How does international law impact the behavior of states? This book, designed for students in multiple disciplines, offers a comprehensive, accessible introduction to the "law of nations," detailing the evolution of state practice in response to an ever-changing, diverse world. In this new edition of William Slomanson's foundational text, the new authors, Professors Slagter and Van Doorn, trace how states manage their sovereignty in myriad ways, working through treaties, international organizations, and international courts to secure their own as well as global interests. With special emphasis on five key areas – human rights, the use of force, human security and humanitarian intervention, environmental protection, and economic relations – the authors illustrate both the power and limits of international law to provide structure and predictability on a globalized planet. Real-world problem sets, annotated bibliographies, and a practical guide to studying international law make this a text that students and instructors alike will appreciate.

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Fundamental Perspectives on International Law

SEVENTH EDITION

Tracy H. Slagter  University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

and

John D. Van Doorn  Independent Scholar and Researcher

with William R. Slomanson  Thomas Jefferson School of Law
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Many college and law school professors have contacted me over the years about when a new edition of *Fundamental Perspectives on International Law* would be forthcoming. I am pleased that the seventh edition has now reached the finish line. I believe that it combines the best of my old approach – a pragmatic focus on the law itself – with fresh insights into emerging areas in international law. I applaud the efforts of Slagter and Van Doorn to make the book accessible to a wider variety of students.

I am honored that the 35 years I invested in this project will not be cast into the dustbin of academic history. Professors Slagter and Van Doorn deserve the credit for elevating this enduring project to the next level. Thus, no words can articulate the degree of thanks I have for the excellent job they have done to present you with this impressive seventh edition.

*Bill Slomanson*
San Diego, California

William Slomanson is Professor Emeritus at Thomas Jefferson School of Law and currently teaches International Human Rights Law for San Diego State University’s Osher Institute and the University of San Diego’s University of the Third Age. He was a Navy officer and awarded the Navy Achievement Medal for his service in Vietnam. Professor Slomanson is listed in the *Directory of American Scholars*, *Who’s Who in American Law*, and *Who’s Who in American Education*. He has authored, co-authored, or edited twenty-seven books, including the first six editions of *Fundamental Perspectives on International Law*. His scholarship has been cited over 3,500 times and he has received numerous teaching awards.
Preface to the Seventh Edition

Fundamental Perspectives on International Law is a text we both used as undergraduates and later as professors teaching our own courses in international law. We both examined a dozen alternatives before choosing the textbook we would assign to our students. In the end, the choice was easy. Due in no small measure to previous editions of this text, our courses in international law are among the most popular that we have taught.

After the sixth edition of the textbook was published in 2011, we hoped that Bill Slomanson would produce an updated version, even as we – like so many other professors around the globe – kept using the old edition. At Bill’s invitation, we dedicated ourselves to producing a revised and updated version of a textbook we had both used our entire careers as professors of Political Science and International Studies. With constant encouragement from Bill Slomanson, we produced the version of the textbook that you hold in your hands. This text is dedicated to the proposition that international law is an important, intrinsically interesting, and enjoyable pursuit.

We committed to this project in cooperation with Bill Slomanson because we noticed that there was a void in international law texts that only his approach filled. Other texts tended to be either too long and jargon-filled – or too brief and perfunctory for most students’ needs. More importantly, they did not invite students to explore the subject for themselves, even while providing the resources to help them do so. As political scientists, we were also eager for an international law text that was welcoming to those coming from disciplines other than the law. Fundamental Perspectives on International Law has always been an accessible and comprehensive introduction to international law, and we continued that tradition.

If you have used previous editions of this textbook in the past, you will see that we have endeavored to maintain the features of Slomanson’s original book that made it so easy to read and a joy to teach from. They include a surfeit of examples, engaging prose, excerpts from cases throughout the book, and easy online access to longer excerpts of important cases. In addition, we have retained the “Problems” that used to appear at the end of every chapter. The Problems help make this subject more tangible for
students. We have moved them and other material online so that they can be updated as new developments warrant.

The text has been reorganized and rewritten throughout. Some chapters have been combined; some bear the same titles as in previous editions but the content is completely fresh. Readers of previous editions of this text will note a shift to a more narrative style with fewer subheadings. This makes the text easier to read while providing greater context. Additionally, new content was added on issues like the development of international law, space law, human rights, human security, environmental law, and economic relations in the era of cyber-risks.

For those who are new to this textbook, here are some of the advantages it provides for instructors and students alike:

- The book opens with a “How To” chapter for students, created to assist students who are completely new to legal arguments and jargon. This chapter gives short, easy-to-understand guidance on how to read cases, how to brief them for use in class, how to read treaties, and how to decode UN documents. Additionally, while we do not adopt a particular theoretical perspective in this book, we have added a table and explanation to help demystify the theoretical approaches to international jurisprudence and help provide a framework for what is to follow. Instructors can use this chapter to complement their own teaching if they wish, or simply refer students to it as necessary.

- Each chapter begins with a vignette based on current issues in international law. These vignettes illustrate principles and pose questions that international law helps us answer. They demonstrate that international law is not a static subject reserved for long, dusty textbooks and academic discussion – it is dynamic, constantly evolving, and essential to understanding today’s world.

- In the best tradition of Bill Slomanson’s original textbook, we have been attentive to the writing style in the book, ensuring that it is both accessible and yet pithy enough to serve undergraduate, graduate, and law students well. The chapters are information dense. But they are readily divisible into sections to ensure a manageable reading load. The book is designed with both teacher and student in mind: it can be adapted for courses that meet several times a week or just a single time per week.

- The number of chapters fits readily into a single semester if preferable. There are eleven discrete chapters arranged in a logical sequence, but they can easily be used out of sequence to accommodate an instructor’s preference. We can envision this text being used in a course sequence
Case excerpts are used throughout the text, edited to ensure that students understand not only a court’s decision but also its reasoning. Many of the more famous cases in international law (e.g., *The S.S. Lotus* and *Nottebohm*) are printed directly in the text for easy reference. Longer excerpts of both landmark cases and more recent cases from a wide variety of international courts have also been edited for length. These can be found online. Course instructors thus have the flexibility to assign online cases as desired for their students, customizing the textbook to suit their teaching needs.

Since the best way to learn is through application, we have created “Problems” for every chapter that also appear online. These problems ask students to apply what they have learned to both hypothetical and real situations, helping them to think more deeply about the material they have read and discussed in class. Instructors may also wish to use some of these problems as springboards for exams, or as assignments in their courses. We have found them very useful for class debates and/or group projects.

To help students and instructors satisfy their curiosity, we have also provided a brief annotated bibliography on the companion website. Maintaining it online allows for regular updates.

It is our sense that international law as a subject and as a discipline is reaching an inflection point that is well captured by this text. We hope that a new generation of students will find in this textbook a path toward greater appreciation for, and understanding of, the nuances of international law, and that they will be part of a new international law for a new age. We also hope that it will encourage conversations between law and political science – conversations that happen all too infrequently.

Students served as our inspiration for taking on this project. This new edition would not exist without the constant interest in the subject from decades of eager students. We are thankful to them, of course, but also to others who have made this book possible: the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Faculty Development Program; Robert Dreesen, Erika Walsh, Lisa Pinto, Lucy Edwards, and Jackie Grant at Cambridge University Press; copy-editor Margaret Humbert; and our many faculty and staff colleagues, notably Debbie Gray Patton, Angelee Hammond, Ang Subulwa, Druscilla Scribner, Dave Siemers, and James Krueger.

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