

**AMERICAN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW**

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# American Journal of International Law

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# INTERNATIONAL LAW: 100 WAYS IT SHAPES OUR LIVES

Many find international law abstract and static. Topics such as war and peace or relationships between countries are considered by some to be not so much questions of law, but of power and influence. Others question the existence of international law.

*International Law: 100 Ways It Shapes Our Lives* was conceived from the proposition that international law not only exists, but also penetrates more deeply and broadly into everyday life than is generally recognized. Some ways are of relatively recent vintage, while others are long-standing. 100 examples were identified by ASIL members, vetted by a smaller group of experts, and organized into seven chapters: 1) daily life; 2) leisure; 3) travel; 4) commerce 5) health and the environment; 6) personal liberty; 7) public safety and global security.

Join us in demonstrating how international law shapes our lives by

- Visiting *100 Ways* at [www.asil.org/100ways](http://www.asil.org/100ways)
- Using it in teaching and general civic education programs;
- Adding ways to the list; and
- Sharing your experiences using *International Law: 100 Ways It Shapes Our Lives*.

We hope that this creative and interactive project will help demonstrate the diversity and the centrality of international law to our lives today.

INTERNATIONAL LAW:  
100 WAYS  
IT SHAPES OUR LIVES

INTERNATIONAL LAW:  
100 WAYS  
IT SHAPES OUR LIVES



American Society  
of International Law

IN DAILY LIFE

- 1 Always knowing what date and time it is anywhere on the planet.**  
By universal recognition of the prime meridian and Greenwich Mean Time (via international agreement at the International Meridian Conference in 1884). The latter was updated to "universal time" in 1928, and subsequent technical agreements have refined the definition further.
- 2 Mailing a letter reliably and easily to anyone in the world.**  
By ensuring a truly universal postal network and recognizing that specified postal rates in one country would satisfy delivery requirements in all countries (the Constitution of the Universal Postal Union, 1964).
- 3 Driving cars with improved safety standards.**  
By adopting global safety standards for automobiles, notably the Agreement Concerning the Establishing of Global Technical Regulations for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment, and Parts Which Can Be Fitted and/or Used on Wheeled Vehicles (1998).
- 4 Being able to call Arkansas, Missouri, or most of Montana home.**  
As the result of the bilateral treaty known as the Louisiana Purchase (1803).
- 5 Placing and receiving telephone calls worldwide.**  
By creating an international communication network and by reaching an international agreement preventing national claims to the geostationary orbit. See the 1865 Constitution of what is now called the International Telecommunications Union, the oldest intergovernmental organization, and the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (UN Space Treaty, 1967).

- 6 Knowing that a second is the same length of time everywhere in the world.**  
By setting internationally recognized standards, particularly the Decision of the 13th General Conference on Weights and Measures (1967), under the auspices of the International Office of Weights and Measures (est. 1875).
- 7 Using the same software on computers worldwide.**  
By providing rights of distribution, copyright, and rental to authors of computer programs via the World Intellectual Property Organization Copyright Treaty (1996).
- 8 Getting an up-to-date weather forecast about your destination before you travel.**  
By benefiting from international rules for the collection and dissemination of worldwide weather data, as provided for by the Convention of the World Meteorological Organization (1947) and the International Telecommunication Convention (1932).
- 9 Watching news and events from around the world on television.**  
As a result of the international convention providing equal access to the international satellite communications network, as stated in Resolution 1721 (XVI) of the General Assembly of the United Nations (1961).
- 10 Listening to a BBC program on your radio.**  
By following regulations, implemented by the International Telecommunication Union, that provide for shared use of the radio spectrum and assign positions for communication satellites, building from the International Telegraph Convention (1865).

# AMERICAN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

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### **International Criminal Law by Other Means: The Quasi-criminal Jurisdiction of the Human Rights Courts**

*Alexandra Huneus*

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Although the regional human rights courts have no criminal jurisdiction and cannot find individual responsibility, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights regularly orders states to investigate and punish gross human rights violations, and monitors the progress of the resulting prosecutions. Today, it is monitoring the progress of fifty-one prosecutions across fifteen states for acts that amount to international crimes. The article explores the evolution of such quasi-criminal jurisdiction in the regional rights courts, and juxtaposes this development to the work of the international criminal tribunals.

### **Clash of Paradigms: Actors and Analogies Shaping the Investment Treaty System**

*Anthea Roberts*

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When seeking to understand the nature of the investment treaty system, participants routinely draw analogies from and with public international law, international commercial arbitration, public law, trade law, and human rights law. However, these analogies frequently point to distinct (and sometimes clashing) conclusions as a result of differences in their underlying paradigms. This article examines what each paradigm reveals and obscures about the investment treaty system and how the backgrounds and interests of different actors inform their choice of analogies.

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