

## EDITORIAL

Amsterdam Law Forum reached a great deal of its potential during the last year. Under the direction of the previous board, ALF further matured as an interdisciplinary law review. Apart from publishing a very interesting series of high quality issues, the 2010/11 editors organized a successful conference on a very current topic.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the scope and focus of this journal was redefined and more emphasis is now laid on security and criminal law, two areas that are witnessing considerable developments these days. At the same time ALF continues to be a platform for interdisciplinary research pertaining to international and transnational law in a broad sense. This policy attracts readership from a large group of academics. In turn, we hope that this creates more exchange of ideas between researchers working in different fields.

In September a new team of committed editors took over. I will briefly address our plans and ambitions below. The most important thing however is the announcement of the issue before you. As the new team, we are proud to present the first issue by our hand. It befits the new scope of ALF and contains a series of interesting articles on recent developments in law and contributions on more fundamental debates.

The first three articles focus on human rights law, but they all concern different instances of application. Quirine Eijkman and Bibi van Ginkel offer their views on the use of intelligence during terrorist trials. They compare their use in criminal procedure in four different countries, and focus specifically on disclosure. They raise concerns for human rights standards, in particular the right to a fair trial. They argue that the use of intelligence is especially problematic if the intelligence was acquired through a foreign power. Martin Kuijer also focuses on human rights protection. He discusses the consequences of the EU's accession to the ECHR. He zooms in on the role of the European Court of Justice, possible participation of the EU in organs of the Council of Europe, and a range of other current issues that need to be solved in order to make accession successful. Dimitry Kochenov writes on the protection of minorities in EU. The EU does not have a specific minority protection policy, yet Kochenov argues that the efforts to create an internal market did lead to some contributions in improving the position of vulnerable groups.

David Bulloch also writes about terrorism and human rights, but focuses more on the international political aspects of this issue. He analyzes the secret American program to survey international financial transactions in effort to fight Islamic terrorism and Europe's reaction once the program was disclosed to the public. He argues that both the outcry in Europe and the subsequent American accusation of Europeans being soft is a sign of the fundamentally different opinions between the two continents on how to adequately combat

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<sup>1</sup> See S. Dreef and L. Morrission, 'Legal Perspectives on Gender and Sexual Equality. Conference Report' 3(2) *Amsterdam L.F.* 210 (2011).

terrorism and how the principles of security and privacy are valued when they conflict with one another. His article offers interesting insights on the cause of a particular irritation that is part of a series of many that existed between Europe and the United States during the war on terror.

León Hernández also writes on American legislative efforts reaching over the border. She analyses whether the Mérida Initiative, a set of U.S. laws to combat drug cartels, violates Mexican sovereignty or not. Some argue it is just a matter of cooperation between two states, others say it violates the Mexican constitution as it allows a foreign power to heavily influence domestic policy. She presents nuanced arguments that show that both bringing the initiative in complete accord with the Mexican constitution and maintaining the status quo leads to sub ideal situations. A good read for those interested in international cooperation in fighting drug trafficking.

In the discussion section Mark Katz describes how Russian businesses have profited from anti-western sentiments in Middle-Eastern countries. The Arab spring of 2011 and the toppling of a number of regimes, including Cold War partner Libya, is unfavorable to Russian economic interest in the regime, especially if their markets are now opened for western competition. Something to keep in mind when one tries to understand Russia's position in the Security Council.

My predecessor Sofie Dreef reviews David Held's *Cosmopolitanism. Ideals and Realities*, in which he argues for a more holistic law regulating world order. Dreef sketches the central ideas advanced in the book and provides them with articulate critique.

As the new editors, it is not only our task to consolidate the efforts of the previous team in improving the journal, it is also our challenge to raise the bar even higher. We are working on strengthening the quality of the articles through peer review and plan on reaching out to a larger audience to increase our readership. We hope to organize another conference, which we will announce in greater detail in the next issue. In the mean time we continue to welcome all submissions for publication by those who are writing on international and transnational law.

We are very much looking forward to provide you with a forum for information and exchange of ideas on international law this coming term. We are committed and motivated to make this year a success.

Louis Middelkoop  
Editor-in-Chief