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Academic Forum on ISDS

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Forum is for academics active in the field of ISDS to exchange views, explore issues and options, test ideas and solutions, and hopefully make a constructive contribution to the ongoing discussions on possible reform of ISDS, in particular to discussions in the context of UNCITRAL's Working Group III (WGIII). These discussions are likely to touch on systemic and other complex issues of investment law, treaty law, and international dispute settlement. Although the UNCITRAL process is government-led, it is open to consider views of various stakeholders, and the academic community undoubtedly has a role to play. The Forum is thus intended to operate as a think tank to study the desirability of a reform and examine possible reform options.

The Forum is *academic* in nature in the sense that membership is open to individuals holding an academic position (at either a university or academic research center). The academic nature reflects the intention to pursue objective research and analysis of the issues that are likely to arise in the context of reform initiatives. It is also *neutral*, meaning that it will work in a spirit of independence, without pre-conceived ideas on possible outcomes of the reform process. It is finally *diverse* and *inclusive* so as to comprise the perspectives of regions of the world that are often under-represented in similar fora and to include individuals with diverse academic interests, scholarly backgrounds, and views on ISDS. Indeed, the promoters of the Forum firmly believe that inclusiveness and diversity are key to the success of the group's mission.

Geneva, 12 March 2018