

**Workshop on Rethinking International Investment Law:  
Civic Advocacy, Representation and Participation in the International Investment Regime**

**(An International Economic Law in Context Workshop)**

3 – 4 May 2016  
University of Warwick

**Report to the Society of Legal Scholars**

The first workshop in the International Economic Law (IEL) in Context Workshop Series was successfully held on 3 – 4 May 2016 at the University of Warwick. The IEL in Context Workshop Series is being organised by the Centre for the Law, Regulation and Governance of the Global Economy (GLOBE) at Warwick Law School aimed at exploring the interdisciplinary and contextual nature of contemporary scholarship in international economic law, broadly defined. This first workshop on ‘Rethinking International Investment Law: Civic Advocacy, Representation and Participation in the International Investment Regime’ was attended by over 30 national and international delegates and included a public session on the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) Agreement currently being negotiated between the European Union (EU) and the United States (US). The objective of the workshop was to bring together a range of academic and practitioner perspectives on the emergence of a new space of advocacy and citizenship in relation to the international investment regime and the implications for the contemporary legal architecture governing international investment flows and on sustainable development.

Using the seed money from the SLS and from the Socio-Legal Studies Association (SLSA), we managed to secure additional funding from the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), Warwick Law School, the University of Warwick’s Global Research Priorities on Global Governance, Keele Law School and from the ERSC Impact Acceleration Account. IIED and Keele Law School joined us as co-organisers of the event.

We held a very productive workshop and generated a great deal of interest among delegates for follow-up events. Among our activities for following on from this will be a briefing note on ways forward for civic advocacy, representation and participation in the international investment regime as well as discussions for academic publications.

A unique aspect of our workshop was our collaboration with IIED, a research and advocacy NGO, and our objective of bringing together academics with practitioners and other stakeholders, including representatives from civil society groups and intergovernmental organisations, lawyers, and politicians, to enrich our discussion beyond substantive academic perspectives. Among others, we managed to secure the participation of Manuel Montes, advisor with the South Centre, an intergovernmental organisation in Geneva and former economist with the UN Financing for Development Office; Mahnaz Malik, barrister and arbitrator from 20 Essex Street; Wong Chen, an MP from Malaysia; and Jane Nlunga, country director of advocacy organisation, SEATINI in Uganda. All the representatives greatly enriched the academic discussions at the workshop.

The workshop was convened over two days, organised around thematic plenary sessions which addressed various aspects of civic advocacy, representation and participation in the international investment regime. This included the introductory panel framing the various discussions – academic and policy – surrounding the role of participation in the legal architecture for international

investment as well as panels on government and parliamentary involvement in investment treaty making; public participation in international investment arbitration; stakeholder engagement and channels of citizenry action in the investment regime. We also organised a public session on 'TTIP Friend or Foe? Facing the Facts and Fiction on the Transatlantic Trade Investment Partnership and Other Investment Agreements' which was chaired by James Harrison, from the Warwick Law School, and featured Manuel Montes, Wong Chen, Ruth Bergan from the UK's Trade Justice Network and featured Lorenzo Cotula, our co-organiser from IIED who is also currently a Visiting Research Fellow with the GLOBE Centre. The public session was attended by a good crowd of people from the university as well as from our local community in Coventry and Warwickshire, including local councillors. This public session was well received and some participants from the local community expressed interest in similar events to be held in the future.

Feedback from the workshop itself also indicated that delegates very much welcomed the approach of the workshop and the workshop series as a whole – which is to introduce and develop contextual methodologies, including socio-legal methodologies, to scholars of international economic law, and to increase the profile of socio-legal and other contextual approaches to scholarship in international economic law – and welcome further workshops developed along these lines. There was a clear consensus among academic delegates at least that there is a gap in the current spaces for academic scholarship and engagement on international economic law for discussions of this nature. Consequently, this bodes very well for the workshop series as a whole.

More information about our workshop can be found on our website:

[http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/law/research/centres/globe/events/iel\\_seminars/investment\\_workshop/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/law/research/centres/globe/events/iel_seminars/investment_workshop/)

We are also attaching the workshop Concept Note, programme and poster for the public session for further information. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you require any clarification or further information.

Dr Celine Tan and Professor John McEldowney  
GLOBE Centre

8 July 2016