Notes, Comments and Reviews

As an international body founded on the basis of cooperation, the Arab League was established to primarily promote closer ties among member-states and co-ordinate their policies. It is composed of a group of 21 sovereign states and the Palestinian Authority spread across the Middle East and much of Muslim Africa sharing a common Arab culture. Members include Saudi Arabia, Syria, Sudan and smaller states such as Comoros in the Indian Ocean. One of its policies is to forge a peace plan for Israel and the Palestinians, which to date has proven to be a Herculean task.

Reflective of the majority of the Poles’ desire to band once again with their European brothers, Poland celebrates in June 2003 a decisive vote in a referendum to join the EU. The referendum gives President Aleksander Kwasniewski the popular mandate needed to ratify Poland's treaty with the EU, signed at an Athens summit in April. The treaty calls for a seven-year transition period. As aptly observed in a report by the Associated Press, the Polish leaders campaigned heavily for joining the union, saying it would accelerate modernization in Poland, still recovering from 40 years of communist rule that ended in 1989, and end historic division in Europe.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo’s June 2-4 2003 state visit to Seoul, South Korea underscored concerns over the importance of the North Korea issue to regional security. Earlier this year, North Korea was resolute in its stance against international pressures for its denuclearization. In her meeting with President Roh Moo-hyun, of South Korea, both leaders recognized that the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and the pacific resolution of the North Korean issue through dialogue are essential to the peace not only of Northeast Asia but of the world at large. GMA assured her South Korean counterpart that she will spearhead the filing of a Resolution in the Asean Ministerial Meeting on the third week of June 2003 that will urge the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

In the same state visit by GMA, another agreement was forged between the Philippines and South Korea relating to a build-operate-transfer scheme of electric power plants in the Philippines by a Korean company. Pursuant to a memorandum of understanding signed earlier by the two States, the state-run power monopoly Korea Electric Power Corp. is set to build two 50-megawatt power plants in the Island of Panay. Should a final contract be signed as expected later this June, the project will surely be a boost to the power supply needs of the country, particularly of Panay Island.
In July 2003, the Institute for Special Studies will release a book on Public International Law and International Trade Law by Prof. Jeremy Gatdula. The work reflects the learned expertise of the author on the subject matter and his deep grasp and understanding of the novel subject. It is highly recommended as a resource and reference material in public international law and trade law.

Leaders of the European Union and Canada reaffirm their links through an EU-Canada Summit in May this year in Athens. Fast-paced changes in the current global milieu gave rise to intensified bilateral connections between the EU and Canada, confirming their shared belief that further liberalisation of trade and investment is even more important in promoting economic growth and prosperity and that a viable multilateral system remains an indispensable tool in managing global concerns. The Summit among others dealt with more specific concerns such as Canada's request for WTO consultations concerning the status and treatment of applications for the approval of genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) in the EU, where Canada and the EU set out their different positions. Discussions touched on aspects of economic, scientific, social, and political issues from the perspectives of each side.

In May 2003, French-led peacekeeping troops were sent to the Ituri region around Bunia in North-Eastern Congo following a UN Security Council authorisation. Four years of Civil war have troubled peace and security conditions in Congo, where Uganda and Rwanda and their Congolese rebel allies seized eastern Congo. In an earlier development, UN Security General Kofi Anan requested France to take over by September from 700 Uruguayan troops currently in Congo. Meantime, the latest crisis took hold when Uganda withdrew its more than 6,000 troops from Bunia pursuant to a UN-initiated peace accord. Rival Lendu and Hema tribal groups fought for control of the town in street battles and UN officials report nearly 400 bodies have been found.

In April 2003, leaders of the European Union met in Athens at a Summit to ratify the accession of 10 new member states, mostly from Central and Eastern Europe. These new members are expected to sign their EU membership treaties later into the Summit that will formally usher in their inclusion to the EU in May 2004. They are Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Malta, and Cyprus.

This year, a Sharia Bill is brewing in Pakistan’s North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) Assembly, initiated by two senior officials in the country’s NWFP. Reports have it that this prompted Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf to sack the two proponents of the controversial Bill. The two men relieve of their posts are the head of the provincial police and the chief civil servant. The Bill proposes restricting the rights of women, and calls for
education and financial systems to be brought into line with the teachings of the Holy Quran. Much debate is expected as oppositors of the Bill reflect a general fear of a re-run of life under the Taliban militia, the Islamic hardliners who ruled Afghanistan where women and girls were pushed out of their jobs and schools, and back into their homes.


A panel for the Paris-based International Court of Arbitration will hold hearings on the dispute between Maynilad Water Services, Inc. and metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) from August 9-14, 2003. The Arbitration Court had ordered Maynilad to renew its US$120-million performance bond which expires in July and to post an additional US$30-million bond to secure its obligation, including concession fees to MWSS. Had the Court not stepped in, MWSS would have tapped the bond. (See Makati Business Club E-Newsletter, posted 02 July 2003)
Arellano Law Advocacy Center (ALAC)

The Center engages in research and discussion on burning issues of national interest or paramount legal or political significance with a view towards influencing and shaping public opinion and the formulation of public policy with its studied position on the matter. It is also in charge of training the members of the Arellano Law Forensics Guild, oratory and moot court competitions.

Center for e-Law

The Center intends to be at the forefront of law and technology concerns and issues with a view to anticipating and preparing for the coming of the digital age.
Office of Legal Aid

The Office of Legal Aid was created in 1999 after the Supreme Court approved the Clinical Legal Education program of the School. The Office shall be in charge of supervising the actual courtroom practice of 4th year law students. Likewise, it renders free legal assistance to indigents in adjoining communities.

Order of the Flaming Arrows

The Order of the Flaming Arrows is the AUSL’s honor society composed of students from the sophomore to the junior year with at least two semesters of residence in the law school. To be eligible for the membership, the student must have a cumulative GWA of at least 85% during a school year, without any failing grade in his entire stay in the law school.