <i>Barrister, 9 Wentworth Chambers, Sydney</i></p>		

DAY 2 | Friday, 13 March 2026

TIME	STREAM A	STREAM B	STREAM C
08.00-09.00	<i>Registration</i>		
09.00-10.30	<p>SESSION A4: EMERGING ISSUES IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS LAW</p> <p><i>Chair: Robert Kirkness Thorndon Chambers</i></p> <p><i>Consideration and discussion on recent and topical issues arising from international commerce, from the digitisation of business instruments and authentic acts, utilisation of blockchains to effect transactions, and the UNCITRAL Model Laws on Electronic Commerce, Electronic Signatures, and Electronic Transferable Records, and the C.I.S.G. and UNIDROIT and UNCITRAL instruments on contracting and payments.</i></p> <p><u>Panellists</u></p> <p>Prof. Ignacio Tirado Secretary-General, UNIDROIT</p> <p>Prof. Lisa Spagnolo Faculty of Business & Law, Deakin University, Melbourne</p>	<p>SESSION B4: PRIVATE LEGAL ISSUES AND DISPUTES IN AGRICULTURAL / FISHERIES TRADE</p> <p><i>Discussion of private disputes affecting agricultural & fisheries trade, including work on M.A.C. Protocol to the Cape Town Convention and the Pacific Islands Forum.</i></p> <p><i>Chair: Dr. Penelope Ridings MNZM International Law Commission</i></p> <p><u>Panellists</u></p> <p>Kerrie Robertson Independent Consultant, Adira Consulting</p> <p>Dr. Wilfred Golman University of the South Pacific, Vanuatu</p> <p>William Brydie-Watson UNIDROIT</p> <p>Prof Megumi Hara University of Chuo</p>	<p>SESSION C4: BALANCING COMMERCIAL AND STATE INTERESTS IN INVESTOR-STATE DISPUTES</p> <p><i>Chair: Prof. Christian Riffel University of Canterbury, New Zealand</i></p> <p><i>Discussion topics include recent issues in investor-state disputes and the utilisation and effectiveness of I.S.D.S. mechanisms in modern investment treaties and free trade agreements.</i></p> <p><u>Keynote Speaker</u></p> <p>The Hon. Justice Brian Preston, A.O., S.C. Chief Judge, Land and Environment Court of New South Wales</p> <p><u>Panellists</u></p> <p>Prof. Anna Veneziano Deputy Secretary-General, UNIDROIT</p> <p>Prof. Chester Brown, S.C. Professor of Law, University of Sydney</p> <p>Dr. Ivana Damjanovic University of Canberra</p> <p>Lauren Lindsay Barrister, Bankside Chambers, Auckland</p> <p>Richard Braddock Lexbridge Lawyers, Sydney</p>
10.30-11.00	<i>Morning Tea</i>		

TIME	STREAM A	STREAM B	STREAM C
11.00-12.30	<p>SESSION A5: JURISDICTIONAL ISSUES IN CROSS-BORDER COMMERCIAL DISPUTES Chair: Dr Anna Kirk Bankside Chambers</p> <p><i>Consideration and discussion on recent issues and emerging topics in choice of forum, jurisdictional disputes, and forum non conveniens issues, including but not limited to the H.C.C.H. Choice of Courts Convention.</i></p> <p><u>Keynote Speaker</u> The Hon. James Allsop, A.C. Arbitrator & Mediator, Sydney Arbitration Chambers</p> <p><u>Panellists</u> Margo Harris Barrister, Owen Dixon Chambers West, Australia Prof. Marco Jovanovic University of Belgrade</p>	<p>SESSION B5: HARMONISING INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC LAW ON ACCESS TO CREDIT AND SECURITY INTERESTS Chair: Dr Isa Alade University of Canterbury</p> <p><i>Topics and discussions relating to efforts to harmonise international and domestic law facilitating cross-border access to credit, in particular the Cape Town Convention and the UNIDROIT instruments on assignments of receivables, leases, intermediated securities, and warehouse receipts.</i></p> <p><u>Panellists</u> Stewart Germann President, New Zealand Society of Notaries Dr. Jeanne Huang Associate Professor of Law, University of Sydney, Australia William Brydie-Watson UNIDROIT David Brown Associate Professor University of Adelaide Paul Ng Partner, Rajah & Tann, Singapor</p>	<p>SESSION C5: CROSS-BORDER DISPUTES OVER CRYPTOCURRENCY, NON-FUNGIBLE TOKENS, AND DIGITAL ASSETS Chair: Suzanne Howarth</p> <p><i>Topics and discussions relating to international disputes over digital assets, including but not limited to the applicability of the C.I.S.G., the effects of the UNCITRAL Model Laws on Electronic Commerce, Electronic Signatures, and Electronic Transferable Records, and the UNIDROIT Digital Assets and Private Law Principles.</i></p> <p><u>Panellists</u> Prof. Ignacio Tirado Secretary-General, UNIDROIT Michael Green, S.C. Barrister, Level 22 Chambers, Sydney Prof. Andre Janssen Radboud University, CISG in the Digital Age</p>
12.30-14.00	Lunch Debate on A.I. Law and Technology <i>Dr Olivia Erdelyi v Associate Professor Gabor Erdelyi mediate by Kate Wiseman</i> Barrister, Bankside Chambers, Auckland		

TIME	STREAM A	STREAM B	STREAM C
14.00-15.10	<p>SESSION A6: ENFORCEMENT OF FOREIGN COURT JUDGMENTS & ARBITRAL AWARDS</p> <p>Chair: Prof. Anna Veneziano <i>Deputy Secretary-General, UNIDROIT</i></p> <p><i>Consideration and discussion on recent issues and emerging topics in the recognition and enforcement of foreign judgments and arbitral awards, including but not limited to the H.C.C.H. Judgments Convention and the New York Convention.</i></p> <p><u>Panellists</u></p> <p>Dr. Jeanne Huang <i>Associate Professor of Law, University of Sydney</i></p> <p>Joan Lim-Casanova <i>Partner, K&L Gates Straits Law, Singapore</i></p> <p>Robert Kirkness <i>Barrister Thorndon Chambers, Wellington</i></p>	<p>SESSION B6: CROSS-BORDER INSOLVENCY IN AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC</p> <p>Chair: Prof. Lynne Taylor <i>University of Canterbury,</i></p> <p><i>Review and discussion of recent issues and the effectiveness of cross-border insolvency laws and mechanisms, including the UNCITRAL 1997 Model Law on Cross-Border Insolvency.</i></p> <p><u>Panellists</u></p> <p>Prof. Trish Keeper <i>Victoria University of Wellington</i></p> <p>Dr. Amit Kumar Kashyap <i>Centre for Corporate Law Studies, Nirma University, India (tbc)</i></p> <p>Prof. Christopher Symes <i>Emeritus Professor of Law, Adelaide University,</i></p>	<p>SESSION C6: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE PRACTICE OF PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW</p> <p>Chair: Dr. Olivia J. Erdélyi <i>Faculty of Law, University of Canterbury</i></p> <p><i>Topics and discussions involving the use of AI in cross-border transactions and international arbitration as well as the regulation of the cross-border trade of AI-related technologies.</i></p> <p>Keynote: Robert Kroplewski <i>Robert Kroplewski Law Office, Poland</i></p> <p><u>Panellists</u></p> <p>Assoc Prof. Ben Adams <i>University of Canterbury</i></p> <p>Saad Kazmi <i>SGS Melbourne</i></p> <p>Manraj Singh Rahi <i>Law Cyborg, Wellington</i></p> <p>Pauline Courtney <i>Kate Sheppard Chambers, Wellington</i></p>
15.10-15.25	Afternoon Tea		

TIME	STREAM A	STREAM B	STREAM C
15.25-16.30	<p>CLOSING SESSION</p> <p><i>Chair: Prof. Petra Butler</i> University of Canterbury</p> <p><u>Keynote Address</u></p> <p>The Hon. David Goddard, K.C. <i>Judge, Singapore International Commercial Court</i></p> <p><u>Panellists</u></p> <p>Chairs of the previous Sessions</p>		
16.30	Drinks		