

EDITORIAL COMMENT

It is certainly my pleasure to share with you this double-issue of the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LEGAL INFORMATION. I wish to express my sincerest thanks to **Mark Engsborg**, Editor, for allowing me the opportunity to work as Guest Editor of this issue, and to the seven article authors, nine book reviewers, **Thomas Mills**, **Asilhan Bulut**, **Becca Emerson**, **Sheila Jarrett**, and all the folks at **William S. Hein and Co., Inc.** for their amazing support and dedication to bringing this issue together. And what an issue it is!

It is my pleasure to present to you three first-time IJLI authors exploring a trio of fascinating and diverse international human rights issues. Next are three “follow-up” pieces meant to compliment, expand, and update three previously published IJLI articles from 2010, 2013, and 2014. The Articles section concludes with a piece by a familiar contributor to the IJLI on the future of law librarianship in the United States.

Once again, **Thomas Mills** has assembled an incredible selection of book reviews that truly complement each and every article presented here, and **Aslihan Buulut** has compiled an awe-inspiring international calendar that has become one of the trademarks of the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LEGAL INFORMATION.

The issue begins with **Alexandra García’s** compelling story of Spain’s present-day blanket Amnesty Act which many contend operates in violation of international human rights laws. Ms. García introduces us to the concept of “blanket amnesty” acts in general, provides a solid foundation for understanding both the pros and the cons of such acts, and shares how Spain’s 1977 Amnesty Act came into being during Spain’s transition to justice at the end of the Francoist regime. She then explores South Africa’s successful use of such acts to foster democratic restoration after the Apartheid era and highlights the growing international support for eliminating overly broad blanket amnesties as illustrated by the continued prosecution of Nazi war criminals and the recognition of the unconstitutionality of Argentina’s *Full Stop* and *Due Obedience* laws. Despite requests from the UN Human Rights Committee and mounting support among the international community, Spain’s 1997 Amnesty Act still prevents the prosecution of some individuals who could be held accountable for crimes against humanity. Ms. García’s call to action is a must read for everyone.

We then jump from Spain to the Commonwealth Caribbean and **Emily Becker’s** study of two powerful social movements of the indigenous people of the Caribbean. Ms. Becker pulls back the curtain on the region’s long and often romanticized history to uncover the true struggles endured by the original

inhabitants of the islands. Through the telling of the Rastafarian and Indigenous Resurgence movements, Ms. Becker debunks common myths and celebrates the amazing resilience and determination for self-identification of the indigenous communities and tribes. I encourage you to immerse yourself in Ms. Becker's exploration of these peoples and discover that Rastafarianism is more than great music and celebrate the diversity that has not only survived colonization but is currently thriving in the Commonwealth Caribbean.

From amnesty acts and social movements, we move to another fundamental human right—the right of privacy. **Anna-Maria Hambre** takes us deep into the tax codes of Sweden and the United States with her comparative study of Tax Confidentiality laws in each country. Ms. Hambre traces the historical development of the tax codes as well as the cultural responses to those developments as each nation attempts to balance the desire for governmental transparency with the protection of individual privacy. Of course, no discussion of privacy would be complete without the mention of the effects of technology and access to information—both of which are included here. Ms. Hambre's analysis is truly a fascinating review of how deep-rooted cultural norms and social priorities affect all aspects of our legal systems; right down to the tax information we provide our governments each year.

“Deep-rooted cultural norms” is perhaps an understatement when you think of the Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (NN&P) of Ethiopia. In our Winter 2013 issue, **Tsegaye Beru** introduced us to the Ethiopian legal system (see Tsegaye Beru, “*Brief History of the Ethiopian Legal System—Past and Present*,” 41.3 INT'L J. L. INFO 335 (Winter 2013)). Since then, Mr. Beru has focused his attention on creating an in-depth outline for anyone wishing to study the groundbreaking 1995 Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. It is truly my honor to include this outline in this issue of the IJLI. Mr. Beru's passion for the rights and liberties afforded the NN&P in this historical document, and his commitment to the proper interpretation of those provisions, are inspiring. His substantial work included in this issue features not only the events that led to the ratification of the constitution, but also provides in-depth discussions of many of the more critical and controversial provisions included in the constitution. While answering many questions surrounding the constitution, Mr. Beru also poses significant additional questions for all legal scholars to consider as the body of case law interpreting the 1995 Constitution continues to grow.

It is also my honor to include the second installment of **Peter Macalister-Smith's** and **Joachim Schwietzke's** impressive and comprehensive bibliographical calendar of diplomacy and international law surrounding World War One which premiered in our most recent issue (see Peter Macalister-Smith & Joachim Schwietzke, “*100 Years Ago: A Bibliographical Calendar of Diplomacy and International Law: In the Years 1914 and 1915*,” 42.3 INT'L J.

LEGAL INFO. 517–555 (Winter 2014)). This second and concluding installment picks up where we left off: at the beginning of 1916, and it presents selected acts and responses of various states to the events of World War One. More than 100 documents are featured in this compilation, concluding with the Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers, signed in Versailles on June 25, 1919. Also included is an Annex containing information relating to several of the treaties presented as well as a comprehensive bibliography of the vast number of sources cited in the collection.

The third follow-up piece included here comes from **Roderick O'Brien**, who first published *Legal Education in China: English Language Materials* in our Spring 2010 issue (see Roderick O'Brien, "Legal Education in China: English Language Materials," 38.1 INT'L. J. LEGAL INFO. 93 (Spring 2010)). What began as a few foreign librarians in China sharing lists of English materials has now expanded to a globally published list of more than 120 items published in English on the subject of legal education in China. On behalf of international law librarians everywhere, I wish to extend my personal thanks to Mr. O'Brien and to all the librarians with whom he has collaborated to compile such a valuable and up-to-date list of materials.

The final article in this issue is from **Jootaek Lee**, a prolific scholar and author, on law librarianship globally and the future of U.S. law librarians particularly. Mr. Lee's piece is based on his recent talk "U.S. Law Librarians and their Roles" presented at the National Assembly Library of Korea, Seoul, Korea, on April 21, 2015. I am thrilled that he chose our publication to further share his vision of the promising future for law librarians and what we all can do to make his vision a reality.

I hope you enjoy reading this collection of interesting and diverse articles and book reviews as much as I have enjoyed assembling it. I hope this collection will spark inspiring conversations and spirited debates throughout the legal information community for many years to come.

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