

Introduction to International Law

Dr. V. Balakista Reddy

Professor of Law, Registrar &

Director, Centre for Aerospace and Defence Laws (CADL)

NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad

E-mail: registrar@nalsar.ac.in

DEFINITION, NATURE, SCOPE AND DEVELOPMENT OF I.L

- Domestic and International Legal Order
- Definitions of I.L.--- traditional and modern
- Nature I.L.– Not True Law and True Law
- Scope and Development of I.L.
- Basis or various theories of I.L.
- Perspectives on I.L. First , Second & Third World
- Difference between Public and Private I.L.
- Basic Principle of Modern I.L.
- Codification and Progressive Development of I.L.
- The Importance of I.L. in the Modern World
- Sources and Subjects of International Law
- Relations between International Law and Municipal Law

Domestic and International Order

- ▶ What is Law? Understanding of law is different for different people
- ▶ For scientists "Laws are the proven conclusions of experiments undertaken", Sociologists "Law is an agent of social control confirming certain social behavior "
- ▶ Domestic Law is generally mean the internal law of a nation. It is also referred to as Municipal Law or National Law.
- ▶ Sources of Domestic Law –legislature, customs and presidents, whereas international law consists of treaties and customs.– Sources of ML and IL.
- ▶ Domestic law governs the behavior and actions of individuals, whereas IL governs the behavior and actions of bodies of government: states or countries.
- ▶ Domestic law operates on the basis of Institutions – Legislature, executive and judiciary, IL on the other hand No legislature/Parliament, No w executive Though World Judiciary (ICJ)but it has limitation of jurisdiction.

Domestic and International Order

- ▶ International legal system-Horizontal legal system and all the parties are situated on the same plane.
- ▶ All the states are in the same plane no imposition is possible. states are free to choose which rules should apply to them and which should not. As a result, enforcement is often difficult.
- ▶ On the other hand, vertical legal system, wherein the parties are not situated on the same plane.
- ▶ In the domestic legal system, the state imposes rules and regulations on the citizens who are then bound to comply with them. Owing to this vertical nature, enforcement in the domestic legal system is easier.
- ▶ Approaches— Domestic Law Coercion , Compulsion, Dhandha will work. On the other hand IL is should be based on Cooperation, Coordination, Consensus, Convincing etc..

Compliance in International Law

- ▶ If there is no authority higher than the state, why do governments ever abide by the pacts they make with each other?
- ▶ First View: states only respect agreements that fulfill their immediate interests.
- ▶ Second View: international inducements, reciprocity, concerns about reputation, and/or domestic politics/institutions regularly help sustain adherence.
- ▶ Third View: Compliance as a problem of capacity, or of poor management.
- ▶ Governments keep their promises because they care how others perceive them, internalize norms, or view agreements as valid and fair

Definitions of I.L.– Traditional

- ▶ Traditional Definition - States alone are the subjects of I.L.
For example
- ▶ Oppenheim: International Law is “the name for the body of customary and treaty rules which are considered legally binding by civilized states in their inter course with each other.”
- ▶ J.L. Brierly: International Law may be defined as “the body of rules and the principles of actions, which are binding upon civilized states in their relation with the one another.
- ▶ Hackworth: “International Law consists body of rules governing the relation between states.”
- ▶ Criticism of Oppenheim’s definition:
- ▶ Not only states but also international organization, Civilized states, Individuals and other private persons, General Principles of Law ignored, IL is Living Law etc.,

Modern Definitions of I.L.

- ▶ Modern definitions – International Law not only regulates the relations between states but also International organizations, individuals non – state entities etc. For example:
- ▶ Charles G. Fenwick: “the body of general principles and scientific rules which are binding upon members of the International Community in their mutual relations.”
- ▶ Whiteman: “the standard of conduct at as given time for states and other entities subject there to.”
- ▶ J.G.Starke: International Law may be defined as “that body of law which is composed for its greater part of the principles and rules of conduct which states feel themselves bound to observe, and therefore, do commonly observe in their relations with each other”, and which includes also;
 - (a) The rules of law relating to the functioning of international institutions or organizations, their relations with each other, and their relations with states and individuals; and
 - (b) Certain rules of relating to individuals and non-states entities so far as the rights or duties of such individuals and non-state entities are the concern of the international community.

Nature of International Law

- ▶ There are two views on the subject
- ▶ International Law is not a true law: John Austin, Hobbes, Holland, Pufendorf, and Bentham.
- ▶ Austin Definition of Law
- ▶ The rules of international law are positive morality:
- ▶ Holland Bentham Brownli etc., denied the legal character of international law.
- ▶ International law is not law because
- ▶ No agency for international legislation. No organized force, No a determinate impartial arbitrator, The ICJ is no compulsory jurisdiction,
- ▶ Some writers called international law as a quasi-law, Starke: International law is a weak law, Queen Vs. Keyn: International law is not an exactly law.

Nature of International Law

- ▶ I.L. is a True Law : Oppenheim, Brierly, J.G. Starke, Kelson, Hart,
- ▶ Louis Henken " Almost all nations observe almost all principals of IL & almost all there obligations, almost all the time.
- ▶ Sir Henry Maine – Historical jurisprudence – In primitive societies there was no sovereign political authority yet there were laws.
- ▶ Austin's concept of law denied customary rules of international law.
- ▶ Treaty and conventions are legislation of international law.
- ▶ When international questions states do not rely upon moral arguments but rely upon treaty precedents and opinion of specialists.
- ▶ States do not deny the existence of international law
- ▶ Some state (U.K. and USA) international law treated as part in their own true sense.
- ▶ As far as sanctions are concerned, international law does not completely lack it.
- ▶ Violations of law is in municipal laws also
- ▶ Decisions of ICJ are binding upon parties to the dispute.
- ▶ WTO and its Dispute Settlement Mechanism changed the Nature and Characteristics of IL

Scope of International Law

- ▶ Scope of I.L. has expanded due to:
- ▶ Inclusion of New Subjects of I.L.
- ▶ Emergence of New States
- ▶ Establishment of Int. Organizations
- ▶ Homogeneous Western World to Heterogeneous Developing Countries
- ▶ Emergence of New Problems— Protection of Human Rights to Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
- ▶ Expansions to New Issues Ex. From Outer Space to Deep Sea-bed

Development of I.L. in Ancient and Medieval Times

- ▶ From Ancient times to 10th Century- Egypt, Ancient Jews, Greeks, Romans, Hindus, and Muslim Laws mentions about inter-state Relations
- ▶ Inter-state relations in those days were bases on Moral Rules rather than legal rules
- ▶ Entering treaties with other countries, respect ambassadors (Dutas), respect foreigners, Rules of Law bases on Just wars and unjust wars,
- ▶ Religion, Dharma played important role
- ▶ Respect others territory and diplomatic relations
- ▶ **Development of I.L. in Middle Ages**
- ▶ IL is essentially a product of cretion civilizations- Oppenhiem
- ▶ Supremacy of Church, Feudalism and Feudal Relationships
- ▶ Renaissance and Reformation Movements
- ▶ Sea Routes and sea trade also helped
- ▶ Lex Mercatoria or Law of Merchants

Development of Modern I.L.

- ▶ 1648 Treaty of Westphalia and the birth of Modern state system
- ▶ Hugo Grotius and his contribution to IL
- ▶ The Final Act of the Congress of Vienna 1815 and multilateral system of Social, political, and economic cooperation
- ▶ French became common Language
- ▶ Maritime Conventions and the Hague Conferences
- ▶ Various International Treaties and their role in IL
- ▶ theories and International Instructions helped in the development of Modern IL

Development in the 20th & 21st Centuries

- ▶ End of First World War and the Treaty of Versailles and the establishment of the League of Nations
- ▶ The Locarno Pact of 1925 strengthened the Principle of Pacific Settlement of Dispute settlement and pledge of non-aggression
- ▶ The Kellogg- Briand Pact or Paris Pact of 1928 declared the renunciation of war as instrument of National policy
- ▶ Second World war and the establishment of the U.N.
- ▶ UN and its Contribution to International Law
- ▶ Establishment of other institutions: Judicial and non-judicial
- ▶ IL in 21st Century-Impact of Globalization, the Establishment of WTO, developments in Technology, Communication and Transportation etc.,

Codification & Progressive Dev. of IL

- ▶ Why the codification and progressive development?
- ▶ IL is dynamic, changing according to the various needs of international society.
- ▶ Codification before the League Of Nations
 1. *International Conferences:*
 - 1856 Paris Declaration on Law of War
 - The Hague Convention of 1899 and 1907
 2. *International Associations and International Organizations:*
 - The *Institut de Droit International* (The Institute of International Law) established in 1873 with the objective "the study, codification and development of International law" **For the contribution it made towards settlement of disputes through peaceful means, the Institute was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize as early as 1904**
 - The Hague Academy of International Law, The Harvard Law Research Institute, The American Institute of International Law etc.,

Codification Under League of Nations

- In 1924, League of Nations appointed 16 member Committee for codification. In 1927 it submitted report to the Assembly--- Topic wise discussion of Nationality, Territorial Waters and State Responsibility.
- Under the League of Nations UNIDROIT (The Rome International Institute for Unification of Private Law) was established in 1926 within the legal framework of the League.
- UNIDROIT Principles of International Commercial Contracts, International Leasing, Protection of Cultural Property are some of the contributions of UNIDROIT.
- UNIDROIT Convention on Agency in the International Sale of Goods, Geneva, 1983; UNIDROIT Convention on International Factoring, Ottawa, 1988.
- League Codification Conference of 1930 and 1931--- which represented the main forms of civilization and the principal legal systems of the world.
- International Labour Organization

UN and Codification

Article 13 (1) (a) of the U.N. Charter lays down that the General Assembly shall initiate studies and make recommendations for the purpose if “promoting international co-operation in the political field” and “encouraging the progressive development of International Law and its codification”.

The main organs as well the specialized agencies of the United Nations have played a significant role in codifying the developing International law, International Economic/Trade Law through General Assembly Resolutions and International Conventions – in the form of both *Hard* and *Soft* Law.

Codification and development of IL in emerging areas including Human Rights, Environmental Protection etc..

Various UN General Assembly Resolutions including PSNR, NIEO, Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of State, etc..

The United Nations also created specialized institutions for this purpose i.e., UNCITRAL (United Nations Commission on International Trade Law).

Basic Principles of Modern I.L.

- ▶ Well established Municipal Legal systems and not so well established IL – weakness in IL, international community has experienced world wars, etc.
- ▶ Establishment of UN
- ▶ Divided world and uniting principles or survival principles or strategies
- ▶ Sovereign Equality of States
- ▶ Principle of Good Faith (*Pacta Sunt Servenda*)
- ▶ Peaceful Settlement of Int. Disputes
- ▶ Prohibition of Use of Force
- ▶ International Co-operation
- ▶ Non-Intervention, and
- ▶ Equal Rights and Self Determination

Enforcement observance of IL

- International public opinion
- Countermeasures and self-help
- Collective or bilateral sanctions
- Afraid of losing reciprocal benefits of participation
- Collective actions of civil society
- Domestic courts and enforcement of international law;
- State applying domestic law extraterritorially
- Voluntary Consent
- Good Faith Principle
- Chapter VII of the United Nations
- Economic Globalization & Inter-dependency of World
- WTO & Changing notion of International Law

Sources of International law

- ▶ Sources-methods by which the rules have been created.
- ▶ Sources of Domestic Laws
- ▶ Classification of Sources of International Law
- ▶ Formal and Material Sources
- ▶ Primary and Secondary Sources
- ▶ Hard Law and Soft Law Sources
- ▶ Are the UN General Assembly Resolutions as Source of International Law?

Article 38 of the statute of ICJ

- ▶ (a) International convention whether general or particular establishing rules expressly recognized by the contesting states.
- (b) International Customs as evidence of a general practice accepted as law.
- (c) General Principles of law recognized by civilized nations.
- (d) Subject to article 59 judicial decisions and juristic works as subsidiary means for the determination of rules of law.
- ▶ This article not exhaustive-does not make reference to resolutions of the GA of the UN
- ▶ International Law dynamic and fast changing

Subjects of International Law

- ▶ Subjects and Objects of Law
- ▶ Persons or entities to whom law attributes rights and duties are the subjects of law---The term subject of I.L. refers to entities endowed with legal personality, capable of exercising certain rights & duties under Int. legal system.
- ▶ Legal Personality & Recognition of Legal Personality-
- ▶ The possession of Int. personality means - an entity is a subject of I.L., and is "capable of possessing international rights and duties, and has the capacity to maintain its rights by bringing Int. claims"

Which Entities have Legal Personality ? Or Theories

- ▶ Definition of I.L.– Traditional Vs. Modern
- ▶ Realist Theory – States alone are the subjects of I.L.-Traditional definitions
- ▶ Fiction Theory- Individuals alone are the subjects of I.L. or Supports of Monism
- ▶ Functional Theory – jurists like J.G.Starke, oppenheim , Brownlie

State as Subject of I.L.

- ▶ Realist Theory, Dualism & Traditionalist Views.
- ▶ States alone are the subjects of I.L.-Why?
- ▶ "Since the Law of Nations is based on the common consent of individual states, and not of individual human beings, states solely and exclusively are the subjects of I.L." Oppenheim
- ▶ I.L. address to States, Under I.L. states have rights and duties, states declare war and peace, enter treaties with other states, etc.

Definition & Characteristics & Classification of States

- ▶ What is state? Different things to different people
- ▶ I.L. Context state is defined as "a group of societies within a defined geographical area united to ensure their mutual welfare and security"
- ▶ Article 1 of Montevideo Convention on rights and duties of states, 1933- permanent population, a defined territory, a govt. and capacity to enter relations with other states
- ▶ Classification or kinds of States- sovereign states, Federal States, Non-self governing territories, mandate and trust territories, Protectorate states, etc.,
- ▶ Sovereignty and sovereign equality...

State as subject..

- ▶ Fundamental Rights of states- Right to equality, right to co-existence and self determination, right to independence, right to respect dignity etc.,
- ▶ ILC draft declaration on Rights and Duties of states, 1949- right to independence, right to jurisdiction, duty of non-intervention, right to equality, duty to protect Human rights and fundamental freedoms, duty to maintain peace and security , etc.,
- ▶ Condition of Admission of a state to membership in UN (Admission Case) 1948
- ▶ At. 4 of UN Charter- A state, peace loving state, must accept obligations of UN Charter, must be able to carryout obligations, and must be willing to do so
- ▶ Competence of GA for the admission of a state to UN-1950

Int. Orgs. as Subject of I.L

- ▶ L. Tunkin " Int. org. as an association of states established on the basis of treaty in accordance with I.L. in order to achieve specific objectives"- (1)Association of states-IGOs and INGOs (2)setup by treaty, (3) established for specific purposes,(4) possess int. personality and (5) created in accordance with I.L.
- ▶ Kinds of Int. Orgs- Intended duration-Ad hoc, Provisional and permanent
- ▶ Nature of their powers-Legislative, Administrative, Judicial etc.,
- ▶ Character of their objectives-single or multipurpose
- ▶ Geographical- Global, Regional & sub regional

Evolution of Int. Organizations.

- ▶ Int. orgs. before League of Nations- Int. orgs for prevention of wars, Grotius, Holy Alliance of 1815, Concert of Europe, the Hague Conventions of 1899 & 1907
- ▶ Public Int. Unions in 19th century- the ITU 1865, UPU 1874 etc.,
- ▶ Int. in the 20th century-The League of Nations and The U.N.
- ▶ Role of Int. organs. In the present day
- ▶ The UN and its specialized agencies- Ex. art. 100, 104 & 105 of UN Charter, Art. 39 of ILO, Art. 47 of ICAO.
- ▶ 1946 Convention on privileges and immunities of UN & Its members
- ▶ 1986 Vienna Convention on Law of Treaties between states & Int. orgns conformed that they have capacity to enter into treaties.
- ▶ 1994 Convention on the safety of UN & Associated Personnel. Art. 7 & 9

Supporting cases

- ▶ Reparation for injuries suffered in the service of UN of 1949-
- ▶ (1) the court was asked to determine the capacity of UN, as an organ, to bring an international claim for compensation against a state
- ▶ (2) the Court said "UN is Int. person & it is subject of I.L. and capable of possessing rights and duties and can bring int. claims.
- ▶ The above was reaffirmed by the ICJ in 1980 Interpretation of Agreement of 25th March 1951 between WHO and Egypt, the court said " Int. orgns. Are subject of I.L. and they are bound by any obligation incumbent upon them under general rules of I.L, under their constitutions or under int. agreements to which they are parties.
- ▶ 1. UN (immunities & privileges) Act 1947 to give effective to the Convention on the Privileges & Immunities of UN 1946
- ▶ UK made legislation to implement the 1994 convention on the safety of UN & Associated Personnel . In 1997 UK made legislation making crime under the above treaty is a crime under England.



Individual as Subject of I.L.

- ▶ The status of Individual is one of the most important, yet difficult question of modern I.L.
- ▶ Supporters of Monism and Fiction Theory
- ▶ Historically, those rules which first developed imposed duties to prevent piracy and slave trade, and to protect the persons and states of foreign sovereigns and their diplomatic representatives.
- ▶ Greeks- human being is the measure of all things and people unite as family, tribes, society nation, etc. were meant to serve the humanity.
- ▶ Various Int. treaties, Judicial tribunals and courts have recognized individual personality & tried under I.L. Example..
- ▶ Treaty of 1907 between five central American states established Central American Court of Justice, which provided for individuals to bring cases directly before the court.
- ▶ Under Art. 304 of the Versailles Treaty 1919, Nations of Allied & Associate powers could bring cases against Germany in their own names for compensation.

Nuremberg, Tokyo Tribunals & Individual

- ▶ In his opening statement at Nuremberg trials, 1946 the US Chief prosecutor Justice Robert Jackson declared that “ crimes against I.L. are committed by men, not by abstract entities, and only by punishing individuals who committed such crimes can the provision of I.L. be enforced”.
- ▶ The above tribunals have pointed out that “ I.L. imposed duties & liabilities upon individuals” and they declared that
- ▶ the crime against peace, crime against humanity & conspiracy to commit these crimes, as international crimes.

Regionalism, Human Rights & Individual

- ▶ European Convention for Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 1950 and the European Court of Human Rights and European Commission on Human Rights have recognized and tried cases against their home governments.
- ▶ American Convention on Human Rights, 1969 and American Court of Human Rights.
- ▶ African Charter 1981 and African Commission on Human & Peoples Rights The ICSID, 1965 has enabled private foreign investor to have access to international machinery
- ▶ The Rescue Agreement of 1968 provides that " State parties under the duty to Rescue and render services to Astronauts who landed in their territory or under their jurisdiction
- ▶ The International Convention on the Suppression & punishment of Crime of Apartheid of 1974 declared apartheid a Int. crime and individual is directly responsible.

Recent Int. developments & Individual

- ▶ The ILC Draft code of Crimes Against the Peace & Security of Mankind of 1991 has reiterated the individual responsibility under I.L.
- ▶ Two Res. of Security Council on Somalia situation in the early 1990s unanimously condemned breaches of humanitarian law and stated that “those who order their commission would be held individually responsible for them”
- ▶ The ICC provides that the Court has Universal jurisdiction over persons with respect to Genocide, Aggression, serious violations of laws of war and Crime against humanity.
- ▶ Although no international Criminal Court (before the ICC) or penal tribunals, various conventions have provided some scope and tried and punish individuals who have violated laws of war, engaged in genocide or committed int. terrorist acts.
- ▶ As Anthony D' Amato has speculated “in the 19th century I.L. was concerned states Vs state, in the 20th century I.L. concerned state Vs individual and in the 21st century I.L. is going to concerned individual Vs individual”

Thank You

