

# International Law May 29 2009 updates

---

Concepts of International Law are often complex and time-consuming to research. Lawyers and politicians, in times of conflict, often re-examine issues of international law, particularly in areas such as armed conflict, terrorism, universal sovereignty and human rights. This is especially acute at a time when the current Iraq War is invoking experts to search international law to determine what it has to say about the humane treatment of Prisoners of War: What Does International Law Say About Prisoners of War? (by the Council of Foreign Relations)

[http://www.cfr.org/background/background\\_iraq\\_prisoners.php](http://www.cfr.org/background/background_iraq_prisoners.php)

What, therefore, is international law and what areas of international relations does it cover? Examination shows the coverage to be extensive. However, where is the researcher to go for authoritative information? A good basic textbook is the **2005 edition of Antonio Cassese's 'International Law'** at <http://www.oup.com/uk/booksites/content/0199259399/>

This site offers invaluable links to various areas of International Law.

**Columbia University's Law Library** provides another excellent research guide to International Law: [http://www.law.columbia.edu/library/Research\\_Guides/internat\\_law/pubint](http://www.law.columbia.edu/library/Research_Guides/internat_law/pubint)

Another highly useful resource is the Yale University Law Library which has published a comprehensive guide on INTERNATIONAL and FOREIGN LAW:

<http://www.law.yale.edu/library/research/foreign&intl/index.html>

A vast amount of authoritative information on international law and related issues is available through the Internet. This webliography offers an initial introduction, particularly for those not familiar with the subject. It is, however, inevitably selective and does not cover the full spread of subjects, such as trade, <http://www.wto.org> or financial institutions, <http://www.worldbank.org>

The Law Library of Congress also provides useful starting points:

**The Law Library of Congress has launched a redesigned Global Legal Monitor**

[[http://www.loc.gov/lawweb/servlet/lloc\\_news?home](http://www.loc.gov/lawweb/servlet/lloc_news?home)]. The new Global Legal Monitor has the ability to view legal developments by topic

[[http://www.loc.gov/lawweb/servlet/lloc\\_news?allTopics](http://www.loc.gov/lawweb/servlet/lloc_news?allTopics)] (more than one hundred so far)

and by jurisdiction [[http://www.loc.gov/lawweb/servlet/lloc\\_news?allJuris](http://www.loc.gov/lawweb/servlet/lloc_news?allJuris)] (over one hundred and fifty). The content of the Library of Congress's Global Legal Monitor can also be searched through its advanced search interface.

Also, consult the new Public Library of Law: **The Public Library of Law (PLOL)**

Provides free access to selected U.S. legal materials. Includes cases from the U.S. Supreme Court, Federal Circuit Courts back to 1950, state courts back to 1997, federal statutes, codes from all 50 states, and more and includes tutorials on finding a case and searching for statutes. Requires free registration to view cases. <http://www.plol.org/Pages/Search.aspx>

The Kent Law Library (U.K.) has extensive links on EU, UK and International Law, all updated:

<http://www.kent.ac.uk/lawlinks/index.html>

Another new resources is the United Nations AudioVisual Library of International Law: The United Nations Office of Legal Affairs launched the [Audiovisual Library of International Law](http://www.un.org/law/avl/)

<http://www.un.org/law/avl/>

"The Audiovisual Library is a unique, multimedia resource which provides the United Nations with the unprecedented capacity to provide high quality international law training and research materials to an unlimited number of recipients on a global level. The Audiovisual Library consists of three pillars: (1) the [Historic Archives](#) containing documents and audiovisual materials relating to the negotiation and adoption of significant legal instruments under the auspices of the United



Nations and related agencies since 1945; (2) the [Lecture Series](#) featuring a permanent collection of lectures on virtually every subject of international law given by leading international law scholars and practitioners from different countries and legal systems; and (3) the [Research Library](#) providing an on-line international law library with links to treaties, jurisprudence, publications and documents, scholarly writings and research guides. The Audiovisual Library is available to all individuals and institutions around the world for free via the Internet."

### SEARCH ENGINES

General searches on International Law issues should always begin with the Librarian's Index to the Internet <<http://lii.org>>, the Internet Public Library <<http://www.ipl.org>>, **BUBL** <http://bubl.ac.uk/link/linkbrowse.cfm?menuid=2829> or the WWW Virtual Libraries Sites <<http://vlib.org/Overview.html>> all of which maintain their own internal search engines. Typing in "International Law" in these search engines will yield the best and most authoritative Internet sites.

### PORTALS and GATEWAYS:

At least numerous excellent portals offer *extensive gateways into international law*:

**Cornell University's Legal Information Institute** maintains a very useful gateway to national laws, trade law and international law: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/world/> See also the World Legal Information Institute at: <http://worldlii.org> and Cornell's Foreign and International Law Sources on the Internet: <http://library.lawschool.cornell.edu/guides/foreign2/>

Also, the **Edwin Ginn Library at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University** has gathered an impressive array of International Resources at their web site: [http://fletcher.tufts.edu/inter\\_resources/pubintl.html](http://fletcher.tufts.edu/inter_resources/pubintl.html)

**The Library Legal Law Exchange** offers excellent resources for the study of International Law: [http://www.llrx.com/international\\_law.html](http://www.llrx.com/international_law.html)

**The Virtual Chase** (a fantastic learning tool for any researcher, offering tutorials in many specific subject areas) offers a section on International Law at: <http://www.virtualchase.com/resources/international.shtml> (also offers resources on Country Studies) Another Virtual Chase exclusive is a tutorial on where to locate State, Local and International Resources at <http://www.virtualchase.com/govdoc/intllaw.html>

**Guide to Electronic Resources for International Law:** <http://www.asil.org/resources/index.html> forms part of the website of the American Society of International Law. After an introductory section, the guide is divided into different subject areas e.g. human rights, international economic law, treaties and so on. The guide has additional value because it not only provides extensive links through its subject headings but also includes a narrative for each entry.

Also consult the **Electronic Information System for International Law** <http://www.eisil.org/> This Web Site is very well organized by topics and themes. Both of the above sites are very highly recommended.

### Legal Research on International Law Issues Using the Internet

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/~llou/forintl.html> The University of Chicago Law School maintains this website. It has an extensive array of links with a table of contents more detailed than that provided by the AJIL. However, there is little narrative and links are simply identified through a generic title. This, however, will prove to be a useful supplement to the AJIL guides.

### Guide to Foreign and International Legal Databases

[http://www.law.nyu.edu/library/foreign\\_intl/](http://www.law.nyu.edu/library/foreign_intl/) Maintained by the New York University School of Law, the website provides access to a vast array of databases covering subjects from taxation, copyright to environmental, international, international trade, international criminal law and human rights.

**Internet Website Index** <http://home.att.net/~sломansonb/intlweb.html> This is the most basic portal, providing a simple alphabetical/topic index, though running through 34 pages e.g. air law, country studies.

### **INSTITUTIONAL WEBSITES:**

The websites of a few of the principal institutions of international law include the following:

**United Nations:** <http://www.un.org/english>

This is the main UN website with links to others of importance, primarily through its international law link <http://www.un.org/law>. Through this site, one can access treaties, law of the sea, trade law, criminal tribunals, and a research guide to UN documents at <http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/specil.htm>. Particularly useful is <http://www.un.org/databases/index.html>, the UN database, which includes the Dag Hammarskjold Library online catalog, voting records and index to speeches.

**International Court of Justice:** <http://www.icj-cij.org> The ICJ, which sits at The Hague, was set up in 1945 under the UN Charter and acts as a world court. Its website provides extensive information on the Court, its history, purpose, members, decisions, texts on key cases.

**International Criminal Court:** <http://www.un.org/law/icc/index.html> The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court was adopted in 1998 by a UN conference and opened for signature. It has now received the required 60 ratifications and will enter into force on 1 July 2002. It has been ratified by the UK but not the USA. The website is very detailed, providing overviews, ratification status, access to key documents, and associated bodies.

**International Law Commission:** <http://www.un.org/law/ilc/introfra.htm> The UN General Assembly established the ILC in 1947 to promote the progressive development of international law and its codification. It meets annually and is composed of 34 members elected as independents by the General Assembly for five-year terms. Most of ILC's work involves preparation of drafts on topics of international law. The website provides full access to key documentation and the working of the ILC.

### **HUMAN RIGHTS**

The question of human rights is now a central concern of international relations and international law. Websites abound and those below offer a useful introduction:

**Amnesty International** <http://www.amnesty.org>

This award winning website needs no introduction, this is the premier Human Rights organization in the field. Website includes news, copies of reports and links to other websites.

**Council of Europe Human Rights Web** <http://www.humanrights.coe.int> This website provides public access to information about the Human Rights activities of the Council of Europe. It includes the European Court of Human Rights, case law, activities, and the texts of conventions.

**Human Rights Internet** <http://www.hri.ca/welcome.asp> The HRI aims to offer human rights activists and organizations in particular, but also governments and international agencies, an information resource on human rights issues and the role of civil society. The website includes access to full text reports on various topics, including international law. It also offers a range of subscription databases. One of its most useful (free) tools is the Human Rights Internet Directory <http://www.hri.ca/databank/> a searchable database of human rights websites recorded by site context, features, geographical focus, key words and more.

**Human Rights Library:** <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/index.html>

A website maintained by the University of Minnesota with access to over 7,000 human rights documents on subjects ranging from treaties and UN documents to bibliographies and research

guides, together with links to 3,600 other sites. Includes a section on treaties and other international instruments. Also available in SPANISH.

**Human Rights Search Engine:** <http://www.hurisearch.org/> (Available in SPANISH)

**Human Rights Watch** <http://www.hrw.org> The largest human rights organization based in the United States, with worldwide links and offices in other countries, including London. Its website again offers a huge resource, including country briefings, specific country reports and the full text of its World Report (currently 2002).

**Interights** <http://www.interights.org> The International Center for the Legal Protection of Human Rights, is an international human rights law centre established in 1982. It aims to support and promote the development of legal protection for human rights and freedoms worldwide. Its website includes databases on Commonwealth and international case law. Also available is a lengthy and detailed analysis on 'Responding to September 11: The Framework of International Law.' Maintains a section on International Case Law.

**Some key documents are:**

- *the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948*  
<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>
- *the European Convention of Human Rights in English*  
<http://www.echr.coe.int/NR/rdonlyres/D5CC24A7-DC13-4318-B457-5C9014916D7A/0/EnglishAnglais.pdf>

**JOURNALS**

There have been a proliferation of Law Journals available through the Internet over the past few years. Many have their own websites with content lists, though few have online texts. Useful general websites for identifying law journals include:

**Searchable Law Journals via the University of Texas Law Library:**  
**Searchable Contents Pages from over 750 Law Reviews and Other Scholarly Journals -**  
[http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/tallons/content\\_search.html](http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/tallons/content_search.html)

**Law Journals with an International Focus:** [http://www.law.cam.ac.uk/resources\\_jour.php](http://www.law.cam.ac.uk/resources_jour.php) maintained by the Faculty of Law at the University of Cambridge, it lists journals, which have some substantive full text content online.

**Law Reviews** <http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/lawreviews/> is a website maintained by the Jurist Legal Education network listing a vast range of law review journals.

**The best single site for full text access is the European Journal of International Law**  
<http://www.ejil.org> It has complete access for Vols 1 (1990) to 9 (1998) and abstracts and selected full-text articles from 1999 onwards. Also check out their new International Law Links:  
<http://www.ejil.org/links/index.html>

**The Stanford Journal of International Law** <http://sjil.stanford.edu/> has full contents pages going back to Vol 26, (1990), and Emory International Law Review also offers full-text online <http://www.law.emory.edu/EILR/eilrhome.htm>

**OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES:**

**Avalon Project** <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/avalon.htm> at the Yale Law school. Access to a vast array of documents in law, history and diplomacy from the 18th to the 21st centuries e.g. the Monroe Doctrine, Balfour Declaration, UN Charter and so on. Documents sorted by year, by major collections (e.g. U.S. multilateral treaties from 1864-1999). The site also includes

bibliographies and a search facility. Excellent site, which also includes an online human rights archive, Project Diana.

**Columbia Law Libraries Guide to Treaty Research:**

[http://www.law.columbia.edu/library/Research\\_Guides/internet\\_law/treaty\\_research](http://www.law.columbia.edu/library/Research_Guides/internet_law/treaty_research)

For Columbia Law Library's other highly valuable research guides on aspects of International Law, consult: [http://www.law.columbia.edu/library/Research\\_Guides](http://www.law.columbia.edu/library/Research_Guides) The latter includes outstanding research guides on the European Union, Human Rights, the United Nations, and International Trade Law, among others.

**Internet Law Library** <http://www.lawmoose.com/internetlawlib/89.htm>

Covers TREATIES AND INTERNATIONAL LAW.

**Law Reports on the Web** [http://www.law.cam.ac.uk/resources\\_rept.php](http://www.law.cam.ac.uk/resources_rept.php) A website maintained by the Faculty of Law at the U of Cambridge; provides access to a number of reports divided into U.K. law and International Law Reports.

**UNITED STATES:**

**U.S. Government** <http://www.firstgov.gov> The official U.S. Government website with full and extensive links to all areas of US Law.

**U.S. State Department** <http://www.state.gov> and for U.S. Policy: <http://america.gov>  
In addition, the Office of the Legal Advisor at the U.S. State Department maintains its own Web Site <http://www.state.gov/s/l/> with access to Treaties in Force, Private International Law, International Claims and Investment Disputes and the Digest of International Law.

**The AMERICA.GOV WEB SITE** above offers an extensive free online book Outline of the U.S. Legal System: <http://www.america.gov/publications/books/outline-of-us-legal-system.html>

**How the U.S. is Governed:** [http://www.america.gov/publications/books/us\\_governed.html](http://www.america.gov/publications/books/us_governed.html)  
Maintained by the State Department with basic documents and writings, famous speeches, historical materials and access to U.S. LAW and selective International Treaties.

**Sources of United States Legal Information in Languages other than English.** Mark E. Poorman. <http://www.llrx.com/features/otherthanenglish.htm>

See also: **Tracking Current U.S. Federal Legislation and Regulations: a Guide to Basic Sources** <http://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/98-461.pdf>

**LEGAL BLOGS:**

**Law Blog:** The Wall Street Journal Law Blog follows business law, law trends and politics.

**Schneier on Security:** Learn about security technology and security law from one of the industry's most respected leaders.

**The Am Law Daily**

**Jurist: Paper Chase:** A blog written by University of Pittsburgh law students,

Last Updated May 28, 2009 by STEPHEN PERRY

**EMAIL:** [perrystephen@fastmail.fm](mailto:perrystephen@fastmail.fm)

**OTHER RESEARCH RELATED RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT:**

<http://irosteveperry.pbworks.com/irosteveperry>