e-RG
Electronic Resource Guide

United Nations

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American Society
of International Law

This electronic resource guide, often called the ERG, has been published online by the American Society of International Law (ASIL) since 1997. Since then it has been systematically updated and continuously expanded. The chapter format of the ERG is designed to be used by students, teachers, practitioners and researchers as a self-guided tour of relevant, quality, up-to-date online resources covering important areas of international law. The ERG also serves as a ready-made teaching tool at graduate and undergraduate levels.

The narrative format of the ERG is complemented and augmented by EISIL (Electronic Information System for International Law), a free online database that organizes and provides links to, and useful information on, web resources from the full spectrum of international law. EISIL's subject-organized format and expert-provided content also enhances its potential as teaching tool.

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I. Introduction

The United Nations (UN) Chapter of the *ASIL Electronic Resources for International Law* provides an overview of resources for performing UN-related research.   The increasing availability of primary source documents and other information on official web sites of the UN has allowed researchers to conduct a significant amount of current and historical research using the Internet. Because of the value of secondary resources in providing important background, analysis, and citation information to access web based materials effectively, some mention of these titles is also included in this chapter.

The United Nations is an international organization formed after World War II in 1945 to promote international peace, security, and cooperation under the terms of the [Charter of the United Nations](#) (http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter). Originally signed by 51 founding countries, there are

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

currently 193 [Member States](#) to the UN Charter (http://www.un.org/en/members). The predecessor organization to the UN is The League of Nations established in 1919 by the [Covenant of the League of Nations](#)(http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/leagcov.asp).   Additional information on these founding documents is provided in [Section IV](#) of this chapter.

II. Research Approaches and Methodology

UN research requests may involve obtaining a copy of a recent UN resolution, acquiring background information on the UN's position on a particular issue, or obtaining information on voting practices of a particular Member State. Considering which agency or organ may have issued the material is an important step in accessing the needed information. Like other forms of international legal research, use of secondary sources will increase the researcher's awareness and understanding of the organ's structure and function and, also likely identify citations to primary documents saving the researcher time in locating needed material.

Another important component to keep in mind when performing UN research is that given the UN's interaction with events in the world, the researcher has numerous sources outside of traditional legal or UN-specific options to consider. In addition to texts and treatises on the individual organs or on a particular UN-related subject area, news and public affairs information are also important research sources.   Lastly, attention to currency of documents and other materials is critical when completing any research project.   Documents may be amended or earlier versions may still be of interest.   Although there may be some duplication of effort, a researcher may want to consult several sources to ensure their work is current as of a particular date.

III. UN Official Internet Sites

The list of official UN websites has grown substantially over the years. The sites listed below are a limited, representative selection of the most important official sites. These are also good places to begin researching legal and current affairs issues involving the UN.

A. General

These sites are important sources for learning more about the overall structure of the UN System, activities of the various organs, and providing background information.   Some of these sites are designed to help direct the researcher to more specific agencies or programs.

1. [United Nations Home Page](#) (http://www.un.org/) Maintained by the UN Department of Public Information, this site is a good starting point if one has not already identified a more specific information resource. Many of the sources described in this chapter are accessible from the UN's Home Page including the [UN Documentation Centre](#) (http://www.un.org/en/documents/) for texts

of resolutions of the major bodies (the General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council, and the Secretariat), and a United Nations Documentation: Research Guide (http://research.un.org/en/docs/), The UN makes its pages available in the six official languages of the UN: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish.

2. International Law Page of the UN Home Page (http://www.un.org/en/law/) This page is part of the official UN Home Page provided by the Department of Public Information, but it is listed separately here to draw attention to this important section. It leads to materials specifically relevant to international law, such as UNCITRAL materials (http://www.uncitral.org/), the International Law Commission(http://www.un.org/law/ilc/index.htm), Oceans and Law of the Sea materials (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/index.htm), and the International Court of Justice (http://www.icj-cij.org/).

3. Organization Chart of the United Nations (http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/structure/org_chart.shtml) This organization chart of UN System provides a visual listing of and direct links to principal organs, programmes, specialized agencies, commissions, and related organizations of the UN.

4. United Nations System Directory (http://www.unsceb.org/directory) This comprehensive content and website finding aid is a great place to start research. This resource initially displays a directory of official UN and related organization websites arranged structurally. The directory may also be displayed alphabetically. In addition, the Bookmarks tab displays UN web content categorized by type (*e.g.*, statistics, annual reports, etc.). Finally, the Social Media tab links to UN social media feeds (*e.g.*, webcasts, podcasts, Twitter, Facebook, Google+, Flickr, etc.).Available in English only.

B. UN Treaty Internet Sites

UN Members States are required to register all treaties and international agreements with the Secretariat, Office of Legal Affairs (UN Charter, Art. 102). In addition to the UN Treaty Database there are several useful resources provided by the UN Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs.

1. United Nations Treaty Collection (http://treaties.un.org/) The Treaty Collection provides access to the full text of over 50,000 bilateral and multilateral treaties contained in the *United Nations Treaty Series* (UNTS). UN treaty documents contain reservations, declarations, notifications and objections to particular treaties. Use of a basic or advanced search option is available to search by subject, participant, or title. Entry into force and registration date, status, and signature and ratification information is provided.

2. Status of Multilateral Treaties deposited with the Secretary-General

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

(http://treaties.un.org/pages/ParticipationStatus.aspx) Updated daily, this resource provides status information of over 500 multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary-General.

3. Treaty Reference Guide (http://treaties.un.org/Pages/Overview.aspx?path=overview/treatyRef/page1_en.xml) This Guide contains definitions of key terms used in the UN Treaty Collection and also a glossary of basic terms relating to treaty actions (http://treaties.un.org/Pages/Overview.aspx?path=overview/glossary/page1_en.xml).

4. UN Treaty Series Cumulative Index, covering volumes 1-2500 (http://treaties.un.org/Pages/CumulativeIndexes.aspx) Available in English and French. The *Official Record* of activities reported to the General Assembly is posted here.

5. Travaux Preparatoires. The drafting or negotiating history associated with a specific UN Conference is available for selected UN instruments and may be identified using UN-I-QUE: United Nations Info Quest (http://lib-unique.un.org) or ODS (http://documents.un.org/). Preparatory documents may also be available on the website of the treaty secretariat or international organization. The International Law Commission (ILC) Yearbook is one source for documents prepared in the ILC's work in drafting specific conventions (http://www.un.org/law/ilc/).

Also of interest to the researcher are articles focusing on various developments in UN treaty practice. A recent example is *Some Notable Developments in the Practice of the UN Secretary-General as Depositary of Multilateral Treaties: Reservations and Declarations*, authored by Palitha T.B. Kohona, Chief, Treaty Section, Office of Legal Affairs, United Nations, 99 AJIL 433 (2005) (http://www.jstor.org/stable/1562508). Other articles may be identified using Bibliographic Resources, Journal Indexes and Databases. For more information on treaty research including resources for non-UN treaties see the Treaties chapter (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=treaties) of this Guide.

C. Official UN Sites of Interest by Topic

Another approach to navigating UN resources on the Internet is by topic or subject area.

1. Development (http://www.un.org/en/development/) Includes information on the role of the various principal organs, regional commissions, and research institutes in advancing this central mandate of the UN.

2. Global Issues (http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/) Provides an alphabetical list of links, key documents (primary documents, reports, statistics), events, UN System partnerships, and speeches.

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

3. Human Rights (http://www.un.org/en/rights/) For additional information and guidance on Human Rights research see the International Human Rights chapter of this Guide (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=ihr).

4. Humanitarian Affairs (http://www.un.org/en/humanitarian/) Provides information on refugees, disaster relief, and other humanitarian assistance.

5. Law of the Sea (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/index.htm) This page contains information from the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea and includes the Convention on the Law of the Sea, information related to the convention, such as status, reports, and much more information. Also see the chapters on the Law of the Sea (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=los) and International Environmental Law in the Guide (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=ienvl)

6. Peace and Security (http://www.un.org/en/peace/) Of particular interest from this page is United Nations Peacekeeping (http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/) and Current Peacekeeping Operations (http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/operations/current.shtml).

IV. UN Documents and Resolutions

The UN Charter, Universal Declarations of Human Rights, Statute of the International Court of Justice, and various treaties and conventions are among the founding documents of the United Nations. Researchers should be aware that although many of these documents are available electronically, the Official Record of a particular governing body, consisting of meeting records, resolutions and decisions, and reports of major committees remains the official source for citation.

A. Founding Documents

1. Charter of the United Nations (www.un.org/en/documents/charter/) Numerous texts, treatises, and articles on the UN Charter are available from this website.

a. Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs http://www.un.org/law/repertory/) Provides a summary of decisions by the principal organs of the UN.   Information and analysis on individual Articles of the UN Charter is also available.

b. Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization (http://www.un.org/law/chartercomm/) An Ad Hoc Committee to consider proposals and suggestions on effective functioning of the UN was established at the end of the 29th session (1974) of the UN General Assembly. This web site provides information on the Special Committee, its earlier and current mandate, and provides links to resolutions, instruments, and reports that are the work product of the Committee. Also see, *Report of the Special Committee on the*

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, UN Doc. A/50/33 (1995) and GA Res. 50/52 (Dec. 11, 1995).

c. History of the League of Nations (http://www.unog.ch/80256EE60057D930/(httpPages)/8C989922E1DBC95980256EF8005048CA?OpenDocument) This website provides an overview of the events associated with this organization that preceded the United Nations. The Versailles Peace Treaty (http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/versailles_menu.asp) established the League of Nations and contains Articles 1-26 of the League of Nations Covenant. Researchers may also now access an electronic version of The League of Nations Official Journal, Vols. 1-21 (1920-1940) available from Hein Online (http://www.heinonline.org/HOL/Index?index=journals/leagon).

For a comprehensive analysis of the Charter that also provides extensive annotations to related sources and useful annexes see, *The Charter of the United Nations, A Commentary*, 3d ed., by Bruno Simma, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012. (http://www.worldcat.org/isbn/9780199580156).

2. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/) For additional information and guidance on Human Rights research, see the chapter on Human Rights of this Guide (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=ihr).

3. Statute of the Court of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) (http://www.icj-cij.org/documents/index.php?p1=4&p2=2&p3=0) Signed as part of the UN Charter, the ICJ Statute also delineates the sources of international law in Art. 38.   See Section V of this chapter for additional information on the ICJ.

B. Documents and Resolutions from the Principal Organs of the UN

The websites provided here serve as a gateway for accessing documents, membership, and other information from the individual principal organs of the UN.   The UN Documentation Centre (http://www.un.org/en/documents/) serves as a gateway website for access to documents from all of the active principal organs including the General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council, and the Secretariat. The Journal of the United Nations (http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/En/lateste.pdf) provides information on meetings and activities for all the UN organs.

1. General Assembly (GA)

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

All 192 member states are represented in this UN body with primary function to address political, social, and economic issues. It has seven committees to handle specific areas including: 1) political and security, 2) economic and financial, 3) social, humanitarian, and cultural, 4) trusteeship, 5) administrative and budgetary, 6) legal and 7) special political.

a. General Assembly (http://www.un.org/en/ga/) GA resolutions (http://www.un.org/documents/resga.htm) are available from the first session (1946) to the current session.

b. Sixth Committee (Legal) of the General Assembly (http://www.un.org/en/ga/sixth/) The Sixth Committee considers legal questions in the General Assembly and is one of the seven main committees of the GA. This resource includes information on the 52nd session (1977) through the current session. A selection of early documents appear on the listing of Landmark General Assembly Documents (http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/landmark/amajor.htm). For a general description of the Sixth Committee and its role in the development and codification of international law, see articles authored by Virginia Morris & M.-Christiane Bourloyannis including *The Work of the Sixth Committee at the Forty-seventh Session of the UN General Assembly*, 87 AJIL 306 (1993), available at http://www.jstor.org/stable/2203826.

c. Voting Records (http://unbisnet.un.org/) Voting records of the General Assembly from its first session (1946) to the present, are searchable by keyword, by resolution UN Document Symbol, or by agenda document/item number.

2. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/) Among its areas of responsibilities the ECOSOC focuses on international economic and social issues and, cultural and educational cooperation.

a. ECOSOC Documentation (http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/docs.shtml) Resolutions, decisions and other documentation is available from 1946 to present.

b. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (http://csonet.org/) Established in 1946, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations is a standing committee of the ECOSOC consisting of 19 members. The NGO Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) prepares Guidelines for all non-governmental organizations and entities. The Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Database (http://esango.un.org/civilsociety/login.do) is available from the NGO Liaison Office of the Director-General's Office at UN Office of Geneva and is searchable by subject or "field of activity." Information about members and year of status is available in this database.

3. The Security Council (SC) (http://www.un.org/en/sc/) This organ's primary function regards

issues of peace. Of the 15 members, the original five sponsoring members have permanent status: China (since 1972, The People's Republic of China; until 1971 the Republic of China [Taiwan]); France, Great Britain, Russia (until 1991 the USSR) and the United States.

a. Security Council Resolutions (http://www.un.org/en/sc/documents/resolutions/) Resolutions are available from 1946 to present. Information regarding organization, voting, rules, is also available from this website.

b. Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council (http://www.un.org/en/sc/repertoire/) A guide to the proceedings of the Council from 1946 is provided.

c. Voting Records (http://unbisnet.un.org/) Voting records of the Security Council are searchable by keyword from the 1st year (1946-) to present.

4. Secretariat and Secretary-General (SG) (http://www.un.org/en/mainbodies/secretariat/) The Secretariat assumes administrative responsibilities for the principal organs of the UN and also administers the UN programmes. "The Secretary-General is appointed by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council for a five-year, renewable term." Information about the Secretary-General, daily briefings, statements, and other information on the work and activities of the Secretary General is available.

a. Secretary-General Documents (http://www.un.org/sg/) Contains links to the Secretary-Generals speeches as well as the *Annual Report of the Secretary-General* and related documents.

5. International Court of Justice (ICJ) See Section V, Courts and Tribunals of this chapter for information on the ICJ.

6. Trusteeship Council (http://www.un.org/en/mainbodies/trusteeship/) Since 1994, the work of the Council regarding non-self governing territories was no longer needed. The Council no longer holds meetings.

Another important UN resource for resolutions is the Official Document System of the United Nations (ODS) (http://documents.un.org) also listed in Section XII, A of this chapter.   As of December 31, 2004 this resource became available as a non-subscription-based UN database. ODS is a fully searchable electronic repository for UN materials offering full text documents issued since 1993.   Resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and the Trusteeship Council since 1946 are accessible from this resource.

C. Specialized Agencies

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

Among the agencies that function independently of the UN are: International Labour Union (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Maritime Organization (IMO), World Health Organization (WHO), World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), World Bank Group, International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Civil Aeronautics Organization (ICAO), Universal Postal Union. These organizations have well-developed web sites of their own and should be consulted for information and resources specific to these organizations. For a more complete listing and information of specialized agencies see various UN resources listed under Section III, A of this chapter.

D. Related Organizations

The World Trade Organization (WTO), and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are examples of Related Organizations of the UN. For a more complete listing and information see the individual organizations website or see various UN resources listed under Section III, A of this chapter.

E. UN Offices, Departments, and Programmes

Selected offices of the UN are provided below. A more complete listing is available from the general resources listed under Section III, A of this chapter.

1. Departments of the UN Secretariat (http://www.un.org/en/mainbodies/secretariat/) A master listing with links to the various Departments is available from this website.

2. United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) (http://www.uncitral.org/) The official UNCITRAL website includes Case Law on UNCITRAL Texts (CLOUT), which provides abstracts of court decisions and arbitral awards (often unpublished) relating to the conventions and model laws emanating from the Commission's work. The website also includes texts of documents beginning with the 28th Session (1995), and selected legal texts such as UNCITRAL Arbitration Rules and UNCITRAL Conciliation Rules. Available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Chinese.   For further information on international trade see the chapter on International Economic Law of the Guide (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=iel).

3. United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) (http://www.unhchr.ch/) A key site for research in human rights available in English, French, and Spanish.   For further information and research guidance, see the "Primary Sources" section of the Human Rights chapter (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=ihr) of this Guide.

4. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (http://www.unhcr.org) The UN High Commissioner for Refugees provides texts of numerous UN documents pertaining to refugees,

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

country of origin information, statistics, etc. For further information and research guidance, see the "Primary Sources" section of the Human Rights chapter (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=ihr) of this Guide.

5. Oceans and Law of the Sea Materials (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/index.htm)   For in-depth information on researching this area of international law see the Law of the Sea (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=los) chapter of the Guide.

V. International Courts and Tribunals

Information on the individual courts and tribunals is available from the respective court's website. The website of the Project on International Courts and Tribunals (PICT) contains information on many of the courts and is listed here first as a general resource for locating information on the various courts.

Project on International Courts and Tribunals (PICT) (http://www.pict-pcti.org) This web site provides access to information about the activities of many international courts and tribunals including: International Court of Justice(ICJ), International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), International Criminal Court (ICC), International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).   The full-text of selected cases and decisions from these international courts is also available.

A. The World Court

1. International Court of Justice (ICJ) (http://www.icj-cij.org/) The ICJ, also known as the World Court, is located in The Hague, Netherlands. Founded in 1946 to replace the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ), it is the principal judicial body of the United Nations. The Court consists of 15 judges and its jurisdiction is for contentious cases (disputes between states) and advisory decisions (at the request of selected UN bodies).

a. History of the PCIJ and ICJ (http://www.icj-cij.org/court/index.php?p1=1&p2=1) Available from the ICJ website, this resource provides a historical overview of the developments for the pacific settlement of international disputes that eventually led to the creation of the PCIJ and ICJ.

b. International Court of Justice (ICJ) (http://www.icj-cij.org/) This is the official ICJ website and is available in English and French. The site contains general information about the Court, basic documents, decisions, the Court's docket, and other information. This page provides links to all cases and advisory opinions referred to the Court since 1946.

c. Statute of the ICJ (http://www.icj-cij.org/documents/index.php?p1=4&p2=2&p3=0) The

adoption of the ICJ Statute in 1945 replaced the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. For an article-by-article analytical comparison of the new Statute with the old, *see* [Manley O. Hudson, The Twenty-fourth Year of the World Court, 40 AJIL 1, 14 (1946)](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2193893) (http://www.jstor.org/stable/2193893). Article 38(1) of the Statute established the sources of international law: international conventions, customary international law, general principles of law recognized by civilized nations, and judicial decisions and teachings of highly qualified publicists.

d. [Rules of Court](http://www.icj-cij.org/documents/index.php?p1=4&p2=3&p3=0) (http://www.icj-cij.org/documents/index.php?p1=4&p2=3&p3=0)

This resource contains the Rules of Court concerning "the internal judicial practice of the Court and Other Acts and Documents Concerning the Organization of the Court."

e. [International Law Commission (ILC)](http://www.un.org/law/ilc/) (http://www.un.org/law/ilc/) The ILC website provides access to the full text of final drafts, reports, and conventions on topics selected for codification including the law of treaties, state succession and diplomatic relations. In addition, researchers should be aware of the ILC Yearbook which reprints the special rapporteurs reports. Also of interest are annual survey type articles that highlight the work and activities of the ILC.   For example, *see* [The Fifty-Sixth Session of the International Law Commission by Michael Matheson in 99 AJIL 211 (2005)](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3246099) (http://www.jstor.org/stable/3246099).

f. [World Court Digest](http://www.mpil.de/en/pub/research/details/publications/institute/wcd.cfm) (http://www.mpil.de/en/pub/research/details/publications/institute/wcd.cfm) Provided by The Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, this resource is an electronic version of the first three volumes of the printed publication of the same name and a continuation of Fontes Juris Gentium. The text of digested judgments, advisory opinions, and orders of the International Court of Justice can be searched on areas of international law including law of treaties, use of force, international organizations, law of the sea, air and space, human rights, and dispute settlement. Information on jurisdiction, procedure, and individual judges of the ICJ is also provided.

g. [ASIL Insights](http://www.asil.org/insights.cfm) (http://www.asil.org/insights.cfm) For commentary on the ICJ cases and actions, see the articles written by international law scholars for ASIL Insights. Regular coverage of the World Court also appears in articles authored by Manley O. Hudson (PCIJ and ICJ), Leo Gross, and more recently Pieter Bekker and Daniel Bodansky in the American Journal of International Law.

2. Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ) Although the PCIJ was not a part of the League of Nations there was a close association between the two bodies (see [History of the PCIJ and ICJ](http://www.icj-cij.org/court/index.php?p1=1&p2=1) (http://www.icj-cij.org/court/index.php?p1=1&p2=1) also listed above.   The PCIJ also issued advisory opinions referred to it by the League of Nations Council or Assembly.

a. [Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ) Decisions](http://www.icj-) (http://www.icj-

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

cij.org/pcij/index.php?p1=9) Decisions of the Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ) from 1922-1946 are reported in various Series (Ser.) and include both the English and French texts. Judgments, advisory opinions, and acts (Ser. A, B, A/B, and C) provide separate links for contents, citation, index, correspondence, speeches, and related documents. A useful collection of documents concerning the organization of the court (Ser. D), a collection of yearbooks (Ser. E), and a bibliography of works and documents related to the Court are also available (Ser. F). Some of these pdf documents are over 400 pages in length.

B. International Criminal Courts

1. [Coalition for the International Criminal Court](http://www.iccnow.org/) Some basic information about the court, as well as links to selected documents, including UN publications.

2. [International Criminal Court](http://www.icc-cpi.int/) (ICC) This is the official website of the ICC. The ICC site contains essential court documents, the *Official Journal*, annual reports, practice directions and directives, codes of conduct, the court calendar, press releases, as well as the decisions, judgments, and transcripts from all of the cases.

3. [UN Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals](http://www.unmict.org/) (MICT) The MICT was created by the UN to carry out a number of the essential functions of the ICTY and ICTR after they cease operations at the end of their mandates. One of these functions will be to preserve the archives of both institutions. The branch continuing the work of the ICTR in Arusha, Tanzania, began operating on 1 July 2012. The branch continuing the work of the ICTY in The Hague, Netherlands, began operating on 1 July 2013.

4. [International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia](http://www.icty.org/) (ICTY) The ICTY was created by the UN Security Council to investigate, prosecute, and punish the crimes committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s during and after its breakup. The ICTY website provides basic legal documents, press releases, judgments, documents from cases, links to text of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Available in English and French. Westlaw/WestlawNext also has an ICTY database.

5. [International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda](http://www.unictr.org/) (ICTR) The ICTR was created by the UN Security Council to investigate, prosecute, and punish the crimes committed in Rwanda in 1994. The ICTR site contains basic legal documents, judgments, press releases and information about publications. Available in English and French. Westlaw/WestlawNext also has an ICTR database.

6. [Special Court for Sierra Leone](http://www.sc-sl.org/) (SCSL) The SCSL was created jointly by the government of Sierra Leone and the UN Security Council to investigate, prosecute, and punish

the serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law committed in the territory of Sierra Leone since 30 November 1996. The SCSL site contains essential court documents, annual reports, practice directions and directives, codes of conduct, sentence enforcement agreements, the court calendar, press releases, video summaries, as well as the decisions, judgments, and transcripts from all of the cases.

7. [Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia](http://www.eccc.gov.kh/en) (ECCC) (http://www.eccc.gov.kh/en) The ECCC was created jointly by the government of Cambodia and the UN General Assembly to investigate, prosecute, and punish senior leaders of Democratic Kampuchea and others most responsible for the serious crimes committed in Cambodia from 17 April 1975 to 6 January 1979. The ECCC site contains the essential documents, judicial biographies, structural explanation, and all of the case decisions and documentation for the trials of the Khmer Rouge.

8. [Special Tribunal for Lebanon](http://www.stl-tsl.org/en/) (STL) (http://www.stl-tsl.org/en/) The STL was created by the UN Security Council at the request of the government of Lebanon to investigate, prosecute, and punish the perpetrators of the attack of 14 February 2005 which killed the former Prime Minister of Lebanon Rafiq Hariri and 22 others. The STL site contains the essential court documents, practice directions, press releases, rules of court, rules of evidence, and other documentation.

For more information about international criminal law see the [International Criminal Law](http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=icl) chapter (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=icl) of this Guide.

C. Other Courts and Tribunals

1. [International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea](http://www.itlos.org/)(ITLOS) (http://www.itlos.org/) This site contains information about the tribunal, proceedings and judgments (including the application, written and oral proceedings, order, and the judgment), basic texts and documents, and news. There is a search engine and a site map.   Also see the chapters on the [Law of the Sea](http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=los) (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=los) and [International Environmental Law](http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=ienvl) (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=ienvl) in the Guide.

2. [United Nations Office of Administration of Justice](http://www.un.org/en/oaj/) (UNOAJ) (http://www.un.org/en/oaj/) The UNOAJ is an independent organ of the UN for matters involving staff members of the UN Secretariat, associated UN programmes such as UNDP, UNHCR, and IMO, ICAO, and the staff of the ICJ. It replaced the older UN Administrative Tribunal (UNAT) in 2009, with a two-tiered judicial system. The UN Dispute Tribunal (UNDT) is the trial level, and the UN Appeals Tribunal is the appellate level. The UNOAJ site contains helpful information for UN employees with grievances, as well as the the jurisprudence of the current and former versions of the tribunal.

3. [United Nations Reports of International Arbitral Awards](#), Recueil des sentences arbitrales (RIAA)

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

(http://untreaty.un.org/cod/riaa/index.html) Currently prepared by the UN Codification of the Office of Legal Affairs, the RIAA Reports includes international decisions between States and decisions between States and international organizations. Expanded coverage will include decisions dating back to late eighteenth century. The print version of this reporter may be consulted to view the maps accompanying selected cases.

VI. Bibliographic Resources, Journal Indexes and Databases

A. UN Resources

1. UN Documentation: International Law (http://research.un.org/en/docs/law) This bibliography identifies a number of important and useful resources on general issues on international law including leading texts, yearbooks, compendiums, and reports.

2. UN-I-QUE (United Nations Info Quest) (http://lib-unique.un.org) One of the services provided by the Dag Hammarskjold Library, provides symbols/sales numbers for selected documents and publications, although full bibliographic information is not given, from 1946 to present. The database focuses particularly on documents and publications of a recurrent nature, such as annual/sessional reports of various bodies, statements in General Debate, etc.

3. UNBISnet UN Bibliographic Information System (http://unbisnet.un.org/) This database provides for bibliographic searching of the Catalogue of UN publications and documentation indexed by the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library and the Library of the UN Office at Geneva, and non-UN publications held in the collection of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library. The user can also search voting records of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly (from the first session, 1946-) and Security Council (from the first year, 1946-). Additionally, another file contains speech citations for the main United Nations organs, the General Assembly (thirty-eighth session, 1983-), the Security Council (thirty-eighth year, 1983-), the Economic and Social Council (1983-) and the Trusteeship Council (15th special session, 1982-). It is important to note that there is access to many full-text documents from this database. Full-text resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council, going back to 1946, are included. The search forms have been revised recently for more effective searching.

B. Other Journal Indexes and Databases

Given the volume of information available on the Internet for both primary documents and secondary materials, it is easy to neglect an important resource that is most ideally performed during the initial stages of a research project. It is possible that someone has written about the same or similar topic of interest. Journal articles will provide citations to primary materials, identify leading texts and treatises, and also help flesh out the details of more involved and complex issues.

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

There are several journal indexes and databases that may have some overlap in the journal titles they include.   It is important to be aware of dates of coverage for any particular journal title.   A representative listing of some of the subscription and non-subscription offerings is provided below.

1. Subscription Based Journal Indexes and Databases

One thing to keep in mind when considering the use of subscription-based resources is that you may have access to them from institutions with which you are associated. Many university, law school, law firm, and public libraries provide their communities with access to many of these resources. Check with them for specific URLs you should use in order to have access.

a. HeinOnline (http://heinonline.org/) The database includes full-text access to legal and international law journals searchable by title, author and citation.   HeinOnline is especially useful for locating older journal articles.

b. Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals (IFLP) (http://heinonline.org/HOL/Index?collection=iflp) This resource provides article and chapter level indexing from over 550 legal publications worldwide. Article-level indexing of Yearbooks of international law is also included.   Available in various languages.

c. JSTOR - The Scholarly Journal Archive (http://www.jstor.org/) Provides full text articles from various scholarly disciplines. JSTOR participants are from numerous universities and organizations around the world. Among the currently available titles of interest to the researcher of international law are: American Journal of International Law, American Journal of Comparative Law, Human Rights Quarterly, International and Comparative Law Quarterly.

d. Public Affairs Information Service (PAIS) (http://www.csa.com/factsheets/pais-set-c.php) Public Affairs Information Service (PAIS) provides article level indexing from news sources and publications on issues of global policy.

A more complete listing and description of periodical indexes is available under the "Research Basics" heading in the International Organizations (http://www.asil.org/erg/?page=io) chapter of the Guide.

2. Non-Fee Based Journal Indexes

Researchers may use the available indexes to help identify articles on issues of international law.

a. Max Planck Yearbook of the United Nations (http://www.mpil.de/ww/en/pub/research/details/publications/institute/mpyunl.cfm) Provides the table of contents and selected full text of articles on developments and activities of the United

Nations. Publication began in 1997.

b. [Peace Palace Library](http://www.peacepalacelibrary.nl/) (http://www.peacepalacelibrary.nl/) The catalog of this extensive collection of public, private, and municipal international law is searchable by keyword (and by organization), topic, title, and author.   The collection also includes international political and diplomatic history. A single record may include a variety of information including links to the full text of the article, a description of the work from the library catalogue, or a table of contents. Search results may also include links to information on works available outside the Peace Palace Library collection.

c. [Public International Law, A Current Bibliography of Books and Articles](http://www.mpil.de/ww/en/pub/research/details/publications/institute/pil.cfm) (http://www.mpil.de/ww/en/pub/research/details/publications/institute/pil.cfm) Provided by the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law since 1975 .

VII. Related Associations and Organizations

A. UN- Specific

1. [Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS)](http://acuns.org/) (http://acuns.org/) ACUNS is "an international association of scholars, teachers, practitioners, and others who are active in the work and study of the United Nations system and international organizations in general." This is an extensive website with information about the organization, copies of newsletters and other reports, and links to related sites.

2. [Global Policy Forum (GPF)](http://www.globalpolicy.org/) (http://www.globalpolicy.org/) This organization focuses on UN Security Council issues and reform, the UN financial crisis, and other issues related to social and economic policy at the global level. The website offers links to documents and data as well as a number of original papers.

3. [United Nations Association of the U.S.A.](http://www.unausa.org/) (http://www.unausa.org/) The UN-USA site provides information about the organization - its purpose, projects (including Model UN), and texts of press releases.

4. [United Nations University](http://unu.edu/) (http://unu.edu/) Provides detailed information about the work and programs of this international academic organization. Available in English, French, Spanish, and Chinese.

5. [United Nations Watch](http://www.unwatch.org/) (http://www.unwatch.org/) United Nations Watch is a Geneva-based organization "whose mandate is to monitor the performance of the United Nations by the yardstick of its Charter."

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

B. General

1. [American Society of International Law (ASIL)](http://www.asil.org) (http://www.asil.org) Several resources of interest to the researcher of international law are available from this web site including [Electronic Information System for International Law (EISIL)](http://www.eisil.org) (http://www.eisil.org).   EISIL provides links to legal instruments, useful web sites, and research resources organized under 13 subject areas including human rights, economic law, and environmental law. An added feature of EISIL is the "more information" record where you will find citations, a brief description of the document or resource, and other information.   UN resources are available in the [International Organizations](#) section of EISIL.

2. [International Studies Association](#) (ISA) (http://www.isanet.org/) While the ISA is not specifically focused on United Nations matters, some of its activities may be of interest. There are web pages for international law, international organizations, and other sections, as well as links to web resources relevant to international studies.

VIII. Libraries and Research Centers

There are many libraries that are designated as official UN Depositary Libraries that receive UN Documents and Sales Publications.   Academic, university, or public libraries that collect international legal materials also receive UN documents, texts, and related publications of interest.

A. UN-Related Libraries

1. [Dag Hammarskjöld Library](http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/) (http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/)The Library's web pages provide information about services, collections, bibliographies, and a list of depository libraries.

2. [Library of the United Nations Office at Geneva](#) (UNOG) (http://www.unog.ch/) Founded in 1919 as The Library of the League of Nations this site has information on special collections including the League of Nations Archives. This site is available in French and English.

3. [United Nations Depository Libraries](http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/deplib/index.html) (http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/deplib/index.html) A listing is available by country from this web site of the Dag Hammarskjold Library.

4. [United Nations Information Centres](http://unic.un.org/aroundworld/unics/en/index.asp) (http://unic.un.org/aroundworld/unics/en/index.asp) A world-wide directory and description of these centres.

B. Other Libraries

Other libraries may be identified through various print and web-based directories. Among the options a researcher might consider are academic institutions with programs in international law or

international relations and, public libraries with federal and state government document collections. Policies regarding access and use of these collections vary.   The catalogs of these collections may be searchable from the website of the institution or organization.

IX. Research Guides

A representative listing of the many excellent research guides that provide information on both print and electronic resources is provided here.

A. UN Research Guides

1. [United Nations Documentation: International Law](http://research.un.org/en/docs/law) (http://research.un.org/en/docs/law) Provides an excellent overview of researching UN documents and publications for law-related issues. Available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Chinese.

2. [United Nations Documentation: Overview](http://research.un.org/en/docs) (http://research.un.org/en/docs) This Research Guide provides information on the types of documents issued by the UN as well as how to locate the documents in paper or electronic form.

3. [United Nations Documentation: UN Resources](http://research.un.org/en/un-resources) (http://research.un.org/en/un-resources) This resource identifies major publications of the organizations comprising the UN system. Available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Chinese.

4. [United Nations Documentation: How to Find UN Documents](http://research.un.org/en/docs/find) (http://research.un.org/en/docs/find) This Research Guide provides information on how to find UN documents in paper or electronic form.

5. [UN Documentation : Research Guide : Training Guides : United Nations](http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/train.htm) (http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/train.htm) Brief, informative, and very worthwhile PowerPoint presentations on UN electronic resources including ODS, UNBISnet, UN Web Search, and iSeek are available from the UN Dag Hammarskjold Library. Content, coverage, and research examples demonstrate how to use the sources effectively and obtain needed information.

B. Other Research Guides

1. [United Nations Documents Research](http://www.law.harvard.edu/library/research/guides/int_foreign/find-un-docs.html) (Harvard Law Library) (http://www.law.harvard.edu/library/research/guides/int_foreign/find-un-docs.html)

2. [Research Guides, United Nations](http://law.duke.edu/lib/researchguides/un) (Duke Law Library) (http://law.duke.edu/lib/researchguides/un)

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

3. [Research Guide: The United Nations](#) (Columbia Law Library)
(http://library.law.columbia.edu/guides/United_Nations)

4. [Government Documents & Information: United Nations](#)(Yale University)
(http://guides.library.yale.edu/unitednations) The Yale UN research guide is a well-organized guide
to UN resources and research. Some information is specific to Yale, but users everywhere should
find it useful.

X. UN Document Symbols and Classification System

A. Document Symbols

Each principal organ has a unique symbol associated with their documents. For example:

> A/- General Assembly

> E/- Economic and Social Council

> S/- Security Council

> ST/- Secretariat

> T/- Trusteeship Council

A second series of symbols may appear after the first slash.   This designation reflects the sub-body
within the main organ that produced the document. For example:

> -/AC/- Ad Hoc Committee or Similar Body

> -/C/- Standing, Permanent or Main Committee

> -/CN/- Commission

> -/CONF/- Conference

> -/GC/- Governing Council

Examples of UN document numbering:

Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the International Criminal Court, ICC-ASP/1/3, at 215,
and Corr. 1 (2002). In this example, ICC is for International Criminal Court and ASP for Assembly
of State Parties.

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

Commentary on the Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights, UN Doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/2003/38/Rev.2 (2003).

Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, UN Doc. A/50/33 (1995) and GA Res. 50/52 (Dec. 11, 1995)

Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. UN Doc. A/CONF.151/26 (vol. I).

B. Research Guides

For additional information on document symbols consult the following guides:

1. [United Nations Documentation: Document Symbols](http://research.un.org/en/docs/symbols) (http://research.un.org/en/docs/symbols)

2. [UN Documentation : Overview](http://research.un.org/en/docs/) (http://research.un.org/en/docs/)

XI. Statistics and Other UN Information

[CyberSchoolBus](http://www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/) (http://www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/) The CyberSchoolBus is a global teaching and learning project. It contains a great deal of information about global trends, information about UN Member States, country and city profiles, statistics, photographs, and educational modules and activities. See the [UN Core Treaties](http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/treaties/index.asp) page (http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/treaties/index.asp) which provides "student-friendly versions" of "the world's most important agreements." Available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Chinese.

[UN Cartographic Section, Maps and Geographic Resources](http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/english/htmain.htm) (http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/english/htmain.htm) A variety of maps listed by country, peacekeeping mission, non-self governing territories, region, and selected historical events are available from this web site.   Information on related UN geographic resources is also provided.

[UN Data](http://data.un.org/)(http://data.un.org/) A gateway to statistics from UN agencies searchable by topic area.

[UN Documentation Centre](http://www.un.org/en/documents/) (http://www.un.org/en/documents/) In addition to the access provided to primary documents from the General Assembly, Security Council, ECOSOC, and the Secretariat, press releases are available for the General Assembly and Security Council. Available in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Chinese.

[UN Educational Portal](http://en.unesco.org/themes/education-21st-century) (http://en.unesco.org/themes/education-21st-century) A quick locator for educational and related resources within the UN system.

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

XII. Other Electronic Resources

A. UN Official Electronic Resources

1. Official Document System of the United Nations (ODS) (http://documents.un.org) This is the official repository for documents published by the United Nations. It contains the full text of documents dating back to 1993 in PDF format in all official languages. Documents are stored in two databases: 1) UN Documentation, which includes documents back to 1993 and, 2) UN Resolutions, which includes resolutions of the General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council and Trusteeship Council since 1946. Previously restricted to registered users only, access became available to the general public on December 31, 2004.

2. UNBISnet (http://unbisnet.un.org) Full-text resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council, going back to 1946, are available. The website is updated daily and provides access to full-text documents.

3. UN Libraries Central Gateway (http://www.un.org/unlibraries/unlibe/index.html) Links to all of the UN libraries and websites.

4. Libraries, Catalogues, & Publication Services of the UN System
(http://www.unsystem.org/en/libraries/index.html) Another tool to locate all kinds of UN documents, sales publications, and even non-UN documents is the UNCAPS. This resource provides a single point of access to library catalogs, indexes and abstract databases, library holdings, links to full-text resources, and archives. The user can search all of the databases or select individual ones to search, such as the FAO, UNBIS, WIPO, etc.

5. UN Audiovisual Library of International Law (http://www.un.org/law/avl) The Codification Division of the UN Office of Legal Affairs hosts a variety of multimedia resources for international law including audio lectures by scholars and practitioners, film and photos on UN legal instruments, and a Research Library consisting of treaties, research guides, and scholarly writings.

6. UN Yearbook (http://unyearbook.un.org/) Complete coverage of the Yearbook is available from 1946- current and is both browseable and searchable by year. Possibly one of the easiest ways to identify the past activities of the UN.

B. Commercial Online Services

The major subscription-based commercial online services have limited primary materials specific to UN research. Several databases of secondary sources are of interest to the researcher of UN materials.

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

1. [HeinOnline (HOL), United Nations Law Collection](www.heinonline.org) (www.heinonline.org) This resource allows searching of UN treaties by parties, citation, date, and subject area. Law review articles that cite a treaty and are part of HOL's extensive law journal collection are hyperlinked for quick access to the full text resource. The same linking feature is available for documents in other HOL collections such as the U.S. Statutes.   One feature not found anywhere else is the UNTS and LNTS treaty citators that allow UN and LN treaties to be found by their UNTS or LNTS citation. The UN Law Collection includes documents and decisions of other UN bodies: International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), International Court of Justice (ICJ), UN Commission on International Trade (UNCITRAL) and UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). UN Yearbooks, UN Serials, and the UN Codification and Progressive Development of International Law are also available.

2. [Lexis/Lexis Advance](http://www.lexis.com) (http://www.lexis.com) Lexis is in the process of migrating from the older Lexis platform to the newer Lexis Advance platform. As of this writing, not all materials have been transferred to the new platform, including all of the international materials. The older Lexis provides electronic access to International Legal Materials, published by the American Society of International Law. The file can be found in the INTLAW Library as the ILM file. Since ILM focuses on reproducing the texts of key documents of interest to international law, selected United Nations documents (e.g., Security Council resolutions) can frequently be found here.

Another Lexis file of considerable interest to United Nations topics is the Federal News Service, which has been ported to the new Lexis Advance platform. It is under the News facet. While the Federal News Service covers much more than United Nations developments, searches in it can be restricted by combining search terms with the search expression "section (united nations)." They focuses more on summaries of UN news rather than reproduction of documents. Lexis is a very good source for newspapers, wire services, and magazine articles.

3. [Westlaw/WestlawNext](http://www.westlaw.com) (http://www.westlaw.com) Westlaw is in the process of migrating from the older Westlaw platform to the newer WestlawNext platform. Although, as of this writing, the international materials have been ported to WestlawNext, they are not organized very well in the new location. They are listed under International Materials-->Administrative Materials-->Multi-National.

Westlaw provides in its ILM database an electronic version of International Legal Materials, published by the American Society of International Law. With its emphasis on reproducing the texts of selected documents of interest to the international law community, ILM includes the texts of selected United Nations documents of particular interest including Security Council Resolutions.

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

The full text of the International Court of Justice judgments, opinions, and orders, from their inception in 1947 to the present is available in Westlaw's INT-ICJ database. Westslaw also has databases containing documents and judgments from the international tribunals for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and Rwanda (ICTR). WestlawNext provides access to many newspapers, magazine articles and some foreign and international law (particularly UK, Australia, Canada, and the EU).

XIII. Current Developments Resources

As mentioned in Section II, Research Approaches, given the role of the UN in international activities there are numerous resources available to learn more about UN developments. A brief review of sources that monitor UN activities is provided below.

A. UN News Sources

1. UN Chronicle (http://unchronicle.un.org/) Good source for current information and also provides information on important resolutions and documents. A print version is also available.

2. UN News Centre (http://www.un.org/News/) Links are provided by the UN Department of Public Information to recent press releases, press briefings, daily highlights, and other news publications. This page offers a search mechanism, audio, and current news information. Available in English, French, Russian, Spanish, and Arabic.

3. UN Wire (http://www.smartbrief.com/un_wire/) The daily news summary covering the United Nations, global affairs and key international issues. UN Wire is a free service sponsored by the United Nations Foundation and its sister organization, the Better World Fund. An email alert service is available.

4. UNIC Latest Headlines (http://www.unicwash.org/LatestHeadlinesFromUN.aspx) The United Nations Information Center (UNIC) in Washington, DC, collects the latest headlines from the UN.

5. UN Pulse (http://un-library.tumblr.com/) Developed by the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library, this tumblr blog identifies selected documents, reports, and publications that have been recently issued, but the UN and others. Archives are available and may be searched. This service replaces the old *UN Pulse* blog, which itself replaced *Documents Alert*.

B. UN Reform

Strengthening the UN (http://www.un.org/en/strengtheningtheun) This website is a portal for the UN reform process.

This page was last updated September 27, 2013.

C. Special Topics - Terrorism

1. Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) (http://www.un.org/en/sc/ctc/) Mandated by Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), this web site provides access to the country reports from Member States pursuant to this resolution and many other relevant documents and information.

2. UN Action Against Terrorism (http://www.un.org/en/terrorism/) This page provides access to a variety of information and documents regarding UN actions against terrorism. Documents from the Security Council and General Assembly are available as well as conventions and declarations.   Also highlighted are the relevant resolutions, presidential statements, and verbatim records.

3. United Nations Treaty Collection - Conventions on Terrorism (http://treaties.un.org/Pages/DB.aspx?path=DB/studies/page2_en.xml&menu=MTDSG) This is a listing of all of the major terrorism treaties deposited with the Secretary-General of the UN, with links to their text in all official languages and to their current status.

D. Other Sources

1. ASIL Insights (http://asil.org/insights.cfm) Various topics of international law are featured in this electronic newsletter produced by the American Society of International Law.   Each issue focuses on an individual topic, provides some substantive analysis, and includes citation information to primary source documents and materials.

2. BBC World (http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world_radio_and_tv/) Provides news coverage of international events.   RSS feeds are also available.

3. Council on Foreign Relations (http://www.cfr.org/) This site features coverage of many current events, issues, and subject areas including international organizations, international law, peace and security, and terrorism.

4. International Law in Brief (ILIB) (http://www.asil.org/ilibmenu.cfm) Provided by the editorial staff of International Legal Materials, this electronic newsletter contains a collection of current primary documents (treaties, resolutions, and decisions), legislative, and other documents of interest. Archived issues are also available.