

# GERMAN REVIEW ON THE UNITED NATIONS | Abstracts

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## UN Personnel

Angela Kane

pp. 99–103

### **The Women's Question at the UN**

#### **A Lack of Gender Equality in Recruitment Processes**

The demand for gender equality is still applicable and relevant for the United Nations recruitment process, as women in leading positions continue to be underrepresented. This situation has significantly improved since the nineties, but it is difficult to get the exact figures on female quotas. Gender equality in high-level positions, as required by the United Nations General Assembly, has nevertheless not been achieved.

Ekkehard Griep

p. 104

### **Comment: A House for the United Nations**

The author introduces the association 'A House for the United Nations'. The initiative calls for more visibility for the UN in Berlin. In his opinion, the Palais am Festungsgraben could serve as an information center and as a dialogue forum.

Viviane Brunne

pp. 105–109

### **A Global Network: 40 Years of the VDBIO**

#### **German Personnel at the UN**

German employees are represented in most international organizations at various levels—the German Federal Foreign Office estimates their number to a total of 8,000. The Association of German International Civil Servants (Verband deutscher Bediensteter bei internationalen Organisationen – VDBIO) has supported the German staff in international organizations for 40 years by representing their interests and providing them with practical information and a global network.

Ian Williams

pp. 110–115

### **Ethics, Accountability and Transparency**

#### **Do the United Nations Meet Their Own Standards?**

Immunity from external courts legitimately protects the United Nations from national litigation and governmental harassment. However, it can have negative consequences for UN personnel as well as for victims of misconduct outside the UN system. In 2005, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan

presented measures in the areas of ethics, accountability and transparency. The Office of Staff Legal Assistance (OSLA) and the Ethics Office were established along with an ombuds-person. Although there is a consensus that the handling of staff disputes and institutional misconduct improved significantly, a general reform of the legal system is required.

Wolfgang S. Heinz

pp. 116–120

### **Ten Years of the UN Human Rights Council**

#### **Between Politicization and Positioning**

The year 2016 marks the tenth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations Human Rights Council. Unlike in 2011, this event is not accompanied by a review process. The article examines the work and potential of the Council focusing on four dimensions: changes in the institutional framework, the politicization and positioning processes within the Council, the handling of critical issues, and the increase of special procedures. The role of civil society is briefly addressed and reform approaches are outlined.

Nico Schrijver

pp. 121–125

### **50 Years of Human Rights Covenants**

#### **Time for a Unified Treaty Body**

To mark the fiftieth anniversary of the two first binding UN Human Rights Covenants, the author assesses the Covenants and outlines future challenges they may face with respect to implementation. The emergence of the Covenants must be seen in the context of the Cold War. The proliferation of human rights treaties and supervisory mechanisms has led to duplication and fragmentation. Since bold reform initiatives are bound to fail, there is a need for a step-by-step reform of their structure and procedures. The ultimate aim is to create one single unified treaty body with a robust monitoring mechanism.

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