



«THE FULLERTON ROUNDTABLE»

International Roundtable Consultation
IDEA AND POLITICS OF GLOBAL JUSTICE

The Fullerton Hotel Singapore

10 September 2026



IDEA AND POLITICS OF GLOBAL JUSTICE

**Documentation of an International Roundtable Consultation
at the Fullerton Hotel in Singapore**



INTERNATIONAL PROGRESS ORGANIZATION

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The Fullerton Hotel, Grand Staircase, 10 September 2026

EXPOSÉ

A quarter century ago, upon the end of the bipolar power struggle of the Cold War, expectations were running high for a new era of peace and justice – a “new world order” where the rule of law between states would ultimately prevail, as envisaged in the UN Charter. These were the years when the 19th century idea of humanitarian intervention was revived, the principle of universal jurisdiction was drafted into domestic law, the Rome Statute of the ICC was negotiated, and ad hoc tribunals, whether international or hybrid, were established – supposedly as part of measures to preserve or restore international peace and security.

At the same time, the sudden absence of a balance of power facilitated large-scale use of force – whether authorized by the UN or not – by so-called “coalitions of the willing,” operations for the conduct of which almost no one was held accountable. High-ranking commanders and the political architects of these interventions have remained untouched. Typically, only the vanquished were brought to justice, as Carla Del Ponte, Prosecutor of the Yugoslavia Tribunal, belatedly, albeit implicitly, admitted in her memoir.

The predicament of global justice, and in particular the challenges to international criminal jurisdiction under these and the global conditions now emerging – where national interests increasingly trump international law – will be the primary focus of the roundtable’s deliberations. These deliberations may build on the International Progress Organization’s assessment and analysis of humanitarian interventions since the 1991 Gulf War, the conclusions of its UN-mandated monitoring mission at the Scottish Court in the Netherlands (2000-2002), and recent meetings on “Responsibility in International Relations” (2023) and “Sovereignty and Coercion: The United Nations in the Web of Power Politics” (2024).

One of the dilemmas in this context is the question of how to deal with a reality where the prohibition of the international use of force is effectively non-existent for its enforcers (and their allies) – due to the provisions of Article 27(3) of the United Nations Charter. This circumstance undermines the very foundation of the pursuit of global justice; it has also been the reason for the organization’s paralysis in matters of collective security since its inception.

Against this backdrop, and in view of the recently promulgated National Security Doctrine of a major global player, one may indeed ask whether a Schmittian *pluriversum* of spheres of influence of the great powers will erode, and eventually make obsolete, the United Nations *universum* of values and norms shared by all states by virtue of their “sovereign equality.” Will, under these conditions, *peace* ultimately be rooted not in justice, but depend on an ever-volatile balance of power – or reciprocity of interests – between the great players?

What can be the meaning of “global justice” under a statute where the major players feel emboldened to impose their will according to a rationale reminiscent of the era of the Peloponnesian War – “right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must” (Thucydides)?

Impunity in the exercise of power makes the law meaningless.

PARTICIPANTS

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CONFERENCE TEAM

Davide Sirna (ITALY) · **Clemens Spoo** (GERMANY) (academic team members)
Ramazan Ersoy (Executive Office Vienna) · **Lukas Köchler** (logistics & audiovisual)

SCHEDULE

Wednesday, 9 September 2026

WELCOME RECEPTION

The Lighthouse, Fullerton Hotel

Thursday, 10 September 2026

ROUNDTABLE CONSULTATION

Inland Revenue Room

Session I: 9:00-10:45

Coffee break

Session II: 11:00-12:30

Lunch: 13:00-14:00

Session III: 14:30-16:15

Coffee break

Session IV: 16:30-18:00

GALA DINNER

Raffles Hotel, East India Room

Friday, 11 September 2026

WORKING LUNCHEON

“Port of Call” – Marina Bay

PROGRAM

SESSION I

Hans Köchler

Introductory Remarks

Anthony Lang

From Justice to Law: Lessons from Plato

Margaret deGuzman

Global Justice in a Multipolar World

SESSION II

Valur Ingimundarson

*Contesting Western Universalism:
Civilizational State Narratives and the Crisis of the International Liberal Order*

Aniruddha Rajput

*The Structural North-South Asymmetry:
International Criminal Justice beyond the Shadows of “Values” and “Interests”
of its Founders*

SESSION III

Rauf Versan

*Aspects of the Administration of International Criminal Justice
in International Courts and Tribunals*

Stefan Talmon

The UN Security Council as Judge

Steven Roach

The Pragmatic Idea of Global Justice

SESSION IV

Yahli Shereshevsky

*Pre-Trial Justice at the ICC:
Arrest Warrants between Procedure and Accountability*

Magda Karagiannakis

*The Weaponization of Accountability:
How States Can Use ICC Conduct and Disciplinary Standards
to Pressure Judges and Prosecutors*

Mahdev Mohan

*Hybrid Justice:
ECCC Lessons for Transnational Accountability on the Blockchain*



GALA DINNER

Raffles Hotel, East India Room

10 September 2026, 20:00

Chief Guest & Keynote Speaker

**Professor Walter Woon, SC
Former Attorney-General of Singapore**

**« REMEMBRANCE AND RECONCILIATION –
THE DANGER OF HISTORICAL AMNESIA »**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On September 10th, 2026, the International Progress Organization (I.P.O.) continued its tradition of tackling crucial issues in international affairs by hosting scholars, legal experts, and practitioners from Asia, the Middle East, the Americas, and Europe at the Fullerton Hotel in Singapore for an international roundtable consultation on “Idea and Politics of Global Justice.” Building on earlier consultations held in Vienna (“Responsibility in International Relations,” 2023), Istanbul (“Sovereignty and Coercion: The United Nations in the Web of Power Politics,” 2024), and Malta (“Maritime Order in the Global Era,” 2025), the discussions were chaired by Hans Köchler, President of the I.P.O., and structured around four sessions featuring presentations by experts from Australia, Austria, Germany, Iceland, India, Israel, Singapore, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, alongside contributions from scholars representing China, Denmark and Kazakhstan. Following the roundtable, **H.E. Walter Woon**, former Attorney-General of Singapore, addressed attendees and distinguished guests at a gala dinner at the Raffles Hotel, speaking on “Remembrance and Reconciliation: The Danger of Historical Amnesia.”

1. Overview and Core Problematic

The roundtable addresses the acute crisis confronting international criminal justice and the rule of law amid systemic geopolitical realignments. The introductory remarks of Hans Köchler frame the modern condition not merely as part of an ongoing cycle of idealistic proclamations and political betrayals – seen from Westphalia to the UN Charter – but as an outright *paradigm shift*. The international order has increasingly abandoned universalist legal justifications in favor of raw transactional power, Carl Schmitt-style assertions of the “state of exception,” and unvarnished realpolitik. This tension between normative ideals and executive power serves as the analytical foundation across all contributions.

2. Key Thematic Pillars

A. Geopolitical Paradigm Shifts and Civilizational Contestations

- *Unilateralism and the Demise of Legal Pretenses:* **Hans Köchler** highlights how contemporary superpower conduct – exemplified by aggressive unilateralism, threats against foreign leaders, the dismissal of international humanitarian law, and overt hostility toward the International Criminal Court (ICC) – marks a regress toward pre-Enlightenment statecraft governed purely by force.

- *Civilizational State Narratives*: **Valur Ingimundarson** examines how powers like Russia and China – and increasingly the United States – reframe legitimacy around deep-seated civilizational continuity and cultural specificity rather than Western liberal universalism, eroding multilateral institutions (UN, NATO) and replacing a rules-based order with competing civilizational spheres of interest.

B. Institutional Asymmetries, Legitimacy Crises, and Weaponized Procedures

- *North–South Structural Imbalance*: **Aniruddha Rajput** details how the contemporary architecture of international criminal justice remains structurally biased against the Global South – apparent in prosecutorial selection, Security Council referral mechanisms, and the application of complementarity. He questions whether the respective institutions can survive the decline of their founders' hegemony.
- *The Security Council's Ambiguous Role*: **Stefan Talmon** interrogates the UN Security Council's assumption of "quasi-judicial" functions (such as declaring state conduct unlawful or fixing borders), while Köchler notes the structural paradox of a Council whose permanent members are insulated from accountability yet delegate coercive authority to unilateral mechanisms.
- *Disciplinary Frameworks as Geopolitical Weapons*: **Magda Karagiannakis** illustrates how states weaponize the Rome Statute's broad conduct and disciplinary provisions (independence, impartiality, misconduct) using sanctions, threats of national prosecution, and procedural challenges to constrain ICC judges and prosecutors.
- *Expressive Justice vs. Due Process*: **Yahli Shereshevsky** demonstrates how the ICC's reliance on arrest warrants as symbolic, expressive substitutes for trial (when state obstruction prevents custody) strains the procedural rights of the accused, calling for adjusted evidentiary standards and adversarial protections.

C. Adaptive Models, Pragmatism, and New Frontiers

- *Multipolar Resilience and Hybridization*: **Margaret deGuzman** argues that while enforcement remains uneven, global justice norms are deeply entrenched. The multipolar diffusion of power is yielding decentralized, context-sensitive models – such as universal jurisdiction in the Global South, crowd-sourced evidence, and hybrid domestic/international transitional justice bodies (e.g., Colombia's *Special Jurisdiction for Peace*).

- *Pragmatic Political Engagement:* **Steven Roach** posits that the ICC cannot preserve its legitimacy through an artificial posture of apolitical detachment; instead, it must adopt a politically attuned, pragmatic prosecutorial strategy to navigate great-power hostility and avoid alienating affected populations.
- *Philosophical and Technical Evolutions:*
 - *From Idealism to Education:* **Anthony Lang** draws on Plato's late transition from *The Republic* (Πολιτεία) to *The Laws* (Νόμοι), arguing that global justice must move from utopian institutional design to sustained public education and consensus-building. He refers to the role of the *Nocturnal Council* (νυκτερινός σύλλογος) as example.
 - *Cross-Border Hybrid Accountability:* **Mahdev Mohan** applies the structural lessons of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) – particularly public-private collaboration and victim integration – to the digital sphere, presenting a blueprint for tracing decentralized cross-border digital financial crimes and blockchain-based asset recovery.
 - *Historical Trajectory:* **Rauf Versan** outlines the historical arc of how states dealt with individual criminal responsibility – from Versailles, Nuremberg, and Tokyo to the ad hoc tribunals and the Rome Statute – underscoring the enduring impact on domestic legal systems despite recurring jurisdictional dilemmas.

3. Conclusion & Outlook

The roundtable reveals that while international criminal institutions face existential headwinds – driven by great-power contempt, structural inequality, and institutional politicization – the global demand for accountability persists. The survival and efficacy of global justice in a multipolar era depend on moving away from exclusive great-power dominance and selective enforcement toward decentralized, pragmatic, and hybrid frameworks that balance universal norms with local and transnational realities.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

By Hans Köchler

President of the International Progress Organization

I am pleased to welcome you here, at the Fullerton Building, the grand neoclassical monument that, upon its opening as the General Post Office, was designated as *Mile Zero* for Singapore. The “Fullerton Light” – a giant revolving beacon, mounted on its roof – once guided ships out in the ocean over an impressive distance of 24 nautical miles. May this light symbolically guide us in our deliberations of justice and peace amid all the geopolitical turbulence.

Yet beyond the geographic symbolism, it is the legacy of the Singapore War Crimes Trials after the Second World War (1946-1948), with their vast documentary record, that will be of relevance to our deliberations today, especially as regards the notion of “superior orders” and the jurisprudence on “criminal omissions” in the determination of personal responsibility.

I am glad that, after our roundtable meetings in Vienna, Istanbul and Malta, we can again welcome an interdisciplinary group of scholars representing theory and practice in their respective fields – as our topic, “idea and politics,” would suggest.

As we are meeting here by the historic old harbor – that long connected the city to the world – allow me to briefly recount the history of our cooperation with Singapore that started in April 1974 with a meeting at the Main Government Building. In preparation of our first international conference later that year in Austria, we discussed issues of international dialogue and peaceful co-existence. Decades later, in October 2004, we took part in a debate on “Cross-Examining Justice: Cultural, Religious and Social Conceptions of Justice,” hosted by the Asia-Europe Foundation. During this meeting, we also discussed the question of universal jurisdiction and problems of the then-nascent International Criminal Court. In later years, we co-sponsored, in cooperation with the National University of Singapore, a meeting on “Religion and Violence” and took part in a seminar on the “Culture of Durable and Lasting Peace,” organized by Jamiyah Singapore.

Justice: the lessons of history

Against this background of our modest “half-centennial” history of cooperation, let me address the topic of our meeting in the larger historical context. Since hundreds of years, and particularly in the wake of major conflagrations, states have often resorted to exalted, idealistic proclamations. They pledged to reshape their relations, once and for

all, according to the principles of law and justice, only to fall back, time and again, into the old habits of power politics and ignite even greater conflagrations:

- o The “Peace and Friendship,” pronounced in and propagated by the **Pax Westphalica** (1648), did not do away with the absolutist assertion of national sovereignty typical of pre-democratic Europe. The political realities at the time stood in stark contrast to the pompous language, e.g., of the *Treaty of Münster*, stipulating, “Pax sit christiana, universalis et perpetua veraque et sincera amicitia (...) ut utraque pars alterius utilitatem, honorem ac commodum promoveat.”¹
- o The “fraternité véritable et indissoluble” [true and indissoluble fraternity] among the monarchs, stated in Article 1 of the **Holy Alliance Treaty** of 1815, was also intended to contain nationalist and democratic tendencies among their populations and eventually served as the legal pretext for a series of military interventions, labeled as “humanitarian.”²
- o The so-called “best efforts” to bring about “the friendly settlement of international disputes” invoked in the **Hague Conventions** of 1899 and 1907³ did not in any way result in a stable order of peace.
- o The noble commitment of the **League of Nations**, post-World War I, “to promote international cooperation and to achieve international peace (...) by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments” (Preamble to the Covenant) was ultimately proven *ineffective*. The organization “expired” – or was phased out – in the wake of an even greater catastrophe than the one that had triggered its founding.⁴
- o The cycle of *idealistic invocation* and *realistic revocation* of lofty principles has not ended there. World War II brought a new “Charter” – of the **United Nations** – promising “justice and respect for the obligations arising from

¹ “That there should be a Christian and Universal Peace, and a perpetual, true, and sincere Amity (...) in order that each party shall endeavour to procure the Benefit, Honour and Advantage of the other.” (*Instrumentum Pacis Monasteriensis*, 28 October 1648, Article 1)

² *Traité de la sainte Alliance entre les Empereurs de Russie et d’Autriche et le Roi de Prusse* [Treaty between Austria, Prussia, and Russia / The Holy Alliance Treaty]. Signed at Paris, 18/26 September 1815. – Cf. Köchler, *The Concept of Humanitarian Intervention in the Context of Modern Power Politics: Is the Revival of the Doctrine of “Just War” Compatible with the International Rule of Law?* (Studies in International Relations, Vol. XXVI.) Vienna: International Progress Organization, 2001, chapter I.

³ E.g., *Convention pour le règlement pacifique des conflits internationaux, La Haye, 29 juillet 1899* (Convention for the Pacific Settlements of International Disputes [“Hague Convention I”]), Article 1: “En vue de prévenir autant que possible le recours à la force dans les rapports entre les États, les Puissances contractantes conviennent d’employer tous les efforts pour assurer le règlement pacifique des différends internationaux.”

⁴ Treaty of Versailles, Part I: *The Covenant of the League of Nations*, 28 June 1919.

treaties and other sources of international law” (Preamble). However, because of special procedural regulations, the Charter effectively allowed its drafters to bypass those very obligations. (We discussed the problems at our Istanbul roundtable on “Sovereignty and Coercion.”)

The predicament of justice under the 21st century version of *realpolitik*

The wars of aggression of the era of the United Nations, often conducted in the name of self-defense or noble humanitarian principles, should by now have made everyone aware that, at the global level, the gap between *idea* and *reality* of justice cannot be bridged by any lofty proclamations of goodwill. The adoption of the UN Charter did not break the seemingly perpetual cycle of invocation and revocation.

As early as during the Gulf crisis of 1990/1991, the I.P.O. spoke out against a false “New World Order” proclaimed in the name of peace, security, freedom and the rule of law.⁵ Also, in the summer of 1991, before the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations in Geneva, it was the International Progress Organization that alerted the international community, for the first time in UN history, of a serious breach of international human rights covenants by the Security Council’s policy of imposing comprehensive sanctions on Iraq that, over more than a decade, resulted in the death of a million innocent lives.⁶

In 2026, we are witnessing a new development right before our eyes, indeed a kind of *paradigm change*. Now, the cycle of *invocation* (“idea”) and *revocation* (“reality”) appears to be broken – but simply because there is no more invocation of an ideal. That trend has meant abolishing *principle* in favor of *interest* – along the lines of what Carl Schmitt, according to the logic of the “state of exception,” defined as the *exercise of sovereign power*, above – or more precisely, *beyond* – the law.⁷ Statements and proclamations by the leader of the Security Council’s most powerful member – whether in connection with the war in Gaza, the situations vis-à-vis Venezuela or Canada, the questions of sovereignty over Greenland or the Panama Canal, or the armed conflict with Iran – all point in the same direction. Ideals (e.g., the rule of law) are openly dismissed as

⁵ Cf. lecture meeting on “Democracy and the New World Order: The United Nations Organization in the Present International System.” Instituto Mexicano del Desarrollo (IMED) / Mexican Institute for Development, Mexico City, Mexico, 10 November 1992. – Köchler, *Democracy and the New World Order*. Studies in International Relations, Vol. XIX. Vienna: International Progress Organization, 1993.

⁶ *Presentation by the delegate of the International Progress Organization, Mr. Warren A. J. Hamerman, on the U.N. sanctions against Iraq and human rights*: United Nations – Economic and Social Council, COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, Forty-third session, 10th meeting held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 13 August 1991, at 10 a.m. See official record: U.N. Document E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/SR.10, 20 August 1991.

⁷ Cf. Köchler, “Carl Schmitt’s Conception of Sovereignty, the UN Security Council, and the Instrumentalization of the ‘State of Exception,’” in: Valur Ingimundarson and Sveinn Jóhannesson (eds.), *Liberal Disorder, States of Exception, and Populist Politics*. (Routledge Studies in Anti-Politics and Democratic Crisis.) Part I: “Liberal Democracy and the Use of Exceptional Powers.” Abingdon (UK)/New York: Routledge, 2021, pp. 27-43.

irrelevant; in the era of Trump II, there is only the reality of politics, i.e. of the national interest, which – within the logic of his narrative – does not require any justification except the firm and unequivocal assertion of that very interest. Or, in the words of Stephen Miller, the influential White House Chief of Staff for Policy: “ We live in a world in which you can talk all you want about international niceties and everything else, but we live in a world – in the real world (...) – that is governed by strength, that is governed by force, that is governed by power. These are the iron laws of the world that have existed since the beginning of time.”⁸

As we have seen over the course of recent months, this strategic-cum-ideological repositioning has been accompanied by a hitherto unimaginable *coarsening of manners* and *brutalization of public discourse*, with open threats of genocide and civilizational extinction. In one particular conflict, diplomacy was unscrupulously used as a *ruse of war*. The assassination of state leaders – a historical taboo since the Peace of Westphalia, after the end of the Thirty Years’ War – appears, again, to have become a tool of foreign policy; international humanitarian norms and the rule of law as such have been openly, and repeatedly, dismissed, even ridiculed, by a head of state, that country’s Secretary of State, Secretary of War, and a (most influential) deputy spokesperson for the government. Carl von Clausewitz’s dictum, “War is the continuation of politics by other means,” often quoted by advocates of realpolitik, does certainly not cover such an interpretation of political authority in times of war.⁹

The practices and qualifications appear more and more as a *regress into the pre-Enlightenment era* of interstate conduct. The “barbarization” of international relations – a phenomenon we have witnessed since the 2020s in particular – has meant that there are no taboos any more in terms of political language (at least on the part of the most powerful). This has been obvious, as I have already said, in repeated threats to eliminate an entire civilization, commit massive war crimes (such as the total destruction of a country’s civilian infrastructure), or even assassinate the people one is negotiating with (who are put on notice that it may be uncertain whether they will return home if they do not agree to one’s demands).¹⁰ Curiously, these threats and transgressions of the law mostly have met with the silence of the political establishment even of major powers, not just weak countries. No real, decisive reaction either on the part of the Secretary-

⁸ Quoted according to: Michael Froman, *Getting Might Right*. Council on Foreign Relations, New York, 9 January 2026, www.cfr.org/articles/getting-might-right.

⁹ “Der Krieg ist eine bloße Fortsetzung der Politik mit anderen Mitteln.” (*Vom Kriege* [1812], Book I, Chapter I, Paragraph 24.)

¹⁰ See *Iran weekly briefing: Trump threatens Iran’s negotiators as two sides meet for talks*, by Matthew Doran, Middle East Correspondent, Jerusalem, ABC NEWS, Australia, 21 June 2026: “‘You close [the Strait of Hormuz] and you won’t have a country,’ Mr. Trump said he’d told Iranian officials, during a phone interview with Fox News. ‘You won’t even make it back to your f***ing country.’”

General of the United Nations; no concise and unambiguous Presidential Statement by any of the monthly Presidents of the Security Council!

All those leaders should be reminded of the U.S. *Lieber Code* of 1863, promulgated by President Abraham Lincoln, regarding perfidy (Article 16) and political assassinations (Article 148) in times of war.¹¹ Responsible politicians should also be mindful of what a century earlier Emer de Vattel said in his treatise on the law of nations (1758): “L’Assassinat [et l’Empoisonnement] sont donc contraires aux Lois de la Guerre, également proscrits par la loi Naturelle & par le Consentement des Peuples civilisés.”¹²

Under the circumstances, the United Nations’ protracted effort to adopt the 2019 *Draft Articles on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes Against Humanity* appears rather anachronistic¹³ – in an environment where the leader of the most powerful nation declares his open contempt for rules that are binding upon all states.

According to the rationale of “my country first!” what counts, as expressly and publicly stated, is the leader’s “*reason*” and his personal “*conscience*,” not “abstract,” universally valid principles of morality or the rules of international law.¹⁴ To decisions of a Schmittian ruler of this sort, acting as the master of the “state of exception” and declaring national emergencies at will, *there is no remaining corrective to power*, and certainly not by way of UN resolutions – if that sovereign represents a permanent member of the Security Council.¹⁵ One is reminded here of the sobering assessment of Senator Fulbright, one of the architects of the United Nations, who famously spoke of the “arrogance of power” and “the tendency of great nations to equate power with virtue and major responsibilities with a universal mission.”¹⁶

This has become particularly obvious in the promulgation of the statute of a so-called “Board of Peace,” an entity endorsed by the Security Council¹⁷ – in an act by which the Council quasi-voluntarily stripped itself of its coercive authority, delegating it to a permanent member state’s leader who *alone* possesses the power of veto under that Board’s statute, *written by himself*, and who *alone* selects the members of that Board.

¹¹ General Orders No. 10: *The Lieber Code / Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field*, promulgated by President Abraham Lincoln, 24 April 1863.

¹² M. de Vattel, *Le Droit des Gens ou Principes de la Loi Naturelle. Appliqués à la Conduite & aux Affaires des Nations et des Souverains*. Vol. I., Leiden, 1758, p. 55. (“Assassination [and poisoning] are therefore contrary to the laws of war, and equally condemned by the law of nature and the consent of all civilized nations.”)

¹³ See, for instance, General Assembly resolution A/RES/79/122 of 12 December 2024.

¹⁴ “Trump Lays Out a Vision of Power Restrained Only by ‘My Own Morality’.” *The New York Times*, 10 January 2026.

¹⁵ On the dilemma, cf. Köchler, “The Dual Face of Sovereignty: Contradictions of Coercion in International Law,” in: *The Global Community – Yearbook of International Law and Jurisprudence 2019*, Part 6: *Recent Lines of Internationalist Thought*. New York: Oxford University Press 2020, pp. 875-885.

¹⁶ J. William Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power*. New York: Vintage Books / Random House, 1966, p. 9.

¹⁷ Resolution 2803 (2025), adopted by the Security Council at its 10046th meeting, on 17 November 2025. See also Annex 1: *President Donald J. Trump’s Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict*.

Anyhow, we should have no illusions about the UN Charter. The provisions of Article 28(3) have made the prohibition of the use of force effectively non-existent for any of the permanent members. Under the Charter, there is no consistent restraint on the arbitrary exercise of power.

Also, what the two Western founders of the United Nations feared most in the final negotiations on the wording of the Charter in San Francisco, in 1945 – namely the sidelining of the UN (i.e., the Security Council) as guarantor of collective security in favor of regional arrangements (an idea Nelson Rockefeller strongly promoted at the time in regard to Latin America) – and what they eventually were able to prevent through a compromise enshrining a right of “collective self-defense” in the Charter¹⁸ – is now taking shape in the new *National Security Strategy of United States* that rehabilitates – or revives – the Monroe Doctrine of the 19th century. Thus, the guideline of international relations is not anymore *peace through justice* (as in the UN Charter), but a balancing of interests among regional hegemons – with national sovereignty, defined in an exclusivist sense, reigning supreme.

In the context of the United Nations, up until recently virtually every act of aggression by a major power was accompanied by a legalistic or humanitarian justification, whether it was in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, former Yugoslavia, Libya, or Ukraine. In the new framework of realpolitik emerging among major powers, *ideals* (principles) are flatly done away with in favor of (national) *interests*. This is indeed a dramatic paradigm shift in terms of the *narrative* of great power politics, brought about by unilateral actions against which the United Nations is utterly impotent. According to the underlying rationale, legal justification would be a waste of time. Stating one’s vital interest and acting upon it will be sufficient. As the world has witnessed, the narrative even includes bragging about acts such as “eliminating” a country’s leadership *twice*,¹⁹ abducting the head of state of a sovereign country, seizing that country’s petroleum resources, or confiscating Iran’s cryptocurrency accounts.²⁰

In a Schmittian world – where decisions on war and peace are solely made by the sovereign ruler, the master of the state of exception – justice at the global level becomes

¹⁸ For details, see Stephen C. Schlesinger, *Act of Creation: The Founding of the United Nations*. Cambridge/MA: Westview Press, 2003, chapter 11: “Rockefeller’s Bounty: The Regional Option,” pp. 175ff.

¹⁹ “The one regime was decimated, destroyed, they’re all dead. The next regime is mostly dead, and the third regime – we’re dealing with different people than anybody’s dealt with before ...” (Quote from Air Force One, according to *The Times of Israel*, 30 March 2026: Jacob Magid, “Trump insists killing of Iran’s leaders ‘truly is regime change,’ deal to end war ‘could be soon’.”)

²⁰ Cf. U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release: *Economic Fury Targets Iran’s Largest Digital Asset Exchange for Terror Finance and Sanctions Evasion*, 2 June 2026. – See also, Institute for the Study of States of Exception (ISSE), Washington DC, USA, January 5, 2026: Global Events – *ISSE Statement on the U.S. Capture of Nicolas Maduro*.

meaningless. *What counts is the “art of the deal”*: namely, how the major players – acting in a space *beyond* the law – delimit their spheres of interest vis-à-vis each other on the basis of mutual agreement.²¹ According to this rationale, the method of bargaining does not require any substantial definitions in terms of morality, law or logical consistency. In such a Machiavellian context – where, to reiterate, diplomacy becomes a ruse of war and the assassination of a country’s leaders is left to the discretion of the attacking party – a system of international criminal justice risks becoming completely *dysfunctional*. The opinion article by the U.S. Secretary of State in the Wall Street Journal – “Why We’re Dismantling the International Criminal Court”²² – says it all. The representative of a superpower – permanent member of the Security Council, not party to the Rome Statute – speaks of international law as “so-called,” and announces that they will “dismantle” the Court, “brick by brick, if necessary.” The UN’s “international rule of law” is not only being marginalized, it is declared irrelevant, indeed *phased out* and replaced by a purely transactional “order,” a loose framework of deals and bargains in utter contempt for the law and beyond any considerations of morality.

As organization in consultative status with the UN, the I.P.O. has followed the development of global power dynamics since the middle phase of the Cold War, all through the collapse of the bipolar balance of power and the unipolar interlude, up to the present chaotic repositioning – or better, power struggle – between the major players amidst the emergence of a new *multipolar constellation*. Allow me to take this opportunity to remember, with special appreciation, the role of *Ramsey Clark*, Assistant Attorney-General and later Attorney-General of the United States under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, and Nobel Peace Laureate *Seán MacBride*, then President of the International Peace Bureau in Geneva, who both over many years substantially and enthusiastically contributed to our efforts in matters of criminal justice, peace and the rule of law. Their contributions have shaped our organization’s public legacy.

We were among the first and most-outspoken critics of the unipolar era’s so-called humanitarian interventions and the Security Council’s entanglement in coercive measures that violated basic human rights.²³ Our monitoring role at the Lockerbie Trial, on the basis of a Chapter VII resolution of the Security Council, made us aware of the dilemma of judicial independence – when powerful state interests, whether foreign or

²¹ Cf. Köchler, “Foreword by the Editor,” in: *Sovereignty and Coercion: The United Nations in the Web of Power Politics*. Studies in International Relations, Vol. XL. Vienna: International Progress Organization, 2025, p. xii.

²² *The Wall Street Journal*, New York, July 13, 2026, 10:00 am ET: “Marco Rubio: Why We’re Dismantling the International Criminal Court: America never agreed to a world tribunal that can override our own courts and the Constitution,” <https://wsj.com/opinion/why-we-are-dismantling-the-icc-0af0a8a6>.

²³ Cf., *The Iraq Crisis and the United Nations: Power Politics vs. the International Rule of Law. Memoranda and declarations of the International Progress Organization (1990–2003)*. Ed. Hans Köchler. Studies in International Relations, Vol. XXVIII. Vienna: International Progress Organization, 2004.

domestic, interfere with the operation of a court. In the Lockerbie case, this became most obvious in the UK government's issuing of "Public Interest Immunity" (PII) certificates that prevented the disclosure of vital evidence in the name of national security.²⁴

Justice – forever in the web of power politics?

In the face of a global order where the most powerful countries – the Security Council's P5 and some of their allies – are virtually immune from any enforcement action, and where the leader of the preeminent power declares that international law holds no meaning for them, and they face no consequences, the question whether it is possible to cut the Gordian knot and establish a sound foundation on which courts can operate as *courts of law* – instead of as instruments of power politics or captives of a political agenda imposed upon them – sadly, may seem rhetorical. In a purely transactional framework of inter-state relations, and in view of the reality of conflicting national interests, will global justice not forever remain what Immanuel Kant describes as *regulative idea* – instead of an actionable framework of competencies and procedures that allow the administrators of justice to check executive power *sine ira et studio*?

The "unsigning" of the Rome Statute by states – three of them nuclear powers – that took part in its drafting: the United States (2002), followed by Israel (2002), Sudan (2008), and Russia (2016), was not only disingenuous, but also an early indicator of mistrust and institutional contempt. The imposition of sanctions by the United States on several key officials of the ICC, including its President, has been a further ominous sign.

To put it bluntly: The global community has not yet found the magic formula for firmly establishing international criminal law in a world of sovereign states – so that it could be more than just a few ad hoc steps taken here and there whenever national interests permit. At present, *double standards* are the unintended consequence. In regard to the ICC, we have to ask: *Can there truly be a world court without a world state?*²⁵ Also, we must not ignore a counter-trend of countries, particularly from the Global South, who

²⁴ For details, see Köchler, *Statement by Dr Hans Koechler, International Observer appointed by the United Nations, at the Scottish Court in the Netherlands (Lockerbie Trial), on the withholding of supposedly secret evidence from the Defense by order of the Government of the United Kingdom*. Los Angeles, 25 February 2008, <https://i-p-o.org/Lockerbie-statement-koechler-25Feb08.htm>.

²⁵ Cf. Köchler, "Justice and Realpolitik: The Predicament of the International Criminal Court," in: *Chinese Journal of International Law*, Vol. 16, Issue 1 (2017), pp. 1-9. – For a general evaluation upon the entering into force of the Rome Statute in 2002, see Köchler, *Global Justice or Global Revenge? International Criminal Justice at the Crossroads – Philosophical Reflections on the Principles of the International Legal Order Published on the Occasion of the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Foundation of the International Progress Organization*. SpringerScience. Vienna/New York: Springer, 2003.

withdrew or announced that they would withdraw from the Rome Statute, accusing the Court, *inter alia*, of “selective justice.”²⁶

Finally, in view of the organization’s structural paralysis on virtually all major issues of conflict involving the great powers, one cannot evade the single ominous question: Is the United Nations, in its present shape and statutory form, the adequate framework to implement a global agenda of *justice and the rule of law*, as promised in its Charter?

At the heart of the international order lies an inescapable dilemma: how to reign in arbitrary power – how to curb the often ruthless and destabilizing unilateral assertion of national interests by some of today’s major players – through a statute that reflects, and perpetuates, the power balance of an earlier era, shielding those very powers and their actors from legal scrutiny?

²⁶ See *inter alia*, *Joint Communiqué of the States of the AES* [Alliance of Sahel States: Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger] *Confederation Relating to the Withdrawal from the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, 22 September 2025.

ABSTRACTS

Margaret deGuzman

GLOBAL JUSTICE IN A MULTIPOLAR WORLD

Global justice – understood as accountability for international crimes – took root in the multipolar post-war era, stalled during the bipolar Cold War, and experienced a remarkable growth spurt during the decades of unipolar U.S. dominance. As we find ourselves again in a world with multiple centers of political, military, and economic power, the global justice project faces new challenges. Some of the world's most powerful states not only resist the project but also sometimes actively work to undermine it. For such states, global justice seems to represent at best an inconvenience and at worst an impediment to their perceived geopolitical interests. U.S. sanctions against the International Criminal Court are a striking example, though by no means the only such efforts.

Despite these significant headwinds, there are reasons for cautious optimism about the future of global justice. As I have argued elsewhere, the concept of global justice presupposes a global community with at least some shared norms of justice. Over the decades since the end of the Cold War, those norms have developed to the point where they are now resistant to erosion. Norms related to the core crimes – genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and aggression – are well entrenched in treaties, customary international law, and domestic legislation. Likewise, norms pertaining to the adjudication of such crimes pursuant to international, universal and even regional jurisdiction are now part of the fabric of global society. Although some global justice norms remain contested – those pertaining to head of state immunity are an important example – such contestation rarely challenges the desirability of accountability for serious international crimes. In sum, global justice sits on strong normative foundations.

Challenges to the legitimacy of global justice relate less to the regime's norms than to the institutions tasked with enforcing those norms – national governments and international institutions, including not only courts and tribunals but also inter-governmental institutions like the UN Security Council. Unequal distribution of power results in uneven enforcement of norms, which undermines legitimacy. U.S. officials engage in actions that may amount to international crimes with little fear of repercussions, while the ICC is charged with bias in view of structural limits that often prevent it from reaching powerful state actors. Here again, there is room for optimism, however. As political, military and economic power become more diffuse, including through the development of powerful new technologies, novel approaches to global justice are emerging. Evidence is collected through crowd-sourcing applications and preserved by international mechanisms in anticipation of a future moment when justice will be possible, for instance, in places like Syria. The efforts of international courts are increasingly complemented by those of national courts exercising universal jurisdiction, including in states like Senegal and Argentina that were once reluctant to extend their jurisdiction in this way. National jurisdictions are adopting innovative approaches to accountability for international crimes tailored to national contexts. Colombia's Special Jurisdiction for Peace, with its mix of retributive and restorative justice mechanisms, is a notable example. Such developments suggest that the current multipolar moment, despite its formidable challenges, may produce a more equitable global justice – one that is less dependent on the cooperation of powerful states and more reflective of global norms, while also responding better to local justice needs.

Kevin Jon Heller

HOW THE WEST NEUTERED THE CRIME OF AGGRESSION

The crime of aggression as defined in and operationalized by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court reflects a long history of Western states systematically neutralizing Southern efforts to establish meaningful criminal accountability for unlawful uses of force.

The roots of this tension predate the ICC. When the international community adopted a general definition of aggression through General Assembly Resolution 3314 in 1974, the product had already been neutered by Western intervention. The United Kingdom successfully inserted the phrase "a war of" into Article 5(2), restricting criminalized conduct to classic interstate wars. Western states also ensured during the Friendly Relations Declaration negotiations that economic and political coercion, instruments of dominance over newly decolonized states, could never constitute a use of force. And in drafting the ILC's 1996 Draft Code of Offences, Western states stripped away crimes of particular importance to the South – colonial domination, apartheid, and mercenarism – leaving only the four offences now treated as the "core" of international criminal law, a label that itself encodes the marginalization of Southern priorities.

At Rome and at Kampala, the same dynamic played out in the ICC's aggression negotiations. The "manifest violation" requirement of Article 8*bis*(1) was designed to shield Western uses of force, particularly anticipatory self-defence and unilateral humanitarian intervention, from ICC scrutiny. Western states also demanded the exclusion of non-member states from the ICC's aggression jurisdiction, overriding Southern demands for the same jurisdictional regime that applies to other core crimes.

The result of the West's neutering of the crime of aggression is the existence of a crime that may be symbolically important but is practically useless. It is unlikely that the ICC will ever prosecute an act of aggression – and if it does, it will almost certainly be a Southern state invading another Southern state. That reality is regrettable and unjustifiable. But it is exactly what Western states wanted.

Valur Ingimundarson

**CONTESTING WESTERN UNIVERSALISM:
CIVILIZATIONAL STATE NARRATIVES AND THE CRISIS OF THE
INTERNATIONAL LIBERAL ORDER**

I examine how civilizational state discourses are reshaping political legitimacy in an eroding international liberal order. Drawing on the historian Reinhart Koselleck, I argue that the shift is not only institutional but also temporal: political authority is recast through a reordering of the relationship between the past, present, and future. In this configuration, the future-oriented horizon characteristic of modern liberalism is increasingly displaced by narratives of civilizational continuity.

Civilizational states, notably China and Russia, challenge Western universalist ideas about rights, progress, and international law by asserting their own historical continuity and cultural specificity, while seeking to establish a multipolar order organized around competing civilizational blocs. I analyze how this is articulated in current geopolitics. With respect to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, this narrative underpins the denial of Ukrainian statehood through references to a medieval foundational myth. While maintaining a socialist authoritarian system, China remains deeply embedded in global capitalism. In China, Marxism-Leninism is absorbed into a long historical civilizational narrative rooted in Confucianism, even as the state remains embedded in global capitalism. While China and Russia are critical of the international liberal order, they also use it selectively, invoking sovereignty or international law when it suits them.

I argue that the United States under Donald Trump has also begun to frame its foreign policy in civilizational terms. The projection of a West – framed through decline and renewal – shifts legitimacy away from institutions toward historical narratives, including a defense of Western empires and colonial pasts. The Trump Administration has also sought to decouple international norms from structures. Thus, the language of a “rules-based order” has been abandoned, as institutions such as the United Nations and NATO are stripped of their authority. This stands in contrast to the European Union's continued reliance on institutional forms and procedural legitimacy. What is currently at stake is not only the fragmentation of the international liberal order and the West as a transatlantic project but also a redefinition of the terms on which political authority is claimed and contested.

Xiaoli Jiang

**TOWARDS GLOBAL PEACE AND JUSTICE:
INSIGHTS FROM A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF CHINESE WISDOM OF
GOVERNANCE**

The world today is undergoing profound changes where unilateralism and hegemonism are on the rise and power politics overrides international rules, which places international justice under severe strain. This working paper introduces Chinese wisdom of governance, namely, the wisdom of: **“the world is for all”** – that emphasizes prioritizing public interests, sharing resources, and governing with virtuous and capable people; **“harmony without uniformity”** – that emphasizes the goals of respecting differences, embracing diversity, and opposing tendencies towards exceptionalism and homogeneity; and **“concord among all nations”** – that focuses on good neighborliness through virtue, peaceful coexistence, and multilateral cooperation. By reviewing the origins of these maxims in Chinese history and modern development, this paper discusses relevant practices both in China and in the context of the United Nations. It is argued that integrating the three core governance wisdoms into the operation of the UN – through institutional improvement, process optimization and mechanisms of innovation – could enhance the organization’s mandate of fostering global peace and justice.

Magda Karagiannakis

**THE WEAPONIZATION OF ACCOUNTABILITY:
HOW STATES CAN USE ICC CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY STANDARDS
TO PRESSURE JUDGES AND PROSECUTORS**

This paper examines the Rome Statute's framework governing judicial and prosecutorial conduct as both a mechanism of accountability and a structure that can be mobilized by states to pursue political objectives. Focusing on the provisions relating to independence, disqualification, discipline, and removal, it argues that the Statute's reliance on broadly framed standards – such as independence, impartiality, and serious misconduct – creates space for disagreement over jurisdiction, evidence, or prosecutorial strategy to be reframed as questions of professional conduct rather than legal contestation.

This dynamic rarely takes the form of formal disciplinary or removal proceedings. Instead, the existence of these provisions provides a normative foundation for a broader set of pressure points. These include the use of domestic sanctions regimes, the initiation or threat of national legal proceedings against ICC officials, recusal and disqualification challenges within proceedings, and coordinated engagement through the Assembly of States Parties. By drawing on the language of the Statute, such measures can be presented as forms of accountability, even where they are directed at influencing ongoing judicial or prosecutorial decision-making.

These practices can be situated in the broader institutional context in which the ICC operates, where legal authority remains contingent on state cooperation. It shows that pressure can be concrete through legal and disciplinary process but is often diffuse rather than direct, operating through reputational risk, procedural challenge, and institutional scrutiny rather than formal outcomes. On this basis, the Statute's disciplinary framework in fact performs a dual function: while it is intended to safeguard the integrity of the Court, it also contributes to an environment in which states can translate political resistance into legally framed challenges to the authority of judges and prosecutors.

Anthony Lang

FROM JUSTICE TO LAW: LESSONS FROM PLATO

Plato's *Republic* is one of the most famous works on political justice. It brings together Plato's insights on politics and ethics in his proposal for the ideal city. But this is not Plato's only work on politics. Toward the end of his life, he revised some of the themes from the *Republic* in his book, *The Laws*. This book, perhaps the last that he wrote, is more concrete in detail about what laws should govern a community and how those laws should be enforced. Some argue that this work is the result of Plato's disillusionment in his attempts to put into action the idealism of the *Republic*. In this paper, I suggest that the move from the *Republic* to the *Laws* can provide us some insight into how we should understand global justice and international law. Throughout the 20th century, there have been moments of idealism as the international community moved toward a more robust international legal order. From the United Nations to the International Criminal Court, international actors have sought to achieve justice with new institutions. These institutions, however, often fall victim to the interests of great powers. Perhaps now is the time to revisit the *Laws* and think more carefully about how justice can be turned into law. The concluding chapter of the *Laws* introduces what Plato calls the Nocturnal Council, which should enforce the law not through power but through education. It is a call to what we as scholars must continue to do – inform and educate the public on the benefits of international law and, perhaps even help create new institutional frameworks to advance global justice.

Mahdev Mohan

HYBRID JUSTICE: LESSONS FOR TRANSNATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ON THE BLOCKCHAIN

The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) represents a landmark institutional compromise between the idealism of universal accountability and the realities of state sovereignty. As a novel hybrid, internationalized tribunal, it broke new ground by embedding United Nations standards directly into a domestic civil law structure, co-deploying local and international judges and prosecutors. Crucially, the ECCC revolutionized international criminal procedure by granting victims standing as **Civil Parties** rather than mere witnesses, integrating their direct testimony and demands for collective reparations into the core of the trial process. Navigating these immense geopolitical and procedural tensions proved that global justice is rarely a top-down mandate; rather, it is an adaptive, collaborative framework capable of functioning within highly politicized, legally fragmented environments.

Transnational Digital Crime

While designed to prosecute historical atrocities, the architectural philosophy of the ECCC provides a critical blueprint for the newest frontier of transnational criminal law: cross-border digital asset recovery. Today's decentralized financial crimes exploit the exact gaps the ECCC was built to bridge. Bad actors utilize blockchain technology to move illicit wealth across jurisdictions instantaneously, operating in a regulatory gray zone where domestic law enforcement lacks extraterritorial reach, and international frameworks lack enforcement teeth.

A Hybrid Blueprint

This presentation explores how the ECCC's hybridity directly informs the presenter's current research and legal practice navigating Singapore's regulatory landscape. Where digital assets are misappropriated, effectively tracing and recovering stolen wealth requires a sophisticated synthesis of decentralized, public-private blockchain forensics and traditional, coercive judicial remedies – such as broad disclosure orders, worldwide freezing injunctions, and cross-border regimes.

Conclusion

The legacy of Cambodia's international tribunal demonstrates that when global standards and local jurisdictions converge, individual criminal accountability is achievable. Yet, as the ECCC's history shows, meaningful reparations are often the most elusive element for traditional criminal tribunals. By translating the lessons of the ECCC and other international courts into modern transnational practice, legal professionals can build the agile, cross-border frameworks necessary to police the decentralized web and successfully recover stolen digital wealth.

Aniruddha Rajput

**STRUCTURAL NORTH-SOUTH ASYMMETRY:
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE BEYOND THE SHADOWS OF
“VALUES” AND “INTERESTS” OF ITS FOUNDERS**

The functioning of international criminal justice and particularly international criminal courts and tribunals indicates a structural asymmetry between the Global North and Global South. This asymmetry is reflected statistically, that is, individuals standing trials for alleged international crimes all come from the Global South. This outcome, as much as it may have been the result of politics, is primarily an outcome of the structural asymmetry of international criminal justice. The structural asymmetry is reflected in four ways: First, the disproportionate influence of Western powers in the creation of these institutions, particularly the creation of the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda by the Security Council of the United Nations; second, the control over the “tap” of referrals to the International Criminal Court in the hands of the Security Council; third, the use of complementarity to exclude the prospects of prosecutions of individuals from the Global North; and, fourth – an outcome of the third point – the test of “unwilling or unable genuinely to carry out the investigation or prosecution” always falls on the Global South.

The transformation from a unipolar global order to a multi-polar global order poses various questions for the international criminal system based on the paradigm of the structural North-South asymmetry. Some of the questions intended to be addressed include: Can the structural asymmetry serve as the basis for the survival of the institutions of international criminal justice or be the cause for them to perish? Will the institutions purportedly created to serve international criminal justice survive the waning of the political power of its founders, that is the victors of the power struggle in the bipolar world of the Cold War? What would be the role of “values” and “interests” these institutions stood for? Will the sufferers of the asymmetry, the Global South, have a “value” or “interest” in their future? The question is whether there is still hope to make amends, or if the structural asymmetry is so fundamental to the contemporary architecture of international criminal justice that it will always so remain and the consequences will follow.

Steven Roach

THE PRAGMATIC IDEA OF GLOBAL JUSTICE

Over the years, the International Criminal Court's legitimacy has been questioned and attacked by both non-powerful and powerful states. The fact that the ICC depends on state cooperation to operate effectively means that it must assert its authority in ways that overcome this limitation. And yet, the issue is whether the ICC has effectively devised ways to promote its legitimacy in the face of attacks by both powerful and non-powerful states. If it strictly justifies its actions in apolitical terms, it can detach itself from the interests of affected parties. "Distant justice," for instance, describes how the Court often defaults to its apolitical status to disengage itself from the political context and consequences of its interventions in less powerful states. By contrast, the Court's assertive engagement in situations that directly affect the interests of the Great Powers can quickly turn the Court into a target for punishment, such as sanctions by the United States.

Article 51 of the Rome Statute holds that the Court's mission is to serve the interests of international justice. But how is the Court to realize this mission when it oscillates between passive disengagement in non-powerful states and assertive authority in politically sensitive areas. And in what ways does this oscillation lead to the loss of its credibility, a key dimension of its legitimacy. Moreover, how is its own inflexible disengagement compounded by the inflexibility of Great Power hostility? In addressing these questions, I shall focus on the ICC's open-ended obligation to confront and engage the political forces and hostilities affecting its legitimacy. I shall show how its 2006 Prosecutorial Strategy or positive complementarity failed to promote its adaptability to these challenges – or proved insufficient to tackle the changing political contexts and consequences of its interventions. I argue that a more politically informed pragmatic approach is needed to promote its adaptability to the mounting political challenges to its legitimacy. I shall chart a course of the Court's flexible engagement with powerful and non-powerful states and analyze strategies designed to soften the impact of the Great Powers' resistance and hostility toward the Court. I conclude that the pragmatic potential of the Court can and should work towards a self-attuned prosecutorial strategy that seeks to defend legitimacy through persuasion and political engagement.

Sergey Sayapin

**FROM UNIVERSUM TO PLURIVERSUM?
INTERNATIONAL LAW BETWEEN GLOBAL JUSTICE
AND GREAT POWER SPHERES:
A EURASIAN PERSPECTIVE**

This paper proceeds from a deliberately uncomfortable proposition: that the contemporary crisis of international law is not one of decline but of exposure. What is increasingly visible is not the failure of a universal legal order, but the limits of a universalist narrative that has never fully corresponded to the structure of power within which international law operates.

Doctrinally, the system remains intact. The prohibition of the use of force under Article 2(4) of the UN Charter, the framework of collective security, and the regime of state responsibility continue to define the legal architecture. Likewise, international criminal justice, embodied in institutions such as the International Criminal Court, maintains a formal claim to universality. Yet, the application of these norms reveals persistent asymmetry: enforcement is selective, accountability is uneven, and legal obligations are filtered through geopolitical realities.

The Eurasian and post-Soviet space offers a particularly instructive vantage point from which to interrogate this tension. States in Central Asia and the wider region do not reject international law as such – rather, they engage with it pragmatically and selectively, navigating between competing normative frameworks and power centers. Their practice reflects neither full adherence to a universal order nor outright fragmentation but a form of legal positioning within a pluralized system. Scepticism towards universal jurisdiction, limited engagement with the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and cautious responses to sanctions regimes all point to a deeper concern – that the language of global justice may mask structurally unequal patterns of legal application.

This paper argues that the emerging order is best understood not as a collapse of international law into pure power politics, but as a transition towards a pluriversal legal condition in which universal norms persist, yet are operationalized within differentiated spheres of influence. In this setting, legality is not absent, but stratified: formally universal, substantively contingent.

The doctrinal question, therefore, is not whether international law still exists as a system of norms – it clearly does – but whether its claim to universality can be sustained without addressing the structural asymmetries that shape its application. If international criminal justice continues to operate under conditions that resemble selective or “victor’s” justice, its legitimacy will be questioned not only politically but also legally. Conversely, abandoning universality risks dissolving the normative foundations of the system altogether.

The paper concludes by suggesting that the future of international law lies neither in reaffirming an abstract *Universum* nor in embracing a fully fragmented *Pluriversum* but in confronting the tension between the two. Only by acknowledging the coexistence of universal norms and unequal enforcement can international law retain both its doctrinal coherence and its claim to global justice.

Yahli Shereshevsky

**PRE-TRIAL JUSTICE AT THE ICC:
ARREST WARRANTS BETWEEN PROCEDURE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

This paper examines a central tension within contemporary international criminal justice: the growing reliance on arrest warrants as instruments of expressive accountability and the corresponding strain this places on the rights of the accused. Focusing on the International Criminal Court, it argues that pre-trial processes, and in particular, the issuance of arrest warrants, have acquired an expanded functional role that challenges conventional procedural assumptions.

Two structural features of international criminal law distinguish it from domestic systems and help explain this development. First, the ICC operates under a strong normative commitment to combating impunity, which places significant weight on the expressive and accountability generating functions of arrest warrants. Second, the Court often faces substantial obstacles in securing custody over suspects. In such contexts, as illustrated by the case of Omar al Bashir, arrest warrants may effectively become the endpoint of proceedings rather than a preliminary stage leading to trial.

These dynamics place the ICC in a condition of conflict not only in a political sense but also at the level of legal design, between the imperative to produce accountability and the procedural guarantees traditionally afforded to individuals facing criminal sanction. If arrest warrants carry significant practical and reputational consequences, the distinction between pre-trial measures and adjudication becomes increasingly difficult to sustain. Yet the procedural framework governing their issuance continues to rely on limited adversarial engagement and relatively low evidentiary thresholds.

The paper argues that this mismatch requires reconsideration. In cases where arrest warrants are likely to function as de facto final measures, there is a need to recalibrate procedures by strengthening adversarial elements and reassessing evidentiary standards. Such adjustments could offer a better response to the tension between the rights of the accused and the need for accountability, while also strengthening the expressive value of arrest warrants.

Stefan Talmon

THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL AS JUDGE

The UN Security Council has not only established ad hoc criminal tribunals, referred situations to – or withheld them from – the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, and created investigative commissions and a compensation commission to award damages. It has also, on occasion, assumed a quasi-judicial role of its own. In a number of resolutions, the Council has employed language that resembles a judicial determination – both of the applicable law and of the legal consequences said to flow from a state's conduct. It has, for example, characterized State behaviour as unlawful, illegal, or contrary to international law; declared certain acts null and void; and called upon States to make reparation in accordance with the rules of international law. The Council has also determined land boundaries and pronounced on the legal status of States by using classifications such as “occupying power” or “belligerent.”

Some of these determinations may have enduring legal effects that extend beyond the immediate demands of maintaining international peace and security. As such, the Council's quasi-judicial findings raise questions for the rule of law and for global justice. This presentation examines whether, and to what extent, the Council is competent under the UN Charter and general international law to make such determinations, and what its quasi-judicial role entails. It also considers how the Council ought to approach findings of law – particularly where the relevant facts or legal position are uncertain. Finally, it explores the possible legal effects of the Council's quasi-judicial pronouncements.

Rauf Versan

ASPECTS OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS

Theoretical foundations of the concept of international criminal justice may have early roots in history. But from a practical point of view, this concept attained prominence in the immediate aftermath of the First World War in relation to the demands made by the victors when they had agreed upon the inclusion in the Versailles Peace Treaty with Germany of the provisions providing for the punishment of the major parties responsible for war crimes, including the German Emperor, for “the supreme offence against international morality and the sanctity of treaties.” To that end, there was to be established a “special tribunal” charged with trying the Emperor.

Similar steps were taken under similar historical circumstances after the Second World War. In 1945, the four Allied Powers set up the International Military Tribunal (the Nuremberg Tribunal) whose Charter provided for the prosecution of individuals for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and crimes against peace. The Allies instituted other tribunals in Germany having jurisdiction to try minor alleged war criminals. In the Far East, the Tokyo Tribunal was set up to try the major Japanese leaders and politicians alleged to have committed very serious breaches of international law.

The 1990s saw a breakthrough: *ad-hoc* criminal courts were established by UN Security Council resolutions, and the relative success of them contributed to the impetus for the creation of a permanent International Criminal Court in 1998. Other courts and tribunals with international features have since been established. These courts and tribunals have contributed to the development of a steady jurisprudence relating to war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, as well as to the understandings concerning the workings of the procedural mechanisms of these judicial bodies. All these courts and tribunals have jurisdiction over individuals, not states.

These developments on the international plane have also had an impact on national jurisdictions where there has been an increase in the domestic prosecutions of international crimes, some of which based on the principle of universal jurisdiction.

CURRICULA VITAE



Margaret deGuzman

Dr. Margaret M. deGuzman is I. Herman Stern Professor of Law and Co-Director of the Institute for International Law and Public Policy at Temple University Beasley School of Law. She also serves as a judge of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, where she currently sits on the Trial Chamber in *The Prosecutor v. Félicien Kabuga*.

Professor deGuzman's research focuses on international criminal law, international humanitarian law, human rights, and transitional justice. Her scholarship examines how international criminal law shapes – and is shaped by – the broader global legal order. In addition to her work in international law, she teaches a course on Mindful Lawyering, which explores how mindfulness practices can support ethical, client-centered, and resilient legal practice.

She is the author of *Shocking the Conscience of Humanity: Gravity and the Legitimacy of International Criminal Law* (Oxford University Press, 2020), and co-editor of *The Elgar Companion to the International Criminal Court* (with Valerie Oosterveld, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2020), and *Arcs of Global Justice: Essays in Honour of William A. Schabas* (with Diane Marie Amann, Oxford University Press, 2018). Her work has also appeared in leading journals and edited volumes, including the *Journal of Criminal Law and Philosophy*, *Virginia Journal of International Law*, and *Yale Journal of International Law*.

Professor deGuzman is a Senior Peace Fellow at the Public International Law and Policy Group, and a board member of the Center for International Law and Policy in Africa.

Before joining the Temple Law faculty, she clerked on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit and practiced criminal defense law in San Francisco. She also served as legal advisor to the Senegal delegation at the Rome Conference on the ICC and as a law clerk in the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia. She was a Fulbright Scholar in Darou Ndiar, Senegal.



Kevin Jon Heller

Kevin Jon Heller is Professor of International Law and Security at the University of Copenhagen's Centre for Military Studies and Distinguished Recurring Visiting Professor of Law at Universidad Torcuato di Tella in Buenos Aires. He is an Academic Member of Doughty Street Chambers in London, sits on the Advisory Board of the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales, and served as Special Advisor to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on War Crimes from 2021-2026.

Prof. Heller's books include *The Nuremberg Military Tribunals and the Origins of International Criminal Law* (OUP, 2011) and four co-edited volumes: *The Handbook of Comparative Criminal Law* (2nd ed. forthcoming OUP, 2026), *The Hidden Histories of War Crimes Trials* (OUP, 2013), the *Oxford Handbook of International Criminal Law* (OUP, 2018), and *Contingency in International Law: On the Possibility of Different Legal Histories* (OUP, 2021). Later in 2026, Cambridge University Press will publish his short book *The Vietnam War, Environmental Destruction, and International Law*. He is also Editor-in-Chief of the international-law blog *Opinio Juris*, where he has blogged for more than 20 years.

Prof. Heller has been involved in the practice of international law throughout his career, most notably acting as one of Radovan Karadzic's formally-appointed legal associates at the ICTY; serving as the plaintiffs' sole expert witness in *Salim v Mitchell*, a successful Alien Tort Statute case against the psychologists who designed and administered the CIA's torture program; functioning as UNITAD's [United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh/ISIL] Special Expert for International Criminal and Humanitarian Law; and acting as legal advisor to and expert witness for Ramzi bin al-Shibh, one of the defendants in the 9/11 trial at Guantanamo Bay.



Valur Ingimundarson

Valur Ingimundarson is Professor of Contemporary History, Chair of the Department of History, and Chair of the Board of the EDDA Research Center at the University of Iceland. He is also an Associate Fellow at LSE IDEAS in London. He holds a PhD in History from Columbia University in New York. He has published widely on geopolitics, international history, and security studies; politics and international law; Arctic geopolitics and governance; populism and fascism; Iceland's foreign and security policies and its relationship with the United States and NATO; U.S.-German and U.S.-European relations during and after the Cold War; and post-conflict and memory politics. His latest book is entitled *Embellished Promise: Iceland's Arctic Policies and Shifting Geopolitics* (London: Palgrave, 2024).



Xiaoli Jiang

Professor Xiaoli Jiang received her PhD degree in Applied Linguistics at Warwick University, UK in 2008. Her research interests cover applied linguistics, intercultural communications, and area and country studies. She has published in high-quality journals both at home and abroad, including *System: An International Journal of Education, Technology and Applied Linguistics*, *Studies in Higher Education*, and *Chinese Teaching in the World*. As Deputy Dean of the School of Global Leadership and Deputy Director of the Administrative Committee (Suzhou Campus) at Renmin University of China her research extends to the cultivation of young talents for global leadership. She has hosted research projects respectively supported by the National Social Science Fund of China, Ministry of Education of China, and Renmin University. She was awarded a Fulbright Visiting Scholarship in 2011.



Magda Karagiannakis

Dr. Karagiannakis is an international lawyer, barrister and academic. Her area of expertise is dispute resolution focusing on international criminal law and international courts. She is currently the Coordinator of the La Trobe University Juris Doctor Program, teaches, and conducts research into dispute resolution, mediation and advocacy.

Dr. Karagiannakis is admitted as a barrister to the Supreme Court of Victoria, the High Court of Australia, and is on the List of Victims and Defence Counsel at the International Criminal Court. She has acted as counsel in national and international cases including appearing as prosecuting counsel in the first successful prosecution for genocide in Europe by an international criminal court (Prosecutor v Krstic, International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia). She was advocate and counsel before the International Court of Justice for the Bosnian state in its action against Serbia and Montenegro for breaches of the Genocide Convention. In addition, she was a member of the defence team for Charles Taylor, the former President of Liberia, in his appeal against conviction and sentence for crimes against humanity before the Special Court for Sierra Leone. She has also acted as a senior legal advisor and investigator to the UN Inquiry into the assassination of the former Lebanese Prime Minister and 14 other cases concerning political assassinations and terrorism (UNIIC – United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission). She has also been engaged in or advised on investigations into alleged international crimes in Myanmar, Sri-Lanka and Syria.

Dr. Karagiannakis has consulted and trained judges, prosecutors, defence counsel, police, prison officers and NGO personnel for national, international and non-governmental organizations in Asia, Europe and the Middle East. These consultancies included training judges and defence counsel at the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia.



Hans Köchler

Hans Köchler is University Professor emeritus of Philosophy and former Chairman of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Innsbruck, Austria. In 1972, he was awarded his Doctor of Philosophy degree *sub auspiciis praesidentis rei publicae* (under the auspices of the President of the Republic), the highest academic recognition in Austria. He is the founder and President of the International Progress Organization (I.P.O.), an NGO in consultative status with the United Nations. In 2000-2002, he served as international observer, appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, at the Scottish Court in the Netherlands ("Lockerbie Trial"). Köchler is the author of numerous articles and books on phenomenology, transcendental philosophy, political and legal philosophy, theory of international relations and the United Nations, conflict resolution, as well as issues of cultural hermeneutics and inter-cultural dialogue. In a lecture and article in 1972, he coined the notion of "dialogue among civilizations." He serves as editor of the series *Studies in International Relations* and member of the editorial board of several journals, including *Culture and Dialogue*, *Geopolitica*, and *Indian Yearbook of International Law and Policy*. Köchler is the recipient of numerous honors and awards such as an Honorary Professorship of Pamukkale University (Türkiye), honorary doctor degrees from Mindanao State University and Armenian State Pedagogical University, the medal "Apostle of International Understanding" (India), the Honorary Medal of the International Peace Bureau (Geneva), and the Gusi Peace Prize (Philippines).



Anthony Lang

Anthony F. Lang, Jr. is a Professor of International Political Theory in the School of International Relations at the University of St Andrews. He received his BA in philosophy from the University of Notre Dame in 1990 and his MA and PhD in political science from Johns Hopkins University in 1996. He was an assistant professor of political science at the American University in Cairo, Egypt from 1996-2000. From 2000-2003, he served as a program officer at the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, where he directed programs on ethics and the use of force, religion and U.S. foreign policy, and ethics in higher education. Prior to arriving in St Andrews in 2004, he taught courses at Yale University, Bard College and Albright College. He is currently the editor of the *Journal of International Political Theory* and was one of the founding editors of *Global Constitutionalism* and serves on the editorial boards of *Ethics & International Affairs* and *Human Rights Review*. He has been active in the International Studies Association (ISA), serving as the President of the International Ethics section in 2003-2004 and Chair of the Academic Freedom Committee from 2016-2018, along with service in the Human Rights Section as the Programme Chair. He created the Centre for Global Constitutionalism (now the Centre for Law and Global Governance) at the University of St Andrews. He has served as a consultant to the UNODC on ethics in higher education and the UK Ministry of Defence on the legal and ethical use of force. He has published three single authored books and edited or co-edited ten others and published numerous articles and book chapters. His scholarship sits at the intersection of politics, law and ethics at the global level. He has written about global constitutionalism, universal values, the just war tradition, political responsibility, international law, Middle East politics, and human rights. His publications can be found at: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/international-relations/people/al51>. He tweets @ProfTonyLang.



Mahdev Mohan

Mahdev Mohan is the Head of Technology, Investigations & Disputes at KGP Legal LLC (Singapore) and an Associate Tenant at Temple Garden Chambers (London). A former Nominated Member of Parliament (Singapore) and Google's Global Product & Legal Policy Lead for APAC & Emerging Markets, Mahdev's practice uniquely bridges regulatory policy, technology law, and international dispute resolution. His expertise encompasses international law advisory, corporate investigations, and commercial and investment arbitration.

Formerly an Assistant Professor of Law at Singapore Management University (SMU), he directed the Asian Business & Rule of Law Initiative and currently serves on the International Law Association's (ILA) global committee on AI & International Law. A Fulbright Scholar with an LLM from Stanford Law School, Mahdev sits on the editorial boards of the *Journal of East Asia & International Law* and the *China and WTO Review*, and has published extensively on international digital rights and international economic law. Known for his expertise at the intersection of digital media, free speech, and tech regulation, Mahdev served as an expert witness for Nobel Laureate Maria Ressa, whose protracted, high-profile litigation over online criminal defamation charges culminated in a historic withdrawal of all charges. Furthermore, his pro bono representation of ethnic minority genocide victims before the UN-backed Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) significantly influenced the court's landmark Case 002 jurisprudence and paved the structural path for subsequent investigations into Cases 003 and 004.



Aniruddha Rajput

Professor Aniruddha Rajput is a Distinguished Professor of Law at the National University of Law, Delhi. He is a barrister in England and Wales and Advocate at the Supreme Court of India. He advises and appears on behalf of States, international organizations and private entities before international courts and tribunals. He is a member of the Working Group and of the Drafting Committee on International Investment Contracts constituted by UNIDROIT with the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). He was a Member of the United Nations International Law Commission from 2017 to 2022, where he served as the Chairperson of the Drafting Committee at its 69th Session in 2017. The topic proposed by him – Evidence before International Courts and Tribunals – was added to the Long Term Programme of Work of the International Law Commission and appended to the Report sent to the General Assembly. He was a member of the group constituted by the Law Commission of India to revise the Indian Model Bilateral Investment Treaty. He is presently a visiting fellow and teaches courses on international law and investment law at the University of Vienna since 2022; also, a Shanghe Fellow at the China National Institute for SCO for International and Judicial Exchange at the Shanghai University for Political Science and Law (2026). Previously he was a visiting fellow at the Max Planck Institute Luxembourg for International, European and Regulatory Procedural Law (2018-2019) and Practitioner-in-residence at the *KFG International Rule of Law – Rise or Decline?* at Humboldt University in Berlin (2017).



Steven Roach

Steven C. Roach is Professor of International Relations in the School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies (SIGS) at the University of South Florida. A Fulbright Scholar and Honorary Professor at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain (2020-2021), he has published widely on politics and international affairs. In 2022, he was the recipient of the Theodore and Venette Askounes-Ashford Distinguished Scholar Award, Global Excellence Award, and Outstanding Faculty Award, and in 2019, was appointed Country Expert of USAID's Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance (DRG) work team in South Sudan. The work team's assessment report was presented to the U.S. State Department and Congress and now serves as the basis of USAID's five-year strategic mission in the country. At the University of South Florida, he served as SIGS Director of Graduate Programs (2018-2021), where he restructured and significantly increased recruitment to the PhD program. He currently teaches on a variety of subjects, including international relations, human rights, global populism, African politics, and the foundations of political inquiry.

Professor Roach's research is broad in scope, focusing on the politics of international law, critical international relations, global ethics, East African politics (South Sudan), European politics, human rights, and global governance.



Sergey Sayapin

Sergey Sayapin is Professor of International Law at KIMEP University (Almaty, Kazakhstan) and holds a Dr. iur. (*magna cum laude*) from Humboldt University of Berlin. He specializes in public international law, international criminal law, and the law governing the use of force. His research engages with questions of global justice, accountability, and the evolving structure of the international legal order, including emerging challenges of global risk. He has a particular interest in Eurasian and Silk Road approaches to international law and serves as the editor of the *International Law on the Silk Road* book series (Brill). He has published widely with leading international presses and is the author of *A Central Asian Perspective on International Law* (Bloomsbury, 2026).



Yahli Shereshevsky

Dr. Yahli Shereshevsky is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Haifa Law School and a Principal Investigator at the *Minerva Center for the Rule of Law under Extreme Conditions*. His research and teaching focus on international humanitarian law, international lawmaking, international criminal law, and the intersection of law and technology. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the *Lieber Society on the Law of Armed Conflict*. His scholarship has appeared in leading international law journals, including the *European Journal of International Law*, the *Harvard International Law Journal*, and the *Journal of International Criminal Justice*.



Stefan Talmon

Stefan Talmon is Professor of Public Law, Public International Law and European Union Law, and Director at the Institute for Public International Law at the University of Bonn. He is also a Supernumerary Fellow of St. Anne's College, Oxford. Prior to taking up the chair in Bonn, he was Professor of Public International Law at the University of Oxford, where he also held visiting fellowships at All Souls College and Christ Church. Professor Talmon is the general editor of GPIL – German Practice in International Law (<https://gpil.jura.uni-bonn.de>). He practices as a Barrister from Twenty Essex, London, and frequently advises on questions of public international law. He has appeared as counsel and expert before the International Court of Justice, the European Court of Human Rights and international arbitral tribunals as well as domestic courts in England, Germany and the United States of America.



Rauf Versan

Rauf Versan is emeritus Professor of International Law at the Faculty of Political Science of Istanbul University. A graduate from the Law Faculty of Istanbul University, he undertook postgraduate studies in international law at Downing College, University of Cambridge, UK (LL.B., 1978; PhD, 1986). He served as Research Fellow at the Law Faculty of Heidelberg University and concurrently at the Max-Planck-Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law at Heidelberg, Germany (1984-1985). From 1986 to 1993, he was Lecturer at the Faculty of Political Science, Istanbul University; *Privat-Dozent* (Associate Professor) (1993-2001); Professor (2001-2021). He was Visiting Lecturer at Boğaziçi University (1992-2000). He served as *ad-hoc* judge at the European Court of Human Rights (2007-2008) and is a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Turkish Education Foundation.



Walter Woon, SC

Professor Woon read law at the National University of Singapore on a Development Bank of Singapore Scholarship. He then proceeded to Cambridge University on a Commonwealth Scholarship. He was called to the Bar in 1984 and was appointed Senior Counsel in 2007. Professor Woon is currently Lee Kong Chian Visiting Professor at the Yong Pung How School of Law, Singapore Management University. He was elected to an Honorary Fellowship of St John's College Cambridge on 3 February 2022. He is also an Emeritus Professor at the National University of Singapore, having been David Marshall Professor at the Law Faculty from 2010-2022.

He served as Attorney-General from 2008 to 2010, having previously been Solicitor-General from 2006 to 2008. He has also been Judge Advocate-General as well as a member of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights, the Legal Service Commission and the board of directors of the Monetary Authority of Singapore. From 1998 to 2006, he was Singapore's ambassador to Germany, Greece, the European Communities, the European Union, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and the Holy See, as well as the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. In 2007, he was an alternate member of the High Level Task Force on Drafting of the ASEAN Charter (serving as Singapore delegation leader during the later half of the process) and presented the completed Charter to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers for signing by the Heads of Government at the Thirteenth ASEAN Summit on 20 November of that year.

He is Chairman of the Society of International Law Singapore (SILS). He was also President of the *Goethe-Institut* (Singapore Branch) from 2010 to 2016 and an Executive Council Member of the Asian Society of International Law from 2011 to 2017. From 1995 to 1997, he was Legal Adviser to the President and Council of Presidential Advisers.

ACADEMIC TEAM MEMBERS



Davide Sirna

Davide Sirna is a Trade Analyst at the Italian Trade Agency in Copenhagen, with the Italian Embassy to Denmark. Previously, he worked as Communication Specialist at the Council of American States in Europe, and as Lecturer and Moderator with *Associazione Diplomatici's* Model United Nations program. His earlier experience includes serving as Ambassador's Personal Assistant at the Embassy of Cuba in Copenhagen, as intern at the Dante Alighieri Society in Berlin, as intern at the Royal Embassy of Denmark in Madrid, and an internship with the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) of the European Parliament in Brussels.

In 2022, he attended the *Scuola di Limes* (Limes School of Geopolitics) in Rome. He holds a Master's degree in Cultural Diplomacy and International Business from Furtwangen University-Academy for Cultural Diplomacy (with a dissertation by the title of "Cosmopolitan Leadership"), and a Trilingual Master's degree in European Studies and International Relations from the *Centre international de formation européenne* (CIFE), with a dissertation titled "From Istanbul to Ventotene: How to tackle populism in the case of EU-Turkey relations." He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Translation with Business. The title of his dissertation is "The Populist Fall" (originally published in Spanish as *La recaída populista*).

He currently writes articles for *The New Global Order* and has previously authored articles for the Spanish think tank *Geopol21* and the Italian think tank IARI. In 2025, he was chosen to be Italy's delegate for Economic Growth and Employment for the Y20 summit in South Africa. In 2026, he took part in the Italian-German Spinelli Forum in Milan, and he is currently a Spinelli alumnus.



Clemens Spoo

Clemens Spoo studies at the Faculty of Law, University of Hamburg (Germany), focusing on European and Public International Law. In August 2024, he did an internship in a criminal division at the Local Court Hamburg-St. Georg. Since April 2025, he has been working in the enforcement office of the Court of Hamburg-Altona.

He attended the International Environment Law seminar at the University of Hamburg. In August 2025, he submitted his Major Research Paper at the Department of European and International Law.

As part of the First State Examination in Law on the topic of peacekeeping law, he completed, in August 2025, a major research paper on the topic "Israel's attack on Iran – a justified act of self-defense, use of force in the context of an existing conflict, or an act of aggression contrary to international law?"

In his studies at the University of Hamburg, Mr. Spoo is particularly interested in how international and European legal systems seek to replace the unilateral exercise of power with institutionalized procedures, transforming political confrontation into rules-based interaction.

EVENT PHOTOS



Opening session, The Fullerton Hotel, 10 September 2026

Prof. Hans Köchler, moderator of the roundtable, delivers introductory statement.



Hans Köchler, center, flanked by academic team members Davide Sirna (Trade Analyst – ITA Italian Trade Agency), left, and Clemens Spoo (graduate student of law, University of Hamburg, Germany).



Working session, Inland Revenue Room



Session I: Prof. Margaret deGuzman speaks about “Global Justice in a Multipolar World.”



Dr. Yahli Shereshevsky analyzes pre-trial justice at the International Criminal Court. At his left: Prof. Steven Roach.



Prof. Stefan Talmon talks about the UN Security Council as judge.



From left: *Prof. Rauf Versan* (Türkiye), em. Professor of International Law, Istanbul University, ad hoc Judge (2008) at the European Court of Human Rights; *Prof. Stefan Talmon*, Director of the Department of International Law, University of Bonn (Germany), former Professor of Public International Law, University of Oxford, UK; *Dr. Yahli Shereshevsky*, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of Haifa (Israel); *Prof. Steven Roach*, Professor of International Relations, School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies, University of South Florida, Tampa (USA); *Prof. Aniruddha Rajput*, Distinguished Professor, National Law University, Delhi, member of the International Law Commission of the United Nations (2017-2022) (India).



From right: *Prof. Margaret deGuzman*, Professor of Law, Co-Director, Institute for International Law and Public Policy, Temple University, Philadelphia, Judge, United Nations International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (USA); *Prof. Valur Ingimundarson*, Professor of Contemporary History, Chair of the Department of History, University of Iceland, Reykjavik (Iceland); *Dr. Magda Karagiannakis*, Course Director, Juris Doctor Program, School of Law, La Trobe University (Melbourne), Victims and Defence Counsel, International Criminal Court (Australia); *Prof. Anthony Lang*, Professor of International Political Theory, University of St. Andrews, Scotland (UK); *Mr. Mahdev Mohan*, Advocate and Solicitor (Supreme Court of Singapore), Stanford Center on International Conflict and Negotiation (Singapore).



Welcome Reception at the Lighthouse, overlooking Marina Bay, 9 September 2026

From left: *Dr. Yahli Shereshevsky* (Israel), *Mahdev Mohan* (Singapore), *Prof. Rauf Versan* (Türkiye), *Davide Sirna* (Italy).



Prof. Valur Ingimundarson (Iceland), right, and *Clemens Spoo*, academic team member (Germany).



Main entrance, Fullerton Hotel, Singapore, 10 September 2026

Prof. Hans Köchler (Austria), President of the International Progress Organization (front row, center), with speakers and team members, from left to right: Prof. Anthony Lang (UK), Prof. Aniruddha Rajput (India), Prof. Rauf Versan (Türkiye); Dr. Magda Karagiannakis (Australia); Mr. Clemens Spoo (Germany); Prof. Steven Roach (USA); Prof. Köchler; Prof. Valur Ingimundarson (Iceland); Prof. Stefan Talmon (Germany); Prof. Margaret deGuzman (USA); Mr. Mahdev Mohan (Singapore); Ms. Nicole Sim, Legal Intern, KGP Legal (Singapore); Dr. Yahli Shereshevsky (Israel); Mr. Davide Sirna (Italy).



East India Room, Raffles Hotel, Singapore

Hans Köchler, President of the International Progress Organization, hosts gala dinner for participants and special guests.



*Professor Walter Woon, Attorney General of Singapore (2008-2010), delivers keynote speech on
Remembrance and Reconciliation: The Danger of Historical Amnesia.*



*Prof. Hans Köchler, President of the I.P.O., raises a toast to the guest of honor Prof. Walter Woon,
Chairman of the Society of International Law Singapore.*



The President of the I.P.O. (center), flanked by chief guest *Prof. Walter Woon* (Singapore) and *Jason Subler* (USA), hosts participants and honored guests at the closing gala dinner of the roundtable.



Guest of honour *Prof. Walter Woon*, right, in conversation with *Prof. Stefan Talmon*, St. Anne's College, Oxford University.

I.P.O. PUBLICATIONS ON MATTERS OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

THE LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE PALESTINE PROBLEM (WITH SPECIAL REGARD TO THE QUESTION OF JERUSALEM)

Studies in International Relations IV

Vienna: International Progress Organization, 1981, ISBN 3-7003-0278-9

THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S FOREIGN POLICY Facts and Judgment of the International Tribunal

Studies in International Relations XI

London: Third World Centre for Research and Publishing, 1985

TERRORISM AND NATIONAL LIBERATION

Studies in International Relations XIII

Frankfurt a. M./Bern/New York: Peter Lang, 1988, ISBN 3-8204-1217-4

GLOBAL JUSTICE OR GLOBAL REVENGE? International Criminal Justice at the Crossroads

**Philosophical Reflections on the Principles of the International Legal Order
Published on Occasion of the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Founding of the
International Progress Organization**

By Hans Köchler

Vienna/New York: Springer, 2003, ISBN 3-211-00795-4

THE USE OF FORCE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS Challenges to Collective Security

Studies in International Relations XXIX

Vienna: International Progress Organization, 2006, ISBN 3-8204-23-6

THE "GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR" AND THE QUESTION OF WORLD ORDER

Studies in International Relations XXX

Vienna: International Progress Organization, 2008, ISBN 978-3-900704-24-7

THE SECURITY COUNCIL AS ADMINISTRATOR OF JUSTICE? Reflections on the Antagonistic Relationship between Power and Law

By Hans Köchler

Studies in International Relations XXII

Vienna: International Progress Organization, 2011, ISBN 978-3-900704-25-4



IN THE MORE THAN 50 YEARS SINCE ITS FOUNDING IN 1972, THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRESS ORGANIZATION HAS WITNESSED, AND CONSECUTIVELY COMMENTED ON, MAJOR TECTONIC SHIFTS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. A DRAMATIC CHANGE OF GEOPOLITICS OCCURRED WITH THE END OF GLOBAL BIPOLARITY AND THE END OF THE COLD WAR IN THE YEARS AFTER 1989. THE "UNIPOLAR MOMENT" OF THE TURN OF THE MILLENNIUM, PREMATURELY CELEBRATED BY SOME AS THE DAWN OF A "NEW WORLD ORDER," HAS INSTEAD LED TO THE GRADUAL EMERGENCE OF A NEW MULTIPOLAR CONSTELLATION, DIFFERENT FROM THE BALANCE OF POWER THAT HAD MADE POSSIBLE THE FOUNDATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS AFTER WORLD WAR II. THIS DEVELOPMENT IS NOW, IN 2022, THREATENED BY MAJOR SYSTEMIC RISKS FOR GLOBAL ORDER AND PEACE.

AMIDST ALL THE TURMOIL AND UPHEAVALS OF THE LAST FIFTY YEARS, THE FOCUS OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRESS ORGANIZATION HAS REMAINED THE SAME: NAMELY, TO CONTRIBUTE TO A MORE CRITICAL *SELF-AWARENESS* OF HUMANKIND AS BASIS FOR *PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE* AMONG STATES, CIVILIZATIONS, AND PEOPLES.

IN THE PAST DECADES, THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRESS ORGANIZATION HAS EVOLVED INTO A GLOBAL THINK TANK DEALING WITH CRUCIAL ISSUES OF GLOBAL PEACE AND JUSTICE. IN SEVERAL INSTANCES, THE ORGANIZATION WAS THE FIRST TO IDENTIFY PROBLEMS AND PROPOSE SOLUTIONS – IN SOME CASES DECADES BEFORE THE MAINSTREAM CATCHED UP WITH THE IDEAS:

- * IN 1972, THE I.P.O. IDENTIFIED, AND ANALYZED, "*DIALOGUE AMONG CIVILIZATIONS*" AS CORE ISSUE OF PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE, AND APPROACHED THE UN AS WELL AS UNESCO IN THAT REGARD.
- * IN 1980, THE I.P.O. PUBLISHED AN ANALYSIS ON "*HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW*," SUGGESTING THAT THE BASIC NORMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS SHOULD BE DEFINED AS FOUNDATION ALSO OF THE LEGITIMACY OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, AND CALLING FOR NORMATIVE CONSISTENCY OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM IN THAT REGARD.
- * IN 1985, THE ORGANIZATION CONVENED AN INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF EXPERTS IN NEW YORK CITY ON "*DEMOCRACY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS*," FOCUSING ON THE NEED TO APPLY DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES ALSO IN RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES. THIS RESULTED IN THE FORMULATION OF SPECIFIC PROPOSALS, IN 1991, FOR *REFORM OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL*, ESPECIALLY IN REGARD TO THE VOTING PROCEDURE AND THE CONCEPT OF PERMANENT MEMBERSHIP.
- * IN 1991, THE I.P.O. RAISED THE ISSUE OF "*ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS*." AT A MEETING OF THE UN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN GENEVA, THE I.P.O. WAS THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL VOICE TO STATE THAT SANCTIONS IMPOSED BY THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL MUST CONFORM TO HUMAN RIGHTS AS *JUS COGENS* OF GENERAL INTERNATIONAL LAW.
- * IN 1991, THE ORGANIZATION PUBLISHED THE FIRST CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE "*NEW WORLD ORDER*" THAT WAS PREMATURELY DECLARED AFTER THE END OF THE COLD WAR – AND THAT HAS PROVEN UNSUSTAINABLE IN THE FOLLOWING DECADES.
- * IN THE YEARS FROM 2000 TO 2007, THE I.P.O. FOCUSED ON THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR A SYSTEM OF *INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE*, IDENTIFYING MAJOR DIFFICULTIES IN REGARD TO POWER POLITICS AND THE ASSERTION OF NATIONAL INTERESTS. THIS INITIATIVE STEMMED FROM THE NOMINATION, BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, OF TWO DELEGATES OF THE I.P.O. AS INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS AT THE SCOTTISH COURT IN THE NETHERLANDS ("LOCKERBIE TRIAL"). THE TWO ANALYTICAL REPORTS OF THE I.P.O., ISSUED AFTER THE TRIAL AND APPEAL, HAD A CONSIDERABLE IMPACT ON DEBATES ON INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND THE ROLE OF "OBSERVERS" IN INTERNATIONAL TRIALS.