On 24-25 May 2014, Undergraduate, Masters and PhD students from different universities around the world convened at Renmin University of China (RUC), Beijing to participate in the 2nd Annual International Forum for Law School Students, co-sponsored by Renmin Law School and Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law.

RUC generously covered all the expenses of participating students and I was delighted to have been given the opportunity to represent Sydney Law School at this wonderful event. The forum commenced on Saturday morning, with Prof. Jiang Dong of Renmin Law School and Prof. Lloyd Wilson of Indiana University formally opening proceedings and introducing the forum’s topic – “Law and Justice Under Globalisation”. Prof. Han Dayuan, Dean of Renmin Law School, then delivered a welcoming address and discussed the influence of globalisation on China from an economic, cultural and, of course, legal perspective. He encouraged participating students to keep an open mind over the course of the weekend in discussing the varied responses of different countries to what are essentially universal issues. Prof. Dayuan noted that we had a great deal to learn from each other and concluded by thanking students in advance for the papers that we had each prepared for the forum.

So began a day of thought-provoking presentations in the Ming De lecture theatre. Each student had 20-30 minutes to deliver his or her paper followed by 5 minutes of Q&A from a panel and the audience. Jan Rausch of Ludwig-Maximilians University of Munich and Michael Knight of Indiana University delivered particularly interesting papers. Jan discussed Regulatory Competition in European company law while Michael described the potential role of Neuroimaging Technology in criminal proceedings. During the “Law and Ethics” session of the forum, I delivered my paper, which was a comparative study of the Australian, Japanese and Dutch responses to the topical issue of euthanasia.

The following day, RUC hosted a Model United Nations Conference, with each visiting student acting as the UN Delegate for his or her country of origin. Prof. Jiang Dong again opened the proceedings, highlighting the important role that many law students will one day play in resolving international issues. The case study for the conference centered on the disappearance of MH370 and the associated search and rescue effort. We discussed at length international law issues and quickly realised how difficult it must be to reach consensus in a forum where there are so many competing interests at play. If it wasn’t the USA vetoing a proposed resolution it was Russia or China doing so. In the end, we managed to agree on several important issues and I was pleased to have been given the Award for Best Delegate at the conclusion of the conference.

On top of the Forum and Model United Nations Conference, RUC thoughtfully planned a range of activities to showcase the city of Beijing, including tours of Tiananmen Square and the Summer Palace. Overall, I felt honoured to have represented Sydney Law School in Beijing and for that I must thank the Centre for Asian and Pacific Law within the University of Sydney (CAPLUS) for their nomination. It was an invaluable experience engaging with like-minded students from
around the world and I was inspired by many of the ideas and issues discussed over
the weekend. RUC was very accommodating and I hope to return to Beijing sometime
in the future.

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