
Editor's introduction

Governance for a More Ethical World

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This issue of *Irish Studies in International Affairs* is primarily focused on the topic of 'Governance for a more ethical world', drawing on a series of papers presented at the annual conference of the Royal Irish Academy's Committee for International Affairs, held in Dublin in November 2010, a presentation from Mary Robinson to the Academy in December 2010 on climate change and a number of other articles dealing with related substantive issues of concern. This is not the first time the journal has addressed such issues.¹ However, as institutional structures of regional and global governance become more significant, and have to deal with a wider range of issues, from finance to security and climate change, the challenges of balancing such institutional structures with other voices representing traditionally marginalised groups, or of including an ethical dimension in decision-making, becomes ever more crucial. Yet, international and regional governance by its nature is at a greater remove from citizens than their state-level structures and usually does not to involve a directly elected, or even directly accessible, element equivalent in any way to national democratic processes. In this void there is a key challenge for international relations to develop processes that temper the realpolitik of powerful state interests with other influences.

The power of the Arab Spring revolts emerging across North Africa and the Middle East during 2011, and the sense of their immediacy for those of us outside the region created by the use of new media technologies, reflect the genuinely growing globalisation of our political space. Another example of such globalisation is the extent to which citizens of states within Europe facing serious banking and fiscal crises now have a much greater sense of the power of international financial institutions, including the IMF, a reality experienced by states in the Global South for many years. At another level, a free-market approach to climate change will allow wealthy states to alleviate some of the impacts of such change at local level, leaving vulnerable and poor states to face the greatest impacts. What will be the response to such challenges at the level of international governance?

¹See, for example, John Doyle, 'Thirty years of *Irish Studies in International Affairs*', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 20 (2009), 1–6; or Eileen Connolly and Lorna Gold, 'Development and the United Nations: achievements and challenges for the future', *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 17 (2006), 61–75.

The contribution to the 2010 international affairs conference by Peter Power, TD, then Minister of State in the Department of Foreign Affairs, sets out a government perspective on the issues under discussion. Paul Rogers from the Department of Peace Studies in Bradford University, and one of the world's leading experts on security matters, analyses the nature of international security responses in recent years, and argues that there is a need for a new approach to problems of international conflict, with an emphasis on a sustainable security paradigm that unites ideas of human and common security into a long-term perspective.

Three articles from international lawyers explore the particular challenges for human rights in the contemporary security context. Javaid Rehman from Brunel University examines the role and influence of Islam within Europe, and in particular debates the position of Muslims in Europe and the compatibility of *Sharia* with European human-rights values, within the context of the human-rights challenges faced by new security laws as part of the 'War on Terror'. Siobhán Mullally from University College Cork analyses the impact of UN Security Council resolution 1325, dealing with women, peace and security, in contemporary Pakistan. Finally in this section, Edel Hughes from the University of Limerick explores the capacity of the existing international human-rights law framework to deal with current challenges to peace and security.

In the second section of the journal, four key policy arenas and examples are explored, in which, to date, the international system has struggled to find a mechanism to deliver just and sustainable policy outcomes. Former President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, addresses the key challenge of climate justice, the issue to which she is now devoting much of her considerable energy and talent. Zafar Jaspal, of the Quaid-I-Azam University in Islamabad, one of Pakistan's leading experts in international security, discusses the hugely important question of nuclear weapons proliferation in South Asia—often now seen as the most dangerous nuclear weapons theatre in the world. Gëzim Visoka of Dublin City University presents a very challenging critique of international administration in post-intervention Kosovo. This case, in which the international community has taken direct responsibility for the governance of a territory, raises serious questions for the UN and EU in regard to their ability to deliver sustainable systems of transitional governance in post-war environments. Finally in this section, Walt Kilroy of Dublin City University looks at the particular case of the re-integration of ex-combatants in post-war Sierra Leone, through an internationally administered disarmament, demobilisation and re-integration scheme.

In the section on diplomacy and foreign policy, two historically focused articles deal with themes and countries of ever increasing significance for Ireland. Kate O'Malley, from the Royal Irish Academy's Documents on Irish Foreign Policy project, analyses the post-independence diplomatic relationship between Ireland and India. Though the relationship was perhaps not as active as it might have been in the 1980s and 1990s, a renewed political, economic and indeed academic relationship between the two states has been evident in recent years, and a study of the early years of Irish-Indian inter-state diplomacy is therefore timely. In another timely article, given that Irish-German diplomacy is so crucial to the state's contemporary economic plans, Mervyn O'Driscoll of University College Cork examines German reactions to Ireland's initial EEC membership application in 1961–63.

The final section of the journal includes our annual reviews of Ireland's foreign relations and Ireland's foreign aid programme. Nicholas Rees and Helen O'Neill continue their indispensable articles, which year after year offer an important time-series analysis of Ireland's foreign relations generally and its aid programme in particular. These reviews are a significant annual commitment for the two authors, but they are widely used and welcomed by students of Irish foreign policy everywhere, including this editor. As Professor Rees is handing on the baton to another author for next year's volume, I wish to take this opportunity to thank him for his huge commitment to the journal over many years, which I know will continue in other ways.