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## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developments in International Criminal Law</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreword</td>
<td>The Editors in Chief</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rome Conference on an International Criminal Court:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Negotiating Process</td>
<td>Philippe Kirsch and John T. Holmes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The United States and the International Criminal Court</td>
<td>David J. Scheffer</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court</td>
<td>Mahnoush H. Arsanjani</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining “Crimes against Humanity” at the Rome Conference</td>
<td>Darryl Robinson</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress and Jurisprudence of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia</td>
<td>Sean D. Murphy</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Violence in Decisions and Indictments of the Yugoslav and Rwandan Tribunal: Current Status</td>
<td>Kelly D. Askin</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Superseding the Security Council: Ambiguous Authorizations to Use Force, Cease-Fires and the Iraqi Inspection Regime**

*Jules Lobel and Michael Ratner*

The 1998 United States and British bombing of Iraq to enforce the weapons inspections imposed by the gulf war cease-fire reveals major shortcomings in Security Council authorizations of the use of force by UN members. The problems include determining whether such authorization has been given, its scope and extent, and whether it has terminated. This article argues that explicit Council authorization is necessary for nondefensive uses of force, that its objectives should be limited and clear, and that it should end with the establishment of a permanent cease-fire.

**Notes and Comments**

**Legal Aspects of the Use of a Provisional Name for Macedonia in the United Nations System**  
*Igor Janev*  
155

**Contemporary Practice of the United States Relating to International Law**  
*Sean D. Murphy*  
161

**International Decisions**  
*Edited by Bernard D. Oxman*

- **Prosecutor v. Akayesu**  
  Judgment by International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda on charges of genocide and international crimes of sexual violence  
  *Diane Marie Amann*
  195

- **Grant v. South-West Trains, Ltd.**  
  European Court of Justice decision regarding employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation  
  *Laurence R. Helfer*

- **A. Racke GmbH & Co. v. Hauptzollamt Mainz**  
  European Court of Justice ruling on validity of EC regulation suspending trade concessions provided for in EC cooperation agreement with Yugoslavia  
  *Juliane Kokott and Frank Hoffmeister*

- **Decision concerning the Maastricht Treaty**  
  Danish Supreme Court judgment on constitutionality of ratification of European Union Treaty and right of Danish courts to review validity of EC measures  
  *Sten Harck and Henrik Palmer Olsen*

- **Prince of Liechtenstein v. Federal Supreme Court**  
  German Constitutional Court on jurisdiction to adjudicate claim of Prince of Liechtenstein to painting confiscated by Czechoslovakia at end of World War II  
  *Bardo Fassbender*
Public Prosecutor v. Ashby
Italian decision on jurisdiction under NATO Status of Forces Agreement to try U.S. military officers for deaths caused when aircraft severed ski lift cable
Review of NAO Submission No. 9703
U.S. National Administrative Office report under NAFTA Labor Cooperation Agreement on alleged labor violations at plant in Mexico

Current Developments
The EU-U.S. Compromise on the Helms-Burton and D’Amato Acts
Stefaan Smis and Kim Van der Boght
The Fiftieth Session of the International Law Commission
Robert Rosenstock
The Fifty-fourth Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights
Michael J. Dennis

Book Reviews and Notes
Edited by Richard B. Bilder
Ratner, Steven R., and Jason S. Abrams. Accountability for Human Rights
Stein, Eric. Czecho/Slovakia: Ethnic Conflict, Constitutional Fissure, Negotiated Breakup (Vratislav Pechota)
Rubin, Alfred P. Ethics and Authority in International Law (Iain G. M. Scobbie)
Talmon, Stefan. Recognition of Governments in International Law: With Particular Reference to Governments in Exile (Edward G. Lee)
Hoopes, Townsend, and Douglas Brinkley. FDR and the Creation of the U.N. (Charlotte Ku)
Gillespie, Alexander. International Environmental Law, Policy, and Ethics (Edith Brown Weiss)
Ziegler, Andreas R. Trade and Environmental Law in the European Community (Juliane Kokott)
Wu Chao. Pollution from the Carriage of Oil by Sea: Liability and Compensation (Erik Franckx)
Musgrave, Thomas D. Self-Determination and National Minorities (Hurst Hannum)
Bothe, Michael, Natalino Ronzitti, and Allan Rosas (eds.). The OSCE in the Maintenance of Peace and Security: Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management, and Peaceful Settlement of Disputes (Erika B. Schlager)
Ginsburgs, George. From Soviet to Russian International Law: Studies in Continuity and Change (Peter Krug)


Books Received