

The Four Societies

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW
CANADIAN COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL LAW
JAPANESE SOCIETY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

“International Law and Disasters” The Fourth International “Fostering a Scholarly Network” Four Societies Conference

Call for Papers

The international law societies of Australia & New Zealand, Canada, Japan and the United States of America (the “Four Societies”) have held three conferences bringing together younger scholars around a theme often resulting in a scholarly volume (Wellington, New Zealand in 2006; Edmonton, Canada in 2008; and Awajishima, Japan in 2010).

The Four Societies are organizing a Fourth Joint Conference and invite paper proposals from their members. The Four Societies Conference will be held September 27 to 29, 2012 in Berkeley, California at the Claremont Resort. The theme of the Fourth Joint Conference will be “International Law and Disasters.”

The Theme of International Law and Disasters

Few aspects of the future are certain. Yet, it is certain that catastrophes, attended by widespread suffering, are a part of our collective future. No one will be surprised to wake tomorrow to learn of an earthquake, an accident at a nuclear power plant, or the desperate plight of persons fleeing chaos. Data indicate that a significant natural disaster occurs on average once a week. Every three weeks, there is a disaster that exceeds the response capacities of the country most affected. Damages inflicted by disasters kill one million people each decade and leave millions more homeless. Economic damages from natural disasters have tripled in the last thirty years. All of these statistics tend to increase with a growing population and it is argued by many that climate change will increase the intensity of some types of disasters.

Curiously, however, the international legal order addressing this certain future is, in comparison to other far less certain areas of international affairs, both relatively undeveloped in practice and unexamined in the academic legal literature. Efforts from the bottom up by groups of States develop haphazardly. Driven today by one disaster, tomorrow by another, the *ad hoc* incoherence of legal and institutional response mirrors the fortuity of the catastrophes humanity encounters. The resulting fragmented *ad hoc* array of responses leaves many holes in the collective effort and often leads assistance amidst an emergency to be as likely a matter of luck as of planning. Simultaneously, the efforts from the top down by international organizations and their member States to comprehensively confront this challenge easily spin into ever-broader discussions, sweeping in so many initiatives and efforts that the sheer weight of the agenda seems to impede progress. Similarly, the scholarly

attention to catastrophes, with notable exceptions, is diffuse.

With this situation in mind, the Steering Committee invites paper proposals addressing this broad and multifaceted subject. The proposals may take historical, institutional, political or other perspectives on the theme. The proposals may address a particular type of disaster or address a particular way in which international law bears on the subject of disasters broadly. It is the intent of the organizers that the collected resulting papers form a balanced volume illuminating and progressively advancing the global collective response to this pressing issue.

Submission of Proposals and the Process of Selection

Paper proposals should include a project description not exceeding 500 words and the applicant's *curriculum vitae*. Submissions should cover work that has not been previously published. It is the intention of the sponsoring societies to keep the papers together and publish them in one volume. However, if the conference fails to provide an opportunity to publish the presented papers, participants will be free to publish them elsewhere.

Submissions should be sent by e-mail to the Sponsoring Society of which the submitter is a member. Since the underlying goal of this initiative is to foster a scholarly network between individuals associated with the four sponsoring societies, applicants are advised to send their submissions to the sponsoring society with which they are most likely to have a long-term connection, such as through membership in that society, or a university position or employment in the country, or countries, represented by that sponsoring society.

The CCIL requires that candidates either be or be prepared to become a member of the CCIL by the time of the conference. Applicants should be Canadian residents or citizens. Submissions should be made to:

CCIL Four Societies Committee

manager@ccil-ccdi.ca

The Deadline for Submission of Proposals is March 1, 2012

Each sponsoring society will select four papers, subject to the review and approval of the Steering Committee comprising members from the Four Societies. Preference will be given to papers by those who are in the early stages of their careers. Additional preference will be given to innovative and cutting edge proposals related to International Law and Disasters. The CCIL will aim to notify its four successful applicants by April 15, 2012. Each participant will submit a full paper to the organizers by 31 August for distribution to the other participants.

Participants are responsible for their own transportation costs. The American Society of International Law will provide lodging and meals at the venue during the conference. The working language of the Conference will be English.