

President's Message

Every Spring, Prof. Eric Bergsen of Pace University organizes the Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Competition at the University and the Federal Economic Chamber of Vienna under the sponsorship of the AAA, the Chartered Institute, the ICC, the LCIA and UNCITRAL. This year, 71 student teams from all over the world participated, including one from Basel, and for the first time, one from Geneva. This is a unique event. The students, about five per team, first prepare written briefs on a complex problem involving the UNCITRAL Model Law, the Vienna Sales Convention, and the Unidroit Principles. This year, the University of Basel won the first prizes both from the Claimant's and the Respondent's brief. Congratulations! Then, everybody comes to Vienna for oral argument before some 150 international arbitrators including quite a few from Switzerland. The level is very high indeed. There are eliminatories first, then the quarter-finals, semi-finals, and finals. This year, the prize for the best oral argument deservedly went to Deakin University of Melbourne, Australia.

What is particularly exciting about this event is the international spirit which unites young and old people from all over the world in an endeavor that is both serious and fun. For all involved in the moot, it is a refreshing and rewarding experience which can make us confident in the future of international arbitration.

Pierre A. Karrer