Governments acting in direct contradiction to international human rights laws and conventions in their treatment of refugees and asylum seekers must be held to account. That was the message in yesterday morning’s session ‘Rights without borders: is the concept of asylum alive and well in a post-truth world?’

Australian policy was criticised by members of the panel and the audience, referred to at one point as “a national scandal that the government is not acknowledging”, by Julian Burnside of the Victorian Bar in Melbourne (pictured). He called for government leaders, past and present, to be taken to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to be prosecuted for crimes against humanity.

“We are regularly in breach of the relevant provisions of the universal declaration of human rights, of the Refugee’s Convention, of the Convention Against Torture. We are in breach of those every day, and there are no consequences to these breaches,” he said.

Mandatory detention

Since 1992 Australia has had a policy of indefinite mandatory detention of non-citizens who do not have a visa, which largely covers those people who arrive by boat seeking asylum, including children and pregnant women. The Australian government calls this practice illegal, even though most consider that they have committed no offence.

In 2012 the Australian government began deporting people looking for asylum offshore to Manus in Papua New Guinea and Nauru, an island state with a land area smaller than that of Melbourne airport, where reports suggest that people are kept in terrible conditions and are dying of medical neglect.

“Australia has faced no consequences, apart from international criticism,” said Burnside. “The country should be the subject of trade sanctions in response to our mistreatment of human beings who have come to Australia seeking protection from persecution.”

Former Prime Minister John Howard was later questioned during the lunchtime conversation on how Australia is regarded internationally, in light of the issue. Howard suggested there is a very well received view around the world that Australia did the right thing in relation to immigration and asylum seekers in the early 2000s.

The subsequent dismantling of this policy, he said, led to one of the biggest public policy failures in this country for some years. “You cannot sustain support for a healthy immigration or refugee programme unless your population is satisfied that you are controlling the flows of people.”

The right to life

Panellists also condemned the European Union and some of its member states, particularly Italy, for their handling of recent pleas for asylum from Libya, Syria and other African nations. Agnès Callamard of the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights cited a variety of violations to the laws of the right to life, such as arbitrary killings, force, push back measures and lateral repatriation that are being violated in a number of so-called transit countries.

Despite breaches of the Geneva Convention, the Palermo Convention, and others that give all human beings the right to life regardless of citizenship, there are very few prosecutions for homicides of refugees or migrants, said Callamard.

According to Callamard, a strong allegation can be made against Italy and the EU in aiding and abetting human rights violations in Libya, and she hopes that a case will be brought against the government for ignoring the international rights convention.

When Australia signed up to the ICC and had to introduce its own domestic laws that outlawed genocide for the first time, mirroring the Statue of Rome, it also introduced section 268.12 of the criminal code – which forbids the arbitrary detention of human beings.

According to Burnside, every prime minister and every immigration minister in Australia from 2002 to the present, is guilty of crimes against humanity as identified by section 268.12.

Panellists were in agreement that an international response is needed in the EU, in Australia, and in several other countries guilty of this conduct. “We have no excuse for it, we need to do a lot better, and I think the international community ought to be imposing sanctions on Australia in response to our wilful disregard of our humanitarian obligations,” said Burnside.
Legal disruption unwrapped

Disruptive technologies could lead to fewer graduate lawyers, but also new opportunities for those that do pass the bar. That was one of the messages in yesterday’s session, ‘Disruption: lawyers advising disruptive companies while disruptors change the legal industry’.

Speakers discussed automation technology and its role in due diligence work and data gathering. Murray Bruce, geography lead Asia-Pacific at IBM, explained that the use of chatbot technology will become a feature in many corporates within six months. A chatbot is a computer program which conducts a conversation via auditory or textual methods, and law firms are increasingly using them to streamline diligence processes.

“Instead of taking time to find the right information, and then deciding what to do with it strategically, chatbot technology will allow lawyers to spend all their time thinking about the information rather than finding it.”

Murray offered the example of an exploration project he had been recently involved with. Previously, before each hole had been dug, a team of lawyers had to spend around six weeks sourcing information to create a standard report on the project before they could proceed. “Using chatbot technology creates that same report in six minutes,” he said.

Answering questions from the audience over whether this would lead to an inevitable decline in graduate lawyers, Kieren Parker, a partner at Addisons in Sydney was upbeat. “It is a gross generalisation to say we will lose graduate lawyers because that assumes that graduate lawyers only perform one role. I am an M&A lawyer and my junior staff probably perform 10 key tasks. Perhaps three of them can be automated,” he said.

There are clear comparisons with the shift in roles of bank tellers in the 1970s following the adoption of the ATM. Tellers became more customer service focussed as a result of the technology. They did not die out though. “We are going to see a need for legal managers to manage a team of virtual agents and bots and also live team of legal staff. You will have to change the way you skill your lawyers,” added Bruce.

Disruptors or saboteurs?

Elsewhere in the session the speakers debated the role of the now established disrupters, Airbnb and Uber, with both firms represented on the panel. While their impact on the hospitality and transport sectors respectively is not in doubt, the role that the legal system plays in regulating them was more disputable. Alexandra Neri, partner at Herbert Smith Freehills in Paris called on lawmakers to act.

“Lawmakers need to react to what is happening now,” she said, adding that although disruptive businesses and services are often innovative they can also bring rough changes in society too, which is often unprepared for the changes.

Fighting fake news

The ease and speed at which false or biased information can be spread on social media is among the greatest threats to democracy today, according to panellists in yesterday’s session on fake news.

Levels of misinformation or so-called junk news rose by 12% during the UK election earlier this year, and in Michigan – a swing state – 33.8% of all links shared during the US’ presidential election in 2016 were identified as junk.

“These posts are anti-democratic because they manipulate people into certain beliefs, but we don’t know where they are coming from,” said Oxford University Internet Institute’s Monica Kaminska. “One of the most difficult things is to establish who is behind the bot accounts.”

While some may argue that such firms or individuals are operating a public service by providing information that allows people to make a decision, it’s the lack of transparency surrounding the source that’s the problem.

“Thinking of the types of ads I personally saw during the UK election, it wasn’t exactly free information. They were highly manipulative,” said Kaminska.

And while people are free to make their own judgment, studies have shown that if exposed to the same information repeatedly, it can eventually become a truth in their mind.

Research from Cambridge University in 2015 shows that just 227 likes on Facebook is enough for a computer to know the user better than a friend, and almost as good as a spouse. It only takes 10 likes for a computer to outperform a work colleague at predicting certain personality traits.

The benefits of anonymity

But it’s a delicate balance. In countries like China and Russia, anonymity allows citizens to discuss or criticise politicians without fear of persecution. “Anonymity as an unmitigated evil is not good either,” said Steve Crown, deputy general counsel at Microsoft. “We don’t dislike regulation, but we do dislike bad regulation. At this point we don’t understand the best way to get around this challenge.”

A controversial bill recently passed in Germany is another example. The new law requires social media platforms to remove ‘obviously illegal’ postings within 24 hours or face a fine of up to €50 million ($58.9 million).

The highly automated nature, which is likely to see content removed without going through the traditional referral process, is concerning to speakers and human rights groups alike.

“By offloading the responsibility to companies, governments are managing to remove way more content than they could themselves under the rule of law,” said Crown.
The global AML dilemma

As anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing cases grow, governments are calling on lawyers to provide information on clients and flag suspected cases to authorities. But uncertainty surrounds how these requirements clash with lawyer-client privilege and compliance costs.

At yesterday’s session ‘Not quite surf ‘n turf but essential AML and sanctions knowledge for your practice: perspectives from other jurisdictions and the Australian context’, panellists offered a look into the progression of anti-money laundering rules that are affecting the legal community.

The US is facing a constant push and pull between the bar association and the Treasury. The American Bar Association has ramped up efforts to police its own profession but the US Department of Treasury’s Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) has put out stringent geographic targeting orders which have a specific mandate on information on title insurance on real estate purchases through limited liability companies with cash in high risk areas such as Hawaii, Florida, Texas and California.

“The Russia investigation into the election has breathed new life into legislative efforts on beneficial ownerships, so there’s a new impetus to get the major Bill moving and may be the tipping point on H.R. 3089: The Corporate Transparency Act of 2017,” said Kevin Shepherd, partner at Venmavable in the US and senior vice chair of the Regulation of Lawyers’ Compliance Committee.

A new model rule for bar associations with client due diligence is also forcing action would be through

state bar disciplinary proceedings and this would address the concern that the legal profession is not doing enough,” said Shepherd. It would complement voluntary practices.

Even though it was a vanilla proposal, it had significant pushback from the American Bar Association Ethics Committee, according to Shepherd. “We do not want a Christmas tree festooned with different model rules, so it would need to be as generic as possible and not make it just AML focused,” he added.

“The Treasury knows it’s touching the third rail on the client-lawyer privilege issue and has been doing an elaborate dance around the issue and getting closer without touching it,” said Shepherd. “The Treasury doesn’t like it but gets it and has been nibbling around the edges through initiatives such as geographic targeting orders which are encroaching on lawyers. It would need to be a very clever approach.”

An international approach

Lawyers and bar associations across Japan are dealing with technical compliance and effectiveness challenges through the Act on Prevention of Transfer of Criminal Proceeds, said Tatsu Katayama, partner at Anderson Mori & Tomotsune, Japan. But requirements for lawyers are challenging and include record keeping, internal controls, verifying client identification and the AML and compliance rule, it’s fair to say the final chapter of story is not yet written,” said Maurice Piette from the Federation of Law Societies of Canada.

Belgium is wrestling with the problem, and has been for some time. “AML has been on the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe’s (CCBE’s) agenda at every meeting since September 1999 and it has met 93 times to date,” said Ruthven Gemmell from the from Belgium. The CCBE has brought into force four directives, with the fourth one coming into force July 26 2017 and a fifth one being proposed. “More leaps are taking place with each directive being more specific than the previous,” said Gemmell.

The fifth directive being proposed aims to strengthen transparency requirements of trusts and put in central registers that provide financial intelligence units a prompt and searchable way to acquire information from obliged entities.
Australia must focus on decarbonising its energy and electricity sectors, and use technologies that already exist to reduce carbon outputs. This was the message in yesterday’s ‘Project financing of renewable energy’ session, presented by the Banking Law Committee.

One of the key measures must be to develop a smart grid – which can be described as an evolving network of new technologies, equipment, and controls working together to respond to increasing demands for electricity between utilities and their customer networks.

“Under a smart grid, renewables will continue to play an integral role in the development of large scale solar and wind, and small scale solar projects,” said Andrew Gardner of Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC) in Sydney.

However, he said the country will need storage in improved demand and response to successfully integrate renewable energy. “This will mean a greater role for battery storage, biomass or waste energy and larger storage technology for pumped-hydro and concentrated solar.”

Australia must also consider how it can regulate and operate its grids, which were obviously not created with renewables in mind. Behind the meter, renewables will play an essential role in this, said Gardner. Behind the meter structure is a renewable energy system that is uniquely designed and built for one purpose, be it a factory or another structure or building, with the primary function of reducing the carbon footprint of that building by locally generating electricity using renewable sources.

**Behind the meter**

Australia has a relatively small population, with only a limited need for combined capacity. By using behind the meter generation, solar and batteries, the country could provide 25% of all generated energy using this method by 2040. Incorporating pumped hydro, the current figure is closer 10%.

When implementing new technologies and developing projects, it is very important to structure the project so that it is bankable, to ensure that when, and if, project financing is secured it is at a good price.

Later, Rommel Harding-Farrenberg, of Corrs Chambers Westgarth in Sydney, outlined the primary risks associated with securing project financing, in Australia and further afield. The most prominent of these is political risk, such as where the project is located and the cost of insurance.

Other risk considerations include legal and regulatory concerns, technical, construction and completion risks, fuel supply and revenue and operational risks, and who will be responsible for maintenance post completion.
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This morning’s keynote session will try to get to grips with the world of machine learning and disruptive technologies in Australia.

“One of the key questions will be what are some of these innovations doing when they harness AI and apply them into areas where up until now we thought we would be relatively immune,” according to session chair Martin Stewart-Weeks, who specialises in the cross-over of government, technology and innovation.

The potential disruption across multiple sectors from new technologies is immense. In 2016, the World Economic Forum estimated that by 2020 across the world’s 15 most developed economies, over five million people would lose their jobs. Tech advances would create over two million jobs, but eliminate seven million, mostly impacting white collar workers and administrative jobs.

More recently (September 2017), a YouGov poll for the Royal Arts Council find that up to four million private sector jobs in the UK could be lost to robots in the next decade, especially in the finance and accounting sectors, transport and distribution, and media, marketing and advertising.

A quick example from outside the legal world illustrates its potential disruptive affect. Silicon Valley company Enlitic has developed machine learning software that diagnoses cancer from medical images. The software learns from experience and can analyse a CT scan in 0.02 seconds. It takes a doctor about 10 minutes.

**A rising tide**

The panel will include speakers from a range of backgrounds, including Megan Brownlow, executive director of PwC who focuses on the media and entertainment industry and was recently appointed deputy chair of the Screen Australia board; Kate Cooper, who was previously director of innovation services and former head of social media for the UK government and helped design the digital communication strategy for the London 2012 Olympic Games; and Adrian Turner, CEO of Data 61, part of the Federal Government’s CSIRO entity that is the largest data innovation group in Australia.

One key challenge is the impact disruptive technologies will have on future workforce skills and employment trends.

“People are beginning to realise that the algorithms that we are all getting a little mesmerised by, particularly around machine learning and AI and their application to things like pattern recognition in insurance companies and legal practices, where once you had a junior clerk go through screeds and screeds of paper to make connections between different pieces of information to build up a case, mean that all of a sudden a machine can do all of that work,” says Stewart-Weeks.
Climate breakdown: the IBA’s solution

Today the IBA will spell out its efforts in developing a model statute and other initiatives to fight climate change

At both ends of the globe in the weeks running up to this IBA event, extreme weather phenomena have been turning lives upside down.

The North Atlantic is in the middle of its hurricane season, which runs from June to November. Thirteen storms have so far been named, seven of which were hurricanes, the most devastating being the category four hurricane Harvey and the two category five hurricanes Irma and Maria. In all, September represented the most ferocious month ever for hurricanes, superseding the same month in 2004. At currently reported estimates, the season has so far caused over 200 deaths and damages above $150 billion.

Meanwhile, Australia has been suffering a second scorching heatwave, hot on the heels of record temperatures set in February that triggered electricity shortages and created catastrophic wild fire conditions.

Prominent scientists link these to accelerating climate change trends. In the case of hurricane Harvey, the storm was initially downgraded to a tropical storm before intensifying dramatically. That’s due, at least in part, to unseasonably high temperatures and unusually warm waters in the Gulf. Sea-level rises will only intensify the damages from such storms.

These weather events fit into the context of the spectre of irreversible climate change exacerbated by human industry, The UN’s latest Emissions Gap Report 2016, which tracks progress since the Paris Agreement, predicts that even with the efforts so far undertaken to reduce emissions to achieve the 2°C increase limit in global warming above pre-industrial levels, the world is heading for a 3.4°C increase.

What is the role of law-making and lawyers in this? Since releasing its Achieving Justice and Human Rights in an Era of Climate Disruption report in 2014, the IBA has been working to produce a follow-up model statute, which, says former IBA president David Rivkin, will include provisions “that would facilitate citizens bringing actions against their govern-ments to help prevent or mitigate climate change”.

The IBA has also been studying the legal issues arising from adaptation concerns, including food security, water access and the rights of refugees and migrants. Both reports will be presented in today’s session for debate.

Courts collaring governments

According to Rivkin, lawyers are critical to so many of the efforts. “It is lawyers who will develop the frameworks for the public-private-partnerships that are needed; lawyers who will protect the intellectual property of new inventions that are needed; and lawyers who will pave the way for the work that scientists, engineers and governments all need to do to advance the Paris Agreement. That is something which is important for all lawyers to understand”.

Today’s panel will discuss the role of the legal community in reducing emissions, promoting renewable energy and other technologies, holding governments to account and coping with the impacts of climate change including in the human rights field.

This is no mean feat: climate change’s impact and prevention affects different countries, regions and groups of people in hugely varying ways. Baroness Helena Kennedy, another of today’s panellists, stresses that “the big debate now is one of persuasion, persuasion of legislatures to take this further forward”.

As governments enact laws that push forward the Paris Agreement agenda, one area where panelists have seen significant legal developments is in the use of litigation to hold states and private companies to account.

Two examples are being especially closely watched. In 2015, in a case brought by Dutch social pressure group Urgenda, the District Court of The Hague ruled that the Netherlands had breached the standard of due care by pursuing a programme that, by 2020, would see it reduce CO2 emissions by less than 25% compared with 1990 levels. The Court ordered the government to ensure emissions were at least 25% lower.

The ruling represents the first decision by any court in the world ordering a state to limit greenhouse gas emissions for reasons other than statutory mandates. The case throws up a whole host of legal issues.

The second ongoing case is before the Philippines Human Rights Commission (CHR), filed by typhoon survivors, marks the first ever human rights legal action demanding an investigation into and the accountability of 47 large fossil fuel and cement companies. The case argues that the emitters have curtailed people’s fundamental rights to “life, food, water, sanitation, adequate housing, and to self-determination”.

Other pioneering cases have recently sprung up in the US, Belgium, Peru and potentially Australia (by Environmental Justice Australia).

Rallying the globe

Rallying global legal effort in the right direction is a big goal for the IBA. The increasingly front stage role played by courts has its own risks. For instance, Rivkin questions the usefulness of litigation cases that try to ascribe blame, rather than looking forward, as “de-tracting from the fight that needs to be undertaken”.

Another huge consideration in these times is cross-border collaboration. It is an issue all too keenly illustrated by the US administration’s attempt to pull back from the Paris Agreement, but is also evident in the legal community. “In a world that has taken on the notion that everything is about competition, collaboration has gone down the agenda,” says Kennedy. “This is a sensitive issue in the IBA as different countries take positions on this and feel they are not going to be able to sell the idea of taking mitigatory steps.”

As the US administration has announced its departure from the Paris Agreement (which it cannot do until 2020), the work undertaken at sub-national and state level is becoming increasingly important. Climate change also impacts every practice of law, meaning that a broad conversation needs to happen.

As the panelists will indicate, the IBA’s aim in this regard is to produce a sort of uniform legal template that can be adapted and built on, and a marker to help answer questions about the uncertainty of legal authorities and what regulations could ultimately look like.
As the debate about human rights versus security intensifies, many believe it is time for bar associations worldwide to become more vocal.

This afternoon’s session will look at two things and how they relate. The first is the critical debate raging in many countries between welcoming refugees and migrants with open arms and reassuring citizens that the necessary steps are being taken to protect their security and safety. The second is the role that bar associations can have in this public debate.

When this session was first conceived a year ago, the organisers could not have predicted how the topic would escalate. Just around the corner was President Trump’s attempted Muslim travel ban and a spate of terrorist attacks, including the December 2016 attack in Berlin and 2017 attacks in London and Manchester, among others.

In Australia, which has suffered a series of attacks since the Bali bombings in 2002, it was as recently as July 2017 that security forces scuppered a plot at Sydney airport.

The public’s reaction has continued to intensify and polarise. The recent elections in Germany, which welcomed over one million migrants in 2015 and 300,000 in 2016 (a policy that Angela Merkel has continued to defend), brought Merkel back into power but also saw the rise of the far-right AFD (Alternative for Germany). Anti-migrant groups have been spreading throughout Europe. In the US, Trump’s focus on building a border wall, instituting a travel ban and rescinding the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) programme have also thrown kindling onto the fire. August 2017 then saw the Charlottesville riots, where public opinion lit up again in vocal reaction. This panel will look at what role bar associations can have and perhaps should have when such debates open up and weigh the different perspectives.

What can bar associations do?

“The bar associations cannot remain silent in these situations,” says Dr Péter Köves, Hungarian lawyer and IBA vice-chair of the Bar Issues Commission (BIC). “Bar associations must understand each other better. Each association believes that they are alone with this problem and when they talk to others they find out that the others are having the same or similar problems.”

In Hungary, Köves vehemently disagrees with the Hungarian government’s position regarding refugees and migrants. In 2017 the country completed a second section of fence to block migrants, acting on a government campaign that has gone as far as portraying refugees as “poison”.

But Köves maintains that bar associations cannot simply present the human rights angle. “While I fully disagree with that shameful campaign […] there is a legitimate expectation of the citizens to live without terrorist attacks and for the government and the authorities to mitigate them and control the people coming into the country.”

In the US, the American Bar Association (ABA) operates through resolution. When a resolution is in place the ABA can speak out. The ABA has recently done just this in relation to the DACA repeal. In September 2017, ABA president Hilarie Bass urged Congress to quickly pass legislation to provide “a fair, orderly and safe way ahead” for those participating in DACA and stating that the move “threatens the future of thousands of deserving people”.

Adding to this, several states have opened cases against the federal government arguing the policy violates the due process and equal protection clauses of the Fifth Amendment.

According to New York-based Deborah Enix-Ross, also of the BIC: “we [ABA] are not a political organisation, we are an association of lawyers. Having said that one of our fundamental goals is to uphold the rule of law and we need to speak out in a way that is respectful and forceful under any circumstance”. Enix-Ross adds that there will be people who argue that bar associations should not be getting involved, but, she asks, “if the lawyers don’t lead who will?”

Evolving to survive

The panel will bring together voices from Germany, Israel, Venezuela, England and Wales and Australia. The prime aim is to share of ideas and views about how bar associations can actively participate in public debates concerning human rights, refugees and security where the rule of law is being misrepresented, misused or simply not being properly understood.

Each country has its particular debates over human rights and security. In Australia for instance, the tough migrant policy has recently come under further pressure. The government offered cash to Rohingya refugees held on Manus Islands to return to Myanmar after Papua New Guinea’s supreme court ruled that the 800-strong migrant centre breached human rights and had to close.

The bar associations in each country are also structured in different ways that determine what some of its aims might be and what ability it has to speak out. The panel will look at what a bar can do if it does not have an easy way of speaking out, and if it does speak out how it should then support its members.

Enix-Ross makes a further point about the role bar associations can play and how actively pursuing that might secure their relevance for future generations of lawyers. “If you look at the younger generation of lawyers they are much more likely to join issues and causes rather than associations,” says Enix-Ross, “so voluntary bars especially have to think about how they are going to attract those numbers, how to provide value and content to their members rather than just disciplining and licensing.”

In these cases, a more activist bar association may better represent the rule of law, constructively influence public debate and reinforce bonds with its members.
just a few years ago the concept of the hostile takeover looked to be fizzling out entirely. Given activism worldwide, especially in Europe, it is rising to levels not seen before. The likelihood of a decline in hostile activity is slim, and a more appropriate question is how far it still has to grow.

With the phenomenon so prevalent, and cross-border hostile activity at such high levels, this morning’s session is timely. Hostile deals are harder to close than friendly takeovers, and require greater sophistication in terms of local practice, local law, and local strategy.

Today’s session will look at two recent hostile takeovers that have caught the attention, both unique in their own way, run by a panel that structured and executed the deals, bringing to light the key legal issues, deal terms and process involved in each transaction.

It will be chaired by Pablo Iacobelli of Carey y Cía, Santiago, and Mary Ann Todd of Munger Tolles & Olson, Los Angeles.

It is hard to say what issues didn’t come up

Populating the panel will be Swiss partners Philipp Haas and Daniel Hasler of Niederer Kraft & Frey and Homburger respectively, Charles Jacobs of Linklaters in London, Andrew Nussbaum of Wachtell Lipton Rosen & Katz in New York, and Stephen Minns of King & Wood Mallesons here in Sydney.

One of the deals that will be dissected by the panel is Johnson & Johnson’s ($&J) $30 billion all-cash acquisition of Swiss biotech company Actelion, completed through a tender offer to acquire the publically held shares in the company.

Philipp Haas led the legal team advising Actelion in this transaction, and plans to give his account of what is an interesting, and unorthodox story of how it developed from start to close.

The difficulty in the transaction arose when the question of how the buyer was able to attach value to the products that Actelion still had in development, when the probability of success is only around 15% and takes around ten years to complete.

The route that Haas and his team took saw $&J take over the company, while simultaneously Actelion de-merged and spun off its early stage development pipeline in a new company to its shareholders. The tendering shareholders got the cash for tendering the shares, and they got shares in the new listed company, Idorsia.

“This was the perfect way to monetise the value of the development pipeline, and shareholders can continue to participate in its upside,” he says. “Quite frankly this is a primer – it is the first time in public M&A that a structure like that was devised, and implemented.”

Convincing $&J that this was the correct thing to do was unorthodox, he said, and the fact that they agreed to exclusivity is not something seen in public M&A. “Actelion wanted to stand alone, but it became clear that $&J was serious and determined.”

Brewing the deal

The second deal that will be examined during the session will be AB InBev $100 billion merger with SABMiller. Andrew Nussbaum played a key element in structuring the deal, the third largest takeover in history, which kicked off a number of corporate and shareholder issues in different jurisdictions.

One of the largest problems that the legal teams faced was that AB InBev was held by a number of key stakeholders, without whose consent the deal could not be completed, and who couldn’t be coerced. “They didn’t have enough power to make a deal happen, but at the same time, on certain terms, had an interest in having a deal happen,” he adds.

What made this deal interesting from a corporate structuring perspective was the inclusion of a partial share alternative. Most UK takeovers are all-cash bids, but this was a cash offer with a partial share alternative, which was essentially designed to address the tax related concerns, as well as desires of shareholders Bevco and Altrea, who held around 40%, to remain shareholders in the combined company, not to sell out.

“It is hard to say that this cross border deal is a template for anything,” says Nussbaum. “We had the Belgian and UK corporate law issues, dealing with a Brazilian based investor group, Colombia’s Santo Domingo family, Altria, a US listed company with its own stockholder obligations, and then SABMiller with the UK corporate law and the takeover code,” he adds. “It is hard to say what issues didn’t come up in a way, given the multiple parties and the multiple jurisdictions.”
The history of Sydney

From starvation and instability in the 19th century to Olympic glory in the 21st, the host city has grown up remarkably quickly.

The founding of Sydney can be traced back to the arrival of Captain Arthur Philip and his 11 ship-strong First Fleet in January 1788, 18 years after British navigator James Cook discovered the harbour city.

Named after Lord Sydney, the then British home secretary, it was described by Captain Philip in a letter as the ‘finest harbour in the world’. The harbour itself, by then, had already been in existence for at least 50,000 years and been home to 19 aboriginal clans prior to European settlement.

Ships from Portugal and China had long been spotted sailing past the harbour. But it wasn’t until Captain Philip’s decision to designate Sydney Cove, a small bay on the southern shore of today’s Sydney Harbour, as the site of Great Britain’s first penal colony in Australia that this previously unknown land was put on the map.

Unlike how much British-led colonisation was being undertaken at that time, the sole rationale behind the occupation of Sydney was to establish a prison settlement for British convicts: it could be argued that the establishment of the city as one of the world’s most prosperous metropolises happened purely by chance.

The first few decades of colonial rule was beset by rebellions and revolts. While the British government had gone beyond its earlier plan of setting up penal colonies to build up the harbour city using advanced European knowledge, they had consistently ignored the skills of local people, who were indigenous inhabitants that had seen their population plummet due to diseases brought by European settlers.

Growing up fast

But issues of starvation and political instability in the new settlement began to dissipate towards the 1840s, when the trappings of a free and developed society – such as elections – started to appear in the city, which by then had been under British rule for more than 50 years. The development of Sydney had reached its climax when news of gold deposits was being spread around the world following the claimed discovery of the first payable goldfields at Ophir, near Bathurst in New South Wales (NSW), by British gold prospector Edward Hammond Hargraves in February 1851.

This had attracted 370,000 immigrants from around the world to Australia, boosting the population of the burgeoning British colony to 1.7 million. These immigrants, many of whom had decided to stay despite not having found riches on the goldfields, had also helped transform the former convict colonies into modern cities in the latter half of the 19th century.

The formation of the Commonwealth of Australia, which saw the incorporation of six British self-governing colonies into a federation, in 1901 gave official recognition to Sydney as the centre of economic, cultural and political activity in Australia as the city became the capital of the Australian state of NSW.

With such unprecedented scale of autonomy from the government in London, Sydney witnessed an acceleration in both economic output and population. Even the Great Depression, which had hit the newly-formed capital and stymied its growth for a few years, failed to stop the establishment of the iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932, connecting the city’s northern and southern banks. But a series of domestic and global events, namely the Great Strike of 1917 and the Second World War, had ground the economic and development of Sydney and the Federation as a whole to a halt.

Domestically, the introduction of a new time card system, which was aimed at better monitoring and boosting worker productivity, drew the ire of blue-collar workers. This led over 5,700 employees of the Eveleigh Railway Workshops – which was key to much political and industrial activism in Australia during the 20th century, and the nearby Randwick Tramsheds to go on strike in August 1917. Externally, the Japanese bombardment of Sydney Harbour and other key Australian port cities during the Second World War had inflicted serious human and economic losses on this budding Oceanic nation.

Olympic gold

But the damage and heavy causalities incurred from WWII did not stop the expansion of Sydney. With an influx of European and Asian immigrants to the metropolis, new skyscrapers started to be built with the opening of the iconic Opera House in 1973 being the biggest highlight. The waves of immigration and the success of Sydney in becoming a major cultural melting pot had made the harbour city a perfect candidate for the 2000 Olympics, which brought a further boom in tourism and immigration.

The first passenger railway line in NSW was opened in September 1855, connecting Sydney to Parramatta Junction, which was located west of present-day Granville Railway Station. With the economic wealth in the NSW mainly generated in the 1800s from farming and pastoralism, the early railway expansion during the 1860s was intended to connect Sydney with other major rural railways across the Blue Mountains to Bathurst and across the Southern Highlands to Goulburn. All these new transport links were constructed under the direction of John Whitton, who was known today as the ‘father of the railways’.

The addition of new lines had substantially increased the number of passengers travelling on them, which had risen from 776,000 to 5 million in just a decade. Riding on the success of Joh Whitton, Dr. John Bradfield developed his plan to build a world-class electric railway system during the 1920s.

It took less than ten years for the first electric trains to be constructed and to start running on the Illawarra Line in June 1926. This was followed by the opening of the Harbour Bridge in March 1932, connecting the North Shore Line to Wynyard Station. In more recent decades, the Circular Quay station was added to the city’s public transport system in 1956.

Sydney is now one of the most competitive financial hubs in the world and is home to both domestically and internationally well-known financial institutions.
The Dubai International Arbitration Centre (DIAC) is the largest arbitration centre in the Middle East. It is a non-profit institution that provides efficient and impartial administration of commercial disputes. The DIAC Arbitration Rules, adopted in 2007, are in line with international standards. The DIAC is comprised of the Board of Trustees, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat.

The cases registered with the DIAC relate to different sectors such as real estate, engineering and construction, general commercial, media, insurance and oil and gas with large amounts in dispute, some exceeding one billion dirhams.

The DIAC has developed a pool of experienced arbitrators from different cultural and legal backgrounds located in the UAE and abroad.

The DIAC has recently established DIAC 40, a forum for young arbitration practitioners, and organizes a wide range of specialized training courses and events.
Julian Assange founded WikiLeaks in 2006, an organisation that made its first major series of leaks in 2010. When in the same year Swedish authorities opened a case against him for sexual assault, the debate about him as a character meshed with the WikiLeaks story. He has been living in the Ecuadorian embassy in London since 2012.

From a legal angle, Assange presents a challenging case. On the one hand, he has evaded the law by seeking refuge in the Ecuadorian embassy and avoiding extradition to Sweden to answer assault allegations.

From another angle (an argument supported by many), the Swedish allegations were a front, and Swedish courts were being used by the US government to extradite Assange to the US to answer for the WikiLeaks leaks. In 2016, a UN legal panel ruled that Assange was indeed being “arbitrarily detained” and should be released. Both Sweden and the UK contest the panel’s conclusions.

In 2017, the CIA labelled WikiLeaks a “non-state hostile intelligence service” and intensified its pursuit of Assange. Investigators in the US argue that Russian intelligence used WikiLeaks as a tool to exert its influence on the result, a claim that Assange vehemently denies.

The career
Assange is a computer programmer and activist for freedom of information. “It has been my long-term belief that what advances us as a civilisation is the entirety of our understanding of what human institutions are actually like”, he has said. In his book Cypherpunks (2012), he wrote: “the internet, our greatest tool for emancipation, has been transformed into the most dangerous facilitator of totalitarianism we have ever seen”.

Assange was born in 1971 in Queensland. During a peripatetic upbringing, he formed the hacking group International Subversives. In 1991 he was caught hacking into Canadian telecoms company Nortel and pleaded guilty to various hacking charges. He began to focus on programming and in 1993 launched Australia’s first public internet service provider (Suburbia Public Access Network).

He has received multiple prestigious awards including the Amnesty International UK Media Awards, TIME Person of the Year Reader’s Choice, Sydney Peace Foundation Gold Medal and Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism, among others. Documents leaked by WikiLeaks have also been used in multiple human rights cases.
According to Vittorio Noseda, co-chair of today’s session ‘Development of future mega cities, infrastructure and services’, smart cities rely on a constant cycle of innovation and adapting to evolving societal needs and interests. "Homes, cars, public venues and other social systems are now on their path to full connectivity known as the Internet of Things (IoT),” he says. The mega cities of the future place smart technology and its developers at the beating hearts of their infrastructure.

There have been quite a few attempts, of varying success, at building smart cities. Among them are Masdar in the UAE and Songdo in South Korea. Both have noble ambitions that include being zero-carbon, zero-waste, and having smart technologies monitor every aspect. Both have so far been hampered by delays and are as yet sparsely populated. Qatar is building the city Lusail and Panasonic and IBM have both been at the centre of interesting smart developments in the US. Where smart cities often have the noblest of aims, from being zero-carbon and zero-waste, the practical realities of their development, or of the integration of the smart technologies into existing cities, opens a minefield of legal questions.

How will this be regulated? The panel, with high level voices from policy making, in-house counsel and private practice lawyers, will explore the myriad legal issues involved, whether it be from an insurance perspective or from a privacy, cyber-security or competition law angle, relating to smart metering and big data to driverless cars.

“How do you incorporate the checks and balances to make sure we don’t have the foundations for a big brother society,” asks co-chair Chung Nian Lam, who explains that the vast collection of data on individuals’ habits to generate versatile energy and resources networks open up questions over who can access this data, what it can be used for, does it leave a vulnerability if a centralised data concentration is compromised, either by hackers or by ‘natural’ failure.
QUESTION What do you like the most

Ghyo Sun Park
Shin & Kim
South Korea
The beautiful scenery and the great people. I’m here for 10 days and would love to find time to go to the Blue Mountains.

Paul Marmor
Sherrards Solicitors
England
Sydney has all the ingredients from an IBA perspective, with a relaxed ambience and great logistics.

Joe Egan
Law Society of England & Wales
England
Like all real hippies I spent a few months working here in the 1970s. I love beaches and watching surfers on Bondi.

Tim Meng
Golden Gate Lawyers
China
It is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. The bay area gives a real impression of diversity.

Oleksiy Demyanenko
Asters
Ukraine
It is a 24-hour flight from Ukraine but definitely worth it. My first impressions are that it is very clean and cosmopolitan.

Frances Kirkham
QICDRC
England
A city based around water is a great city. I love swimming at Bronte beach.

Mark Seah
Dentons Rodyk & Davidson
Singapore
It’s really vibrant and perfect for the IBA Conference. The ICC is also a perfect location.

Torsten Riecke
Handelsblatt
Germany
I am only here for three days but my first impressions are that the city is very well organised. It’s warmer than Berlin!

Giuseppe Schiavello
Schiavello & Co
Italy
It’s a truly international city and the people are so kind. The ICC is stunning, too.

The partners of tomorrow

More flexibility and better education on what the role of partner actually entails would help to change young lawyers’ perception of the role.

“As a young lawyer starting my career in a law firm rather than in-house, I wanted to be a partner from day one,” said Erika Villarreal, partner at Anzola Robles & Asociados. “But a lot of younger people will say it’s an option but not the primary goal. Some are put off by the demands and the work/life balance sacrifice.”

Young lawyers’ perceptions of partnership vary between jurisdictions. Panellists from Ghana and Nigeria explained that most African lawyers still view becoming an equity partner as the ultimate goal.

“But the way the economics work means that not everyone can become a partner,” said Philip Rodney, chairman of Burness Paull in Glasgow. “Being an equity partner is not the only way of fulfilling yourself in business. We have to accept that lots of people won’t become one, but that we must still make them feel fulfilled.”

The financial crisis forced many firms to change approach on their partnership models, in part because there is simply less money to go around now than there was in the past. For instance some offer a tiered model with equity partners at the top.

“When the crisis hit we decided we could not sacrifice the young to benefit the older generation,” said Rodney. “So we focused on preventing that vacuum, which ensured we could grow through the years that followed.”

Sometimes younger lawyers are not fully aware of what being a partner really means, so better education would help, according to panellists. The reactive nature of legal work is also problematic as it limits lawyers’ ability to set their own personal career goals. Carving out time to make these plans is important.

“It’s difficult to talk about how to get more people into partnership without mentioning how much harder it is for women in law. There are many reasons for this, but one is that many firms still have an overwhelmingly masculine culture, agreed speakers, which can put women off.

“In Latin America it’s very difficult for a woman to become partner – we still have big law firms without even one female partner,” said Villarreal. “That’s definitely an issue as some women must think they will just never make it. We have to do what we can to make sure there’s a path for women making their way in law.”

Erika Villarreal, Anzola Robles & Asociados

““We have to make sure there’s a path for women making their way in law”

KEY TAKEAWAYS

• Partnership structures in law firms have changed over the years which has made it seem less attractive to some younger lawyers;
• More flexibility, better education and carefully drafted personal development goals would all help to change this;
• It’s particularly acute for female lawyers who are already under-represented in equity partnerships.
I’m a foodie and always arrange my vacations around it, so Sydney is perfect.

This is my first time back in 10 years. Have lunch at the excellent Quay restaurant.

I come to Sydney regularly—but I hadn’t even seen Darling Harbour before!

I haven’t fully explored but it seems a very hospitable city. There’s a mix of English and American influences.

I had a lovely dinner at Watsons Bay last night - the view was great.

The state library is very impressive and I look forward to visiting the botanical gardens.

I loved going to Manly, taking my shoes off and getting water around my ankles. It isn’t far but you feel like you have left the city completely.

I recommend Bills restaurant in Surry Hills and Doyle’s Seafood in Watsons Bay.

You notice what a cosmopolitan, multi-racial city it is - and cleaner than Jakarta!

about Sydney?

Gasant Orrie
Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr
South Africa

Olugbenga Fabilola
Ayodele Olugbenga & Co
Nigeria

Elisabeth H Loukas
Loukas Law Firm
USA

Sasha Štěpánová
Kocián Solc Balášík
Czech Republic

Martin Murad
Peterka Partners
Czech Republic

Norris Yang
Zhong Lun Law Firm
Hong Kong

Jon Webster
Allens
Australia

Birgul Feyzioglu
Feyzioglu Law Firm
Turkey

Ignatius Andy
Ignatius Andy Law Offices
Indonesia

Jon Webster
Allens
Australia

I have never been to Sydney before. I had lunch at Quay.

We had dinner at Watsons Bay last night. The view was great.

I thoroughly enjoyed going to Manly. I love it. I recommend going there.

You notice what a cosmopolitan multi-racial city it is - and cleaner than Jakarta!
We are a leading disputes-only firm based in London. Disputes are all we do.

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