

EDITORIAL

This issue of VRÜ is special in two respects: First of all, it has a special thematic focus on "New Actors and Instruments in the Law of Development Cooperation". The issue contains four articles investigating institutional and legal innovations in this field of law: It presents the first extensive and contextualized analysis of the proposal that BRICS countries should form their own development bank. And it offers three articles that examine in-depth a variety of new instruments and standards in development cooperation law – the groundbreaking new lending instrument of the World Bank, the labour standards at the International Finance Corporation and the overall standard of 'do no harm'. With these contributions this issue underlines the dedication and almost singular role of VRÜ to be a forum for critical analysis of the law of development cooperation.

Besides this thematic focus, the issue also represents yet another step of VRÜ into the digital world: Starting with this issue, we are commencing our cooperation with the "*Völkerrechtsblog*".

The *Völkerrechtsblog* is a new blog on public international law, run since April 2014 by the "*Arbeitskreis junger VölkerrechtlerInnen*" (Society of Young Public International Lawyers). It is available at www.voelkerrechtsblog.com and offers those interested in public international law a virtual forum for discussion and information sharing. It is bilingual and aimed both at a German and international audiences.

Our cooperation reflects how the internet changes the way legal scholarship functions and communicates. English-language blogs like *EJIL Talk!* or the German *Verfassungsblog* have become important platforms for international and public legal discourse and scholarship. The *Völkerrechtsblog* now offers international law perspectives their own a virtual space with a basis in German-speaking academia but an international outlook and a special interest in questions concerning the Global South.

This interest in the Global South unites VRÜ and the *Völkerrechtsblog*, which thus complement each other in important ways. In this issue of VRÜ, authors analyse new developments in the law of development cooperation in academic papers; in parallel, these same authors put their main arguments up for discussion on the *Völkerrechtsblog*, where they are complemented by critical reactions and counter-arguments from a series of respondent authors. We hope that this format of argument and counterargument – which is the *Völkerrechtsblog's* trademark – will also feed back into and invigorate discussions on Law and Politics in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

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