

9th International Conference on Law and Economics (Empirical & Applied Law and Economics of Governance and Inclusive Public Policy)

Press Note: 16–18 January 2026

The 9th International Conference on Law and Economics, organised by the GNLU Centre for Law and Economics in collaboration with the Centre for Empirical & Applied Research in Law & Interdisciplinary Studies and the GNLU Centre for Disability Studies, with the Centre for Trade and Investment Law (CTIL) as the Premium Partner, was held from 16 to 18 January 2026 at Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar.

The three-day conference brought together distinguished scholars, judges, policymakers, practitioners, and researchers from India and abroad to engage in sustained interdisciplinary deliberations on contemporary challenges at the intersection of law, economics, governance, and inclusive public policy. Anchored in constitutional values and empirical inquiry, the conference sought to advance evidence-based approaches to legal and institutional reform.

The conference commenced on 16 January 2026 with a series of academic engagements setting the intellectual tone for the event. The day 1 of the conference began with **Panel Discussion 1** on “*Navigating the Contemporary Global Economic and Legal Challenges under the Framework of Law and Economics*”, moderated by Prof. (Dr.) Ranita Nagar. Eminent international scholars, including Prof. (Dr.) Stefan Voigt, Prof. (Dr.) Mamata Biswal, Prof. (Dr.) Morita Hatsuru, Prof. (Dr.) Duol Kim, and Prof. (Dr.) Stephanus Phillipus Van Zyl, examined issues such as democratic backsliding, global economic disruptions, corporate governance, taxation, and the growing influence of artificial intelligence on legal systems and institutions. The discussions underscored the need for democratising legal and economic institutions while remaining attentive to empirical realities.

This was followed by an expert **plenary talk by Prof. (Dr.) Stefan Voigt**, who delivered a keynote address on the long-term effects of values and norms on development, highlighting the enduring influence of historically embedded social norms on economic outcomes and institutional performance. The day concluded with a **Panel Discussion** on “*Law and Economics in Contemporary India: Challenges, Reforms, and Opportunities*”, which critically examined structural issues such as inflation, unemployment, judicial accountability, competition in digital markets, insolvency frameworks, and the ethical and regulatory implications of artificial intelligence in the Indian context.

Day 2 of the conference, **17 January 2026**, featured the **Inaugural Ceremony**, graced by **Shri R. Venkataramani, Attorney General of India, as the Guest of Honour, and Hon'ble Justice (Retd.) A. K. Sikri, Former Judge of the Supreme Court of India, as the Chief Guest**. The inaugural session also included addresses by **Prof. (Dr.) Stefan Voigt, Prof. (Dr.) Sudhir Krishnaswamy**, Vice-Chancellor, National Law School of India University, **Prof. (Dr.) Morita Hatsuru**, and **Prof. (Dr.) James J. Nedumpara**, Head, Centre for Trade and Investment Law, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.

In their addresses, the speakers emphasised the importance of integrating economic reasoning into legal interpretation, the role of empirical governance models, and the need for institutional frameworks that balance efficiency with equity. Justice Sikri, in particular, reflected on how judicial decisions can have profound economic consequences and stressed the responsibility of courts to remain sensitive to broader societal impacts. The Attorney-General called for new institutional arrangements and empirical governance models, advocating for greater engagement between legal institutions and real-world economic structures. He emphasized that governance must move beyond abstract theory to become measurably effective and socially responsive.

The day further featured expert **plenary talks** by Justice Sikri, Prof. (Dr.) Sudhir Krishnaswamy and Prof. (Dr.) Stephanus Phillipus Van Zyl who put forth their ideas on multiple facets of the discipline of law and economics. The day continued with various technical sessions held across showcasing peer-reviewed research papers presented by scholars from leading institutions in India and abroad covering a wide range of themes including governance and digital change, competition and business law, banking and financial regulation, environmental law and economics, crime and regulation, and emerging challenges in public policy.

Day 3 and final day, **18 January 2026**, continued with parallel technical sessions addressing themes such as sustainable development, international trade and economic law, public policy and governance, judicial processes, creative and intangible markets, insolvency law, disability and inclusivity, and law and economics of public policy. The paper presentations reflected rigorous empirical and applied research, contributing to nuanced debates on institutional reform, market regulation, social justice, and inclusive growth.

The day also featured **expert plenary talk** by **Prof. (Dr.) James J. Nedumpara**. Followed up by **Panel discussions** organised in collaboration with CTIL, on the theme '*WIPO TKGR Treaty*

and the TRIPS Agreement : Balancing incentives and benefit sharing', moderated by Ms. Krishna Agarwal, including Prof. Unnat Pandit, Controller General of Patent, Designs and Trademarks, Indian Patent Office, DPIIT , Dr. Raghavender, Senior Consultant (Former Joint Secretary), DPIIT, Mr. SK Srihari, Partner, K&S Partners, Dr. Latika Dawar, Assistant Controller, Patent Office Mr. Anand Shetty, Reliance Consumers fostering dialogue on balancing incentives, benefit-sharing, and regulatory effectiveness in global and domestic legal frameworks.

The day continued by another **Panel Discussion** on the theme '*India's Approach to Trade in Health Services: Emerging Challenges and Gaps*', moderated by Pranav Narang, Associate, CTIL, Ms. Shiny Pradeep, Assistant Professor, CTIL, Mr. Sreejith Narayanan Edamana, Chief Operating Officer, Appollo AyurVaid, Mr. Shanay Shah, Co-Chair – FICCI MVT Committee and President, Shalby Ltd., Ms. Anoop Nair, Director, Department of Commerce Prof. (Dr.) Rupa Chanda, Director, UNESCAP Prof. (Dr.) Stephanus Phillipus Van Zyl, South Africa University of Pretoria discussing India's approach to trade in health services.

The conference concluded with a Valedictory Session featuring reflections from **Prof. (Dr.) Stephanus Phillipus Van Zyl** (South Africa University of Pretoria), **Prof. (Dr.) Duol Kim** (Myongji University, South Korea), **Dr. Nitin Malik** (Registrar, Gujarat National Law University), **Prof. (Dr.) Ranita Nagar** (Professor of Economics and Head, GNLU Centre for Law and Economics), **CTIL Representatives**, **Dr. Hiteshkumar Thakkar** (Convenor, GNLU Centre for Law and Economics & Head, Centre for Empirical & Applied Research in Law & Interdisciplinary Studies), who emphasised the continued relevance of law and economics as a discipline capable of addressing complex governance challenges through empirical analysis and constitutional commitment.

Through its diverse sessions and deliberations, the 9th International Conference on Law and Economics reaffirmed the centrality of evidence-based legal scholarship, interdisciplinary engagement, and institutional accountability in shaping responsive, inclusive, and effective public policy.