Invaluable to students and those approaching the subject for the first time, *An Introduction to International Relations, Second Edition* provides a comprehensive and stimulating introduction to international relations, its traditions and its changing nature in an era of globalisation.

Thoroughly revised and updated, it features chapters written by a range of experts from around the world. It presents a global perspective on the theories, history, developments and debates that shape this dynamic discipline and contemporary world politics.

Now in full colour and accompanied by a password-protected companion website featuring additional chapters and case studies, this is the indispensable guide to the study of international relations.

- Includes contributions from leading experts and academics from across the globe, including Hidemi Suganami, Alex J. Bellamy, Peter Singer, J. Ann Tickner, Paul Sharp, Geoffrey Wiseman, Robyn Eckersley, David Kilcullen and Thomas G. Weiss.
- Features a companion website with additional chapters and case studies.
- Provides a wide-ranging, engaging and accessible introduction to International Relations.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO

International Relations

SECOND EDITION

EDITED BY RICHARD DEVETAK, ANTHONY BURKE AND JIM GEORGE
For Naomi, Chiara and Allegra

For Jenny, Nikos, Sophia

For Sara, Joanna and Pablo … with love
There is a certain piquancy in someone introducing a student textbook on international relations who has never formally studied the subject, and whose grasp of contemporary IR theory remains – as my academic colleagues gently tell me, and as my later comments may reveal – somewhat less than absolute. But after many years’ immersion as a foreign minister, head of a major international conflict-prevention NGO, and participant in multiple global policy commissions and panels, I have learned something about the way the international relations world actually works. And let me tell you immediately: that world – of foreign ministers, diplomats, international organisations and conferences, civil society activism and think-tank policy debate – is important, fascinating, and intellectually stimulating, and you should plunge into the study of it with a real sense of excitement.

What is most exciting to me, and I hope will be to you, is appreciating that this is a world that can be very much influenced by good ideas, good policy, good understanding of the way organisations work, and – above all – by well-informed, energetic and creative professionals, of the kind that you will, hopefully, be helped to become by absorbing (and challenging where necessary!) the material in this admirably comprehensive book. We are not all prisoners of dark, inevitable forces that are bound to have their way whatever any of us try to do. Those of us who have spent most of our professional lives trying to rid the world of deadly conflict and weapons of mass destruction (what this book describes as the ‘traditional agenda’), or to inch forward toward cooperative solutions to any of the globe’s other most pressing problems (now recognised as the ‘new agenda’), including environmental stress, poverty and inequality, drug and people trafficking, terrorism, gross and systematic human rights violations, and many more, are not all wasting our time.

There is some good evidence for this in the statistics that have accumulated since the end of the Cold War (mainly via the Human Security Report Project in Canada) about the dramatic decline – counter-intuitive though this may seem every time we watch or read a news bulletin – in both the number of wars and the casualties they generate. Over the last two decades, more old conflicts have ended than new ones have started. And major conflicts (those resulting in 1000 or more battle deaths a year) have declined by an extraordinary 80 per cent, as have the number of people being killed by them. There are a number of explanations, but the best is simply the huge upsurge in activity in mediation, negotiation, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building activity that has occurred, particularly since the mid 1990s, with significant roles being played by regional organisations, certain individual states, major NGOs and the UN itself – all involving deeply committed people doing tough jobs in tough situations.

If individuals matter, so do ideas. One should never lose sight of, or confidence in, their transformative power to change for the better the way the world both thinks and acts. One of the most important to emerge in recent years – in response to the orgies of hate-fed killing and maiming that destroyed the lives and futures of so many hundreds of thousands in the 1990s in Rwanda, Bosnia and elsewhere – is that of the international community’s ‘responsibility to protect’ populations at risk from genocide and other mass atrocity crimes. Cutting across the centuries-old notion that state sovereignty was
all about immunity from external scrutiny and interference was never going to be easy, and challenges still remain to translate rhetoric into effective action in every case where this becomes necessary. But since the UN General Assembly unanimously embraced the new principle in 2005, it has been steadily gaining traction, and does hold out the hope that never again will we have to say ‘never again’ to another Srebrenica, Cambodia or Holocaust. And that is just one of the many ideas discussed in this book currently impacting on international debate.

Much of the study of international relations involves trying to understand, intellectually, the currents that underlie and explain decision-making and action, and the mindsets and perspectives that policymakers and those who influence them bring to bear. Practitioners like me who have seen over the years, situation by situation, the variable impact of quite different factors – sometimes of ideas, ideals and norms; sometimes of genuine instinct to cooperate for the common good; sometimes of crude, hard-nosed Realpolitik – tend to find it difficult to identify wholeheartedly with realism, liberalism, constructivism, or any of the innumerable other particular theories that all have distinguished adherents. Perhaps we will just have to find solace in ‘analytical eclecticism’, that recently identified new approach which seems eminently capable of accommodating, no doubt among others more respectable, the intellectually undisciplined and disreputable.

Whether one is wrestling with the nuts and bolts of practical policymaking – across both the traditional and new agendas – or the higher abstractions of IR theory, the study of international relations is engaging and challenging. There is a whole smorgasbord of issues and approaches laid out here for you to sample in this book, all written by experts in their field, many of them world-renowned. You should find working through it fascinating and stimulating. And you should come away from it much better equipped than I ever was at the start of my career to make a contribution of your own to making this tumultuous world of ours a little safer and saner.

8 March 2011

Gareth Evans is Professorial Fellow at the University of Melbourne and Chancellor of the Australian National University, and President Emeritus of the International Crisis Group, the independent global conflict prevention and resolution organisation which he led from 2000 to 2009. He was Australia’s Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1988 to 1996, and co-chair of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, which published the Responsibility to Protect report in 2004, and of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, whose report Eliminating nuclear threats was published in December 2009.
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This textbook is designed specifically for students studying Introduction to International Relations courses. The success of the first edition, followed by encouraging reviews and conversations with overseas colleagues, led us to prepare a second edition aimed specifically at an international audience. The text has been enlarged and substantially revised with this in mind, and includes new authors from the US and Europe. Where the first edition of this book drew largely upon scholars teaching and researching in Australia, or Australian scholars overseas, for this edition a broad range of new contributors has written on topics previously covered and on new topics, while previous contributors have made updates and revisions to all the remaining chapters. Much of the material excised from the first edition is now available on the new companion website – an important supplement to this book's second edition.

Like any good textbook, this one aims to introduce students to the study of International Relations (IR) by laying out its chief theories, main actors and institutions, and leading issues, in a manner that both excites interest and lucidly explains topics for students with no previous background in IR. Carving up the topics of a complex, dynamic, growing discipline like IR is no easy task. Decisions must inevitably be made about which topics to include, and which to exclude. Topics chosen no doubt reflect but one particular perspective of the discipline's present make-up, one account of what is important for students to learn, and what is not. Since there is no single correct way to present the material to undergraduate students, there is always a degree of arbitrariness involved in topic selection; and we do not pretend otherwise. However, we believe that the structure adopted here, developed over years of teaching undergraduate Introduction to IR courses in Australia and the UK, offers one useful way into the wide range of fascinating topics that fall under the heading International Relations.

The textbook is divided into three parts: Part 1 on theories of IR; Part 2 on what we call the 'traditional agenda' of IR, which focuses on states, war and law; and Part 3 on the 'new agenda' which focuses on globalisation and global governance. These are more fully explicated in the Introduction. But it is worth emphasising that the new agenda does not succeed the traditional agenda in either time or intellectual resourcefulness. The distinction between traditional and new agendas is a heuristic device meant to remind students that the discipline has evolved and changed, and to encourage reflection on the discipline's historical character. Quite often textbooks imply that our present conception of the discipline represents something like the endpoint in the discipline's ineluctable progression from primitive origins to full development. This conceit is easy to succumb to in the absence of historical-mindedness. We hope that a greater appreciation of the past, including the discipline's past, will enable students to gain a better understanding of how the discipline has come to assume its present historical form. This should also encourage students to reflect more deeply on the sources of the tensions, debates and disagreements that shape IR and make it one of the most intellectually exciting disciplines in the human and social sciences today.

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