

FOREWORD

I am very pleased as a UWA Law School graduate, a once Public International Law tutor at the UWA Law School and now a Professor of International Law at the Law School to be asked to write the foreword for the UWA International Law Club Journal, the 'Perth International Law Journal'. The opportunities for Public International Law students in Perth have increased immeasurably over the decades since I was a UWA student. Indeed, these opportunities have intensified over recent years. A UWA Law School focus has seen an influx of Public International Lawyers from a variety of different jurisdictions and continents - Africa, Europe, and North America included.

The creation of the Perth USAsia Centre and its proximity to and close collaboration with the Law School has added to an environment of Public International Law and International Relations discourse around the Law School and the University itself. And the appointment of former Australian Ambassador to the United States, Kim Beazley, as a Law School Honorary Fellow has brought an added dimension in a US Presidential year. The introduction of a range of Public International Law related Masters Degree courses has complemented all that in a formal way, adding more academic opportunities for interested students.

But none of this, of course, works unless there is an enthusiastic and committed student group to take advantage of these opportunities and turn them into career pathways.

The idea for the UWA International Law Club first emerged when UWA Law student Liam Elphick, also a casual academic tutor at UWA and Research Assistant to Law School Dean Erika Techera, detected a strong enthusiasm for knowledge and understanding of international law in a first-year Politics unit he was teaching. After concluding that there was no easy way for students in the Law School, let alone other schools, interested in international law to engage or connect with other like-minded students, Liam asked a number of students interested in international law if they would like to start a new Public International Law focused club for students to pursue their interest.

Liam and his fellow students were strongly supported in their task by Dean Erika Techera, and a trio of UWA Law School Public International Lawyers: Holly Cullen, Philipp Kastner and Sean Richmond. Following a summer of planning, the UWA International Law Club was officially formed and affiliated to the UWA Student Guild in February 2016. Its express aim is to foster engagement with International Law among students and staff at UWA.

I had the honour to be the guest speaker at their launch event in March this year. From then, the UWA International Law Club began its activities and implementing its ideas. Firstly, a blog called JusT Cogens, dedicated to a brief and light-hearted take on a con-

temporary international law issue, was created. It has run a new issue weekly since its establishment - giving many students at UWA the chance to write on a topic they are interested in. Next, an International Law Seminar Series was established, a regular hourly presentation and in-depth discussion on an international law topic, with five seminars taking place each semester. A mix of undergraduate students, Honours, Masters and PhD students, Research Fellows, and UWA and Visiting Academics have presented in this series, creating and fostering deeper understanding of and debate about international law at UWA. Thirdly, a range of other presentations were organised - including an Introduction to International Law session for first-year students, and a presentation by the Honourable Kim Beazley on his experiences as Australian Ambassador to the United States of America. As well, the Club has also been involved in collaborative efforts with other UWA clubs, including joining with the Blackstone Society to jointly run the Australian Red Cross International Humanitarian Law Mooting Competition, and the International Law Quiz Night!

And finally, the Journal.

In 2016, the Perth International Law Journal began its first steps as one of only a small handful of international law focused journals in Australia. The first issue was edited by students on the UWA International Law Club Journal Sub-Committee, and included articles written exclusively by students, both undergraduate and postgraduate.

This provides students of all levels the chance to publish their longer academic pieces of international law research without the uphill battle of trying to be published in highly competitive peer reviewed international law journals. That can come later in their careers!

The Perth International Law Journal is an annual journal, open to any students from any University to publish in.

My congratulations to Liam Elphick, the inaugural President of the UWA International Law Club, to Isabella Bogunovich, the inaugural Editor of the UWA International Law Club Journal, to members of the Journal Sub Committee, and to all Club members on a great start to the Club's activities.

Stephen Smith
Former Minister for Defence and Minister for Foreign Affairs
Professor of International Law, The University of Western Australia