

RCIL

International Law News Coverage



January 16th- 31st, 2025



Announcement

RCIL Essay Writing Competition

on the

'UN International Law
Commission Draft Articles on the
Prevention and Punishment of
Crimes against Humanity'

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Online Seminar on Climate-
Change, Sea Level Rise and
International Law

(February 5, 2025 at 7:30 PM,
IST)

by ASIL-LOSIG in collaboration with
RRU

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Events and Announcements

Online Seminar on Climate Change, Sea Level Rise and International Law

by

American Society of International Law - Law of the Sea Interest Group
(ASIL-LOSIG) in collaboration with Rashtriya Raksha University
(RRU)

on

February 5, 2025

For further details, [click here](#)

RCIL Essay Writing Competition

on the

‘UN International Law Commission Draft Articles on the
Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Humanity’

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 31 March 2025

For further details, [click here](#)

The International Court of Justice

Aerial Incident of 8 January 2020

Canada, Sweden, Ukraine and United Kingdom

v.

Islamic Republic of Iran

On 16 January 2025, **Iran** raised **preliminary objections** to the jurisdiction of the Court and to the admissibility of the Application filed by the Applicants in the case concerning the *Aerial Incident of 8 January 2020 (Canada, Sweden, Ukraine and United Kingdom v. Islamic Republic of Iran)*.

On 4 July 2023, Canada, Sweden, Ukraine and the United Kingdom had filed a joint Application instituting proceedings against Iran concerning alleged violations by the latter of its obligations under the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation of 23 September 1971 (“the Montreal Convention”), arising out of the shooting down on 8 January 2020 of a Ukrainian civil aircraft by military personnel of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. All 176 passengers and crew aboard the flight, many of whom were nationals and residents of the applicant States, were killed in the crash.

Canada, Sweden, Ukraine and the United Kingdom have sought to found the Court’s jurisdiction on Article 36, paragraph 1, of the Statute of the Court and Article 14, paragraph 1, of the Montreal Convention, to which all four Applicants and Iran are parties.

The United Nations and International Law

Secretary-General Urges Increased, Innovative Funding to Support the Work of the Peacebuilding Commission Stressing its Critical Role Amid Rise in Conflicts Worldwide

Amid escalating conflicts, widening geopolitical divisions and deepening climate crisis, the Peacebuilding Commission is more critical than ever, said the UN Chief, stressing that the Pact for the Future charts a course to reforming international cooperation by prioritizing prevention, mediation and peacebuilding. He noted that this year's Review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture offers an opportunity to strengthen the Commission's role and pointed to his recent report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace, which suggests mobilizing political and financial support for nationally owned peacebuilding and prevention strategies. On the issue of financing, the Secretary-General emphasized that voluntary contributions remain paramount and encouraged countries to provide additional support to the Fund.

Senior UN Official in Democratic Republic of Congo Briefs Security Council on Goma Attack and Urges De-escalation to Avert 'Third Congo War'

At the Security Council's emergency meeting to address the worsening situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a senior United Nations official has warned that escalating attacks by the 23 March Movement (M23) continued to kill civilians and peacekeeping personnel in and around the city of Goma. Deputy Special Representative for Protection and Operations in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Vivian van de Perre, also voiced alarm that clashes in the eastern part of that country have resulted in massive displacement. She noted that consequently, MONUSCO has received a large number of people seeking refuge, including officials and various elements who have surrendered their arms. However, MONUSCO bases are not able to accommodate these numbers.

The United Nations and International Law

UN Palestine Refugee Agency Chief Warns Security Council of Risks to Gaza Ceasefire, Recovery Efforts, due to Israeli Legislation

The Implementation of Israel's legislation on 30 January - curtailing the operations of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) - will undermine the ceasefire and sabotage Gaza's recovery and political transition, according to Philippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General of the UNRWA. He expressed hope that the long-awaited ceasefire will hold and the tremendous suffering in Gaza will subside and welcomed the return of Israeli hostages and imprisoned Palestinians to their families. He emphasized that as the largest UN presence in Gaza, the UNRWA is critical in supporting a shattered population under a ceasefire. However, he warned, their operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory will be crippled as legislation passed by Israel takes effect, adding that the fate of millions of Palestinians is at stake.

Security Council Adopts Presidential Statement Acknowledging Inputs for 2025 Review for 20-Year-Old UN Peacebuilding Architecture

The Council noted that the upcoming review of the UN peacebuilding architecture in 2025 will be the fourth, marking the structure's twentieth anniversary. The 15-member Council also noted with appreciation the Secretary-General's report on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace on 27 December 2024 and took note of the Peacebuilding Commission's inputs for the 2025 review.

The United Nations and International Law

With Terrorism at ‘Tipping Point’ in Africa, Security Council Speakers Call for Development-Driven Solutions.

Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina J. Mohammed stated before the Council that terrorism is the most significant threat to peace, security and sustainable development across the African continent today. Describing Sahel as “ground zero” for one of the world’s most brutal crises, she said that for three years, terrorism-related deaths have soared past 6,000, making up half of all global fatalities. In this deadly surge, Burkina Faso is now leading the world in terrorism deaths with a staggering 68 per cent increase. The speakers also engaged in a day-long open debate to outline counter-terrorism initiatives that address the interconnected relationship among security, development and human rights.

Security Council Speakers Urge Israel to Withdraw from Lebanon, Golan Buffer Zone, Allow Peacekeepers to Operate without Obstruction

Speakers in the Security Council have urged Israel to respect its long-established ceasefire agreements with Lebanon and Syria and stay clear of the areas where United Nations peacekeeping missions are deployed to carry out their duties. Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Jean-Pierre Lacroix noted that the cessation of hostilities between Israel and Lebanon, though fragile, continues to hold. However, he noted, with 10 days until the end of the 60-day period for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, its airstrikes continue. He underscored that the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) peacekeepers must be allowed to carry out their mandated tasks without obstruction. Several delegates emphasized that there is **no conceivable justification for deliberately attacking UN peacekeepers** committed to the restoration of peace and security in Lebanon and Syria. The representative of Sierra Leone noted that the Special Court for Sierra Leone was the first tribunal to convict perpetrators for their attacks against UN peacekeepers and underscored that the **Council must prioritize accountability for such crimes.**

United Nations Peacekeeping

Security Council Extends Mandate of United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2771 (2005)

The Security Council has decided to renew the long-standing United Nations peacekeeping presence in Cyprus for another year, underscoring the need to avoid any unilateral actions that could undermine the prospects for a peaceful settlement. The 15-member organ unanimously adopted resolution 2771 (2005) and decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

Under-Secretary General for Peace Operations Briefs Security Council on Worsening Situation in Democratic Republic of Congo and Says Actions Endangering UN shall not be Tolerated

Holding an emergency meeting following advances by the 23 March Movement (M23) towards the city of Goma in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and concurrent attacks on United Nations peacekeepers there, the Security Council heard that urgent action is needed to address a rapidly deteriorating situation.

Under-Secretary General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix said that the “The United Nations is profoundly concerned by the resumption of hostilities”. M23 had fired on positions of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) on 23-24 January 2025, as a result of which **several blue helmets were “killed in carrying out the tasks entrusted to them by this Council”**, reported the Under-Secretary General.

The representative of Greece noted that attacks against MONUSCO peacekeepers **constitute a basis for sanctions designations**. Similarly, Slovenia’s representative stressed that these attacks constitute “**an attack against peace itself**”. She also underlined the **organ’s responsibility to “stand unequivocally behind [its personnel]** in these perilous times and ensure they return home safely to their loved ones”.

United Nations Peacekeeping

Statement Attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Deeply concerned by the escalating violence in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Secretary-General has reiterated his strongest condemnation of the M23 armed group's ongoing offensive and advances towards Goma in North Kivu with the support of the Rwanda Defence Forces.

Two MONUSCO peacekeepers from South Africa and one peacekeeper from Uruguay have been killed while implementing the mandate entrusted upon them by the Security Council and **eleven peacekeepers have sustained injuries** due to the M23 offensive.

The Secretary-General expressed deepest condolences to the families of the fallen peacekeepers as well as to their Governments and the people of South Africa and Uruguay and wished a swift recovery to the injured. He also reminded all parties to the conflict of their obligations under international humanitarian law and **recalled that attacks against United Nations personnel may constitute a war crime**. He called on the **appropriate authorities to investigate this incident** and swiftly bring those responsible to justice.

Security Council Debates Haiti's Request to Transform Kenyan-Led Security Mission into UN Peacekeeping Operation, as Gang Violence, Organized Crime Grip Country

Maria Isabel Salvador, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti and Head of the United Nations Integrated Office in Haiti (BINUH), has told the Security Council that despite several positive political developments in Haiti, a worsening security situation - compounded by organized crime - has resulted in death, displacement and crisis in the country. She also urged international support to make progress on these intertwined fronts. Meanwhile, delegates discussed the country's request for a UN peacekeeping operation to replace the newly-deployed Kenyan-led security mission.

Accountability for Crimes against Peacekeepers

“Perpetrators must be brought to justice”

Watch the video message [here](#)



Image Credit: International Peace Institute

The United Nations Treaty Collection

Depositary Notifications

The **United States of America** [withdraws](#) from the **Paris Agreement** on 27 January 2025.

On 20 January 2025, the conditions for [entry into force](#) of the Amendment to the **Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters** were met. Accordingly, the Amendment shall enter into force on 20 April 2025 in accordance with Article 14(4) of the Convention.

Ukraine [ratifies](#) the **Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters** on 20 January 2025.

Angola [signs](#) the Agreement under the **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction** on 22 January 2025.

The International Criminal Court

Statement of the ICC Prosecutor Karim A.A. Khan KC to the United Nations Security Council on the Situation in Darfur, pursuant to Resolution 1593 (2005).

In his Statement, the Prosecutor noted, *inter alia*, that the last six months have reflected a further descent into deeper suffering, deeper misery for the people of Darfur. Famine is present in Darfur, conflict is increasing and children are targeted. And the whole landscape is one of destruction, and criminality. He stated that it was the clear view of his Office, as reflected in the report before the Council, that international crimes were being committed in Darfur as they spoke. The Prosecutor expressed particular concern regarding the stream of allegations of the targeting of women and girls, and of gender crimes identified through their investigations. He added that the Office was taking the necessary steps to put forward applications for warrants of arrest in relation to the alleged crimes being committed and which have been committed in West Darfur.

Statement of ICC Prosecutor Karim A.A. Khan KC: Applications for arrest warrants in the situation in Afghanistan.

The ICC Office of the Prosecutor has filed two applications for warrants of arrest before Pre-Trial Chamber II of the Court in the Situation in Afghanistan. After a thorough investigation and on the basis of evidence collected, the OTP submitted that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Supreme Leader of the Taliban, Haibatullah Akhundzada, and the Chief Justice of the “Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan”, Abdul Hakim Haqqani, bear criminal responsibility for the crime against humanity of persecution on gender grounds, under Article 7(1)(h) of the Rome Statute. The OTP has concluded that these two Afghan nationals are criminally responsible for persecuting Afghan girls and women, as well as persons whom the Taliban perceived as not conforming with their ideological expectations of gender identity or expression, and persons whom the Taliban perceived as allies of girls and women. The Prosecutor noted that these were the first applications for arrest warrants in the Situation in Afghanistan and that the Office will file further applications for other senior members of the Taliban soon. He added that these requests for warrants of arrest are based on diverse evidence, including expert and witness testimonies, official decrees, forensic reports, statements by the suspects themselves and other Taliban representatives, and audio-visual material.



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