



20 YEARS ON: SVENSKA PETROLEUM AND JONES – EVOLUTION AND CONTINUITY IN THE LAW OF STATE IMMUNITY

18 November 2026, Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford

8:45 – 9:00 **Arrival and Registration**

9:00 – 9:15 **Welcome by Professor Philippa Webb KC**

9:15 – 10:45 **Panel One: The Changing State – Rethinking the Sovereign/Non-Sovereign Distinction**

Chair and Discussant: **Professor Philippa Webb KC** (University of Oxford)

- (1) **Niko Pavlopoulos** (University College London): *Immunities in Respect of Sovereign and Non-Sovereign Acts: The Common Law, the State Immunity Act, and Customary International Law*
- (2) **Thomas Francis** (Curtis, Mallett-Prevost, Colt & Mosle LLP) and **Sarah Gouia** (Curtis, Mallett-Prevost, Colt & Mosle LLP): *Beyond the Sovereign-Commercial Divide: English Courts and the Evolution of the Modern State*
- (3) **Can Yeginsu** (3 Verulam Buildings, Koç Law School) and **Jake Jerogin** (Twenty Essex): *Nature, Purpose, and the Characterisation of Commerciality in State Immunity*
- (4) **Luping Zhang** (China University of Political Science and Law) and **Chaohan Zhang** (Northwest University of Political Science and Law): *Recalibrating the Commercial Exception under China's Foreign State Immunity Law: An International and Comparative Perspective*
- (5) **Jack Kenny** (University of Manchester): *Attribution and Official Capacity in the ILC's Work on Immunity of State Officials*

10:45 – 11:15 **Coffee Break**

11:15 – 12:30 **Panel Two: Waiver – Consent, Treaty, and Contract**

Chair and Discussant: **Professor Andrew Dickinson** (University of Oxford)

- (1) **Cat Drummond** (3 Verulam Buildings): *Waiver of State Immunity from Jurisdiction: Recent Developments*
- (2) **Cameron Miles** (3 Verulam Buildings): *Waiver of Immunity from Execution by Written Agreement*



(3) **Professor Chester Brown SC** (Sydney Law School; 7 Wentworth Selbourne; Essex Court) and **Julian Edwards** (Sydney Law School; NSW Court of Appeal): *Waiver of State Immunity by Treaty in Australia*

(4) **Andrew Loewenstein** (Foley Hoag LLP) and **Nicholas Renzler** (Foley Hoag LLP): *State Immunity from Award Enforcement Across the Pond: A Critical Comparative Appraisal of the Application of the Waiver and Arbitration Exceptions to Award Enforcement in the UK and US*

12:30 – 13:15

Panel Three: Arbitrating against States – Enforcement and Asset Recovery

Chair and Discussant: **Professor Dan Sarooshi KC** (University of Oxford)

(1) **Alexander Thompson** (Twenty Essex): *Double Waiver after General Dynamics*

(2) **David P Stewart** (Georgetown Law Center): *Interpreting the Arbitration Exception to State Immunity: Recent Developments in US Jurisprudence*

(3) **Joseph Dyke** (McNair International): *Issue Estoppel and the Arbitration Exception: The Progressive Whittling of State Immunity*

(4) **Daisy Peterson** (University of Oxford): *Sovereign Asset Tracing and State Immunity*

13:15 – 14:15

Lunch Break

14:15 – 15:45

Panel Four: Causing Harm Across Borders – Evolving Boundaries of State Immunity

Chair and Discussant: **Dr Miles Jackson** (University of Oxford)

(1) **Thomas Weatherall** (Office of the Legal Adviser, US Department of State): *Is Terror Sovereign? Terrorism and the Jurisdictional Immunity of the State*

(2) **Peter Webster** (Essex Court): *Heiser Revisited: The Tort Exception and Enforcement of Foreign Judgments against States*

(3) **Conway Blake** (Debevoise and Plimpton) and **Sara Ewad** (Geneva Graduate Institute): *State Immunity and its Digital Frontiers*

(4) **Kit Fenn** (University of Oxford): *Clandestine Agents and Functional State Immunity: Insistence in Principle, Apathy in Practice*

15:45 – 16:00

Coffee Break



16:00 – 17:30

Panel Five: Immunity, Human Rights, and the *Jus Cogens* Challenge

Chair and Discussant: **Professor Dapo Akande** (University of Oxford)

- (1) **Mathilde Desurmont** (University of Reims): *Beyond the Procedural-Substantive Divide: Rethinking the Customary Law of State Immunity*
- (2) **Tomonori Mizushima** (Nagoya University): *The Resilience of the Jus Cogens Exception: From Jones and Germany v. Italy to the Korean "Comfort Women" Cases against Japan*
- (3) **Luke Vidal** (SLV Partners): *The Fall of a Broken Lion: How the Case of Bashar al-Assad has Shaped French Sovereign Immunity in Matters of International Crimes*
- (4) **Professor Christian Tams** (King's College London; 11 King's Bench Walk): *State Immunity for Nazi Crimes: Brazil and US Practice*
- (5) **Rishi Gulati** (University of West England; Victorian Bar): *Central Bank Immunity and Access to Justice*

17:30 – 17:45

Closing Remarks by Special Guest Speaker

17:45 – 18:00

Reflections and Conclusion by Professor Philippa Webb KC

18:00 – 19:00

Drinks Reception