

Editorial #27: On Spring Fever and the Return of Colour

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As the temperatures here in the mid-latitudes start to get milder, the days grow longer and the first spring flowers cautiously poke their heads out of the ground, our colourful bouquet of different topics and posts here at the Völkerrechtsblog is already in full bloom.

Since March is dedicated to the annual International Women's Day, we at Völkerrechtsblog celebrated with the second edition of our [Women in International Law Symposium](#). In cooperation with members of the Women in International Refugee Law network, the symposium covered a colourful range of topics, all revolving around the contemporary struggles of women and girls seeking asylum and recent developments in this context. We concluded our 'purple' month with another very timely topic brought to us by Mara Ebbers, who [explored](#) the current position of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on the controversial issue of abortion in light of the ongoing *Beatriz* case before the Court. Adding even more colour to our wide range of topics, Petra Sussner [discussed](#) the future of sexual orientation and gender identity in human rights, asking whether heteronormativity is still part of the European legal order.

And in 'green' terms, too, our posts in March had a lot to offer. Under the premise of greening the Cape Town Convention, Nikolas Klausmann [offered](#) some thoughts on UNIDROIT's proposal on a new protocol on renewable energy equipment to the 2001 Cape Town Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment (CTC). Sonja Susann Schäfer then [drew](#) attention to the environmental disaster that occurred off the coast of the Philippines in February by discussing who might be responsible for removing leaked oil which is causing widespread destruction of marine ecosystems and forms a danger to the health of coastal communities.

However, as in previous months, the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine once again overshadowed our springy glow and also remained at the forefront of our author's minds. Philipp Sauter [kicked off](#) the month with his piece on Russia's withdrawal from the New START Treaty. As if the hosts of our Völkerrechtspodcast could have foreseen it, in their 25th episode they [explored](#) the prosecutability of Vladimir Putin under international criminal law and reflected on this, among others, with their guest Annegret Hartig. In March, the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber II not only issued arrest warrants for Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova but also decided on 8 March on the interim release of Maxime Mokom. Franka Pues [discussed](#) this decision in detail in her contribution and raised the question of how to deal with a lack of state cooperation.

Yet another decision, this time by the ICJ, was brought to our readers' attention by Sarah Babaian and Gurgun Petrossian who [considered](#) the consequences of

ignoring the Courts' binding decision in light of the ongoing dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh. Given another recent case, this time before the High Court of Namibia which challenges the Joint Declaration between Germany and Namibia on reparations for colonisation, Mara Ebbers and Anna Müller [examined](#) whether and how the international legal framework provides for reparations for past injustices.

The month of March, however, brings not only the blossoming of new topics but also the continuation of familiar ones. With this in mind, we began our coverage of the Jessup season in February with an interview with one of the organisers of this year's Jones Day German National Rounds, and we ended this month of Jessup – at least on a national level – with not one but two first-hand accounts. As a first-time judge, Anna Hoffmann [reflected](#) on her view from the bench, finding self-worth between losing and winning, and international justice in dark times. Angelina Georgousi, Eveline Guschtschin, Nina Harbecke and Patrick Beer then [offered](#) some reflections from the perspective of a participating team, showing how a bunch of strangers could grow into a team in light of the overall Jessup spirit.

And what better way to end a month than with another great interview from our [‘The Person Behind the Academic’](#) series? This month, Sissy Katsoni introduced us to [Prof. Vasuki Nesiah](#) and [Prof. Marko Milanovic](#). And who would have thought that the international legal bubble would have ‘snatched’ a tropical architect and an opera singer? – Don't tell anyone, but we here at the Völkerrechtsblog are quite happy about it.

We hope you enjoyed our colourful month of March, and we will be sure to add many more bloomy gems to our blog post bouquet in the coming months – so stay (flowery) tuned.

