

Imagining Solidarity in International and Regional Law

Solidarity is a core normative ideal underpinning both the development of modern international law as well as the European project. It has long held a prominent place in legal literature as a social, philosophical and legal concept with both a factual and a normative dimension. According to Scelle: “[t]hat there exist common interests and interdependencies between people suggests a normative proposition that they should act out of solidarity to each other.” More fundamentally, solidarity has been perceived as the guiding principle in altering the outdated structure of international relations from an order promoting the self-interest of States to one that pursues community interests and attempts to find solutions to problems that affect all humankind.

As a legal principle, it has been used in many different contexts. In public international law it has been used in terms of the international peace and security. In the context of the European Union (EU), it has been invoked most strongly during the eurozone and refugee crises. The principle has informed the entire European integration process but with the advent of the Lisbon Treaty it has gained new impetus and now a specific solidarity clause for terrorist attacks, man-made and natural disasters can be found in Art. 222 TFEU. In the African Union (AU), solidarity has been part of the principles of the Organisation for African Unity since 1963, with solidarity rights included in the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights. Furthermore, the first objective of the Constitutive Act of the AU included the achievement of ‘greater unity and solidarity between African countries and the peoples of Africa’. Solidarity has also emerged in other regional regimes, such as in the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS). In recent times, the idea of solidarity has increasingly taken centre stage in the discussion in relation to the Corona vaccine and its distribution around the world. These examples of where the principle of solidarity has been employed, illustrate the diversity and importance of the principle of solidarity in shaping international and regional legal regimes.

In ‘Imagining Solidarity in International and Regional Law’ we invite papers on the multiplicity of ways the principle of solidarity is used both in international and regional law. We welcome contributions on how solidarity can/should be deployed to achieve a variety of aims, including in relation to the environment, human rights, development, peace and security, migration, and other fields, in a variety of contexts across the globe, whether regional integration projects (EU, AU, and others) or as part of public international law.

Keynote speakers

Professor Eleanor Sharpston, QC

- Former Advocate General at the Court of Justice of the European Union
- Fellow at King’s College, University of Cambridge

- Adjunct Professor Trinity College Dublin

Professor Dire Tladi

- Professor of International Law at the University of Pretoria
- DSI-NRF South African Research Chair for International Constitutional Law
- Formerly the Principal State Law Advisor for International Law, with the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation (then Department of Foreign Affairs)

Deadlines and requirements

Please send an abstract (max. 800 words) and CV (max. 5 pages) as a single PDF to E.Kassoti@asser.nl and M.Plagis@asser.nl by 15 May 2021, with the subject line ‘App: Imagining Solidarity’

Draft papers are due 15 September 2021

Online Conference will be held on 28-29 October 2021