Do host countries benefit from investment treaties? Despite extensive research, the economic benefits of signing investment treaties remain unconfirmed. Some proponents claim that investment treaties may improve governance at a national level. But to what extent can investment treaties really lead to good governance? To what extent are policy-makers and street-level bureaucrats aware of investment treaties in practice? Do they take them into account?

This session will look into Singapore’s experience with these treaties. With its highly efficient bureaucracy, manageable size and strong commitment to the respect of international law, the city-state highlights the potential challenges that investment treaties can pose, even in the best of governance conditions. The session is based on preliminary outcomes of a broader ongoing study on investment treaties and national governance in Asia at the Centre for International Law at the National University of Singapore.

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