



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM



International Economic Law  
Interest Group

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

# INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC LAW AND SECURITY INTERESTS CONFERENCE

Amsterdam Center for International Law

University of Amsterdam

14-15 November 2019

### The Topic

For decades, international economic law was deemed the “de-politicized” branch of international law. Rules-based dispute settlement, conducted by independent adjudicators, became the norm. Economic governance institutions were insulated from the decision-making fora of the United Nations, in which peace and security are overriding considerations. In trade and investment agreements, security exceptions were invoked sparingly, permitting governments and private entities to operate within a predictable legal framework. While this legalistic environment was never uncontested, key actors in the regime supported the assumption that, by and large, economic governance could be dissociated from broader geopolitical struggles.

This is no longer the case. The current United States administration is a vocal exponent of this shift, promoting the position that security concerns are no longer a mere exception to legal obligations, but now permeate the entirety of its economic relations. The European Union, whose supranational powers traditionally stop where security issues begin, has enacted a foreign investment screening framework aimed at protecting

security and public order. China's national security legislation has led governments to block Chinese firms from participating in the development of 5G mobile network infrastructure. All over the world, data protection and data localization legislation challenge the notion that the internet is free and without borders, securing to governments the technical ability as well as the legal entitlement to control the flow of information across borders in order to protect security interests.

These developments may strain the ability of international economic law to operate under its usual legalistic assumptions. The World Trade Organization, which for two decades seemed to stand above geopolitical struggles, is now required to deal with the security exception in various parallel disputes. At the same time, its legalized dispute settlement procedure is under threat. The international investment regime, which developed under a fragmented legal and institutional structure, is now the subject of multilateral reform efforts just as states around the world erect barriers to foreign investment to preserve their security interests. Under India's new model treaty, mere invocation of the security exception by a state would make a dispute non-justiciable.

The language of security is also expanding beyond traditional military security. In a world in which everyday objects are increasingly connected to the internet, how do WTO obligations and cybersecurity interact? Does a WTO Member's determination to protect food security prevail over commitments to eliminate trade-distorting agricultural subsidies? Does the search for energy security permit countries to restrict foreign investment? Can states prohibit entire fields of economic activity and nullify the value of investments to pursue global climate security?

### **The Conference**

To discuss these issues, the Amsterdam Center for International Law and the International Economic Law Interest Group of the European Society of International Law will host at the University of Amsterdam, on 14-15 November 2019, a Conference on *International Economic Law and Security Interests*. Besides a roundtable on the adjudication of the security exception, the Conference will feature panels on the different aspects of the topic.

### **Co-chairs**

Amsterdam Center for International Law | Stephan Schill and Geraldo Vidigal  
ESIL Interest Group International Economic Law | Peter-Tobias Stoll and Elisa Baroncini

## **Proposals**

We particularly welcome proposals dealing with the following topics:

### **A. International Law and Security**

1. International Adjudication and Security Issues
2. The Security Exception in International Treaties: History, Drafting, Interpretation
3. Securitization of Law, Legalization of Security

### **B. Security Interests in International Economic Law**

4. Security Concerns and the Multilateral Trading System
5. Security, Transnational Investment, and the International Investment Regime
6. Security Issues and Regional Economic Integration
7. Security and State-Owned Enterprises: Challenges to the Public-Private Divide

### **C. Emerging Security Issues**

8. Cybersecurity and Data Security
9. Security and the Design of State Measures: Subsidies and Government Procurement
10. Beyond Military Security: Economic Security, Food Security, Climate Security, Energy Security, Human Security

## **Submission of Proposals and Timeline**

Scholars, practitioners, adjudicators and officials are invited to submit proposals addressing issues falling within the scope of the Conference's theme. Proposals, including abstracts of no more than 500 words and the speaker's contact details and CV (including affiliation, relevant experience and publications), or inquiries regarding the conference, should be sent to [acil-fdr@uva.nl](mailto:acil-fdr@uva.nl). The deadline for the submission of proposals is 31 July 2019. Successful applicants will be informed by 20 August 2019. Limited funding is available to support travel expenses on a needs basis.

## **Papers and Publication**

The organizers consider publishing papers presented at the conference either as a special issue in a leading journal or as an edited volume published by a leading academic publisher. In the selection of proposals, preference will be given to those interested in publication. Willingness to submit a paper should be indicated in the response to this Call for Papers. Speakers whose paper proposals are selected should be prepared to submit draft papers (between 5,000 and 10,000 words, including footnotes) by 31 October 2019. All proposals and finalized papers must be written in English.