

# INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE PROTECTION OF PEOPLE IN TODAY'S WORLD

## CONTENT, PROGRESS AND PEDAGOGY OF THE MODULE

- This course centers around the international law issues that bear upon today's world. The list of issues can include legal responses to current threats to maritime security, such as piracy, explosions of underwater pipelines and hybrid attacks in other contexts by non-state actors against shipping, including physical and cyber-attacks. The nature of international and internal armed conflict is changing and, with a starting point in current wars across the globe, the course will explore the laws surrounding modern conflicts that are challenging legal classifications of, for example, aggression, occupation, self-determination, genocide, torture and other new forms of international crime, such as 'ecocide'. In addition, the course will examine the issue of gender-based violence that can plague the international community in war and in peace. Furthermore, the course will delve into the application of international law to other major threats to human and national security, including the problem of externalization of protection of national borders, which impacts on vulnerable people across the globe, such as smuggled refugees and migrants at sea, or in crowded and unsafe detention, or women and children stranded in Syrian camps; and the problem of climate change, looking at a human rights approach in international climate change litigation.

To explore these issues, the course begins by establishing an understanding of the building blocks of international law, including the setting, legal actors, principles and the sources of international law, the international law regimes and the institutions, such as international courts and tribunals, and the relationship of international law to national law. This foundation is then explored and expanded on, directly in relation to current situations that draw on and challenge international law in today's world. The students' course preparation is supported by tools such as 'talking power-points' and quizzes, and students' legal problem solving is facilitated by combining lectures with follow-up guest-lectures and workshops, requiring students to apply their knowledge to identify potential solutions to legal problems in modern international relations.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

### KNOWLEDGE

- The development of international law, and the involvement of states and other legal actors
- The main legal principles and legal functions of current international law
- International legal concepts, such as sovereignty, jurisdiction, responsibility, nationality
- The sources of international law, including treaties, customary international law, general principals of law, *jus cogens*, 'soft law' instruments, such as declarations, case law, reports or general comments, *travaux preparatoires*, scholarly works
- The relationship between international law and national law
- The legal fields, frameworks and institutions of international law, generally and specifically in connection with modern international law issues

### SKILLS

- Use the terminology and concepts of international law
- Independently identify international law problems and understand the underlying tensions and competing interests

- Identify relevant sources of international law
- Interpret and apply principles of international law and specific international law provisions
- Present and explain an analysis and findings in relation to a theoretical or practical problem under international law, orally and in writing
- Understand and challenge the deficiencies of the international law system and present possible solutions to overcome them

#### COMPETENCES

- Identifying, analysing and discussing legal solutions to problems within the field
- Understanding and analysing the connection between various areas of international law, international relations and national law
- Advising on the rights and obligations of governments, state authorities or other organizations on past, present and potential legal issues under international law
- Advising on states' rights, powers and duties under international law and how to access judicial remedies to legal challenges in different fields of international law
- Analyzing, researching and presenting an academic study of a legal problem under international law

#### PRE-REQUISITES

- Students are expected to have completed several years of legal studies at the bachelor level. A prior knowledge of international law is not a pre-requisite but is an advantage.

#### TYPE OF INSTRUCTION

- Lectures, with interactive and problem-oriented discussion, combined with problem-based workshops and facilitation of short project writing.

#### EXTENT AND EXPECTED WORKLOAD

- 270 hours

#### EXAMINATION

Name of exam	International Law and the Protection of People in Today's World
Type of Exam	Oral exam based on a supplementary, workshop-based, mini-project 20 minutes per student (including evaluation and feedback)
ECTS	10
Permitted aids	With certain aids: A clean copy of the mini-project can be brought into the exam and a single page per student for the presentation only, with keywords in point-form
Assessment	7-point grading scale
Type of grading	External examination
Criteria of assessment	The criteria of assessment are stated in the Examination Policies and Procedures

## FACTS ABOUT THE MODULE

Danish title	Folkeret og beskyttelse af mennesker i verden i dag
Module code	
Module type	Course
Duration	4 weeks, including 1 week of own preparation, two weeks tuition, and one week to prepare for and undertake examination
Semester	Summer School
ECTS	10
Language of instruction	English
Empty-place Scheme	Yes
Location of the lecture	Campus Aalborg
Responsible for the module	<b>Fenella Billing</b>
Used in	Curriculum for the Master's programme in LL.M. (Master of Laws), 2025. Curriculum for the Master's programme in Business Administration and Commercial Law, 2024

## ORGANISATION

Study Board	Study Board of Law
Department	Department of Law
Faculty	Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

## LITERATURE

- Klabbers, J, *International Law* (4th edn, CUP 2024) TBC
- A selection of book chapters, articles and other publications announced in advance of the beginning of the course
- Relevant treaties and other legal instruments