



Ineta Ziemele

*Professor,  
Editor-in-Chief of BYIL*

# Baltic Yearbook of International Law — Five-Year Anniversary

The Baltic Yearbook of International Law was founded in 2001. The first volume contained articles by Baltic and international scholars about the various issues relevant to the debate about the occupation of the Baltic States in 1940 by Soviet troops and the restoration of their independence in 1990–1991. The year 2001 was important in the history of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania since the process of restoration of independence was completed ten years earlier.

Since the first volume, three additional volumes have appeared, and another is under preparation and will come out at the end of 2005. The yearbook is a Baltic endeavour, with an editorial board consisting of well-known international law scholars from the three Baltic States. It is assisted by an international advisory board. The yearbook is published by Martinus Nijhoff Publishers in the Netherlands. The main language is English, but, true to the yearbook's international character, articles in French and German can also be accepted for publication. The editorial office is based in Sweden at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, and it is largely thanks to this institute that the yearbook has become a reality, since the strength of academic institutions in the three Baltic States may not yet have reached the level where such an international project could be implemented.

International distribution, as provided by Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, is very important since it is a crucial feature of the yearbook to publish articles about Baltic affairs that may not be well known outside the Baltic region. At the same time, the yearbook is a forum for international debate not limited to Baltic issues or authors. It is a Baltic contribution to the strengthening of the international rule of law in international and regional affairs.

The Baltic Yearbook is discovering a new generation of international lawyers in the Baltic States and around the world and provides them with a forum for comments on issues that they have researched in international law. Applying a thematic approach, each volume of the yearbook is dedicated to a theme that is topical internationally or in the region. The issues published so far have covered these themes: 'International Legal Status of the Baltic States', 'Bioethics and Human Rights', 'Reparations for Internationally Wrongful Acts of States', and 'Enlargement and Further Integration of the European Union: A Uniform Vision for Europe?' An issue is under preparation on the use of force in international law. Additionally, the yearbook includes an annual section with a unique review of the practices of the Baltic States in international law. This section not only informs international readers about the statements and actions of state institutions that may have international legal implications but also tells Baltic politicians that their actions can translate to

normative effects. In addition, many topics of general interest have been addressed in articles published along with the thematic articles.

In 2004, the Baltic Yearbook introduced a new section, on the history of international law in the Baltic States. Its purpose is to revisit the traditions that the Baltic States have had in international law but may have forgotten in view of the 50-year occupation by the Soviet Union.

The Baltic Yearbook clearly continues to face many challenges, and some of these appear, at least indirectly, in this presentation on the occasion of the yearbook's five-year anniversary. The yearbook also has to address too many tasks at the same time. One can even draw some parallels with the fates of the three Baltic States, which, within a very short time, have had to catch up with everyone else in a community of democratic states while, at the same time, the events of the past did not go away easily (nor could they). The yearbook, in its choice of themes and reports from the region, is a mirror of some of these realities.

It will be interesting to see how the yearbook develops over, let us say, the next five years. One has to hope that its international and Baltic recognition will grow. Let us also hope that the number of international lawyers in the Baltic States will increase and that the contribution of the yearbook to the international debate will become more and more indispensable.

Interested persons can send articles, book reviews, or other communications to the Editorial Office of the Baltic Yearbook of International Law, P.O. Box 1155, 221 05 Lund, Sweden.

Concerning more information and subscription requests, all interested can consult the Web site of the yearbook at [http://www.brill.nl/m\\_catalogue\\_sub6\\_id18745.htm](http://www.brill.nl/m_catalogue_sub6_id18745.htm).

## Abbreviations

ALCSCd	decision of the Administrative Law Chamber of the Supreme Court of Estonia	ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
ALCSCr	ruling of the Administrative Law Chamber of the Supreme Court of Estonia	LOA	Law of Obligations Act
BA	Bankruptcy Act	LSA	Law of Succession Act
BGB	<i>Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch</i> (German Civil Code)	MVRC	Estonian Motor Vehicle Registration Centre
BPL	Baltic Private Law	OJ	Official Journal of the European Union (formerly Official Journal of the European Communities)
CACP	Code of Administrative Court Procedure	PC	Penal Code
CC	<i>Code Civil</i> (French Civil Code)	PECL	Principles of European Contract Law
CCSCd	decision of the Civil Chamber of the Estonian Supreme Court	RT	<i>Riigi Teataja</i> (State Gazette)
CCSCr	ruling of the Civil Chamber of the Estonian Supreme Court	SCEbd	decision of Supreme Court <i>en banc</i>
CCrP	Code of Criminal Procedure	SEFR	social and economic fundamental rights
CFR	Common Frame of Reference	SGA	Sales of Goods Act
CISG	United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods	SGECC	Study Group on a European Civil Code
CL	Civillikums, Civil Code of the Republic of Latvia	SPSCr	ruling of the Special Panel of the Supreme Court of Estonia
EC	Treaty establishing the European Community	TA	Traffic Act
ECA	Employment Contracts Act	TRIPS	Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights	ULFIS	Uniform Law on the Formation of Contracts for the International Sale of Goods
ECR	European Court Reports	ULIS	Uniform Law on the International Sale of Goods
Estonian SSR	Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic	UNIDROIT	International Institute for the Unification of Private Law
FLA	Family Law Act	WA	Wages Act
GG	<i>Grundgesetz</i> (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany)	WCT	WIPO Copyright Treaty
GPCCA	General Part of the Civil Code Act	WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
HGB	<i>Handelsgesetzbuch</i> (German Commercial Code)	WPPT	WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty
		ZGB	<i>Schweizerisches Zivilgesetzbuch</i> (Swiss Civil Code)

The English translations of a number of Estonian legal acts are available at [www.legaltext.ee](http://www.legaltext.ee)