

Title

Capability of international law to resolve an ethnic conflict: case of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Abstract

The thesis deals with the complex issue of international law's capability to resolve an ethnic conflict, relying to a great extent on a case study of the Dayton system in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It aims to take an interdisciplinary approach, focusing not only on legal issues but also on sociological and other relevant aspects. The first chapters attempt to summarize peace proposals preceding Dayton and are followed by a legal analysis of the adopted documents and a subsequent thorough examination of the most significant and visible aspects of their implementation. The last chapter then reviews the topic from the standpoint of conflict resolution.

Several key questions are formulated in the preface: Is international law able to deter the risk of yet another outbreak of armed conflict in Bosnia? Are its limits or flawed imposition the immediate cause of the present state? Has the international regime in Bosnia become completely dissassociated from the sociological substratum? Whilst seeking for answers, much attention is paid to the perception and reception of the Dayton system by various interest groups within Bosnia's society as well as to international community's ensuing engagement in the country.

It stems from the undertaken analysis that the Dayton system has been outlived and can no longer effectively constitute the cornerstone of Bosnia and Herzegovina's political system. It appears the international community would be wise to make a novel use of available tools of international law to instigate a complex domestic reform which would prospectively transform into a social status quo. Further, the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina may in all its complexity serve as a memento for future international engagement in situations of complicated ethnic-, religion- or culturally based conflict, underlining the need for thorough understanding of the cross-cutting social narratives.