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Sabine von Schorlemer

pp. 3–8

The Destruction of the World's Cultural Heritage: An Issue for UN Security Policy

Objects of cultural value have been destroyed without restraint by the terrorist group IS/ISIL/Da'esh. Consequently, this article carefully scrutinizes how this systematic destruction of cultural heritage gradually transformed into an issue of United Nations security policy. Led by the assumption that preserving works of art and cultural goods has turned into a truly serious and cross-cutting issue within the UN system, this article will discuss how to succeed in designing the international law regime in a more robust way. Above all, this requires consideration of the legal standing of the UN Security Council in the realm of cultural heritage protection. However, further elements are to be considered, inter alia, the ethical 'people-first'-dilemma, the respective mandate of UNESCO, protected cultural zones, culture-focused and hybrid peacekeeping missions, monitoring and enforcement measures for implementing UN Security Council resolutions, and making use of state-controlled sanctions.

Helmut Volger

pp. 9–13

The Election of the UN Secretary-General. The Long Way to More Co-operation and Openness

The election procedure of the UN Secretary-General is often rightfully criticized as opaque and undemocratic. Reform attempts made only slow progress over the past few decades of UN history, despite some modest reform measures in 1996/1997 and 2006. But only now—one year before the next election is to take place—does a General Assembly resolution mark a viable compromise: it involves the assertion of the principles of gender balance and regional rotation, a catalogue of criteria for the candidates, more co-operation between Security Council and General Assembly, a clear timetable and information supplied to UN member states and media. If this compromise is put into practice it would constitute an important step in making the election more democratic.

Martin Pabst

pp. 14–19

The United Nations and Decolonization (II). Economic Decolonization and Selected Case Studies

Colonial populations did not only strive for political independence, but also demanded economic decolonization. The UN General Assembly supported this request by adopting a "Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order" on 1 May 1974. This goal was, however, not realized. It was mainly the fault of the US, which resisted decisive re-

forms in the international financial institutions. The article illustrates the concrete UN contribution to decolonization on the basis of six case studies (South West Africa/Namibia, Palestine, Algeria, Cyprus, Western Sahara, and Congo). The UN had to gain experience from case to case and transfer it to new challenges. The historical process of decolonization would probably have taken place even without UN assistance, but the world organization accompanied and accelerated it.

Oliver Hasenkamp

pp. 20–24

The Pacific Island States in the United Nations. How the Smallest States Exert Influence Despite Limited Resources

The twelve Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) form one of the youngest groups of states within the UN. After being neglected as weak actors, they have received increasing international attention for the past several years. While climate change remains their most important priority, increasing foreign policy experience helps them to broaden their view on other issues. Forming alliances with other small states and using capacity-building strategies, moral framing, institutionalization as well as neutrality and confrontation, they can exert influence over their prioritized policy issues despite limited resources. Under the leadership of Fiji, which is strongly involved in UN peacekeeping and chaired the G77 in 2013, the PSIDS have questioned the influence of Australia and New Zealand in the Pacific and have started to cooperate with new partners on UN level.

Cordula Meyer Mahnkopf

pp. 25–30

Myanmar and the United Nations

The United Nations have been engaged with conflict-torn Myanmar ever since the former Union of Burma was founded in 1948. Due to this tested relationship, Myanmar recognizes the UN as a key player in the ongoing transition process towards democracy. Under military rule for 50 years, semi-democratic Myanmar is opening now to the world and foreign investment. Throughout this process, the UN has delivered a strategic framework in cooperation with Myanmar, while the International Labour Organization has been working efficiently on the issues of forced labor and child soldiers. UN humanitarian aid and drug control are continuing. Concerning the Rohingya conflict, Myanmar behaves as intransigent as ever. In this context it is quite clear that the United Nations do not make full use of their diplomatic potential. Notwithstanding this, the UN insists on a permanent office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Myanmar.