



*The Australian Institute  
of International Affairs*



## Media Release (For immediate release)

### 2011 Nygh Internship recipient

9 June 2011

Announcing a great opportunity for an outstanding young Australian lawyer. The Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) and the Australian Branch of the International Law Association are proud to announce that the 2011 Peter Nygh Hague Conference Internship has been awarded to Ms Melissa Hanks. The award will provide financial assistance for Melissa to complete an internship with The Hague Conference on Private International Law in The Netherlands.

The award will be presented by John McCarthy AO FAIIA, National President of the AIIA and Damian Sturzaker, President of the Australian Branch of the International Law Association, at a function at Allens Arthur Robinson, Level 28, Deutsche Bank Place, cnr of Hunter and Phillip Streets, Sydney, at 6PM on Thursday 9 June. Media welcome; call Katie Lokker on (02) 9230 4243.

Melissa graduated from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) with a Bachelor of Arts majoring in international studies, with first class honours. She has a keen interest in international commercial law focussing on the area of dispute resolution and mediation, and in February 2011 was a member of the UNSW team at the International Chamber of Commerce International Commercial Mediation Competition in Paris. Melissa is excited about joining the international team of leading experts at The Hague Conference. She is looking forward to working on the area of commercial dispute resolution during her program in The Netherlands.

It is a wonderful opportunity to live and work in a city which is home to many of the world's leading international law organizations. Katie Price, the 2008 Nygh Intern concluded her report on her internship by saying 'I had the time of my life thus far.' The AIIA and ILA(AB) hope that the same will be true for Melissa.

2011 is the fifth year that the Nygh Internship has been awarded. Each year, the internship provides either a student, graduate or post-graduate with the rare opportunity to travel to The Hague and work in the area of Private International Law. Successful applicants receive a contribution towards their living expenses for the duration of the internship. Prospective applicants should visit the AIIA's website at [www.aiia.asn.au](http://www.aiia.asn.au) or email Nicola Nygh at [Nicola.Nygh@aar.com.au](mailto:Nicola.Nygh@aar.com.au).

The Peter Nygh Hague Conference Internship is an award in memory of the late Hon Dr Peter Nygh AM, a leading international lawyer, former judge of the Family Court of Australia and an Australian delegate to, and a rapporteur of, The Hague Conference. In 2002, Dr Nygh was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in part "for service to international law, particularly through honorary assistance to The Hague Conference".

Dr Nygh's family donated funds to establish the Peter Nygh Hague Conference Internship. An additional \$50,000 was donated by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, and Allens Arthur and Robinson is generously supporting the administration of the Award. Further donations are being sought to support this initiative. All donations are tax deductible.

### **Background information**

The Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) [www.aiia.asn.au](http://www.aiia.asn.au) was established in 1933 as an independent non-political body to promote an interest in and understanding of international affairs. The AIIA operates nationwide with 1,700 members across seven State and Territory branches. The AIIA provides a forum for discussion, educates, and disseminates ideas via its journal *Australian Journal of International Affairs* and book series including *Australia in World Affairs*. The Governor-General of Australia, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC is the AIIA's Honorary Visitor and Patron.

The Australian Branch of the International Law Association [ILA (AB)] [www.ila.org.au](http://www.ila.org.au) promotes:

- the study, elucidation and advancement of international law, public and private
- the making of proposals for the solution of conflicts of law and for the unification of law
- the study of comparative law; and
- the unification of law.

The International Law Association has over 50 branches worldwide and a growing membership of academics and practising professionals with an interest in international law. Membership is available to all persons interested in international law. The Hon Dr Peter Nygh AM was a past president of ILA (AB) and was also active in the international organisation of the ILA. While president of the ILA (AB), he promoted co-operation between the ILA (AB) and the AIIA.

The Hague Conference on Private International Law [www.hcch.net/index\\_en.php](http://www.hcch.net/index_en.php) is a global inter-governmental organisation with over 60 Member States representing all continents. A melting pot of different legal traditions, The Hague Conference aims for the 'progressive unification' of private international law rules. The work of The Hague Conference involves finding internationally-agreed approaches to issues such as jurisdiction of courts, applicable law, and the recognition and enforcement of judgements in a wide range of areas, from commercial law and banking law to international civil procedure and from child protection to matters of marriage and personal status.

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