

THE PRIVATE SIDE OF TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD –
UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 2030 AND THE ROLE
OF PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW



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THE PRIVATE SIDE OF
TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD

UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030
and the Role of Private International Law

Edited by

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PREFACE

The seeds for this project were shared between the editors at the beautiful gardens of the Peace Palace in The Hague in the spring of 2018. The ‘decade of action’ was close and we were puzzled by the complete absence of any reference to the role of private international law in our emerging global society, not only in the UN 2030 Agenda but also in other specific soft law instruments adopted under the auspices of the UN, like the Global Compacts for Migration and for Refugees. How could we make visible the hidden private international law potential, its underutilised methodologies; how could we expose it, reconstruct it, transform it? Some things were clear. It needed collaborative scholarship, courageous, creative, bold. It needed perspectives from all corners of our world. It needed an inter-generational approach. Other issues were more fluid, particularly in terms of disciplinary boundaries, and much of what you will read in these chapters benefits from private and public international law dialogues, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary insights, and diverse conceptualisations of private international law.

A call for papers inviting scholars to examine the relationship between the SDGs and private international law – one for each Goal – found an enthusiastic response, resulting in over 130 proposals from around the world. Selecting the 17 papers was one of the most difficult parts of this journey. We decided in favour of breadth of perspectives and approaches across regions and across generations. Some contributors are private international law experts, others come from neighbouring fields. Some are researchers, others teachers, others law reformers. All found the project was challenging and at times daunting – not least because most of the work was undertaken during a global pandemic.

The chapters in the book demonstrate the role that private international law plays, and the role it could play, for each of the SDGs. Written by a diverse group of scholars, with different disciplinary backgrounds, different home countries, and different ideological and methodological inclinations, they create a multifaceted picture that is not coherent and therefore promising: taken together, the chapters show the multiple roles private international law can play for the SDGs.

We are most grateful to everyone who joined us on this collaborative journey. To the many scholars who engaged with the call, and to the committed authors who contributed to shape this scholarship through several iterations of their chapters. To the publishers, for their support throughout this process. Special thanks go to the project coordinator, Samuel Zeh, of the Hamburg Max Planck Institute.

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