“Free Trade Agreements: Where is the world heading?”

From 9 March 2007 to 10 March 2007 the Tim Fischer Centre, together with Bond University Faculty of Law, hosted an international and interdisciplinary conference at the Holiday Inn, Gold Coast, Australia.

The conference provided an opportunity for participants, including government officials, lawyers, judges, academics, and students from over 10 countries to share research findings, explore the implications of the changing landscape of world trade, and draw lessons for the future. Among the most distinguished speakers were the Honourable Christine Lagarde, the then French Minister of Foreign Trade and the current French Minister of Finance; the Honourable Tim Fischer, Former Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade; and Mr Peter Grey, Deputy Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia.

Apart from the preceding keynote speeches, law academics, legal practitioners, and government officials who specialized in the field of international trade law also delivered speeches or presented papers, including Maureen Irish (University of Windsor, Canada), Mitsuo Matsushita (University of Tokyo, Japan), Mary Elizabeth Chelliah (Ministry of Trade and Industry of Singapore), Susy Frankel (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand), Daniel Moulis and Jun Wang (Australian lawyers), David Morgan (University of Melbourne and DFAT), Meredith Kolsky Lewis (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand), Arjuna Nadaraja (Attorney-General’s Department), Henry Gao (University of Hong Kong), Andrew Mitchell (University of Melbourne), Y.S. Lee (St. John’s University, USA), Anthony Cassimatis (University of Queensland), Michael Hahn (University of Waikato, New Zealand), Christopher Arup (Monash University), and Jan Macintosh (Griffith University). Most of the speeches and papers presented in the conference have been published in a book bearing the title of *Challenges to Multilateral Trade: Bilateral, Preferential and Regional Agreements* (Wolters Kluwer 2008).