

INTERNATIONAL FAMILY LAW SYMPOSIUM 2026

Burning Issues and Trends in International Family Law



19 May 2026 (Tuesday) | 9:00 am to 6:00 pm
Raja Aziz Addruse Auditorium
Level 2, Wisma Badan Peguam Malaysia
2 Leboh Pasar Besar, 50050 Kuala Lumpur



**International
Academy of
Family Lawyers**

Organised by the Bar Council Family Law Committee
in collaboration with the International Academy of Family Lawyers

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WELCOME NOTE

CO-CHAIRPERSON BAR COUNCIL FAMILY LAW COMMITTEE



It is my great pleasure to welcome all of you to the inaugural International Family Law Symposium jointly organised by the Bar Council Family Law Committee in collaboration with IAFL.

This symposium marks a significant milestone for the family law community in Malaysia. As family dynamics continue to evolve across jurisdictions, the practice of family law increasingly demands not only legal expertise, but also sensitivity in adapting to the families' demands.

Last year, many of us had the pleasure of meeting several of you in Penang during the LAWASIA Family Law & Children's Rights Conference. That gathering reminded us of the increasingly important role Malaysia can play as a platform for cross-border family law issues and intellectual discourse.

Over the years, Malaysian family lawyers have continued to demonstrate the agility to provide high-quality legal services in increasingly complex international family disputes. We have a growing population of mediators and collaborative practitioners in our jurisdiction, a testament that we are open to a multifaceted way of resolving family disputes.

In 2023, we also had the privilege of organising what was then the first Malaysian family law delegation visit to the Singapore Family Justice Courts. That visit was an invaluable opportunity for us to exchange ideas, observe best practices and strengthen regional ties among family law practitioners and institutions. Experiences such as these have inspired us to continue building stronger international collaborations, which have ultimately led to today's inaugural symposium.

On a personal note, my introduction to IAFL came through when I first spoke at a webinar hosted in 2024 by the former President of IAFL, Rachael Kelsey, together with Shabina Begum. As part of the pilot cohort of the IAFL Institute for Further Learning, I came to appreciate the important role IAFL plays in connecting family lawyers across borders and facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experience in an increasingly international area of practice. It is, therefore, especially meaningful for us to collaborate with IAFL for this inaugural symposium.

To our international delegates, "Selamat Datang"! We hope that beyond the academic discussions and professional exchanges, you will also have the opportunity to experience the warmth and diversity of our country.

I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to all panellists, committee members, secretariat staff and participants whose support and contributions have made this inaugural event possible.

We hope that you will find the symposium enriching, engaging and inspiring, and we look forward to many more collaborations in the years ahead.

Thank you.

Kee Hui Yee

Member, Bar Council; and

Co-Chairperson, Bar Council Family Law Committee

WELCOME NOTE

PRESIDENT
ASIA-PACIFIC CHAPTER, IAFL



As President of the Asia-Pacific Chapter of IAFL, I would like to warmly welcome you to the International Family Law Symposium here in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, co-hosted by my Chapter of IAFL and the Bar Council Family Law Committee.

IAFL is a worldwide association of practising lawyers who are recognised by their peers as the most experienced and skilled family law specialists in their respective countries. It was formed in 1986 to improve the practice of law and administration of justice in the area of divorce and family law throughout the world. It is a pleasure to be having one of our 40th anniversary celebrations this year with our Malaysian colleagues.

Our symposium will focus on cross-border family law issues involving parenting disputes, issues of property division and jurisdictional and forum contests.

We hope that it will be an educational and interactive experience for attendees and will encourage both interest in local lawyers in joining IAFL and increased cooperation between our two host organisations.

I hope to meet and speak with as many of you as possible during the course of our symposium.

Warm regards,

John Spender

*President, Asia-Pacific Chapter, IAFL
Melbourne, Australia*

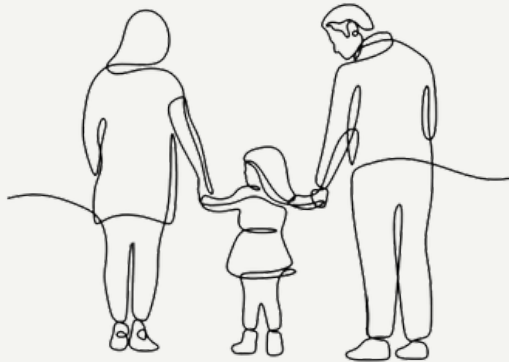
ABOUT THE MALAYSIAN BAR

The Malaysian Bar was established under section 41 of the Legal Profession Act 1976. It is an independent Bar whose aims are, *inter alia*, to uphold the rule of law and the cause of justice, and protect the interest of the legal profession as well as that of the public.

The legal profession in Malaysia is a fused one, where practitioners are admitted as advocates and solicitors of the High Court of Malaya, authorised to both advise clients and represent them in court. Each advocate and solicitor is automatically a Member of the Malaysian Bar so long as he/she holds a valid Practising Certificate.

The Bar Council comprises 42 Members who are elected annually to manage the affairs and execute the functions of the Malaysian Bar. The Bar Council consists of the immediate past President and Vice-President of the Malaysian Bar, the Chairman of each of the 12 State Bar Committees, one member elected by each of the 12 State Bar Committees to be its representative to the Bar Council, and 16 members elected from throughout Peninsular Malaysia by way of postal ballot.

The Office Bearers, namely the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, are elected annually by the Bar Council at its first meeting which is traditionally held immediately after the Annual General Meeting of the Malaysian Bar. They are full time practitioners and their honorary appointments are subject to re-election every year.



ABOUT IAFL

IAFL is a worldwide association of practising lawyers recognised by their peers as the most experienced and skilled family law specialists in their respective countries. Formed in 1986, IAFL aims to improve the practice of law and the administration of justice in the area of divorce and family law worldwide.

Since 1986, IAFL has steadily expanded its global reach. It now represents 127 jurisdictions and has 1,080 Fellows (ie members), including 42 judicial Fellows and 27 associate (ie academic) Fellows. IAFL currently has four regional Chapters: a USA Chapter with 414 Fellows from 41 states; a European Chapter with 346 Fellows from 36 jurisdictions; an Asia-Pacific Chapter with 171 Fellows from 14 jurisdictions; and a Canadian Chapter with 65 Fellows from six provinces and territories.



MEET OUR TEAM

Bar Council Family Law Committee (2025/26)

Kee Hui Yee, *Co-Chairperson*

Rajashree Suppiah, *Co-Chairperson*

Gowri Subbaiyah, *Co-Deputy Chairperson*

Siew Choon Jern, *Co-Deputy Chairperson*

Asia-Pacific Chapter, IAFL

John Spender, *President, Asia-Pacific Chapter*

Inger Blackford, *President Elect*

Caroline McNally, *President Elect Designate*

William Sloan, *Vice President*

Wong Kai Yun, *Immediate Past President, Asia-Pacific Chapter*

Samantha Gershon, *Treasurer*

Eleanor Lau, *Secretary*

Masami Kittaka, *Elected Member, Management Committee*

Jason Tian, *Elected Member, Management Committee*

Ivan Cheong, *Co-opted Member, Management Committee*

Lavanya Regunathan Fischer, *Co-opted Member, Management Committee*

Jemma Mackenzie, *Co-opted Member, Management Committee*



PROGRAMME

8:30 am

Registration

9:00 am

Opening Ceremony

Welcoming Remarks by

Kee Hui Yee (*Co-Chairperson, Bar Council Family Law Committee*)

Opening Remarks by

John Spender (*President of Asia-Pacific Chapter, IAFL*) (*Australia*)

Keynote Address by

The Honourable Justice Dato' Lee Swee Seng (*Federal Court Judge, Malaysia*)

10:00 am

Session 1: What is HOT in Property Division in Cross-Border Disputes?

Moderators: Kee Hui Yee (*Co-Chairperson, Bar Council Family Law Committee*) and Kee Lay Lian (*Singapore*)

Panellists: The Honourable Justice Datin Paduka Evrol Mariette Peters (*Court of Appeal Judge, Malaysia*), Prawidha Murti (*Indonesia*), Alexander Leuftink (*Netherlands*), Elizabeth Hicks (*England*) and Kim Kieller (*Canada*)

11:30 am

Coffee Break

11:45 am

Session 2: What is HOT in Parenting Matters in Cross-Border Disputes?

Moderators: Rajashree Suppiah (*Co-Chairperson, Bar Council Family Law Committee*) and Evan Marks (*USA*)

Panellists: The Honourable Justice Dato' Faizah bt Jamaludin (*Court of Appeal Judge, Malaysia*), Foo Yet Ngo (*Malaysia*), Liuda Yablokova (*Russia*), Sally Nicholes (*Australia*), Dr Hassan Elhais (*UAE*) and Ayako Ikeda (*Japan*)

1:30 pm

Lunch Break

3:00 pm

Session 3: What is HOT in Jurisdiction and Forum Issues in Cross-Border Disputes?

Moderators: Honey Tan Lay Ean (*Past Chairperson, Bar Council Family Law Committee*) and James Stewart (*England*)

Panellists: Foo Yet Ngo (*Malaysia*), Jacqueline Campbell (*Australia*), Jaerey Velasco (*Hong Kong, China*), Anil Malhotra (*India*) and Stacy Heard (*USA*)

4:45 pm

Closing Ceremony

Closing Reflections by

Rajashree Suppiah (*Co-Chairperson, Bar Council Family Law Committee*)

Global Perspectives by

Heather Hostetter (*President, IAFL*) (*USA*)

Closing Address by

Anand Raj (*President, Malaysian Bar*)

5:00 pm

Drinks Reception and Networking Session

SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS' PROFILES

Opening Ceremony



Keynote Address

The Honourable Justice Dato' Lee Swee Seng (*Federal Court Judge, Malaysia*)

The Honourable Justice Dato' Lee Swee Seng graduated with a Bachelor of Laws (Hons) from the University of Malaya (now known as Universiti Malaya, "UM") and obtained his Master of Laws from the same university. He also holds an MBA degree from the University of Southern Cross, Australia.

Justice Dato' Lee was admitted as an advocate and solicitor of the High Court of Malaya in February 1985 and was in practice until May 2010, when he was appointed a Judicial Commissioner of the High Court of Malaya. He was made a Judge of the High Court of Malaya in 2014, elevated to the Court of Appeal on 8 Aug 2019, and most recently, to the Federal Court on 20 May 2025.

Justice Dato' Lee was the Family Court Judge in the Kuala Lumpur High Court in 2015. He is a strong believer in mediation for resolving matrimonial disputes and almost every contested divorce before him was resolved through mediation, with fewer than 10 cases proceeding to full hearing that year. He is convinced that there are no better family arrangements for children other than those agreed upon by their parents.

Justice Dato' Lee was a visiting Fellow of Taylor's University's Law School and a part-time lecturer with the Law Faculty of his *alma mater* for the LLM programme. He is also an Elite Fellow with the Law Faculty of UM. Justice Dato' Lee was a trained advocacy trainer with the Malaysian Bar and a certified mediator with the Malaysian Mediation Centre (now Malaysian International Mediation Centre, "MIMC") before joining the Bench. He also achieved the highest award in Toastmasters International as a Distinguished Toastmaster.

Justice Dato' Lee was the General Editor of the first edition of *Law and Practice of Family Law in Malaysia* (Sweet & Maxwell, 2019), where he also contributed two chapters on "An Overview of Family Law in Malaysia" and "Mediation in Resolving Matrimonial Disputes". He and The Honourable Justice Datin Paduka Evrol Mariette Peters were General Editors for the second edition of the publication, launched on 3 Oct 2025. Justice Dato' Lee is also a committee member of the Court-Annexed Mediation Committee of the Malaysian Judiciary and the Managing Judge for Negeri Sembilan and Melaka Courts.



Welcoming Remarks

Kee Hui Yee (*Co-Chairperson, Bar Council Family Law Committee*)

Kee Hui Yee was admitted as an advocate and solicitor of the High Court of Malaya in 2019. She graduated from the University of Reading, United Kingdom and is currently a partner at Kanesalingam & Co. She was elected to the Bar Council in 2022 as its youngest member, and is the Co-Chairperson of the Bar Council Family Law Committee and the Bar Council National Young Lawyers and Pupils Committee. In her family practice, she advises clients on cross-border matters involving asset division, financial arrangements and issues concerning children. Her experience includes advising on a dispute involving the estate of a billionaire with assets and testamentary instruments across multiple jurisdictions, as well as acting in highly contentious corporate shareholder disputes involving family members.

Hui Yee is actively involved in public interest litigation and has worked on notable cases, including *National Registration Department v A Child* (2020) and *Swatch Group (Malaysia) v Chief of the Ministry of Home Affairs* (2024). Hui Yee is an accredited mediator with MIMC and a trained collaborative lawyer with the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals. She is also a member of the Commonwealth Lawyers Association, LAWASIA and the Inter-Pacific Bar Association, and is currently in the pilot cohort of the IAFL Institute for Further Learning.



Opening Remarks

John Spender (*President of Asia-Pacific Chapter, IAFL*)

John Spender was admitted as a lawyer in New South Wales in 1992 and in Victoria in 1993, and has practised in family law ever since. He was accredited by the Law Institute of Victoria ("LIV") as a specialist practitioner in family law in 2003. In 2007, he joined Kennedy Partners, a specialist family law practice, where he became a partner in 2012.

He has expertise in all aspects of family law, including parenting and financial matters, and has worked extensively in international family law. He has also been an active member of committees of the Family Law Section of LIV since 2003, including as a member of the Executive Committee since 2011, and as Chair of the Maintenance and Property Sub-Committee from 2011 and 2018 and the Courts Practice Sub-Committee from 2019 to 2023. He also received a Distinguished Service Award from LIV in 2023.

John has written or co-authored several papers and has presented at continuing legal education seminars (both in Australia and overseas) since 2009. He is the co-author of *Focus Family Law: Tenth Edition*, published by LexisNexis in Australia in November 2025. He has also lectured at Deakin University, Melbourne since 2021.



SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS' PROFILES

Session 1: What is HOT in Property Division in Cross-Border Disputes?

Speakers



The Honourable Justice Datin Paduka Evrol Mariette Peters (*Court of Appeal Judge, Malaysia*)

The Honourable Justice Datin Paduka Evrol Mariette Peters has been serving as a Court of Appeal Judge since July 2025. She earned both her Bachelor of Laws and Master of Laws degrees from UM. Following the completion of her pupillage in 1992, she was admitted as an advocate and solicitor of the High Court of Malaya. She began her career as a law lecturer, teaching evidence, jurisprudence and land law. During her academic tenure, she published extensively, including the leading textbook, *Law of Evidence in Malaysia*.

In 2002, she returned to private practice at a Kuala Lumpur firm, specialising in intellectual property, media law and data protection, and subsequently became a partner. She remained active in the Malaysian Bar and authored *To Be or Not To Be a Lawyer*, a guide for young practitioners. In 2017, she joined WongPartnership LLP in Singapore as Associate Director of Knowledge, Information and Technology, overseeing the firm's research and knowledge management functions.

Justice Peters was appointed to the Bench in 2019, serving first at the Johor Bahru High Court before her transfer to the Kuala Lumpur Family Court in 2022. She was elevated to the Court of Appeal in July 2025.

She currently serves on the Judiciary's Committees on Family Law, Mediation, and the Judiciary Yearbook, and chairs the ASEAN Standing Committee of Women in Law.

Her most recent publication is *Law and Practice of Family Law in Malaysia*, co-authored and published in August 2025.



Prawidha Murti (*Indonesia*)

Prawidha Murti has been practising litigation for more than 18 years, during which she has handled many cross-border corporate-commercial disputes, bankruptcy and restructuring matters (Penundaan Kewajiban Pembayaran Utang), employment disputes, as well as domestic and international arbitration, among other matters. She has also assisted in various foreign proceedings before courts and arbitration tribunals. She gained experience working with many prominent international law firms, foreign counsel and UK Queen's Counsel (now known as King's Counsel).

Prawidha has since expanded beyond commercial litigation to include cross-border family law, cross-border asset settlements and criminal proceedings. She also maintains a niche practice in anti-monopoly proceedings, including hearings before the Indonesian Competition Supervisory Authority as well as employment disputes before the Industrial Relations Courts.



Alexander Leuftink (*Netherlands*)

Alexander Leuftink is a partner of LINK Lawyers in Amsterdam, Netherlands. He has extensive experience in litigation and specialises in asset allocation in international divorce situations and pre-judgment attachments. He also has expertise in jurisdictional disputes.

Alexander is a specialised child abduction lawyer (Hague and non-Hague Conventions) and a member of the Dutch Association of International Child Abduction Lawyers. He is a qualified divorce mediator with the Dutch Association of Family Lawyers and Divorce Mediators (vFAS) and is registered with the Mediators Federation Netherlands. He also has extensive experience using new media in mediations.

From 2018 to 2023, Alexander was the President of vFAS and of the Institute for Mediation and Family Education, vFAS's educational institute. Alexander also served on numerous vFAS committees.



Kim Kieller (*Canada*)

Kim Kieller was called to the Bar in 1986 and has acted as counsel in family law since her call. She has been motivated by access-to-justice issues, which have been a pillar of her practice.

While still a steadfast litigator, Kim undertook her first mediation course in 1995. Over the following years, she became certified in mediation and in both family and civil arbitration, while also speaking on trial advocacy and procedure. In 2017, Kim graduated with a Master of Laws degree in Dispute Resolution from Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto, Canada.

As of January 2024, Kim no longer undertakes private client retainers so that she can focus her practice on mediation, arbitration and consultation.

Moderators



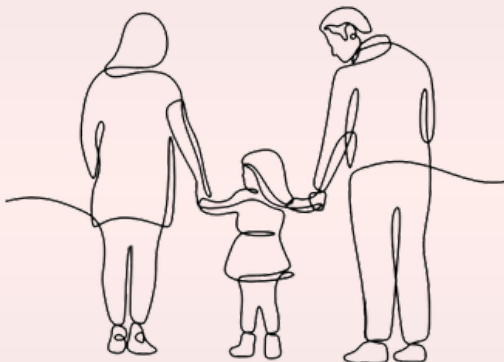
Kee Hui Yee (*Co-Chairperson, Bar Council Family Law Committee*)



Kee Lay Lian (*Singapore*)

Kee Lay Lian graduated from the National University of Singapore in 1985. She specialises in family law, adoption, probate and trusts, and has successfully handled many complex cases. She is also active in *pro bono* work and has been a volunteer with the Armed Forces Association Legal Information Service in Singapore since 2004, as well as a volunteer lawyer with the Legal Aid Bureau, Singapore.

Kee Lay Lian is a facilitator for family law, wills, probate and administration courses at the Singapore Institute of Legal Education. She is an associate mediator at the Singapore Mediation Centre and volunteers as a mediator with the Small Claims Tribunals. She is also a collaborative family practitioner, parenting coordinator and full member of the Society of Estate and Trust Practitioners.



SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS' PROFILES

Session 2: What is HOT in Parenting Matters in Cross-Border Disputes?

Speakers



The Honourable Justice Dato' Faizah bt Jamaludin (*Court of Appeal Judge, Malaysia*)

The Honourable Justice Dato' Faizah bt Jamaludin currently serves as a Court of Appeal Judge. She was appointed Judicial Commissioner in 2017, High Court Judge in 2019 and was elevated to the Court of Appeal in 2024. Her involvement in family law, particularly in cross-border child custody disputes, began during her service as a Judge of the Kuala Lumpur Family Court. Since 2019, she has represented the Malaysian Judiciary on the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices' Working Group on Cross-Border Disputes Involving Children, contributing to regional judicial cooperation and to the development of mediation frameworks, ethical standards for mediators, and shared judicial aspirations and principles for child-related disputes within ASEAN.

Justice Faizah holds an LLB (Hons) degree and an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from Brunel University London, and an LLM degree from the University of Southampton. She was called to the Bar of England and Wales by the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple and admitted as an advocate and solicitor of the High Court of Malaya. Justice Faizah was elected an Overseas Benchers of the Inner Temple in 2018 and currently serves as President of the Malaysia Inner Temple Alumni Association.



Liuda Yablokova (*Russia*)

Liuda Yablokova was born in Poltava, USSR. She is the Managing Partner of SKY LAWYERS, a law firm based in Saint Petersburg, Russia. She practises international and domestic family law and works extensively on cross-border cases, including abduction and rights of access cases under the Hague "Child's" Convention. She has also participated in matters involving jurisdictional conflicts, including high-profile international divorce matters involving investments, trusts and family foundations. She has also negotiated and provided legal support to a number of her domestic clients in relation to overseas acquisitions and ventures.

Liuda writes and lectures on international and domestic family law topics at domestic and international family law seminars and conferences. She earned her MA in Literature (*magna cum laude*) in 1991 from Saint Petersburg State University, and some years later, her BA in Law from the same university. She was admitted to the Saint Petersburg Bar in 2012 and is qualified to practise law throughout the Russian Federation. She speaks fluent English and has a basic understanding of French and Spanish. Her native languages are Russian and Ukrainian.



Sally Nicholes (*Australia*)

Sally Nicholes is the Managing Partner of Nicholes Family Lawyers in Melbourne, Victoria, and is considered a market-leading family lawyer in Australia and internationally. She established Nicholes Family Lawyers in 2005, having practised exclusively in family law from 1995, and has since provided an exceptional level of service that sets her apart from her peers. Sally is an accredited Independent Children's Lawyer, a qualified collaborative lawyer and a Nationally Accredited Mediator. Sally holds particular expertise in international disputes, complex property cases and matters affecting the LGBTIQ+ community. She has been internationally recognised for her instrumental role in international child abduction matters and for achieving meaningful outcomes in matters concerning gender dysphoria and special medical procedures affecting children.

Sally provides pragmatic advice, infused with warmth and empathy, to ensure her clients' best interests are of utmost concern. She is profoundly intuitive and provides astute, sensitive emotional support to clients as they navigate the complexity of their circumstances. Sally is consistently appraised by her peers for her commitment to community advocacy and pro bono work, and is deeply involved in legislative and policy reform through her involvement with the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation. She is Deputy Chair of the World Congress on Family Law and Children's Rights, a Fellow of IAFL and a member of the Australian Institute of Family Law Arbitrators and Mediators. She also sits on the Board of Children's Rights International and Voice of Change.



Dr Hassan Elhais (*United Arab Emirates*)

With over 18 years of experience practising as a legal consultant at Amal Alrashedi Lawyers & Legal Consultants, one of the most reputable family law firms in the UAE, **Dr Hassan Elhais** has extensive knowledge of the legal sector. He is committed to delivering the best possible legal solutions through his varied expertise, which includes arbitration, family law and inheritance law, among others. With significant experience in the legal market, he specialises in drafting legal documents and legal opinions for clients. He is also a licensed practitioner at the Dubai International Financial Centre Courts.

In recognition of his expertise, Dr Elhais has been recommended by embassies of many countries. He was awarded the title of "Best Legal Consultant" for 2016. He has also published many articles and given interviews in prominent media outlets, and is a regular contributor to major local and international newspapers and magazines. Dr Elhais is regularly invited to speak at international conferences on the subject of family law.

Dr Elhais obtained a diploma in private law, which covered Shariah law, the philosophy of laws, litigation law, commercial law and civil law. He also holds a Master's degree in Law, followed by a PhD in Law awarded in 2019.

In addition, Dr Elhais has extensive experience advising expatriates living in the UAE.



Ayako Ikeda (*Japan*)

Ayako Ikeda graduated with an LLB degree from the University of Tokyo (1982), followed by an LLM degree from the University of London (1985) and a further LLM from Georgetown University Law Center, Washington (1991). She was admitted to the Bar Association in Japan in 1984 and has since built a distinguished career in family and international private law.

From 2002 to 2005, she served as Professor at the Legal Training and Research Institute of Japan, where she contributed extensively to legal education and professional training. Fluent in both Japanese and English, her areas of practice include arbitration, divorce, child custody and visitation matters, child support, enforcement of property division orders, Hague Convention child abduction cases, pre- and post-nuptial agreements, and succession law.

Moderators



Rajashree Suppiah (*Co-Chairperson, Bar Council Family Law Committee*)

Rajashree Suppiah is an advocate and solicitor of the High Court of Malaya, based in Kuala Lumpur. She holds an LLB degree from the University of London and has practised law since 1997.

Her practice includes litigation, mediation and collaborative practice, with experience in matrimonial disputes, cross-border custody, employment, corporate and commercial matters, medical negligence and probate.

She is President of the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals and Co-Chairperson of the Bar Council Family Law Committee. She is also actively involved in collaborative practice initiatives within the Malaysian Bar.



Evan Marks (*USA*)

Evan Marks is the founding partner of Marks & West, PA in Miami, Florida. He earned his Bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Miami, has been a member of the Florida Bar since 1981, and has been board-certified by the Florida Bar as a specialist in marital and family law since 1995. He is AV-rated by Martindale-Hubbell.

Marks is the Past President of the Collaborative Family Law Institute, a former President of the Family Law Section of the Florida Bar (2004), former member of the Commission on Responsible Fatherhood (1996 to 2002) and former President of the First Family Law Inn of Court (2000 to 2001).

Marks also teaches and is a frequent lecturer on family law and ethics, including at the Florida Family Law Section's Marital and Family Law Board Certification Review Course, the "Master's Seminar on Professionalism" at the Annual Florida Bar Convention and at the Advanced Judicial Studies College.

SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS' PROFILES

Session 3: What is HOT in Jurisdiction and Forum Issues in Cross-Border Disputes?

Speakers

Foo Yet Ngo (Malaysia)



Foo Yet Ngo is one of Malaysia's experienced family law practitioners, with over four decades devoted almost exclusively to matrimonial and family law. She is known for her advocacy in complex and contentious litigation, including multi-jurisdictional disputes involving children, international child abduction, relocation, high-value matrimonial assets and cross-border enforcement.

Foo was the first Malaysian invited to become a Fellow of IAFL, following her representation of the Australian Government in *Jacqueline Gillespie v Raja Bahrin* (1992), the highly publicised parental child abduction case involving a Malaysian prince.

She is the founder of Y N Foo & Partners, one of Malaysia's earliest family law firms.

Jacqueline Campbell (Australia)



Jacqueline Campbell is a founding partner of Forte Family Lawyers in Melbourne, Victoria, together with IAFL Fellows Jason Walker and Jemma McKenzie. She is accredited as a specialist in family law by the Law Institute of Victoria.

In 2026, Jacqueline has been recognised by Doyle's Guide as a "Leading Family and Divorce Lawyer", "Leading Family Lawyer (High-Value and Complex Property Matters)", "Recommended Parenting and Children's Matters Lawyer" and "Leading Prenuptial Agreement Lawyer".

She is also a member of the Maintenance and Property Committee, Family Law Section, Law Institute of Victoria; Family Law Section, Law Council of Australia; the American Bar Association; and the Australian Institute of Family Law Arbitrators and Mediators. Jacqueline is also Consultant Editor of *CCH Australian Family Law and Practice* and author of the chapters on financial agreements (including pre-nuptial agreements), spousal maintenance, maintenance agreements, parts of property, procedures and precedents. She is also a member of the IAFL Pensions Committee and a former member of the IAFL Asia-Pacific Chapter Executive Committee.

Jaerey Velasco (Hong Kong, China)



Jaerey Velasco is a partner at Payne Velasco, Hong Kong and leads the firm's Family and Matrimonial team. She brings extensive experience in both contentious and non-contentious family law matters, often involving complex international elements. Her practice spans a broad spectrum, including divorce, pre- and post-nuptial agreements, child custody and access arrangements, international relocation and financial settlements involving family trusts and third-party claims. In addition to matrimonial work, Jaerey advises on probate, wills and guardianship of minors.

Jaerey is a trained family mediator, a collaborative practitioner and an accredited private financial adjudicator. Jaerey serves as an executive committee member of the Hong Kong Family Law Association and a committee member of the Hong Kong Collaborative Practice Group.



Anil Malhotra (India)

Anil Malhotra is a distinguished senior advocate (equivalent to King's Counsel) with 42 years' standing as arguing counsel in courts across India, with multiple reported judgments. He holds a Bachelor of Science (1980), Bachelor of Laws (1983) and an LLM degree (1985), from the University of London. He has undertaken specialised studies in comparative family law at the London School of Economics and Law and Society at SOAS University of London.

Malhotra renders expert reports and professional opinions as expert counsel and assists as *amicus curiae* in Indian courts. He has also co-authored 10 influential books on family law and has contributed significantly to legal literature, with over 1,500 published columns. He is also internationally recognised for his contributions to family law and is the Secretary of the International Child Relocation Committee of IAFL. He has acted as *amicus curiae* on inter-country parental child removal incorporated in the Indian judgement referred to the Law Commission of India. He also served on the Indian Government Committee examining inter-parental child removal issues, leading to reports to the Government of India in 2018. Malhotra frequently lectures at prestigious institutions such as the National Judicial Academy and national law universities across India.

Malhotra specialises in matters of marriage; divorce; ancillary reliefs; domestic violence; and matters of children regarding welfare, removal, guardianship, custody and care; intercountry adoptions by Hague Adoption Convention / Hindu laws; maintenance; alimony; financial defrayals and family settlement; surrogacy; citizenship; passport; dual nationality; Indian laws of domicile; inheritance; wills and succession issues; remedies for foreign nationals; anti-suit injunctions; implementation and validity of foreign court orders; validity of decisions rendered by foreign courts under foreign laws; and issues related to double taxation and foreign investment in India.

In addition, Malhotra attended the Hague Conference meeting in Washington in 2025.



Stacy Heard (USA)

Stacy Heard, JD is a family law solo practitioner in Seattle, Washington, where she has served clients for over 25 years. She serves as the Financial Officer in the Family Law Section of the American Bar Association ("ABA"). She is also the Co-Chair of the International Law Committee of the ABA Family Law Section. She is a member of the Association of Family and Conciliatory Courts ("AFCC") (United States and Australian Chapters) and a past president of the Washington State Chapter of AFCC. Stacy is trained in cross-border mediation, arbitration, collaborative law and as a guardian *ad litem*. She is the author of *Washington Family Law* and *LexisNexis Practice Guide* (2019 to 2024), and co-author of *Family Law Attorneys and Parenting Evaluators — Improving Professional Collaboration*. Stacy is a frequent speaker on parenting plans and child custody issues in Washington State, nationally and internationally.

Moderators



Honey Tan Lay Ean (Malaysia)

Honey Tan Lay Ean is a consultant at Seira & Sharizad. She holds an LLB degree from the University of Buckingham, England and an LLM degree from the University of Warwick, UK.

She was admitted as an advocate and solicitor of the High Court of Malaya and called to the Bar of England and Wales by the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple. She is also an accredited mediator with the Malaysian International Mediation Centre (MIMC), with a focus on family matters.

She is a member of the International Academy of Collaborative Professionals and a past chairperson of the Bar Council Family Law Committee and the Bar Council Women's Rights Committee.



James Stewart (England)

James Stewart, MCI Arb is an international family lawyer and Co-Head of the Private Wealth sector at Penningtons Manches Cooper LLP, London. He is also a visiting professor at Ulster University.

He is admitted in England and Wales as well as Northern Ireland, and practises in family law, including arbitration and collaborative law. He is also involved in legal publishing, including serving as General Editor of *Family Law: A Global Guide*.

He has held roles within professional family law organisations and contributes to legal practice and policy discussions in the field.

SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS' PROFILES

Closing Ceremony



Closing Address

Anand Raj (*President, Malaysian Bar*)

Anand Raj currently serves as the President of the Malaysian Bar. He is the former Chairperson of the Bar Council Tax and Customs Committee, former Co-Chairperson of the Bar Council Corporate and Commercial Law Committee and former Chair of the International Fiscal Association, Malaysia Branch. Anand has been in practice since 1996 and a partner at Shearn Delamore & Co since 2003. He currently serves as the Head of the Tax Disputes Practice and the Co-Head of Competition Law and Antitrust Practice at the firm.

He was ranked by The Legal 500 Asia Pacific (2019–2025) as a “Leading Individual” in Tax and has been included in The Legal 500 Asia Pacific’s “Hall of Fame” for Tax (2025–2026) and Competition and Antitrust (2025–2026). Lexology (2025) recognised Anand as a “Global Elite Thought Leader” in Client Choice — Competition, a “Thought Leader” in Competition, and “Recommended” in Competition and Southeast Asia — Competition as well as Corporate Tax — Controversy and Southeast Asia — Corporate Tax. Asia Business Law Journal (2020–2024) recognised Anand as one of Malaysia’s Top 100 Lawyers in Competition Law and Antitrust, and Tax Disputes and Controversy. Asialaw Client Service Excellence (2021) recognised Anand as “The Highest Rated Lawyer To Work With” in Tax and Competition/Antitrust. Anand was recognised as Asia Tax Disputes and Litigation Practice Leader of the Year 2017 by the International Tax Review (“ITR”). Asialaw Leading Lawyers (2020–2024) recognised Anand as an “Elite Practitioner” in Competition/Antitrust as well as in Tax.

Anand was recognised as a “Highly Regarded Practitioner” in Indirect Tax and Tax Controversy (2019–2022, 2025), as well as “Highly Regarded” in World Transfer Pricing (2023–2025) by ITR. Anand was also recognised by Benchmark Litigation Asia-Pacific 2025 as a “Litigation Star”.



Closing Reflections

Rajashree Suppiah (*Co-Chairperson, Bar Council Family Law Committee*)



Global Perspectives

Heather Hostetter (*President, IAFL*)

After five years as an assistant public defender focusing exclusively on criminal defence, **Heather Hostetter** has used her litigation experience to focus her practice solely on family law since 2000. She has been recognised many times for her work in domestic relations.

For several years running, she has been included in annual lists of the top divorce lawyers in *Best Lawyers in America*, *Washingtonian*, *Bethesda Magazine*, and both Maryland and DC’s Super Lawyers list of Top 100 Attorneys, Top 50 Women Attorneys, and Top 10 Attorneys. She is a member of the bar in Maryland, the District of Columbia and Massachusetts. She is also collaboratively trained, a recognised and trusted mediator in family law matters, and an active participant in her local bar associations as a member, leader and continuing legal education lecturer.

Hostetter is the President of IAFL (September 2025 to September 2026) and has been a member of the IAFL Executive Committee for the past six years. She completed the six-year law programme at Boston University, Massachusetts, where she simultaneously earned a BA in Political Science, *summa cum laude*, and a JD in 1995.

INTERNATIONAL FAMILY LAW SYMPOSIUM 2026



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