



2019: YEAR-END REFLECTIONS



GLOBAL FAIRNESS THROUGH GLOBAL LAW

Climate change. Conservation of the oceans. Sustainable development to fight poverty and inequality. Promoting and protecting human rights and human dignity.

The problems of today are global problems and they require global solutions.

International Law is the tool to do just that. By bringing the global community together to create and enforce rules, International Law can work to solve the challenges we face.

But this is not easy. These issues are complex, and if the world is going to tackle them, International law must be fair and effective. That's where we come in.

Independent International Legal Advocates (IILA) is a group of dedicated lawyers committed to ensuring fairness in International law. We believe in a world where International Law works effectively to solve global issues, and every country and every people is heard in its creation and implementation. A global legal system is great for small and developing States – if it's working the way it should.

Working for the inclusion of these diverse perspectives will lead to better outcomes of human dignity, environmental protection, and sustainable development. **If you care about these vital goals – you care about international law across the globe.**



IILA'S MISSION IN ACTION

IILA's approach is the innovative model of serving as "in-house counsel", working in partnership with disadvantaged countries' International Law teams. We provide impartial legal support and training. We do not replace local law advisers, but instead, *partner with them* for long-term collaboration. IILA's approach allows our small and developing country partners to play a more active role in the international community, negotiate with greater confidence, build the capability of their own legal departments, and create fair and just changes in international law. Ultimately it is the citizens of our partner States that IILA serves by ensuring their needs shape the creation and application of international law – and in turn all peoples by making international law an effective tool for global justice.

IILA provides support across the key international law topics confronting a foreign affairs ministry, and tailors our support to the assessed needs of a small or developing State Partner—including:

- Capacity building through intensive training sessions on specific subject matters for each State;
- Analyzing treaty obligations and how to implement them effectively;
- Connecting States with key partners and international law resources;
- Providing research and advice for treaty negotiations;
- Supporting States to include international law in their decision-making;
- Advising on the selection of means for peacefully settling disputes.

Since IILA's founding in 2018, one of our State Partner's has been the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Honduras. Over the past year we've helped them prepare and execute negotiation strategy for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration to ensure the human rights of migrants, provided them with an analysis of the ways forward for the Global Pact for the Environment to grapple with the challenges faced by developing States when working to protect the environment, and helped them navigate through the technical maze of legal issues that surrounded giving the International Criminal Court the right to prosecute leaders for the crime of waging aggressive and illegal war.

IILA's most recent work in 2019 has been to support the Chair of the Group of 77, working for 134 small and developing States (for 2019, the Chair was the State of Palestine), in the pursuit of a global treaty to ensure the Conservation and Sustainable Use of marine life in the open oceans. IILA worked at full capacity through the summer as all States came together in New York for the third round of these negotiations. IILA supported the G77 in fighting to ensure that protecting the ocean is combined with fair distributions of its resources, and a global goal to ensure all peoples can contribute to protecting the oceans – and benefit from its sustainable riches.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR 2020

ILLA's intended impacts for 2020 remain on course and in line with our mission: working for the more effective and fair participation of small and developing States in the creation and application of international law, and improving the lives of peoples across the globe through international law's contribution to sustainable development, human dignity and peace and security.



OPPORTUNITIES

- The negotiations for the treaty to conserve and sustainably use the oceans enters its final and critical stages in 2020. IILA is set to continue its work for small and developing States to fight to ensure their voices are heard and contribute effectively to a treaty that will achieve what it sets out to do;
- A number of small / developing States fully recognize the challenges they face in strategically grappling with international law. IILA is working with a number of these States to prepare programs of engagement, education and support to raise these foundational capabilities that will permit their sustained focus on international law for years to come;
- It goes without saying that pursuing and implementing inside their country trade and investment policies that support development is central to developing States. But ensuring that these goals are accompanied with robust and effective protections for the environment, for labour rights, for human rights – this is a complex international law challenge. IILA is preparing a program with a West African State that would cut across the legal topics in order to unify these vital goals;
- For many small developing States, the obstacles to protect and enforce human rights are not a lack of will or care about human dignity. An overload of reporting to human rights monitoring bodies, difficulties in interpreting and applying the multitude of human rights treaties, and the burden of drafting instruments that speak to new and pressing needs of different regions of the globe stand in the way. IILA is planning now with a small Southern Africa State on an implementation plan to manage international human rights obligations, and ensure enhanced engagement with regional and global monitoring bodies;
- The United Nations Security Council is tasked with the primary responsibility of securing peace and security the world over. The importance of putting small and developing States on an equal footing with world powers is vital – and so is ensuring that decisions over such life and death issues maintains a focus on the rule of law, on ensuring equal treatment in all equal situations. IILA is building a pilot program of support for current and future small / developing State members of the Security Council on bringing international law analysis into each and every decision of the Council;
- One of the most threatening consequences of global climate change is that of sea-level rise, with its existential threat to many countries, its impact on matters of the oceans and its catalyst to mass movement of persons fleeing untenable situations. IILA is actively engaging with a number of small island developing States on how current debates on shaping the future of international law to mitigate and adapt to rising seas can support the needs of their peoples.



CHALLENGES

The opportunities for IILA to make change are great in number. The challenges are also clear and present. The number of stark global concerns continue to make the building of the ambitious and long-term project that is IILA very challenging. Getting behind support for Governments can appear to lack the appeal of directly working for people or communities – despite the need to support the goals of peoples into the language and tools of international law managed most of all by Government officials. And of course, the limited resources of small / developing States can make it quite challenging to support work on international law and building changes to the long-term system. While ultimately possessing a greater potential for impacts, it can be hard to stop fire-fighting to work on planting trees.

IILA has done a great deal in a short time with very limited resources. This is all down to the incredible pro bono support we have received from a number of leading law firms, our team of committed interns and fellows, and our uniquely experienced and accomplished range of international law experts on IILA's Advisory Council. More information on all these supporters can be found on IILA's website!

But to become a sustainable and influential voice on reforming international law policies and practices for small and developing States, we will rely in 2020 on donations from generous people like you. Please help us make International Law fair and effective!

Our future depends on it.

HOW YOUR CONTRIBUTION WILL HELP IILA'S MISSION

With your support and that of others, significant advances in global justice and fairness through international law are possible. Some of the ways that your support would help IILA to seek fairness and justice through international law include:

\$500

Provides a one-month's subscription to online legal research databases and other vital library sources to conduct legal research for our State partners.

\$10,000

Allows IILA to provide one month's worth of legal analysis and strategic support in shaping the international law advisory office of a State partner.

\$15,000

Provides all the organizing costs for a 2-week intensive and targeted training course given by IILA's legal advisers on a vital area of international law to all the foreign affairs legal officers in a small and developing State.

\$45,000

Supports a Legal Fellow for a full year of international law support for IILA's State partners.

Please head to our website to make a tax deductible and either annual or repeat donation to IILA.

www.independentila.org/donate!

