Water conflict resolution in international law

Abstract

Riparian states across the world share common water resource in more than 200 international river basins. International law regulations of riparian states' rights and duties in the field of shared water resource utilization at the regional level is not sufficient. Conflicts between states arising from it constitute a threat to international peace and security. Given effects of climate change on freshwater resources, it is presumed that these conflicts would become more frequent in the future. This thesis deals with the topic of the water conflict prevention and resolution in the international water law.

The aim of this thesis is to evaluate which conflict resolution mechanism is suitable for water conflicts. At the same time, the author asks the following research questions: *What are the factors that determine the efficiency of conflict resolution mechanisms in maintaining international peace and security? How are the international legal principles of shared water resource utilization reflected in the water conflict resolution mechanisms?*

The thesis applies the method of theoretical analysis to water conflict resolution mechanisms and their ability to fulfill their primary objective to maintain international peace and security. It presents findings about advantages and disadvantages of these mechanisms. The thesis analyses international global and regional treaties, customary international law, legal principles, *soft law* documents, case law and relevant academic literature.

The thesis concludes that a suitable water conflict resolution mechanism combines several methods of resolution: negotiation or diplomatic methods with a third-party intervention and inquiry. If a conflict is not resolved this way, arbitration is suitable. The thesis closes with a discussion about the research questions.

Key words: water conflict, international water law, conflict resolution