

woes of developing countries can mean the governments seek investment as the overriding priority, but don't have the power to control the way in which domestic investment is regulated. It is a difficult situation, summarised by an Indian proverb: "The only thing worse than being exploited is not being exploited at all".

The result of this is that shoe manufacturers can set up factories in Asia where workers work a compulsory 7 day week without rest, with strictly enforced targets. Mining companies operate mines in developing countries that have no effective law to prevent the pollution which poisons rivers and destroys ecosystems. Oil companies are able to construct oil pipelines in Africa which displace thousands of local people without satisfactory compensation or equitable shares in the profits.

The law is not keeping up with MNCs because they are only subject to the domestic laws of the country in which

their operations are located. Corporations cannot be brought before the ICJ (International Court of Justice).

But it need not be all gloom and doom. It is possible for globalisation to bring about a rise of standards rather than a fall. For example, financial markets around the world are rapidly tightening their prudential regulations because big investors will refuse to trade through these markets unless the safety and security of transacting via those markets can be assured. Consumer pressure has led to 'dolphin friendly' tuna labelling, creating a competitive advantage for companies boasting this. Informed consumers have effected a change in behaviour where the law failed after the WTO refused to allow countries to ban imports of harmfully-fished tuna.

As citizens of a relatively wealthy country, we have a responsibility to ensure that globalisation is not simply an opportunity for MNCs from developed nations to gain cheap

access to poorer nations without any care for the people or natural resources that facilitated their profits. This responsibility falls on us as consumers, as members of corporations, and as individuals - particularly as we are beneficiaries of global trade. As consumers, we must become more aware of the origin of the products we buy, and of the impact the manufacturing process had on the environment and the workers. As members of corporations, we must be energetic in monitoring our companies' performance and question them by letters and attendance at meetings. We must also ensure that our own government shows leadership on this issue both in the domestic and international arenas. The law is struggling to keep up with the pace of MNCs on their globalisation push - we must play our own part in exerting influence on them.

## international impact

*by Jacqui Boymal, Manager, Young Lawyers' Section*

It is very easy to become engrossed in the day to day pressures of life as a young lawyer and forget about the bigger picture. However, by joining an international legal organisation, you can utilise your legal prowess to contribute to the profession on a world wide scale.

The following international legal organisations welcome the involvement of young lawyers:

### **The Australian Red Cross - International Humanitarian Law Department.**

The International Humanitarian Law Unit (IHL) focuses on protecting victims of war and limiting the

methods of warfare, by promoting adherence to the Geneva Conventions during times of conflict. This subsection of the Australian Red Cross ensures that the Victorian public understands the concept of IHL by disseminating information to the media, the Australian Defence Force, Red Cross members, students and non-government organisations.

Young lawyers may become involved in this organisation by joining the IHL Committee. Law students are also encouraged to participate in the IHL's annual Essay Competition. Alternatively, students may apply for positions as winter or summer interns. For further information please contact Jim Blackwell on 9685 9840 or by e-mail at [jblackwell@vic.redcross.org.au](mailto:jblackwell@vic.redcross.org.au)

### **International Association of Young Lawyers**

The International Association of Young Lawyers (AIJA) is an apolitical organisation promoting mutual cooperation and understanding amongst young lawyers worldwide. The AIJA provides a vehicle for young lawyers looking to develop international networks of associates and conducts legal seminars in a variety of aspects of international legal practice. The focal event on the AIJA calendar is the Annual Congress, which was held this year in Helsinki.

Young lawyers may become members of the AIJA by completing a membership form. Membership forms may be obtained from the

organisation's web-site at [www.ibanet.org](http://www.ibanet.org).  
[www.aija.org](http://www.aija.org).

## International Bar Association

The International Bar Association (IBA) is the world's largest international organisation of Law Societies, Bar Associations and lawyers in international practice. The IBA provides an open forum within which lawyers from all around the world may communicate and exchange ideas. The IBA has over 57 specialist committees including banking and finance, medicine and the law and practice management and technology.

Members receive access to a vast membership network, section journals, discounts to attend international conferences and opportunities to publish papers and speak at conferences. Young lawyers may become members of the IBA by downloading the membership form from the IBA web-site at

## Human Rights Watch

The Human Rights Watch is dedicated to protecting the basic rights of people all around the globe. It seeks to prevent discrimination, uphold political freedoms and protect people from inhumane conduct during wartime. The Human Rights Watch monitors human rights violations in over 70 countries and attempts to publicly expose and prosecute offenders.

Young lawyers may become members by donating \$50.00 US a year. Membership entitles you to receive the Human Rights Watch Update quarterly newsletter and to be notified of upcoming events. In addition, members are encouraged to participate in Human Rights Watch campaigns and to report violations of human rights.

For information on how to become a member please visit the web site at [www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org).

## Amnesty International

Amnesty International has recently established the Victorian Legal Group. Law students, barristers, solicitors, judges' associates and academics are all invited to become members. Members are encouraged to use their legal training and skill for the promotion and protection of human rights. The Legal Group is currently focusing its energy on lobbying the Australian Government to ratify the proposal for an International Criminal Court and increasing public awareness of this issue.

The Legal Group meets every second month and often invites guest speakers to address the group on topical issues. For further information or to join the Amnesty International Victorian Legal Group, please contact Carolyn Graden on 9427 7055 or by email at [rcvic@ozemail.com.au](mailto:rcvic@ozemail.com.au)

For more information on any of the above, please contact: Jacqui Boymal, Manager Young Lawyers' Section, tel 9607 9379, email [jboymal@liv.asn.au](mailto:jboymal@liv.asn.au)

Aurora Kostezky  
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