

## PREFACE

When you start working on a long book your worst fears haunt you that you will never be able to finish it and you envision the moment at which the final letter of the final word will typed on the screen. It is at that point that writing the preface seems the biggest delight; the easiest and perhaps most enjoyable part of a long journey. In reality, at the end of that journey writing the preface is in fact a much more daunting challenge than it first appears and fortunately life makes us take long journeys rather than satisfy our lazy instinct. The writing of this book has been a real adventure for me. There is little, if anything, in international law and literature which has not been mapped or analysed in one form or another and so in case of doubt one need only search the available literature to ascertain whether or not he is on the right track and not simply talking outright nonsense. The premise and story behind this book is quite different. I embarked writing it, besides a personal interest in some of the functions of trusts in the field of international development, because there was nothing written about intergovernmental trusts, with the exception of a handful of articles that were mainly focused on the environment. It is not surprising therefore that in the course of writing I came across numerous issues that I had no idea how they should be regulated, or if in fact they were regulated at all. The discovery and pensive process that necessarily followed made this the most enjoyable piece of research I have ever undertaken. The absence of available literature and general awareness of intergovernmental trust funds further made this project hard to sell! No one was quite sure whether it fell within the realm of private trusts or otherwise within a very bizarre and obscurely forgotten corner of public international law. In any event, it was viewed as a marginal topic without much interest to the general legal public, despite the fact that more than 5,000 such trusts are currently in existence with a combined astronomical budget. I certainly hope to prove these criticisms wrong and placate the very important role of intergovernmental trusts in the operation of public international law and particularly in the fields of environment, development, human rights and others. I moreover hope that the *sui generis* trust model exposed in this book will receive methodical and other scholarly attention and be deemed worthy of some form of multilateral codification.

I would like to express my gratitude to my wife Dimitra and my family for their continuing patience and encouragement in my writing and professional work, as well as my colleagues at Brunel Law School for our scholarly debates on some of the issues analysed in this book. I am also grateful to my colleagues at Mourgelas & Associates Law Firm in Athens for their continued support and their genuine professional interest in public international law.

*London, May 2009*

Ilias BANTEKAS