

FOREWORD

by
Kohken Tsuchiya

The present era is one of on-going internationalisation. Economic activities in particular have come to exceed national boundaries. As a consequence, a huge task is set before those lawyers who are called upon to advise on such cross-frontier transactions. Their expertise should no longer be confined to their home jurisdiction. A basic insight into relevant areas of foreign law and foreign legal culture is equally required, in order to avoid the risk of problems arising from the diversity of legal systems involved later on.

The time seems right to strive for a better mutual understanding of foreign legal practice. Such an effort may be particularly worthwhile in a Euro-Asian perspective, in view of the regional integration processes in both Western Europe and East and Southeast Asia.

This Yearbook, marking the launch of a series of Yearbooks providing regular and up-to-date information on the laws of the Far East to European lawyers (and presumably Asian lawyers alike), will undoubtedly contribute to such a mutual understanding.

It is interesting to note that the initiative for this series of Yearbooks, "Law and legal practice in East Asia" originated from an international student-trainee programme carrying the same name.

Since 1989, this programme enables Dutch law students to spend some months in a law firm in Asia during their final year of study. I am pleased that a number of Japanese law firms are co-operating in this scheme. I believe that a programme such as this will help to increase the awareness of the problems *and* opportunities involved in transnational legal practice among intending lawyers. At the same time, a programme of this kind is instrumental in establishing long-lasting friendly relationships between young legal professionals in the Netherlands and Japan, and in Europe and Asia.

From a long term perspective, it may be more important that young lawyers from many countries establish friendly relations through legal training in foreign countries, than having well established lawyers attending international conferences all around the world.

I am confident that this series of Yearbooks will prove to be as germinal as the underlying ideas about international legal co-operation.

Kohken Tsuchiya
President of the Japan Federation of Bar Associations