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MEDIA ADVISORY

ASIL HOSTS LAW OF SEA TRIBUNAL JUDGE

WASHINGTON, DC – The American Society of International Law (ASIL) will host The Honorable **Helmut Tuerk**, Judge to the International Tribunal for the Law of Sea, for a luncheon talk on *The Contribution of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea to International Law*. The event will take place Tuesday, **September 16, 2008, 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.**, at ASIL headquarters, **2223 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC** (Dupont Circle). Members of the press and public are invited to attend by registering with ASIL Director of Communications and Member Relations, Sheila Ward, at sward@asil.org.

Judge Tuerk, whose biography is available at http://www.itlos.org/general_information/judges/tuerk_en.shtml, is a former Austrian diplomat and legal expert who has served on the Tribunal since October 2005. Commentary on his remarks will be given by ASIL Patron **Andrew J. Jacovides**, former Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the United States.

The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea imposes an

obligation on States Parties to settle disputes by peaceful means and, in particular, also provides for compulsory procedures with binding decisions. The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, composed of 21 judges representing the principal legal systems of the world, is one of the means for the settlement of disputes. The Tribunal is open not only to States but also to international organizations and, under certain conditions, to individuals. The jurisdiction of the Tribunal, in principle, includes any dispute relating to the law of the sea, subject to certain limitations and optional exceptions. In its eleven years of existence, the Tribunal has established a reputation for the expeditious and efficient management of cases and has already made a substantial contribution to the development of international law, including international environmental law.

The United States is not a party to the Convention, but in May 2007 President George W. Bush urged the US Senate to ratify the treaty. ASIL resources on the Law of the Sea are available at <http://www.asil.org/resources/los.html>.

The event on September 16 will begin with lunch at noon, followed by the talk and then a brief question and answer session. ASIL hosts such programs on an occasional basis as an informational service to bring experts on current international law topics together with those who have an interest in them.

ASIL is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, educational membership organization. It was founded in 1906, chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1950, and has held Category II Consultative Status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since 1993. ASIL's mission is to foster the study of international law and to promote the establishment and maintenance of international relations on the basis of law and justice. The Society's 4,000 members (from nearly 100 countries) comprise attorneys, academics,

corporate counsel, judges, representatives of governments and nongovernmental organizations, international civil servants, students, and others interested in international law.

ASIL events, such as *Boumediene and Medellin: The Supreme Court's 2008 International Law Opinions*, generally deal with one of the Society's seven thematic focal areas: Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, International Institutions, International Law and Development, International Security, Science and Technology, Trade and Investment, and Transnational Litigation and Arbitration. For more information, visit www.asil.org.