



Christoph Bezemek, Introduction

Part II: Areas

Antonios Kouroutakis, Global Trade

Without doubt, world trade is an interdependence force, which connects countries and integrates different aspects of the economy. Such economic interconnection may have a spillover effect bringing together and harmonizing legal and political values. The prime example is the custom union between Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg, which foreshadowed and provided the model for future European integration and the EU. Nowadays the model of the EU underpins a new paradigm of a union of independent sovereign states constrained though by the text of the treaties and core values such as rule of law, democracy and the protection of human rights; what I call supra-constitutionalism. However, this model is not unique as similar models exist elsewhere such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). That said, the challenge ahead is whether such models will be proven successful in practice and whether more unions, which are scattered around the world would follow the same path.

Andreas T. Müller, International Human Rights

Law After the formidable rise of the international human rights movement in the wake of World War II, the contemporary situation is often described and analyzed in the vocabulary of crisis and decline. Are we witnessing the demise of the human rights project as we know it or a dialectical turn to a new synthesis in international human rights law?

Stefanie Bock, International Criminal Law

When the Rome Statute, establishing the International Criminal court (ICC) took effect in 2002 it was greeted with widespread excitement and far-reaching expectations. Today, it seems the excitement has faded and many of the expectations have not been met: On the one hand, due to the strong focus of the Court's activities on the African Continent, its work has been overshadowed by allegations of imperialism and the accusation of applying a double standard in dispensing international justice. On the other, the Court has been the target of severe criticism as to allegedly insufficient checks and balances. With some key actors still absent from the Rome Statute, with some states that have yet to ratify it, and still others threatening to withdraw from it (and one state that has already done so), it seems questionable whether the international system of criminal law will live up to the Preamble of the Rome Statute to "ensure lasting respect for and the enforcement of international justice".