

Focus:

The Rule of Law

In August 2004, Secretary-General Kofi Annan issued a report entitled *The Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Conflict and Post-Conflict Societies*. The Report aimed at articulating a “common language of justice for the United Nations” of key concepts of justice, rule of law and transitional justice.

Later the Secretary-General highlighted the rule of law as the all important framework and pledged to make the United Nations work to strengthen the rule of law and transitional justice a priority of the United Nations.

The view that international law and the rule of law are the foundations of the international system and that it is therefore imperative to strengthen the rule of law in all its dimensions, e.g. national, international and institutional levels, was instantly commonly shared and ever since the notion rule of law and its content is under consideration and became a fast growing field of activity within the UN system.

For this reason the *Max Planck Yearbook of United Nations Law* felt it was appropriate to include several contributions concerning this issue.

Thomas Fitschen, Stefan Barriga, Alejandro Alday and Konrad Bühler from the Permanent Missions of Germany, Liechtenstein, Mexico and Austria in New York describe this notion and its development throughout the last years from a practitioners point of view, each focusing on a specific subject.

The Focus is completed by an article about the Reform of the Administration of Justice System within the United Nations, being another aspect in the still ongoing debate about the rule of law.

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