
Editorial

This issue of the *European Journal of International Law* brings to a close a period of over 11 years during which I have had the privilege to be the Journal's Editor-in-Chief. The task has been a demanding one, but its rewards have been immense.

Negotiations to launch the *EJIL* began in 1988, continued as the Berlin Wall fell and post-war Europe transformed itself, and came to fruition in 1990. That bold step was led by Joseph Weiler, Antonio Cassese, Bruno Simma and Pierre-Marie Dupuy, and Renaud Dehousse served as Managing Editor. The new Journal sought – and rapidly gained – a reputation for focusing especially on the all too often neglected history and theory of international law, as well as on key topical issues. In its early years, most of the manuscripts were solicited and the Editorial Board's role in guiding and shaping the Journal was a crucial ingredient in its success.

By 1996, when I arrived, the Journal was in its seventh year. It was published by a consortium which brought together the leading law publishing houses in western Europe under the rubric of Law Books in Europe. This was an arrangement that should have been ideally suited to transcending national loyalties and helping the Journal to forge a truly European identity. In practice, however, it meant that none of the individual publishing partners had a sufficient incentive to promote the Journal with much enthusiasm on their home territories. The *EJIL* was also published in English and French, an entirely appropriate approach given that these were and still are the languages of international law in which bodies such as the International Court of Justice and the European Court of Justice conduct their proceedings. The problem, however, was that the Journal had neither an English nor a French language identity. Francophone authors submitted very few manuscripts for publication and the Journal had literally a handful of subscribers in France. And a large proportion of the subscribers who were reading it in a second language had a mastery of English but not of French.

By 1998 Oxford University Press had been chosen to publish a significantly revamped Journal in English. Since then the total number of pages published annually has doubled, the number of annual issues has increased from four to five, and a policy of translating articles from French as well as other major European languages into English has been put in place. While the loss of linguistic diversity was controversial, both within the Editorial Board and among some readers, the new policy not only made the Journal accessible to individuals writing in a wider range of languages but also assisted in greatly expanding its circulation. I am particularly pleased that so many of our contributors have been far from well-known or prominent, which reflects a policy of encouraging new faces and different perspectives. Today the Journal is widely considered to be one of the most broad-ranging, challenging and consistently interesting journals in the field.

I am grateful to have been able to work closely with an exceptional group of intellectually engaged Board members. The fact that each of them has been very actively involved in shaping various aspects of the international legal regime has also helped to keep the Journal at the cutting edge in many areas. I am also grateful to Frédéric Mégret who, as Book Review Editor, has done an excellent job not only of generating stimulating reviews but also of involving a whole new generation of younger scholars in the *EJIL* enterprise.

I have been privileged to have the support of Anny Bremner, who has been a superb Assistant Editor, and the European University Institute, through its Academy of European Law, has generously provided a home for the Journal and assisted in its development in myriad ways. The EUI and the *EJIL* also provided the context in which the editors of the Journal were able

to launch the initial effort to create the European Society of International Law, which was officially launched in Florence in 2004.

I take considerable pleasure in the fact that I am leaving behind a significantly different Journal from the one I started with almost 12 years ago. In particular, the *EJIL* has recently launched a new phase of rejuvenation and renewal. In June of 2007 a new Scientific Advisory Board, consisting of a diverse and relatively young group of international lawyers from Europe and beyond met for the first time. This group will have a significant input into the future direction and the content of the Journal. Three new members have been appointed to the Editorial Board: Francesco Francioni from the European University Institute, Emmanuelle Jouannet from the Université de Paris 1, and Orna Ben-Naftali from the College of Management in Tel Aviv. We have created an Honorary Editorial Board, which will include those who have stepped down from the Board. We have begun to restructure the Journal's website and enhance its user-friendliness. And, most importantly, Joseph H. H. Weiler, whose vision led to the founding of the Journal, will take the helm as the new Editor-in-Chief. No one could be better placed to ensure that the *EJIL* rises to the many new challenges that will confront international law in the years ahead.

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