



CENTRE FOR
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
AND DIPLOMACY

Thinking Globally Acting Globally



UNA Westminster
Branch

14th Annual Ruth Steinkraus-Cohen International Law lecture

in association with

The Centre for International Studies & Diplomacy, SOAS

and the

The International Committee, The Bar Council of England and Wales

‘Should we be worried about the health of international law?’

Professor Françoise Hampson

Emeritus Professor of Law, University of Essex

Making rules and adhering to them has underpinned the course of the United Nations and international relations more generally since 1945. Some States have not respected these and situations have arisen where adherence to these rules were dismissed but this had limited impact on the rules themselves. They were a violation of the rules, rather than a challenge to them. But some argue that they must now fight for the rules themselves, a cause they never anticipated

SO why should we be worried? Because of the evidence. Three states have announced their intention to withdraw from the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court; progress in world trade at a global level appears to be frozen; there is an increasing tendency to reach regional trade agreements that privilege international corporate interests over those of the populations of sovereign States; the use of torture by US and UK agents in Iraq and Afghanistan disregarded both human rights law and the law of armed conflict; and, in the UK, threats by the government to withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights. Is an expression of concern dangerous, even risking generating a self-fulfilling prophecy, or is it well-founded?

Françoise Hampson was an independent expert member of the UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (1998-2007) and acted as a consultant on humanitarian law to the International Committee of the Red Cross. She is currently working on autonomous weapons, investigations into alleged violations in situations of armed conflict and on the use of an individual petition system to address what are widespread or systematic human rights violations.

Brunei Lecture Theatre

SOAS, Thornhaugh Street, WC1H 0AL (tube: Russell Square)

Tuesday, 7 March at 6.30pm

To be followed by a reception

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