

# Editorial #2 – New beginnings

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Is it a stretch to say that 2021 has started with a lot of hope? A severe pandemic is still ongoing. Without proper political action, it will continue to increase economic inequality, within societies and [globally](#). None of the other global challenges have disappeared – and yet, the first month of 2021 has given us some reasons for being hopeful. Vaccinations have begun in many places. A new President in the United States has taken office and [rejoined](#) the Paris Climate Agreement. Peaceful protests for democracy continue in Belarus, [despite police violence](#) and arrests. In Russia too, [people are on the streets](#), prompted by the attempted murder and subsequent detention of Alexei Navalny.

Many of those developments have been reflected on in blogposts of the past weeks. Sabrina Schäfer [has discussed](#) the legal issues around the US reviving treaty relations. Hannah Birkenkötter [took stock](#) of the two years Germany held a seat on the UN Security Council. Kanstantsin Dzehtsiarou [wrote](#) on the ECtHR landmark judgment in the case Georgia v. Russia (II). A year into the Covid Pandemic, its broader social effects and the legal questions surrounding those merit attention – so please note the call for contributions for a symposium on [COVID-19 and “New” Human Rights](#) that the Völkerrechtsblog will host in collaboration with the Global Pandemic Network.

It also has been a month of exciting new beginnings for the blog: After long and careful preparations, the [Völkerrechtspodcast](#) is launched. In the [first episode](#), you can learn about the prohibition of intervention and listen to Florian Kriener talk about state support for non-violent protests – and what international law has to say on this matter. Episodes will appear monthly, so stay tuned. The Völkerrechtsblog now also has an [Instagram Account](#) – please follow us for international law content with shiny visuals. And last but not least, we welcome a new team member, Muratcan Sabuncu.

All these developments are a testament to the amazing energy and dedication in the [blog team](#) – which makes me personally hopeful, and pretty enthusiastic.

We saw a lot of enthusiasm from participants in our events series [Völkerrechtslunch](#) so far – more than 180 joined for the first Zoom meeting. The series (in German) seeks to offer insights into different professions in the field of international law, it combines brief interviews and live zoom events. After [Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger](#) and [Andreas Zimmermann](#), we will hear from Gyde Jensen, a member of the German Bundestag, today. You can find the [interview](#) here – and join us at 12pm CET for an exchange.

With that, I wish you all a healthy and happy February – with hopes that 2021 will continue to bring improvements and inspiration, in international law and beyond.

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