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## Law of international organizations and the challenges of the contemporary world

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# LAW OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

This Conference, organised jointly by the Department of Public International Law and European Law and the Foundation “*Facultas Iuridica*” of the Faculty of Law and Administration at the University of Silesia, was held in Kroczyce on 14–16 May 2014.

This scientific meeting assembled representatives from the major academic centres in Poland, gathering to deliberate on the diverse aspects of the functioning of international organisations and the role they play on the global scene. However, it was not only an occasion to present the results of academic research and conduct fruitful and inspiring debates. The essential motive for convening the conference was to celebrate Professor Genowefa Grabowska’s jubilee, accompanied with handing over a jubilee book dedicated to her, entitled “*The Law of International Organizations towards the Problems of the Contemporary World*”.

The choice of the conference’s subject was not accidental. International organisations are taking on an important position in international relations. There is no doubt that the contemporary world is an arena for an increasingly complex interplay of states and non-state actors, including a growing number of international organisations, both governmental and non-governmental, conducting their activities in new areas and having novel skillsets. These developments strongly confirm not only that the international legal order is undergoing constant changes, but also shows that non-state actors – in particular international organisations – have crucial assignments in this process. There was also a second, but equally significant, reason for this selection of the conference’s leading theme. It went some way towards recognising the achievements of and honouring Prof. G. Grabowska, whose contribution to research and scientific activity has largely been devoted to international organisations, their law-making and conflict resolution methods, including in relation to the protection of human rights and the protection of the natural environment, as well as to the emergence, progress and performance of the European Union.

The conference consisted of five sessions, each one dedicated to a different aspect of the role of international organisations in international society.

Session one covered a discussion over general questions of the functioning of international organisations: addresses concerned the theory and practice of state recognition by international organisations (Prof. E. Dynia) and on financing (Prof. J. Menkes). Dr P. Szwedo gave a lecture on the interplay between international law and NGOs in the era of global governance. Then shorter notes were conducted: three relating to some specific problems of responsibility and international organisations, as understood by the International Law Commission (by Dr E. Lis, Dr M. Pietras-Eichberger and Dr M. Szu-

niewicz); Dr D. Bach-Golecka gave a note on the right to health, and Dr T. Srogosz shared his views on the implications of the possible independence of Scotland.

Session two, “*United Nations*”, touched upon the topic of sustainable development and the UN (Prof. K. Równy) as well as some crucial points on the reform of the Organisation were presented (by Prof. J. Symonides, Prof. M.S. Grochalski and Dr I. Rysińska). Although the concrete themes were unsurprisingly divergent, a similar conclusion emerged that the UN must undergo a reform process in order to adapt to the challenges and threats of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this session, short notes looked at the UN and its role in the creation of the global regime of targeting, in the context of armed conflicts and other violent situations (Dr P. Grzebyk), as well as the International Civil Service Commission (Dr W. Kilarski) and the legal status of the waters in bays under international treaty law (Dr T. Kamiński).

On the following day, the third session on “*European Union*” took place. As its heading suggests, it was wholly focused on that organisation. Here the topics of the dynamics of the EU law were discussed (Prof. R. Grzeszczak), together with the problem of mixed international agreements in the EU law and practice (Prof. T. Gadkowski), as well as the EU’s legislative competences in the area of private law (Prof. A. Całus) and regional cooperation (Prof. M. Perkowski). Short notes pertained to specific issues involving the Union’s practice: The European Commission’s Notes on Financial Engineering Instruments (Dr J. Łacny), data protection and the fight against crime (Dr A. Grzelak), cooperation (Dr A. Kalicka-Mikołajczyk and Dr A. Szachon-Pszenny) and the role of national parliaments in the context of reforming the euro (Dr A. Pudło).

In the fourth session, “*Law of international organisations in action*”, the panellists addressed specific international organisations. Both intergovernmental (WHO, WTO, MERCOSUR, UNASUR) and non-governmental (Greenpeace) in manifold perspectives were argued by Dr W. Burek, Prof. P. Czubik, Dr M. Słok-Wódkowska, Prof. B. Mielnik and Prof. B. Kuźniak.

The fifth session, “*Justice*”, covered four lectures. Dr K. Wierczyńska discussed questions of the jurisdiction and admissibility in the ICC Statute and practice, Dr M. Stępień gave a speech on the judicial bodies of international organisations and the rule of law in the international community, Dr K. Stasiak and Dr A. Szarek-Zwijacz shared their views on the UN’s internal dispute resolution system and its role in providing justice for victims of abuses by international servants. In addition, Dr J. Banach-Gutierrez spoke about justice for victims of crimes under the UN, the EU and the Council of Europe regulations.

The debate on the performance and direction of international organisations in light of the challenges faced by the contemporary world continues. The exchange of ideas among scholars, which was an inevitable ingredient of the conference in Kroczyce, together with the forthcoming post-conference volume “*New Challenges for International Organisations*”, has unquestionably contributed to these discussions.

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