

: Programme

as at 16/05/2022

sef: Policy Lunch

Making the Multilateral System Fit for the Future – The role of the European Union in revitalising international law

Brussels

Representation of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia to the EU
Rue Montoyer 47, Brussels

31 May 2022, 12.30 hrs – 13.45 hrs

Conference language: English

Supported by

The State Government of
North Rhine-Westphalia



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BACKGROUND

Intersecting and novel types of global risks and crises are accelerating while the existing multilateral structures are struggling to find appropriate responses. This is due to the fact that these structures are still based on a 19th/20th century architecture – designed to meet the challenges of the last century. With his report “Our Common Agenda”, published in September 2021, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has initiated a process which aspires to transition the United Nations, the heart of the international architecture, into a body prepared for the 21st century.

In “Our Common Agenda”, Guterres names the strengthening of international law as a central pillar in this regard and calls for a global road map for the development and effective implementation of international law. The European Union endorsed this call during the informal consultation on the Agenda at the UN General Assembly in February 2022. Among other things, the EU expressed its hope for an early conclusion to the negotiations on an international treaty on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity and the advancement of the work towards a Convention on the prevention and punishment of crimes against humanity. In view of the growing geopolitical tensions, but also the double standards practised by Western states for decades, this may sound like wishful thinking.

However, the current escalation of crises and conflicts could also become a turning point for a realignment of the multilateral system. And indeed, there are signs in some areas that progress may be possible against all the odds, such as the creation of an International Anti-Corruption Court, advances in global environmental governance, or the current negotiations on a global agreement on pandemic preparedness and response.

How are these glimmers of hope to be assessed? What further progress could the “Our Common Agenda” process bring about? What is the EU’s specific contribution to this process and to current initiatives to strengthen and respect international law? What other fora and processes could promote a realignment of the international community and, particularly, a strengthening of international law?

These questions will be the focus of our next sef: Policy Lunch.

12.00 HRS

REGISTRATION AND LIGHT LUNCH

12.30 HRS

WELCOME

Hans H. Stein

Director

Representation of the State of

North Rhine-Westphalia to the EU, Brussels

Dr Marcus Kaplan

Executive Director

Development and Peace Foundation (sef:), Bonn

12.40 HRS

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Maja Groff, Esq

International Lawyer and Convenor of the Climate

Governance Commission, The Hague

Andrej Auersperger Matić

Legal Adviser

Department of the European

External Action Service (EEAS), Brussels

Nanjala Nyabola

Writer, researcher and policy analyst

Member of the UN High-Level Advisory Board on

Effective Multilateralism, Nairobi

Chair

Dr Sascha Werthes

Senior Lecturer at the

Chair for International Relations and Foreign Policy

University of Trier

Followed by discussion with the audience

13.45 HRS

END OF EVENT