

INTERNATIONAL LAW — Focusing on Humanitarian Zones in Colombia —

1) What is International Law & How Do You Find It?

- **Public international law** governs the behavior of nation states and international organizations. It also applies to some conduct by individuals. **Private international law** governs the international interactions of private individuals (natural and legally recognized persons).

- Article 38 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) contains the most widely recognized account of sources of international law. *It lists the sources of public international law as: conventions, customary international law, general principles of law, judicial decisions, and scholarly opinions.*

- Vast amounts of international law is available for free on the Internet. Since much of international law is created by international organizations such as the United Nations and the International Court of Justice, these organizations are able to offer excellent worldwide access to their various international law documents and cases. In fact, a good Internet search will typically be more useful than searching Lexis & Westlaw.

- I typically will try to find a good online research guide covering the issue I'm researching and then go from there. Useful guides about international law (and tools to find other good guides) include:

Hastings Law Library Research Guide - Researching International Law
<http://library.uchastings.edu/library/ref/research.htm>

Cornell Law School Legal Research Search Engine
<http://library.lawschool.cornell.edu/WhatWeDo/ResearchGuides/Legal-Research-Engine.cfm>

NYU's GlobalLex
<http://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex>

LLRX.com - International, Comparative & Foreign Law
<http://www.llrx.com/category/1050>

The American Society of International Law's (ASIL) Electronic Information System for International Law (EISIL)
<http://www.eisil.org/>

The American Society of International Law's (ASIL) Electronic Resources for International Law
<http://www.asil.org/resource/home.htm>

2) See what books we have in our collection

There is still much important analysis of international law published in books. In our collection most of our international law is found in these call numbers & areas:

K48 - K7600	International and comparative law (5 th floor)
K3200	Human rights (5 th floor)
JZ	International organizations / UN (5 th floor)
KZ	International relations (6 th floor)

Either go to the call number areas listed above and browse the collection or search the library catalog <http://hopac.uchastings.edu/search>

3) If you have time to get books thru interlibrary loan, then you could also check to see what books are available at other libraries.

Go to the library's subscription databases webpage

<http://library.uchastings.edu/library/ref/databases.htm>

and select "FirstSearch". Once at this page select WorldCat and search for books that other libraries may own on your subject such as:

Humanitarian Intervention and Safety Zones: Iraq, Bosnia, and Rwanda / Author: McQueen, Carol. Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

To borrow this book from another library click on the "Borrow this item from another library (Interlibrary Loan)" link and then enter your name and email address.

To find similar books, click on the "Subject Descriptor" links.

4) The next thing I might try to do would be to see if there are law review articles that discuss your specific issues. This is a good way to find analysis, cases, and links to other sources you might be interested in seeing.

- You can search the law journal indexes on Lexis or Westlaw or thru the Library's subscription databases.

Library's Subscription Databases Webpage
<http://library.uchastings.edu/library/ref/databases.htm>

Some of the best databases for finding international law articles & documents include:

Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals - Index of articles and book reviews from more than 450 legal periodicals, including journals, essay collections, festschriften, and congress reports. Coverage includes international law (public and private), comparative law, and municipal law of countries other than the United States, British Isles, and British Commonwealth.

Index to Legal Periodicals & Books - A bibliographic database that cites articles from more than 760 legal periodicals and indexes some 2000 law books. Periodical coverage includes law reviews, bar association journals, university publications, yearbooks, institutes, and government publications.

LEGALTRAC - A bibliographic database to find articles in all major law reviews, law journals, specialty law and bar association journals, and legal newspapers on Federal and State Cases, Laws and Government Regulations, Legal Practice, and legal subjects.

Legal Scholarship Network - A searchable database of abstracts of working papers as well as articles accepted for publication. Many links to full text of articles not available on line elsewhere.

Hein-On-Line - Full-text (pdf) searchable online collections include:

- Law reviews, and legal periodicals [including numerous international law reviews]
- English Reports, Full Reprint (1220-1865)
- Treaties and Agreements Library
- Foreign & International Law Resources Database

To find if our library has access to the full-text of a particular journal use the e-journals link from the main page of the library's website: <http://library.uchastings.edu>

So for example searching Index to Legal Periodicals will tell you that this good article is available:

Landgren, K. Safety zones and international protection: a dark grey area. *International Journal of Refugee Law* v. 7 (July 1995) p. 436-58

Then you can find the full-text of this article in pdf by using Hein-On-Line.

– You could do a similar index search on Westlaw or Lexis. You could also search the full-text law reviews, but you'll have to do a more precise search or else you'll get too many irrelevant hits.

5) Evaluate the Country Specific Legal Information on the Internet

Useful websites include:

- Guide to Foreign Law [Hastings Law Library]
<http://library.uchastings.edu/library/ref/foreign.htm>
- Foreign Primary Law on the Web [University of Houston]
<http://www.law.uh.edu/libraries/fi/foreignlaw.html>
- Guide to Law Online [Law Library of Congress]
<http://www.loc.gov/law/guide/nations.html>

6) Good Human Rights Information

- University of Minnesota Human Rights Library
http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/center/asylum/refugee_index.html

This still is a very good collection of human rights information, but it now has a lot of broken links.

- EISIL (Electronic Information System for International Law)
<http://www.eisil.org/>

Select “International Human Rights”

- Refworld - (Maintained by the UNHCR)
<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain>

Refworld contains a vast collection of reports relating to situations in countries of origin, policy documents and positions, and documents relating to international and national legal frameworks.