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International Law in the Age of Trumpism

This seminar critically examines the impact of U.S. President Donald J. Trump's administration on international law, focusing on the key legal developments that challenge established norms, institutions, and practices. Throughout the seminar, we will analyze the Trump administration's approach to international treaties, human rights, multilateralism, and global governance, with a particular emphasis on its long-term implications for the international legal order.

We will begin by contextualizing Trump's foreign policy within the broader framework of U.S. engagement with international law, considering the implications of the "America First" doctrine and its effects on international legal commitments. The seminar will explore case studies such as the U.S. withdrawal from international treaties, including the Paris Agreement, and its approach to international organizations, such as the United Nations and the World Health Organization. We will also consider the administration's relationship with international courts and tribunals, particularly its response to investigations by the International Criminal Court.

In our first focus section, we will examine the Trump administration's positions on international human rights law and international migration law. In our second focus section, we will focus on matters of war and peace.

By engaging with both theoretical and practical perspectives, this seminar aims to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and potential transformations in international law during and after the Trump administration.

The seminar will take place on 11-13 July 2025. A preliminary meeting will be held on 8 April 2025 from 11:10 to 12:40 am, after which students can choose their topics. This session will be held to clarify the instructions, methodology, format, and guidelines, providing comprehensive guidance on the expected outcomes and procedures. We will meet in a hybrid way, in room GER/007 and here: <https://tu-dresden.zoom-x.de/j/68780906215?pwd=G0EZh8cSOIUUa0mYdsUkKgG6TdIUZ.1>.

The seminar will be conducted in English.

Introduction: Trump and Unpredictability in International Relations

1. America First: The Erosion of International Law and How to Fight It
2. The Trump Administration's Approach to International Law and TWAIL: A Critical Examination of Global Legal Power Structures
3. Legal Implications of U.S. Withdrawal from International Treaties: Case Studies of the Paris Agreement and the World Health Organization
4. "I Am a Tariff Man": International Legal Analysis of the Trump Trade War
5. Trump and the Transatlantic Relationship: NATO, Security Commitments, and International Law
6. Undermining International Institutions: A Legal Assessment of the Trump Administration's Sanctions Against the International Criminal Court, Its Personnel, and Those Who Assist It

II. First Focus Section: Trump Administration's Attacks Against International Human Rights Law and International Refugee Law

7. Freedom of Expression under the Trump Administration: A Critical International Law Perspective
8. The Unwarranted Use of AI: Does Trump's Policy of Non-Regulation Undermine Human Rights?
9. The Trump Administration and Human Rights Violations: A Focus on LGBTIQ+ Rights
10. Trump's Migration Policies and Their Compliance with International Human Rights Law
11. The Principle of Non-Refoulement and U.S. Immigration Policies: The Case of Venezuelan Deportations to El Salvador
12. A Critical Race Theory Analysis of Trump's Refugee Admissions Policies
13. Dismantling of USAID and the Decline in International Humanitarian Aid: Consequences and the Global Disruption of Human Rights

III. Second Focus Section: Deconstructing Trump Administration's Approach to Sovereignty, Territoriality, and the Use of Force

15. Sovereignty, Territorial Claims, and International Law: Examining Trump's Remarks on Canada as the 51st U.S. State
16. The Trump Administration's Approach to Ukraine and the Rule of International Law: A Critical Examination
17. International Law and the Use of Force: Trump's Remarks on Greenland and the Panama Canal
18. Trump's Gaza Proposal: A Legal Analysis of Its International Legality
19. Take it or Leave it: Trump's Ultimatum Letter to Iran and the Use of Force in Nuclear Negotiations

IV. Outlook: Anticipating the Impact of U.S. Decisions – The Future of International Law in the Age of Trumpism

20. Lessons from Trump's Presidency: Can International Law Withstand Challenges from Powerful States?