

International Law as Law

While 2008 is destined to be a year shaped by political and foreign policy debates, the 2009 Annual Meeting of the American Society of International Law presents a time for us to step back and renew our focus on International Law as Law.

The international legal system is unique. Like domestic law, international law is created, implemented and enforced – but in a manner that is distinct, varied, and constantly evolving. Understanding how international law functions as law today requires an examination of the nature of the actors in the international legal system and the changing ways in which they interact with one another. These developments are challenging and transforming traditional visions of international law, sparking new and renewed theoretical and practical debates.

The 2009 Annual Meeting will present a broad range of perspectives on the creation, implementation, enforcement, and critique of international law today. We will examine the changing character of fundamental aspects of the international legal system, including the sources of international law, the role of states and their constituent branches of government in generating and implementing international obligations (including the role of domestic courts in enforcing treaty obligations), the law-making and law-executing functions of international organizations, and the role of non-state actors (including civil society, individuals and businesses) as creators, enforcers and subjects of international law. We will also examine developments in substantive law and innovations in techniques for achieving compliance.

The American Society of International Law, with its membership of leading scholars and practitioners of international law from around the world, is uniquely situated to provide an unparalleled exploration of these fundamental issues. We invite you to be a part of the 2009 Annual Meeting.