

### Recent publications

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The *Encyclopaedia of Public International Law* (EPIL) is published under the auspices of the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law in Heidelberg, Federal Republic of Germany. The Encyclopaedia is the predecessor of the *Worterbuch des Volkerrechts* edited by the German scholar, Karl Strupp between the First and Second World Wars. Soon thereafter a revised edition of the *Wortebuch des Volkerrechts* appeared in the years 1960–1962.

The EPIL was initially published in 12 instalments between 1981 and 1984 with articles arranged in alphabetical order from A to Z. The 12 instalments had supplementary addenda containing indexes and biographical references. Later the work was brought together in four volumes with a continuous alphabetical arrangement. The four volumes were published in the years 1992 (volume 1 (A–D)), 1995 (volume 2 (E–I)) and 1997 (volume 3 (J–P)). The volume under review published in 2000 is a continuation and a completion of the consolidation of the 12 instalments.

The consolidation includes an update of the original articles together with other new articles. The EPIL brings together articles written by over 450 contributors, some of whom are renowned scholars of public international law from different background and major legal systems around the world. In the whole EPIL consolidated edition, there are 1 317 articles. In volume 4 (Q–Z) there are 17 new articles. There are also in this volume some 168 addenda to previously existing articles.

The EPIL is an enormous publication covering a wide range of areas and topics in the field of public international law from international law concepts, international institutions, international environmental law, international tribunals and judicial decisions of international courts such

as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, Netherlands. The consolidated volume does not only reproduce articles from the 12 instalments, but also cover new developments in international law such as the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and Yugoslavia and the International Tribunal for the Sea.

International lawyers having a keen interest in international law developments in the African continent will find the EPIL a useful reference book. The complexity and dynamics of inter-state conflicts in Africa and Eastern Europe in the post-Cold War era have generated debates on issues of humanitarian intervention, state sovereignty and the doctrine of self-determination of nations. For example, it appears there is often a contradiction between, on the one hand, the doctrine of self-determination of nations and *utis possidetis* on the other. The modified Latin American doctrine of *utis possidetis ita possideatis* is articulated in the 1963 OAU Charter (article 3(3)). The doctrine conflates boundary and territorial questions by assuming as a governing principle that boundaries must be as they were at the time of declaration of independence. A number of articles in this volume provide a scholarly analysis of judicial decisions by the ICJ on the border and territorial disputes in Africa (for example Burkina Faso, Mali, Morocco and Western Sahara) and attempt to reconcile the gap between the two principles.

The EPIL is a learned contribution parallel to none in the field of modern international law. The fact that the EPIL has been written in English, although most contributors are German scholars, makes the volume accessible to a wide range of readership. The present volume, like the previous volumes, is meticulously researched with cross-references, which makes it easy to use. It is a scholarly yet lucidly written work. The EPIL is a valuable collection necessary to researchers and scholars of public international law.