

# International Law Association (Australian Branch) Annual General Meeting

## *President's Report 2007*

DR CHRISTOPHER WARD\*

2007 has been a year of great significance for the Association.

The primary development has been the restructure of the Journal, which has regrettably fallen behind in production and content. I am delighted that Dr Ben Saul of the University of Sydney has agreed to accept the position of Editor, and that the Sydney Centre for International Law has agreed to assist with the production of the Journal. A Memorandum of Understanding in relation to the Journal was reviewed by the Management Committee and signed by me in October. Already Dr Saul has made great progress, with the long-delayed 2005 edition now available, and future editions in good progress. I am grateful to Dr Saul and to all members of the Management Committee who assisted with the lengthy process and I look forward to the Journal moving ahead successfully.

A Regional Conference was held by the South African Branch. That conference was attended by a small number of Australian members, and I thank them for their interest and support of the Association's wider work. The Biennial Conference will be held in August 2008 in Rio, Brazil, and I encourage all members to consider attending the Conference. The academic work of the Association is of primary importance, and the Biennial Conference is the focus of that work.

To that end, I intend that in April 2008 a one day conference will be held by this Branch, at which Australian members of International Law Association committees will present the work of their committees and facilitate discussion and input from the wider membership and other interested individuals.

The Branch continued its own work at great pace during the year with a large number of very successful afternoon and evening seminars, involving members of the Association as speakers as well as distinguished guest speakers. I am very grateful to all those who gave so freely of their time in the organisation of those events.

I would like to make particular mention of the efforts of Greg Marks in developing the Martin Place Papers No.6 'Indigenous Peoples: Issues in International and Australian Law' in conjunction with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission ('HREOC'). The paper itself is most valuable and represents a substantial contribution to scholarship and advocacy in the field.

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During the year our first Nygh Intern to the Hague Conference on Private International Law, Zoe Justice, left our shores. The Internship was the subject of an evening event attended by the Attorney-General as well as other dignitaries. The venture is very significant and we as an Association are most grateful to Nicola Nygh and her family for their support.

The Nygh and Brennan essay prizes are also now well established and are attracting quality articles. At the time of writing, calls for papers in 2007–2008 are current and again some quality articles have been received.

I would like to thank our Treasurer, Megan Valsinger-Clark for her extraordinary efforts. The Treasurer's role is thankless and difficult and her efforts have not been unnoticed. I am also grateful to our new Secretary, Louisa Fitzgerald, and look forward to working with her in the years ahead.

I would like to thank the members of the Management Committee, who have consistently maintained the administration of the Association effectively and appropriately, and who continue to give freely of their time. The Co-Directors of Studies, Keith Suter and Andrew Byrnes, continue to maintain the academic work of the Association and I am grateful to each of them for agreeing to serve another year in that role. I am also grateful to Margaret Brewster who remains an active member of the Management Committee and is always available to freely provide advice and assistance.

I would like to give particular thanks to Damian Sturzaker, Vice President, who has shouldered a significant load during the year and has always provided wise counsel and great assistance. Also, particular thanks to Martijn Wilder who this year has determined not to stand for the position of Vice President due to work commitments. Martijn has served for many years and I am delighted that he will continue to be a member of the Management Committee.

Finally, I note with great sadness and regret the untimely death of Justice Terry Connolly of the ACT Supreme Court, a great supporter of the Association and the Jessup Moot.