

PREFACE

Dear Reader,

The 2017 UCL Laws Postgraduate and Early Career Conference was held on 30-31 March 2017 in London. The theme of the Conference, ‘The Art of Balancing: The Role of Law in Reconciling Competing Interests’, sought to explore the challenges arising from the need to balance competing rights, obligations, and freedoms. The growing focus on States’ obligations to respect and protect human rights and freedoms has led to a shift in the manner States conduct themselves both in the domestic and international arenas. Yet, given the ever increasing extent of international regulation and concomitant demands on limited financial, technical and human resources, it is not at all clear how these competing rights and obligations ought to be balanced. These questions, and many others, were explored by some 25 practitioners and academics during the two-day event. Several of those works were selected to feature in this special issue.

The issue champions the continued development of the legal research at UCL Laws. Since the very first event in 2014, the annual UCL Laws Conferences have brought together postgraduate students and junior academics, and we are proud to continue this tradition and build on it in 2017. We also pride ourselves on being at the forefront of the shift towards open access in academia by finalizing, for the first since the beginning of the Conference tradition, a publication that offers a prism into the high quality legal research that was presented at UCL. In so doing we offer equitable scholarship for any reader, anywhere, with the aim of contributing, developing, and facilitating legal discussion under the auspices of UCL Laws.

This issue comprises original scholarship on a variety of topics of law and jurisprudence that is open to practitioners and academics alike. Each of the five papers assembled here offers an original contribution to a particular area of law that is both topical and engaging. The intentional diversity of the papers included in this issue demonstrates that the reconciliation of competing interests touches upon a range of legal fields and topics, which are dealt with differently by different legal systems and fields of law.

Before leaving you to enjoy the read, there are some final points to be made. First, we consider it noteworthy that the 2017 Conference stood for openness and equality, as evidenced by the gender, nationality, religion, and age of all of the participants,

commentators, editors, and authors involved. This diversity is likewise manifested in the contributions themselves, which touch upon a wide array of research methodologies, topics, and approaches. Further, we take particular pride in the fact that this is the first postgraduate publication at UCL Laws that is organized, led, and carried out by women.

Finally, it is important to look back over the last year and acknowledge the hard work of everyone who has contributed to this issue. We would like to thank the members of the Editorial Board of the Conference as well as to the UCL Laws PhD cohort, who have each devoted substantial time and energy to reviewing the significant amount of submissions to the 2017 Conference. Without their dedication, this issue could not have been produced. We are especially grateful to Stephanie Erian, who copy-edited the final product that is before you now. Warm thanks are due to Professor Richard Moorhead, the Vice Dean of Research, and to Dr Robyn Parker. Dr Parker has provided invaluable support to the 2017 Conference. Her guidance will be missed. We are also very grateful to all the participants of the 2017 Conference, who presented quality legal research and engaged in fruitful discussions. Last, but not least, this issue could not have taken shape without the steadfast financial, academic, and administrative support of the UCL Faculty of Laws.

We hope that you enjoy the read.

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Editors