

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Traditionally, when reference was made to international law and armed conflict, the primary focus was on the use of force and international humanitarian law. However, increasingly other legal regimes are being used to regulate situations that may be categorised as armed conflicts. In addition, the nature of armed conflict has also changed, partially due to the emergence of new actors who partake in such situations. Furthermore, our perception of what is acceptable behaviour (and what is not) in armed conflict has evolved. Similarly, greater attention is being paid to the assistance provided in post-conflict settings. Bearing all this in mind, there is an urgent need to rethink the legal framework relating to armed conflict and ensure that the reforms suggested are realistic so as to entice compliance.

In a quest to test the validity of the aforementioned assertions we convened a Symposium on International Law and Armed Conflict in September 2008 at the University of the West of England (UK). The discussions during the Symposium not only confirmed our suppositions, but also brought to light other key challenges facing international law and armed conflict. The book presents some of the issues and challenges addressed during the discussions.

This book adopts a thematic approach and aims to provide a broader picture of international law and armed conflict and the current challenges it is facing. Moreover, this approach allows us to highlight the complexities, intricacies, and the interrelationship of the different regimes that may be rendered applicable to armed conflicts. Also, in taking a more inclusive approach, this book offers a new perspective on both existing and emerging themes in this field.

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Noëlle QUÉNIVET and Shilan SHAH-DAVIS

*Bristol Law School
University of the West of England*