

# Justice (Rtd) Shri U.U. Lalit calls for law education that equips lawyers to resolve complex issues of social and economic justice

## Centre for Trade and Investment Law organises International Annual TradeLab Conference 2024

Posted On: 21 JAN 2025 7:24PM by PIB Delhi

Shri Justice Uday Umesh Lalit, Former Chief Justice of India called for law education that equips lawyers to resolve the complex issues of social and economic justice. His comments came during his keynote address at a plenary session of the International Annual TradeLab Conference organized by The Centre for Trade and Investment Law (CTIL), established by the Department of Commerce, Government of India. The session was part of the two-day conference organised in collaboration with the TradeLab Network and the WTO Chairs Programme on 13th and 14th December 2024 at Tamarind Hall, Indian Habitat Centre, New Delhi.

He highlighted the landmark decisions of the Supreme Court of India that brought to the forefront the issue of affirmative action and the fundamental right of every child to free compulsory primary and good quality education. He also highlighted the importance of economic justice coupled with liberalization policy in shaping India's robust socio-economic fabric. In this context, he praised the TradeLab initiative that imparts clinical education to law students on a pro bono basis that can equip future lawyers and academicians to resolve the complex issues of social and economic justice within the ambit of international economic law.



Shri Sanjay Chadha, Head of Public Policy, Uber Technologies delivered the opening remarks. He emphasized the significance of International Economic Law, which examines how sovereign states interact in trade, blending legal and economic perspectives. shared real-life anecdotes from his experiences in trade negotiations. He highlighted the gap in understanding trade agreements and the need for more capacity building in negotiation skills and legal expertise to better equip negotiators.

The conference's main theme was advancing teaching pedagogy and clinical legal education in the realm of international trade and investment law. Panel discussions were held on various pertinent and ongoing topics

within this legal domain. Additionally, closed-door sessions were conducted for TradeLab executive committee members and academic supervisors to provide valuable feedback.

Day 1 of the conference included a closed session for Tradelab executive committee members followed by open sessions including the Experience-sharing session by TradeLab India, the session on Scope & Opportunities of Clinical Legal Education in International Legal Practicum and the final session on Leveraging Artificial Intelligence for Teaching Pedagogy. Day 2 of the conference witnessed three panel discussions and three student presentations of TradeLab projects of MNLU Mumbai, GNLU, and QMUL London conducted during the past year, followed by the closing session.



The Conference led to the diffusion of key insights regarding the development of the TradeLab clinics that can foster innovative approaches and develop capacity amongst law students to conduct groundbreaking research in international trade and investment law.

TradeLab India is headed by CTIL to develop India's capacity in international economic law by establishing TradeLab clinics at law schools in a hub and spoke model. So far, CTIL has produced around 15 projects, and at present, 6 top-tier National Law Universities are running CTIL's TradeLab clinics.

The TradeLab-India initiative spearheaded by CTIL stands at the forefront of capacity building of legal education and practice in international economic law. TradeLab-India has equipped students with practical experience and contributed towards shaping the future of India's engagement with global trade and investment issues

TradeLab was initiated by Professors of International Law, Prof. Joost Pauwelyn and Prof. Sergio Puig and has attained a global presence since 2013 with renowned practitioners and academicians like Ms Jennifer Hillman, Prof. Debra Steger and Prof. Valerie Hughes joining the initiative. TradeLab is incorporated in Switzerland as a non-profit under the Swiss Civil Code. TradeLab students have actively participated in the 2023 & 2024 WTO Public Forum. Membership of TradeLab is open only to universities/centres that participate or want to participate in a legal clinic or practicum part of the TradeLab network.

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**Abhishek Dayal/Abhijith Narayanan/Asmitabha Manna**

(Release ID: 2094910)