

2017

## The International Lawyer Turns Fifty

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### Recommended Citation

John E. Noyes, *The International Lawyer Turns Fifty*, 50 INT'L L. 23 (2017)  
<https://scholar.smu.edu/til/vol50/iss1/9>

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## *The International Lawyer* Turns Fifty

JOHN E. NOYES\*

It has been my privilege to serve on the External Advisory Board of *The International Lawyer* for the past twenty years, occasionally reviewing articles being considered for publication, contributing to the Year in Review survey, and acting as a sounding board. Before being named to the Advisory Board, I came to know *The International Lawyer* as a reader, as Chair of the Publications Committee of the ABA Section of International Law, and as a member of the Section's Council. I congratulate the editors of the journal – among them Marc Steinberg, who currently serves as Editor-in-Chief – for producing consistently excellent issues over the years. Both the SMU Dedman School of Law, home to *The International Lawyer* for most of the past fifty years, and the ABA Section of International Law deserve thanks for supporting the journal.

As we mark the 50th anniversary of *The International Lawyer*, let me highlight four of its notable features. First is the high quality of its articles and comments about specific substantive issues. These articles have appeared either as parts of symposia – on topics as varied as NAFTA (Vol. 27, Issue 3 (1993)), terrorism's burdens on globalization (Vol. 36, Issue 1 (2002)), and international company and securities law (Vol. 37, Issue 1 (2003)) – or as stand-alone pieces. Some decades-old articles published in *The International Lawyer* still provide insightful introductions to complex areas of international law (e.g., Jonathan Charney, "The Marine Environment and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea" (Vol. 28, pg. 879 (1994))). Scores of other international law journals of course also publish articles about substantive issues, and virtually all of those articles can now be searched in electronic databases. But *The International Lawyer's* focus on succinct, expert analyses of subjects useful for the practitioner helps this journal stand apart.

Second are occasional articles that "step back" from particular substantive topics and reflect on the nature of international legal practice or international professional responsibility. I note as examples M.W. Janis, "The Lawyer's Responsibility for Foreign Law and Foreign Lawyers" (Vol. 16, pg. 695 (1982)), and John Gergacz, "In-House Counsel and Corporate Communications" (Vol. 45, pg. 817 (2011)). Such pieces are valuable both for practicing international lawyers and for law students eager to learn about the dimensions of a career in international law, and I have used them in some of my classes. Other perspective pieces examine issues that, although

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not directly related to the day-to-day concerns of practicing attorneys, provide insights into the art form, values, and systems that comprise or influence the enterprise of international lawyering. Examples include F.S. Ruddy, “International Law and the Enlightenment: Vattel and the 18th Century” (Vol. 3, pg. 839 (1968)), Bernhard Grossfeld & Jack Hiller, “Music and Law” (Vol. 42, pg. 1147 (2008)), and symposia on the rule of law (Vol. 43, Issue 1 (2008)) and legal scholarship (Vol. 46, Issue 2 (2012)).

A third notable feature of *The International Lawyer* has been the attention paid, in many issues of the journal, to policy initiatives of the Section of International Law. Beginning with Volume 1, Issue 3, the journal published many Section recommendations and reports to the ABA House of Delegates. Although *The International Lawyer* no longer routinely reproduces these recommendations and reports – the most recent to appear concerned proposed amendments to the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act (Vol. 36, pg. 1261 (2002)) – I found their publication useful, as a way to bring to a wide audience the Section’s efforts to promote the rule of law and to further the progressive development of international law.<sup>1</sup>

Fourth, the journal has long published overviews of recent developments in international law. Volume 1, Issue 1 provided updates on activities at the United Nations, decisions of international tribunals, and international law decisions in U.S. courts. The journal soon included occasional surveys of developments in substantive fields of international and comparative law. In the days before the internet, these overviews helped the practitioner keep abreast of new trends. Although the contributions of the ABA Section of International Law on this front were not unique,<sup>2</sup> the expert summary analyses of regulatory, legislative, judicial, and arbitral developments in *The International Lawyer* provided a great service to the profession. In the early 1980s, a valuable set of commentaries on the *Restatement (Third) of the Foreign Relations Law of the United States* also introduced and critically evaluated that influential work (see Vol. 22, Issue 1 (1988); Vol. 23, Issues 1 and 3 (1989); Vol. 24, Issues 1, 2, and 4 (1990); Vol. 25, Issue 2 (1991); Vol. 26, Issue 1 (1992)).<sup>3</sup>

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1. Several years ago some key recommendations and reports were compiled in book form along with additional commentary. *The United Nations at 50: Proposals for Improving Its Effectiveness* (John E. Noyes ed., American Bar Association, 1997). The Section’s recommendations and reports are now available online. See <http://apps.americanbar.org/intlaw/leadership/policy.html>; ABA Section of International Law, *Policy Manual 2014-2015*, available at [http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/unategorized/international\\_law/policy\\_manual\\_authcheckdam.pdf](http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/unategorized/international_law/policy_manual_authcheckdam.pdf).

2. For example, from 1977 to 1995, the American Branch of the International Law Association also published regular updates of international law developments in the *International Practitioner’s Notebook (IPN)*. (Since 1996, the *ILSA Journal of International and Comparative Law* has published an *IPN* issue devoted to papers presented at the American Branch’s annual International Law Weekend, which the ABA Section of International Law cosponsors.)

3. These articles were compiled as *Commentaries on the Restatement (Third) of the Foreign Relations Law of the United States* (Don Wallace, Jr. ed., American Bar Association, 1992).

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Since use of web searches and electronic databases has become commonplace, some of the reasons for *The International Lawyer* to summarize international law developments have changed. The internet facilitates searches for information when the user knows a key word, and international practitioners arrange for web searches on topics of interest. But internet searches of key words do not introduce new topics that may – sometimes in unexpected ways – relate to matters of concern. Since 1996, *The International Lawyer's* Year in Review survey has helped busy lawyers and academics learn about new developments related to their specialties, as well as about areas they do not follow closely. No other print or electronic source regularly surveys the vast array of international legal developments. The mammoth undertaking of writing, editing, and compiling this annual survey, now published separately as *The Year in Review*, has provided a uniquely valuable service to the profession.

I wish *The International Lawyer* many more decades of success and service.

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