Relative International Legal Personality of Non-State Actors

William Thomas Worster
INTRODUCTION

Functionalist analysis is now the controlling approach for assessing which non-state actors enjoy limited international legal personality, and thus whether they have the capacity for international rights and obligations. While on the one hand, conservative authorities might insist that the only true subjects of international law are states, on the other hand, there is considerable authority supporting the notion that non-state


actors are international legal persons. For legal clarity and certainty, international law needs to distinguish those entities that are legal persons from those that are not (a binary approach) and identify which entities are objective persons *erga omnes*. It also needs to establish which rights, duties, and obligations those entities hold on the international plane. Although some schools of thought suggest that once an entity is identified as a legal person, it enjoys that personality in an objective, *erga omnes* manner, actual practice is more equivocal, and many non-state actors exist as quasi-persons or hybrid entities that blur the distinctions. These entities are considered international legal persons for some purposes but not others, or only in relation to certain actors but not others. Thus, within the category of non-state actors, a challenge of personality fragmentation exists: identifying which actors are international legal persons vis-à-vis existing legal persons and for which purposes they can be treated as international legal persons. This article will examine the variable and disaggregated international legal personality of non-state actors with the goal of discovering how international legal personality is currently understood.

A survey of various entities and quasi-persons suggests that the overriding consideration in the international community and legal system is function. In the field of international organizations, the functional approach is already well-known for questions concerning the powers of organizations. This article will identify the international practice of treating non-state actors as international legal persons and will argue that non-state entities have personality in the international legal system to the degree to which they function on the international legal plane. Notwithstanding Ian Brownlie’s submissions on the matter, this consideration is not truly circular. The existing legal persons assess the actions (or proposed actions) of certain entities and consider the need or benefit of engaging with those entities as international legal persons rather than as domestic legal persons or unincorporated entities. From this assessment, international rights and duties are assigned. This process is reminiscent of the

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International Court of Justice’s (ICJ) approach in the Reparations case, which assessed the needs of the international community and the nature of the entity’s functions to determine whether the United Nations had international legal personality.\textsuperscript{4} For example, once the international community decided that it needed the United Nations to be an international legal person, the entity acquired personality for the designated functions in the Charter of the United Nations (“U.N. Charter”) and in its designated relationships with its Member States. Because this assessment is necessarily dependent on the entities’ functions and exists within a specified relationship, international legal personality for non-state actors is therefore relative and subjective.

This article will first discuss the nature of international legal personality in Part I before exploring the legal personality of various other non-state actors in the following sections. This article will consider international organizations, “peoples” (for purposes of self-determination), National Liberation Movements (NLMs), indigenous peoples, insurgents, belligerents, combatants, private corporations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), religious organizations, and individuals. Throughout this survey, the article will assess each actor and conclude whether it is considered or treated as if it were an international legal person on a functional basis.

\section*{I. International Legal Personality}

It is well accepted in legal doctrine that some non-state entities enjoy rights, duties, and international legal personality under international law.\textsuperscript{5} Certainly, these entities are different

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\textsuperscript{5} See Jan Klabbers, \textit{(I Can’t Get No) Recognition: Subjects Doctrine and the Emergence of Non-State Actors}, in \textit{NORDIC COSMOPOLITANISM: ESSAYS IN INTERNATIONAL LAW FOR MARTTI KOSENNIEMI 369} (Jarna Petman & Jan Klabbers eds., 2003); G. Schwarzenberger, \textit{A Manual of International Law} 48 (1st ed. 1947). Hersch Lauterpacht notes:
\end{footnotesize}
from states, but it is important to assess the kind of personality they enjoy to understand their variable legal nature. The difficulty is that, aside from states, there is no clear law designating international legal personality. Most authorities agree that an international legal person is an entity with a certain capacity for international rights and obligations. Some authorities take a less demanding approach to defining capacity, looking merely for capacity to enjoy international rights and obligations, whereas

International practice shows that persons and bodies other than states are often made subjects of international rights and duties, that such developments are not inconsistent with the structure of international law and that in each particular case the question whether a person or a body is a subject of international law must be answered in a pragmatic manner by reference to actual experience and to the reason of the law as distinguished from the preconceived notion as to who can be the subjects of international law.

**Hersch Lauterpacht**, *The Subjects of the Law of Nations*, in *1 International Law: Being the Collected Papers of Hersch Lauterpacht* 494 (1970); *see also* W. E. Hall, *A Treatise on International Law* 17 (8th ed. 1924) (“[T]o a limited extent . . . it [international law] may also govern the relations of certain communities of analogous character.”); T. J. Lawrence, *The Principles of International Law* 69 (7th ed. 1923) (stating that subjects of international law include “those other political bodies which, though lacking many of the attributes of sovereign states, possess some to such an extent as to make them real, but imperfect, international persons”).


9. *See* Lauterpacht, *supra* note 5; *see also* Award on the Merits in Dispute Between Texaco Overseas Petroleum Company/California Asiatic Oil Company and the Government of the Libyan Arab Republic, 17 I.L.M. 1, ¶ 66 (1978)
others are more demanding, requiring specific capacities, such as the capacity to conclude international agreements, conduct diplomatic relations (active and passive legation), and bring international claims.\textsuperscript{10} To some degree, this debate hinges on the form of participation of the actor on the international plane, both in creating and applying violations of the law and also in identifying violations of the law.\textsuperscript{11} This approach also "functionalizes" personality, moving away from a status from which rights and duties flow and toward a status that is the result of actions. Yet, these distinctions between actors that fully participate and those that do not are increasingly less relevant as new actors participate in the law in partial ways.\textsuperscript{12} Further, enforcement of the law is diffuse and often noncompulsory.\textsuperscript{13} International law


\textsuperscript{11} See generally Jan Klabbers, The Concept of Legal Personality, 11 Ius Gentium 35 (2005) (discussing the distinction between subject and person).

\textsuperscript{12} See Reparation for Injuries Suffered in Service of the United Nations, 1949 I.C.J. at 178 ("The subjects of law in any legal system are not necessarily identical in their nature or in the extent of their rights, and their nature depends upon the needs of the community.").

\textsuperscript{13} See Lauterpacht, supra note 5, at 286–87. Lauterpacht discusses the difficulty and lack of capacity to enforce international law, without that problem being necessarily fatal to the existence of a substantive obligation, He notes:

\begin{quote}
It is useful not to exaggerate the importance of what is, in the last resort, a procedural rule. The faculty to enforce rights is not identical with the quality of a subject of law or of a beneficiary of its provisions. A person may be in possession of a plenitude of rights without at the same time being able to enforce them in his own name. This is a matter of procedural capacity. Infants and lunatics have rights; they are subjects of law. This is so although their procedural capacity is reduced to a minimum.
\end{quote}

\textit{Id.}
has struggled to integrate these subjective and relative international actors into the international legal system, and, following these capacity considerations, the emerging practice is to view the entities functionally.

The debate over the law of recognition, while contentious in the case of states, is largely uncontroversial for non-state actors. States, as “original” (or perhaps “natural” in a sense) legal persons, retain significant discretion to recognize non-state actors and, more fundamentally, serve as gatekeepers to the international legal order. Emerging participants in international law do not participate by inherent right, as states do, but rather as a result of states admitting them. Thus, recognition theory for non-states is analogous to the constitutive theory of state recognition. For example, it is not entirely clear whether the limitations on nonrecognition for purported states, such as jus cogens


15. See Legality of the Use by a State of Nuclear Weapons in Armed Conflict, 1996 I.C.J. ¶ 25. In its advisory opinion, the ICJ distinguished international organizations as derived legal persons from states, which are original legal persons. The ICJ reasoned:

[International organizations are subjects of international law which do not, unlike States, possess a general competence. International organizations . . . are invested by the States which create them with powers, the limits of which are a function of the common interests whose promotion those States entrust to them.]

Id.

violations\textsuperscript{17} or \textit{ex injuria jus non oritur} considerations,\textsuperscript{18} apply to
the constitution of non-state entities.\textsuperscript{19} Perhaps this lack of clarity results from the
dearth of instances where non-state practices were considered inherent violations of international
law. Generally, where an international organization violates international law, it is held responsible under international law, and
such action of the organization does not affect the lawfulness of the organization’s creation.\textsuperscript{20} One can imagine a situation, how-
ever, where an organization or other non-state actor is created

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{17} See Accordance with International Law of the Unilateral Declaration of
\textit{Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros Project (Hung./Slovak.)}, Judgment, 1997 I.C.J. Rep. 7 (Sept. 25); East Timor (Port. v. Austl.), Judgment, 1995 I.C.J. Rep. 90, ¶¶ 28–32 (June 30); Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied
published in 1947); \textit{Int’l Law Comm’n, Articles on State Responsibility with
Doc A/56/10 (2001); S. Talmon, \textit{The Duty Not to “Recognize as Lawful” a Situation
Created by the Illegal Use of Force or Other Serious Breaches of a Jus Cogens Obligation: An Obligation Without Real Substance?}, in \textit{The
Fundamental Rules of the International Legal Order: Jus Cogens and Obligations Erga Omnes Obligations} (Christian Tomuschat & Jean-Marc
Thouvenin eds., 2006); Martin Dawidowicz, \textit{The Obligation of Non-Recognition of an Unlawful Situation, in The Law of International Responsibility} 677,
683 (James Crawford, Alain Pellet, & Simon Olleson eds., 2010).
\item \textsuperscript{18} See Military and Paramilitary Activities in and Against Nicaragua
(Nicar. v. U.S.), Judgment, 1986 I.C.J. Rep. 14, ¶ 270 (June 27); United States
Diplomatic and Consular Staff in Tehran (U.S. v. Iran), Judgment 1980 I.C.J.
Rep. 3, ¶¶ 53–55, ¶¶ 62–63 (May 24); Diversion of Water from Meuse (Neth. v.
Belg.), Judgment, 1937 P.C.I.J. (ser. A/B) No. 70 (June 28). See generally
No. 53, at 76 (Apr. 5) (dissenting opinion by Anzilotti, J.); Factory at Chorzów
(Ger. v. Pol.), 1927 P.C.I.J. (ser. A) No. 9, at 31 (July 26); Mavrommatis Jeru-
usalem Concessions (Gr. Brit. v. U.K.), Judgment, 1925 P.C.I.J. (ser. A) No. 5, ¶
50 (Mar. 26); S.C. Res. 217, ¶ 3 (Nov. 20, 1965).
\item \textsuperscript{19} Of course, the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (VCLT)
suggests that it would (at least insofar as entities that are constituted by treaty).
See Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties arts. 53, 64, May 23, 1969, 1155
U.N.T.S. 331 [hereinafter VCLT]; see also Int’l Law Comm’n, Draft Articles on
the Responsibility of International Organizations, ¶ 87, U.N. Doc A/66/10
(2011). See generally Joined Cases C-402/05 P & C-415/05 P, Kadi & Al
6351 (using \textit{jus cogens} as a means for interpreting the scope of the act, and, not
as a basis for invalidity).
\item \textsuperscript{20} See generally Int’l Law Comm’n, \textit{supra} note 19.
\end{enumerate}
for the express purpose of violating international law, perhaps even *jus cogens* norms. From a purely contractual-treaty perspective, such an act would oblige all other international legal persons to refuse to recognize the new person, but from an organic or constitutional perspective, we might find that the new person exists notwithstanding *ex injuria*, and its acts that contravene international law impose responsibility. Nonrecognition of a state in such a situation would be obligatory; but, what we see is that states continue to engage with an entity, such as a *de facto*, non-state authority not qualifying as a state, which perhaps may even contribute to the formation of international law, notwithstanding the *ex injuria* concerns, merely because the non-state entity is an entity capable of bearing certain basic international obligations. For these reasons, we do not usually draw close parallels between the laws on state recognition, or the obligation of nonrecognition, and the limited, relative, and functional recognition of other international legal persons.

**II. INTERNATIONAL LEGAL PERSONALITY OF VARIOUS NON-STATE ACTORS**

The article will now discuss the various non-state actors with claims to a certain degree of international legal personality and will identify where and how functional assessments are being made. This Part will also determine the resulting international rights and obligations of these non-state actors. At the outset, we will assess international organizations as non-state actors, which are viewed by the international community as having international legal personality on a functional basis. The article will then consider various other non-state actors and will determine, in order from least controversial to most controversial, the personality of these non-state actors, but will conclude for each

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21. *See* Waite & Kennedy v. Germany, Eur. Ct. H.R. 1991-I (holding that a state may not pursue unlawful ends by incorporating an international organization); Int’l Law Comm’n, *supra* note 19, art. 28 (detailing that a state member of an international organization could be held responsible for providing a competence to the organization that would have breached international law if the state committed it).

actor that personality is consistently assessed on a functional basis.

A. International Organizations

It is widely understood that international organizations enjoy personality, but organizations are often understood to enjoy personality only in relation to the states that create them. This subjective personality can be contrasted to cases where the organization is understood to have personality objectively in its relations with all states in the world, whether members or not, and whether recognized or not. Although the ICJ held in Reparations that the United Nations enjoyed objective personality vis-à-vis a state that was not a member, objective personality is not the dominant practice regarding the personality of other international organizations. This does not mean that nonmembers cannot exercise the choice to recognize the personality of the international organization under special law, act, or agreement. It simply means that international law does not require nonmembers to respect the personality of an international organization of which they are not a member. Thus, the organization


24. See id. at 187–88 (concluding that the United Nations has the capacity to sue a Member State on behalf of an injured agent, and holding that the United Nations, acting as an organization, may pursue an international claim against a state government to obtain reparations for damage suffered); JAMES CRAWFORD, THE CREATION OF STATES IN INTERNATIONAL LAW 30 (2d ed. 2006) (distinguishing between entities with objective legal personality, which exists “wherever the rights and obligations of an entity are conferred by general international law,” and those cases where an entity is created “by particular States for special purposes,” which binds only those states).


can operate and is capable of holding rights and obligations under international law only in its relations with the states that create or interact with it. While this relative personality might seem to create potentially awkward situations, most states will take a pragmatic view and will engage with the organization as an international legal person. When they do not, the relative links of rights and duties are not so different from other managed fragmented regimes, such as the law on reservations to multilateral treaties.

In addition, there are some cases where the very members of the organization might differ over whether to treat the entity as an international organization with international personality. There are various entities that are set up and function in fact, for example, by undertaking mundane tasks, such as contracting for office space, yet are not acknowledged to be international organizations, even by their own members. While it seems strange that a state might refuse to acknowledge the personality of an organization of which it is a member, these situations do occur. For example, entities such as the Organization for Security and

organization acquires legal personality under the municipal law of the contracting States”); Cour d’appel [CA] [regional court of appeal] Paris, Jan. 13, 1993, 1993 JDI 353 (Fr.) (stating that, without agreement, a non-Member State is under no obligation to grant immunity to a foreign international organization).

27. See Andrew Clapham, Human Rights Obligations of Non-State Actors in Conflict Situations 492 (2006); Brownlie, supra note 3, at 58. Arangio-Ruiz observes that personality does not arise through formality, but through actual interaction with states.

In their case, too, international legal personality does not flow from recognition by other subjects of international law or from the simple recognition of that international personality by the member states in the establishing treaty. It is only when the formal establishment of the IGO [intergovernmental organization] is followed by its effective possibility to act independently as a distinct subject that international legal personality actually ensues.

Gaetano Arangio-Ruiz, The United Nations Declaration on Friendly Relations and the System of the Sources of International Law 246 (1979); see also Agreement for the Establishment of the Joint Vienna Institute, Aug. 19, 1994, 2029 U.N.T.S. 391 (evidencing a treaty between purely international organizations).

Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Commonwealth, and even the European Union defy our normal understandings of international organizations in their relations with their Member States. It is also unclear whether treaty regimes that create treaty organs, such as Conferences of States Parties and treaty secretariats, are international organizations or not. With respect to treaty regimes, potential disagreement exists between parties, where some members might treat them as a de facto organizations and others might not. In the past, even constituent


The Secretariat was established by Commonwealth Heads of Government as a visible symbol of co-operation between them, to promote consultation and exchange of opinions among member governments and, in furtherance of the 1991 Harare Commonwealth Declaration and related instruments of the association, to provide policy advice and assistance in support of the Commonwealth’s fundamental political values, sustainable development and the promotion of international consensus.

Id.


Key U.S. Redlines in the Negotiations: There will be no mandate for an international body to enforce an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

Parameters: No new international organization should be created to enforce an ATT. Exports will ultimately be a national decision.
organs of international organizations have acted independently of their organization on the international plane from time to time, a practice that has been supported by certain members of the organization and which challenges our understanding of their organizational capacity. Therefore, it is possible for organizations to be subjective legal persons even in relation to their members.

More important for this article, certain entities can also acquire relative personality as an international organization by having functional relative personality (i.e., whether the entity

With Arms Trade Treaty, First Conference of States Parties, Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) Questionnaire for Candidate Cities, ATT Doc. No. ATT/CSP1/2015/INF.1 (Aug. 12, 2015) (answers of Trinidad and Tobago)(concluding the opposite of the United States, understanding the ATT treaty regime to be an international organization)

4. By virtue of its establishment, the Secretariat assumed certain attributes of an international organisation established by treaty such as independence; the possession of a legal personality; and the enjoyment of privileges and immunities. The Secretariat is an entity created by States Parties to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities under the Treaty.

5. Therefore, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago envisages the establishment of an independent organisation that has the competence to contract for services with any other organisation such as, inter alia, United Nations Organisations, regional and international government organisations, universities, private sector entities and other suppliers.

50. Consistent with the obligations it has assumed under the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, in a Headquarters Agreement to be negotiated with the ATT Secretariat, will facilitate the extension of diplomatic-type privileges and immunities to specified senior officials of the Organization. It should be noted that similar privileges and immunities have been extended to other international organisations operating in Trinidad and Tobago.

Id.

34. See, e.g., Letter from the President of the International Court of Justice to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (June 26, 1946), http://www.icj-cij.org/documents/?p1=4&p2=5&p3=3.
acts as if it is an international organization in its relations with one or more of its members). This perspective even pertains to the states that are members of the international organization. In contrast to the subjective approach, the functional approach considers how the entity is treated and the role it fills to evaluate whether it has relative personality. If the entity functions as if it were an international organization, then it may be legally classified as such. It is well recognized that, while personality can be explicitly granted in an international organization’s constitutive instrument, it need not be, and personality might be implicit in the functions of the organization. After all, the United Nations has international personality, even though the U.N. Charter does not make this status explicit. Understanding that personality may be implicit, we then consider, to no avail, whether there is a universal definition of an international organization that can be applied objectively. Notwithstanding the


36. See WHITE, supra note 10.


38. See id. at 178.

39. This conclusion is also supported by the lack of a universal definition of “international organization.” See, e.g., HENRY G. SCHERMERS & NIELS M. BLOKKER, INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL LAW: UNITY WITHIN DIVERSITY (4th ed. 2003); C. F. AMERASINGHE, PRINCIPLES OF THE INSTITUTIONAL LAW OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (2d ed. 2005); Maurice Mendelson, The Definition of ‘International Organization’ in the International Law Commission’s
lack of a specific definition, the essential test for whether an entity is an international organization is if there is a grant of capacities with meaningful independence of action from control by the Member States.\textsuperscript{40} In each case, we must determine whether the entity in question is recognized as, or treated as having, an international personality right or rights. Importantly, this exercise is case-specific, depending on the entity at issue,\textsuperscript{41} and the personality that results is limited to the functional right acknowledged.\textsuperscript{42} Thus, under the functional approach, one can understand an entity as having international legal personality to the extent necessary to execute its tasks.

The particular functions we assess in determining whether a non-state actor has personality are not entirely clear, but there are some likely candidates. Functions might include treaty-making power,\textsuperscript{43} but could also include mundane tasks. For example, an entity that is recognized by agreement and has the ability to purchase office goods and perform other tasks requiring personality must have personality under some legal order, even though it is not incorporated under domestic law. Lacking compliance with the domestic legal order, we can only presume that the entity has international legal personality, despite the only consideration being, in this case, the bulk purchase of office paper. Furthermore, such a functional person will not have the full bundle

\textit{Current Project on the Responsibility of International Organizations, in \textit{International Responsibility Today: Essays in Memory of Oscar Schachter} 371, 372 (Maurizio Ragazzi ed., 2005). The definition of “international organization” continues to be subject of some debate, but most commentators agree at least that there must be a legal person created under international law with some degree of meaningful independent capacity from its members.}

\textsuperscript{40} See, e.g., Reparation for Injuries Suffered in Service of the United Nations, 1949 I.C.J. at 178–79.


\textsuperscript{42} See Reparation for Injuries Suffered in Service of the United Nations, 1949 I.C.J. at 179; Portmann, \textit{supra} note 1, at 106; Malcolm Shaw, \textit{International Law} 196 (6th ed. 2008) (“Personality is a relative phenomenon varying with the circumstances.”); Brownlie, \textit{supra} note 3, at 67 (“The number of entities with personality for particular purposes is considerable.”).

of international rights and abilities associated with the international legal personality of states because it is a limited and functional entity only. For example, the traditional view states that, although international organizations and other non-state actors can enter into international agreements, they cannot contribute to the formation of customary international law. Specifically, the acts of international organizations and decisions of international tribunals do not qualify as constitutive state practice. It is unclear, however, why an organization can create treaty obligations but not contribute to customary obligations.

B. Self-Determination Peoples, National Liberation Movements, and Indigenous Peoples

In addition to international organizations, a variety of other international actors can bear limited, relative, and functional international personality. This article will now turn to these more controversial actors, beginning with groups that have a natural connection to the territory in which they live and enjoy limited, relative international personality on that basis. At the outset, it might be helpful to recall that there is no reason, a priori, why there cannot be other international legal persons other than states and international organizations. In principle, it is simply a choice of the international community which actors are considered international legal persons.


First, international law recognizes “peoples” as holders of the right of self-determination and provides a right to receive support in seeking independence from domination, which may even amount to a right to sovereignty. If the test to be an international legal person is some functional vesting of an international right, then holding the right to self-determination may qualify. An entity with some international rights can be considered an international legal person insofar as it holds those rights.

National Liberation Movements are also accorded certain international rights and duties and, thus, a degree of personality as a kind of agent of the territory they purport to liberate. For purposes of self-determination, a “people” holds this right, and it is not clear that an NLM holds this right. It might be that an NLM seeks to represent the people and thus acts like an agent of the people. NLMs are capable of issuing binding unilateral statements with respect to their struggle with decolonization.


48. See International Status of Southwest Africa, Advisory Opinion, 1950 I.C.J. Rep. 128, 150 (July 11) (separate opinion by McNair, J.) (articulating that sovereignty is “in abeyance” and will “revive and vest in the new State”); PHILIP ALLOTT, EUOMIA: NEW ORDER FOR A NEW WORLD 329–30 (1990); Gerry Simpson, The Diffusion of Sovereignty: Self-Determination in the Post-Colonial Age, 32 STAN. J. INT’L L. 255, 285 (1996) (“International law can accommodate the various claims of the nation, the democratic polity, the indigenous group, the region, and the colony only when it appreciates the provisional and incomplete nature of all exercises of self-determination.”).


especially statements pledging to be bound by the Geneva Conventions.\textsuperscript{51} For example, while sometimes spoken of as a Memorandum of Understanding, the ICJ appeared to consider the Oslo Accords a binding legal instrument.\textsuperscript{52}

The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) is a clear example of an NLM that attained international legal personality.\textsuperscript{53} Initially a project under significant guidance by Egypt, the PLO quickly shifted to independent operation under Yasser Arafat’s Fatah organization.\textsuperscript{54} By 1969, the PLO acquired governance and \textit{de facto} sovereignty over Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon under the Cairo Agreement.\textsuperscript{55} Five years later, the Arab League acknowledged the PLO as the sole international representative of the Palestinian people, which became a U.N. observer shortly thereafter.\textsuperscript{56} In 1989, the PLO declared independence\textsuperscript{57} and entered into the Oslo Accords with Israel in 1993.\textsuperscript{58} The PLO has since exercised rights of consent and the use of


\textsuperscript{52} See \textit{Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory}, 2004 \textsc{I.C.J.} at 138.

\textsuperscript{53} See \textit{Applicability of the Obligation to Arbitrate Under Section 21 of the United Nations Headquarters Agreement of 26 June 1947}, \textit{Advisory Opinion}, 1988 \textsc{I.C.J.} Rep. 12 (Apr. 26); \textsc{Shaw, supra} note 42, at 247–48 (“While Palestinian statehood has clearly not been accepted by the international community, the Palestinian Authority can be regarded as possessing some form of limited international personality. Such personality, however, derives from the agreements between Israel and the PLO and exists separately from the personality of the PLO as an NLM, which relies upon the recognition of third parties.”); \textit{see also} \textsc{G.A. Res. 2248 (S-V)} (May 19, 1967) (creating the Council for Namibia, a subsidiary organ of the U.N. General Assembly that served as the Administering Authority of the Trust Territory).

\textsuperscript{54} See \textsc{Helena Cobban, The Palestinian Liberation Organization: People, Power and Politics} 43 (1984).

\textsuperscript{55} \textit{See id.}

\textsuperscript{56} \textsc{See G.A. Res. 3237, supra} note 50.


\textsuperscript{58} \textit{Declaration of Principles on Interim Self Government Arrangements, Isr.-P.L.O., Sept. 13, 1993, 32 I.L.M. 1525.}
armed force. In addition, it issued commitments with respect to human rights law and has been held to be bound to human rights law as a state-like entity.

Nonetheless, even though an entity has the capacity to enter into international agreements does not necessarily mean it can also participate in the creation of customary international law. Here, just as with international organizations, states continue to monopolize the field. Yet, the United Nations recently granted the PLO the right to exercise quasi-diplomatic protection over several thousand Palestinian claimants before the U.N. Compensation Commission simply because of the pragmatic need for an authority to represent them. This practice was recognized, despite the fact that, formally, only states can assert these claims. Thus, an NLM can exercise partial international rights and create international law through only one of the classic sources of international law in the Statute of the International Court of Justice ("ICJ Statute"): treaty law.

In addition to “peoples” (for purposes of self-determination) and NLMs, there is also the category of indigenous peoples. This group is not the same as the “people” for self-determination, which would normally include all of the people of a state. This group is usually a minority or other distinctive collection of individuals within a state that has a particular, historic connection to the territory. While they are not NLMs, indigenous peoples still hold some international rights, albeit in a more limited

59. See COBBAN, supra note 54, at 43.
61. See id. ¶ 45.
63. This conclusion excludes NLMs or other peoples’ groups that also qualify as insurgents or belligerents. In these latter categories, they might have a stronger argument that their practice should be considered as contributing to customary international law, at least in the field of international humanitarian law.
65. See id.
The ICJ, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, and several states (at least historically) provide that indigenous peoples can be party to international agreements.


States need to do more to honour and strengthen their treaties with indigenous peoples, no matter how long ago they were signed. . . . “Even when signed or otherwise agreed more than a century ago, many treaties remain the cornerstone for the protection of . . . human rights today. . . . The honouring of treaties has in many cases been described as a sacred undertaking requiring good faith by each party for their proper enforcement. . . . I encourage States to take concrete steps to honour and strengthen the treaties they have concluded with indigenous peoples and to cooperate with them in implementing new agreements or other constructive arrangements through transparent, inclusive and participatory negotiations. . . .”

Id.

68. See Western Sahara, 1975 I.C.J. ¶¶ 75–84. In addition, states that supported the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples implicitly expressed in opinio juris that agreements with indigenous peoples could, in some
The ICJ, however, refuses to hold that these entities are states, leading to the conclusion that these collective non-state actors are a special case of legal person and at least have sufficient personality for certain agreements. For example, Article 3 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (VCLT) did not exclude the treaty-making capacity for non-state entities and, by doing so, perhaps, implicitly confirmed it. But, there continues to be a lack of a clear definition of indigenous people as a non-state entity. Each situation of indigenous people is treated on a case-by-case basis, with differing arrangements and differing outcomes following decolonialization, which resulted in inconsistent practice. Some of these groups were initially regarded as having international capacity but were later conquered and
their separate personality extinguished. Some actually maintained their international capacity in dormancy during colonialism only to reassert it following decolonialization, while others attempted to assert their personality following decolonialization only then to lose it definitively. Some entities were able to maintain sovereign capacity for a considerable period before becoming absorbed by stronger neighbors. Some maintained a


73. See, e.g., Terms of a Maritime Truce for Ten Years Between Great Britain and the Chiefs of the Arabian Coast, June 1, 1843, 95 Consol. T.S. 53; Treaty Between Great Britain and Mwanga, King of Uganda (Africa), Aug. 27, 1894, 179 Consol. T.S. 374.


75. See, e.g., Treaty Between Great Britain and the Maharajah of Sikkim, Mar. 28, 1861, 123 Consol. T.S. 266; Agreement Between Great Britain and the Sandwich Islands, July 31, 1843, 95 Consol. T.S. 205; Convention Between Hawaii and Portugal for the Provisional Regulation of Relations of Amity and
modified and domesticated version of their capacity with lingering, though limited, capacity, whereas others maintained only a pretense to international capacity and today have merely a symbolic status (usually in the form of a continuing traditional “ruler”). Yet, this practice is consistent in that each case was approached functionally. Each situation was assessed as a unique practical case, largely led by concerns over how the territory was functionally operating at the time rather than as a class of cases, and, in this process, the states reached functional, pragmatic solutions.

One difficulty with determining personality in indigenous groups lies in assessing whether that personality is “original” or “derived.” States are understood to be original persons because they are not created by other international legal persons. Their existence is primarily a question of fact, resulting from historical processes. International organizations, on the other hand, are created by states, and derive their personality and powers from the states creating them. But, “peoples,” NLMs, and indigenous peoples are not classified as original or derived persons. In one sense, they are as “original” as states. Clearly, they are not created in fact by states but are instead constituted through their


own original historical process. Yet, they need recognition as such in order to access those international rights, and those rights are arguably created by states. The prevailing view is that an indigenous group or NLM must be recognized as such in order to operate as a legal person. For this reason, the classic constitutive-declaratory theory argument on statehood seems to apply by analogy. Upon becoming a qualifying group, however, indigenous people do not accrue the full range of international rights comparable to a state but rather a limited range of rights connected to the function of being an indigenous group. They also do not accrue the rights of self-determination enjoyed by that distinct grouping. Thus, we find again that these kinds of entities can exist as relative, functional persons.

C. Non-State Groups Participating in Armed Conflict

Sometimes overlapping with decolonization and NLMs, but at other times not linked to those phenomena, are insurgents, belligerents, and combatants. These entities all have some degree of effective control of territory through military means and are acknowledged as persons with whom the international community can with engage on the international plane. These entities are highly organized (e.g., they might even adopt internal “legislation”) and often resemble states. States may engage with them, but, for reasons such as mandatory ex injuria nonrecognition, they cannot acquire the legal rights that come with full personality or statehood recognition.

78. SHAW, supra note 42, at 247–48 (“[P]ersonality . . . as an NLM . . . relies upon the recognition of third parties.”).
79. See generally Worster, supra note 16.

Still, D[e] F[acto] R[egimes] [(DFRs)] are not accorded full I[nternational] L[egal] P[ersonality]. Governments seem to find it necessary to express their disapproval of these regimes by not (fully) including them in international decision-making. Such policies will continue to prevent DFRs from being fully operational international actors, blocking meaningful cooperation with them and making it impossible to expect their full adherence to international norms.
International legal doctrine recognizes that insurgents and belligerents in armed conflict directly bear rights and duties under international law. The most important duties are derived from international humanitarian law, but they may also be sourced in human rights law. Some authorities maintain a distinction that only states can be liable under human rights law.


The recognition of a new state, that is, the acceptance by members of the family of nations of a new member, an international person, is regarded by Governments as a political question, although the act of recognition should of course be grounded on a sound legal basis. . . . This of course is not a case of the recognition of an international person. So it seems to me that the recognition of a state of belligerency, so-called, on the part of governments involves very largely political considerations.

Oriental Navigation Co., 4 R.I.A.A. at 341, 346; see also Doe v. Islamic Salvation Front, 993 F. Supp. 3, 8 (D.D.C. 1998); Klinghoffer v. S.N.C. Achille Lauro Ed Altri-Gestione, 937 F.2d 44, 49 (2d Cir. 1991); SHAW, supra note 42, at 219–20, 1040–41 (observing that the concepts of insurgency and belligerency are not easily distinguishable); Cassese, supra note 50, at 124–26, 140–142; Brownlie, supra note 3, at 63 (noting that insurgents and belligerents are both considered subjects entitled to enter into legal relations on the international plane); STEPHEN C. NEFF, THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF NEUTRALS: A GENERAL HISTORY 200 (2000); BRIERLY, supra note 66, at 133–35.

whereas both states and armed groups can be liable under international humanitarian law. Thus, non-state groups cannot formally “violate” human rights but instead can simply commit “abuses.” In seeking to place responsibility, some authorities would exempt the non-state group from collective responsibility and instead would assign responsibility to another state or state-like actor that should have protected the population from mistreatment. The drive to extend the application of human rights law, however, is functional—to have the ability to document and identify mistreatment committed by non-state actors, and not just states. One technique for applying human rights law in-

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FORCES IN THE FIELD 51–52 (1952); LIESBETH ZEGVELD, ACCOUNTABILITY OF ARMED OPPOSITION GROUPS IN INTERNATIONAL LAW 48 (2002).

85. See, e.g., Human Rights Council Res. S-22/1, ¶ 1, U.N. Doc. A/HRC/RES/2-22/I (Sept. 1, 2014). The Human Rights Council condemned in the strongest possible terms the systematic violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law resulting from the terrorist acts committed by the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and associated groups that took place since 10 June 2014 in several provinces of Iraq, which may amounted to war crimes and crimes against humanity, and strongly condemned in particular all violence against persons based on their religious or ethnic affiliation, as well as violence against women and children.


86. See H.R.C. Rep. Pursuant to Res. S-21/1, supra note 60, ¶ 50. The commission was of the view that inmates were transferred out of the prison and summarily executed with the apparent knowledge of the local authorities in Gaza, in violation of their obligation to protect the right to life and security of those in their custody. These extrajudicial executions, many of which were carried out in public, constitute a violation of both international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

Id.

sists that non-state groups comply with any previous commitments that they made to follow human rights law.88 An additional technique consists of identifying human rights norms that conventional law specifically extends to non-state actors.89 In some instances, the U.N. Security Council is relied upon as a substitute for a treaty.90 The difficulty with this approach is that the language of the resolutions does not prescribe human rights for the actors by its own legal act; instead, the resolutions usually conclude that the group violated human rights law, suggesting that the law was somehow already in existence and applicable to the actor at the time of the violation.91 The final technique asserts that all actors are held to juss cogens norms whether or not the groups are subject to human rights law in the same way as states.92 Since the list of juss cogens norms is indeterminate, this approach could include a wide spectrum of human rights protections.93 The more controversial approach includes assimilating the non-state actor to a state and designating it as a de facto, state-like entity, while also denying that it is a state, thus requiring it to comply with human rights norms just like a state.94 After all, non-state armed groups are considered to have

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89. See id. ¶ 44.
94. See, e.g., H.R.C. Rep. Pursuant to Res. S-21/1, supra note 60, ¶ 45 (“[I]t is worth recalling that non-State actors that exercise government-like functions and control over a territory are obliged to respect human rights norms when their conduct affects the human rights of the individuals under their control.”); Ben Emmerson (Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protec-
the capacity to undertake state-like organizational policy to commit crimes against humanity.\textsuperscript{95} Thus, the extension of human rights law to non-state armed groups has a major effect for determining personality. This pragmatic solution gives new appreciation to the way that international persons, such as states and the United Nations, engage with armed groups, perhaps giving those groups limited, functional personality.\textsuperscript{96}

Engaging with these groups in this way, however, implies that the groups may be able to argue for a role in shaping the applicable norms.\textsuperscript{97} Many agreements exist between states and non-state insurgent actors\textsuperscript{98} or between the United Nations and non-


\textsuperscript{96} See generally GERARD MCHugh & MANUEL BESSLER, HUMANITARIAN NEGOTIATIONS WITH ARMED GROUPS: A MANUAL FOR PRACTITIONERS, AND GUIDELINES ON HUMANITARIAN NEGOTIATIONS WITH ARMED GROUPS (2006).


state insurgent actors.\textsuperscript{99} This practice is specifically encouraged by Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions, although the precise legal value of treaty-type agreements with such entities is unclear.\textsuperscript{100} In many of these agreements, the parties do not undertake new obligations\textsuperscript{101} but instead “reaffirm” their existing obligations under international law.\textsuperscript{102} Ultimately, many of these agreements have been applied as treaties.\textsuperscript{103} In at least one


\textsuperscript{100} See generally Prosecutor v. Kony et al., ICC-02/04-01/05, Decision on the Admissibility of the Case Under Art. 19(1) of the Statute (Mar. 10, 2009).


\textsuperscript{103} See, e.g., Int’l Comm’n of Inquiry on Darfur, Rep. of the Int’l Comm’n of Inquiry on Darfur to the Secretary-General Pursuant to S.C. Res. 1564 of 18
case, an armed group successfully acceded to a treaty, even though this ability is not formally recognized and would normally require the group to be considered a person with capacity to enter into the treaty.

Some of these groups have also been understood to have the capacity to issue binding unilateral statements, especially promises to comply with international humanitarian law. Some of


[T]he SLM/A [Sudan Liberation Movement/Army] and the JEM [Justice and Equality Movement] possess under customary international law the power to enter into binding international agreements (so called *jus contrahendum*), have entered various internationally binding Agreements with the Government. In these Agreements the rebels have undertaken, among other things, to comply with humanitarian law. The NMRD [National Movement for Recovery and Development] concluded two Agreements with the Government of the Sudan on 17 December 2004, one on humanitarian access and the other on security issues in the war zone. In these Agreements the parties pledged to release prisoners of war and organize the voluntary repatriation of internally displaced persons and refugees.

Id.; see also S.C. Res. 1127 (Aug. 28, 1997) (regarding UNITA and the Lusaka Protocol).


106. See, e.g., Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2004 I.C.J. ¶ 91 (noting the PLO declaration); Prosecutor v. Akayesu, ICTR-96-4-T, Judgment, ¶ 627 (Sept. 2, 1998) (noting the Rwandese Patriotic Front declaration to the International Committee of the
these promises were made to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)7 and others to the United Nations.8 More important than these specific agreements or unilateral commitments, however, is whether the practice of non-state actors contributes to customary international law. Some scholars and courts look to the practice of non-state actors to establish or prove the rules of customary international law.9 For example, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) has taken into account the practice of non-state actors in


9. See Western Sahara, 1975 I.C.J. at 100 (separate opinion by Ammoun, J.); Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2004 I.C.J. at 74 (dissenting opinion by Ammoun, J.) (“If there is any ‘general practice’ which might be held, beyond dispute, to constitute law within the meaning of Article 38, paragraph 1 (b), of the Statute of the Court, it must surely be that which is made up of the conscious action of the peoples themselves, engaged in a determined struggle [for self-determination].”); L. C. Chen, An Introduction to Contemporary International Law: A Policy-Oriented Perspective 344 (2d ed. 2000); Anthea Roberts & Sandesh Sivakumaran, Lawmaking by Non-state Actors: Engaging Armed Groups in the Creation of International Humanitarian Law, 37 Yale J. Int’l L. 107, 118–19 (2012).
assessing customary international law (albeit, in a limited manner). Since the ICJ Statute only requires that the practice be accepted as law and does not limit acceptance of the provision to states, there may be some plausibility to this argument. Some have even suggested that non-state armed groups are developing their own law of armed conflict parallel to that of states. Most authorities, such as the International Law Commission (ILC), however, maintain that only states may contribute to the formation of customary international law. Thus, while the ICRC documents the practice of armed groups, it distinguishes it from the practice of states with respect to establishing customary international law because of the uncertainty in

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qualifying actors in the rules needed to form customary international law. In any event, the precise normative effect of insurgent practice is not settled, but it is informative of the applicability of international humanitarian law.

Underlying this practice is simply the functional need to ensure the protection of civilian populations by holding combatants to certain minimum legal obligations. Belligerents need to be covered by international humanitarian law in order to minimize the suffering of civilians and participants, but we do not want the combatants to enjoy the benefits of statehood or claim ignorance of *jus cogens* violations. Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions commands that the application of the Article “shall not affect the legal status of the Parties to the conflict.” What we find in this practice is that, occasionally, non-state actors are treated as if they have international legal personality depending on whether they are engaging with issues of international humanitarian law, thus creating a relativist, functional personality. This is the logical result of the theory of the “equality of belligerents”—that, for purposes of effective and practical application of a uniform code of the law of armed conflict, insurgents should be treated equally to the states they are fighting against.

Highlighting their relative nature, however, it is more debatable when analyzing whether prohibitions on the use of force, specifically Article 2, Section 4 of the U.N. Charter, apply to armed

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117. See SHAW, supra note 42, at 265–341.

118. This, however, does not mean that DFRs have no international rights or obligations: “[I]nternational law has (...) developed some rudimentary mechanisms to ensure that the developments on the ground are not entirely left to the (domestic) ‘laws’ of anarchy.” Jonte van Essen, De Facto Regimes in International Law, 28 MERKOURIOS–UTRECHT J. INT’L & EUR. L., no. 75, 2012, at 31, 34 (citing SHAW, supra note 2, at 55).

119. See Jean de Preux et al., Commentary: Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War 43–44 (1960).

groups. Some authorities now argue that, where insurgents have sufficient independent control and organize themselves into a de facto regime, they are state-like and may benefit from the prohibition on the use of force against states. Strictly speaking, the rule only covers “states,” and states can normally exercise their police function to resist civil war. Yet, it may be argued that the term “state” is not the same as “U.N. member,” thus, any insurgent group that operates a de facto state may qualify. The Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia (IFFMCG), an inquiry body established by the Council of the European Union to investigate the conflict in Georgia, found that the South Ossetia and Abkhazia entities, while not states, were “state-like” and thus covered by the prohibition on the use of force. Similarly, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court has concluded that such state-like entities are capable of coordinated

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123. See IFFMCG REPORT ON THE CONFLICT IN GEORGIA, supra note 121, at 239–42.

124. For example, the Ukrainian and Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republics were not states when they were admitted to the United Nations. See Crawford, supra note 24, at 45, n.37. On the other hand, Switzerland has always been considered a state even when it was not a U.N. Member State. See id. at 193.


126. See IFFMCG REPORT ON THE CONFLICT IN GEORGIA, supra note 121, at 239–42.
policy sufficient for crimes against humanity. These cases, however, are not isolated. For example, James Crawford has applied the prohibition on the use of force to the relations between the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan, and the U.N. Security Council has held that use of force between North and South Korea—which were not considered independent states at the time—was also covered by the prohibition on the use of force. Again, a functional, pragmatic approach is taken because what matters is whether the entity controls territory comparable to a state. The international legal personality of these entities, however, is understood to be relative to their nature, role, functions, and duties.

D. Private Organizations: Corporations and Non-Governmental Organizations

Other organizations are increasingly considered international persons for limited, functional purposes. These entities can formally be private entities, such as corporations or universities, and can be incorporated in several different ways, including by states, individuals, and domestic law, but can also be created by treaty. As will be discussed below, there does not appear to be any barrier to granting personality rights to nontraditional bearers of personality where the international community deems it appropriate.

128. See Crawford, supra note 24, at 191.
129. See id. at 470; S.C. Res. 82 (June 25, 1950); S.C. Res. 83 (June 27, 1950); S.C. Res. 84 (July 7, 1950); Tom Miles, North Korea Threatens South with “Final Destruction,” Reuters (Feb 19, 2013), http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/19/us-nkorea-threat-idUSBRE9I0J520130219 (reporting on the threat of a “final destruction” by North Korea against South Korea at the U.N. Conference on Disarmament in 2013 and the reactions of the governments of South Korea, France, Germany, Spain, Poland, the United States, and Britain that the threat was a breach of Article 2(4) of the U.N. Charter).
130. See Theodor Meron, Human Rights in Internal Strife: Their International Protection 39 (1987); Pegg, supra note 81.
131. See Rondeau, supra note 113.
133. See Nijman, supra note 1, at 3 (defining international legal personality and providing an extensive theoretical overview of this concept).
States can create private organizations through either treaty or domestic law. For example, the creation of the University for Peace was based on U.N. General Assembly Resolutions\textsuperscript{134} (and remains intimately linked to, though not a part of, the United Nations\textsuperscript{135}) and a subsequent treaty.\textsuperscript{136} Afterward, the university entered into a headquarters agreement with Costa Rica\textsuperscript{137} that recognized it as an “international institution”\textsuperscript{138} with “the legal status necessary to enable it to fulfil its purposes and objectives.”\textsuperscript{139} Its headquarters are deemed inviolable,\textsuperscript{140} and the institution and staff enjoy certain immunities akin to those of the United Nations.\textsuperscript{141} Despite its appearance and functions, this entity is not an NGO under domestic law but instead is an international organization.

States create corporations under domestic law, and they are more clearly understood as normal domestic entities;\textsuperscript{142} however,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{134} See G.A. Res. 34/111 (Dec. 14, 1979); G.A. Res. 35/55 (Dec. 5, 1980).
\item \textsuperscript{136} See International Agreement for the Establishment of the University for Peace and with the Charter of the University for Peace, Mar. 29, 1982, 1223 U.N.T.S. 87.
\item \textsuperscript{137} See Agreement Concerning the Headquarters of the University for Peace, supra note 132; see also Agreement Between the Government of the Republic of Colombia and the University for Peace for the Establishment of a World Research and Training Centre for Conflict Settlement, July 30, 1986, 2272 U.N.T.S. 159 [hereinafter Agreement for the Establishment of a World Research Centre] (describing the process of entering into agreements with states other than the host state).
\item \textsuperscript{138} See Agreement Concerning the Headquarters of the University for Peace, supra note 132, pmbl., arts. 2, 5, 6, 8.
\item \textsuperscript{139} See id. art. 2.
\item \textsuperscript{140} See id. art. 5.
\item \textsuperscript{141} See id. art 8.
\item \textsuperscript{142} Although some authorities have even viewed these entities as having “limited international legal personality.” See, e.g., James A.R. Nafziger, The Future of International Law in its Administrative Mode, 40 DENV. J. INTL. L. & POLY 64 (2011–2012). For example, “[t]hese organizations included public international utility corporations with limited international legal personality, such as the Scandinavian Airlines System (“SAS”), the Basel-Mulhouse Airport, the Franco-Ethiopian Railway Company, the International Moselle Company, and the Central African Power Corporation.” Id. at 66.
\end{itemize}
this is not always the case. Where a treaty forms the basis for the agreement to incorporate under domestic law, the corporation might function as an international organization. Both the Bank for International Settlements (BIS)\textsuperscript{143} and Eurofirma\textsuperscript{144} technically are regarded as domestic corporations created by treaties but incorporated under domestic law and are considered \textit{de facto} international legal persons. The BIS was initially established to facilitate German reparations under the Versailles Treaty and unusually included private corporations as parties to the treaty alongside states. Despite the participation of private corporations, who are mere domestic legal persons, as parties to BIS Convention, that participation does not appear to have changed the convention’s status as a treaty. Although, perhaps we can wonder whether JP Morgan Bank is now a quasi-international person.

Similarly, states sometimes create NGOs by treaty yet incorporate under domestic law, and those entities can function as international persons. In order to discharge the international relations between the United States and Taiwan without endangering the one-China policy, the United States and Taiwan mutually incorporated NGOs within each other’s domestic legal systems.\textsuperscript{145} These NGOs are staffed by diplomats and empowered


\textsuperscript{144} See BROWNLE, supra note 3, at 66–67 (discussing Eurofirma, the European Company for the Financing of Railroad Rolling Stock).

\textsuperscript{145} See Taiwan Relations Act of 1979, Pub. L. No. 96-8, 93 Stat. 14 (1979); Agreement on Privileges, Exemptions and Immunities Between the American Institute in Taiwan and Cultural Representative Office in the United States, Feb. 4, 2013, http://photos.state.gov/libraries/ait-taiwan/171414/ait-tecro-2013/20130204—agmt-on-privileges-exemptions-immunities-english.pdf (replacing the 1980 Agreement on Privileges, Exemptions and Immunities Between the American Institute in Taiwan and Cultural Representative Office in the United States). The “Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States,” which is the \textit{de facto} embassy of the Republic of China, receives privileges and immunities, a grant not enjoyed by any other NGO in the United States. Moreover, the grant is authorized not by the U.S. government but by another NGO, the “American Institute in Taiwan,” which is the \textit{de facto} embassy of the United States in Taipei.
to issue visas among other acts.\textsuperscript{146} This situation is unusual, though not completely unique,\textsuperscript{147} but there are examples of NGOs that are not mere diplomatic fig leaves acting as international persons. Like the BIS, the participation of a noninternational person in the formation of the NGO does not necessarily result in either defeating the international personality of the new entity or raising the noninternational person to the international plane. For example, the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI)\textsuperscript{148} and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (“Global Fund”)\textsuperscript{149} appear to be well positioned to enjoy enhanced personality in the near future. Similar to the treatment of the Global Fund,\textsuperscript{150} GAVI is already considered an international legal person by Switzerland, though only for purposes of its headquarters agreement.\textsuperscript{151} Yet, GAVI


\textsuperscript{147} Another example would be the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO), which was incorporated under Singaporean law to discharge “sovereign” macroeconomic and monetary analysis duties conferred on it by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. See Chien-Huei Wu, \textit{Monetary Cooperation in the East Asian Context: Progress and Challenges}, 8 \textit{Asian J. WTO & Int’l L.} 583 (2013).


\textsuperscript{149} See G.A. Res. 64/122, at 586 (Dec. 16, 2009) (granting the Global Fund observer status). For more detailed reasoning on how it qualifies as such, see U.N. GAOR, 64th Sess., U.N. Doc. A/64/144 (July 14, 2009).


\textsuperscript{151} See id. Not only is GAVI functionally an international legal person in the view of Swiss law, it is, relatively, an international legal person in that the United States does not regard it as an international legal person at all. This situation results in the odd arrangement where GAVI staff in Switzerland enjoy immunities but those seconded to the office in Washington, D.C. do not. For its part, GAVI appears to consider itself an international organization. \textit{About Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance}, GAVI, http://www.gavi.org/about/ (last visited Sept. 14, 2016) (“Created in 2000, Gavi is an international organisation - a global
might be better understood as a public-private partnership, as it brings together various actors, such as the U.N. Children’s Fund ("UNICEF"), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development ("World Bank"), World Health Organization (WHO), and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.\textsuperscript{152} Of course, there is no serious debate over whether the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is an international person, as it has never sought the kind of role and engagement typical of that status.

The situation changes, however, when the private entity is incorporated purely by individuals without state participation—though there are exceptions here as well. Normally, domestic NGOs and corporations are not considered international persons. Previously, in the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company case, the ICJ did not recognize an agreement between a corporation and a state as a treaty.\textsuperscript{153} The question before the ICJ in that case was not whether the agreement was legally binding between international persons but rather if the ICJ would have jurisdiction over an agreement between a private company and the state of Iran.\textsuperscript{154} Since a corporation cannot be a party to the ICJ Statute, the case was easily dismissed, but the dismissal of the case cannot necessarily be understood as a refusal to consider the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company as an international legal person. There may be other reasons why it is not, but the result in this case does not definitively answer that particular question.

The U.N. Office of Legal Affairs has been cautious about the subject of new non-state international legal persons, although it did opine that autonomous public entities that are not themselves international legal persons might be able to constitute an international legal person.\textsuperscript{155} Despite this position, it is increasingly being argued that a corporation can be held responsible for international crimes under international law. Usually, individuals, not corporations, are held responsible under international

\textsuperscript{152} See Board Composition, GAVI, \url{http://www.gavi.org/about/governance/gavi-board/composition/} (last visited Mar. 22, 2017); GAVI ALLIANCE BY-LAWS (June 18–19, 2014), \url{http://www.gavi.org/library/gavi-documents/legal/gavi-alliance-by-laws/}.


\textsuperscript{154} See id. at 103.

criminal law.\textsuperscript{156} Certainly, entities like Greenpeace are legal persons in their respective domestic legal orders, and perhaps even enjoy certain rights aimed at natural persons;\textsuperscript{157} but, thus far, they do not appear to be treated as international legal persons. This position, however, appears to be on the cusp of potentially shifting. One of the more important recent developments in this regard was the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) decision with respect to contempt against a corporation.\textsuperscript{158} The STL Prosecutor charged not only Karma Al Khayat, an individual, but also New TV SAL (Al Jadeed TV), a corporation, with contempt of the STL. In interpreting the term “person” in STL Rule 60 \textit{bis}, the STL found that the term could include either natural or legal persons.\textsuperscript{159} The tribunal noted the changing nature of corporations in the international area in support of its decision,\textsuperscript{160} and thus analyzed the situation from a functional perspective.\textsuperscript{161}

Shifting from corporations to NGOs, certain NGOs created by private individuals also enjoy a degree of relative personality, depending on the way other international legal actors interact


\textsuperscript{157} See, e.g., Case T-545/11, Stichting Greenpeace Nederland & Pesticide Action Network Eur. v. Comm’n, \textit{CURIA ¶ 27 (Oct. 8, 2013), http://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf;jsessionid=9ea7d2dc30d597a59da204e1e839c99f0fd200512a4.e34KaxiLc3qMb40RCh0SaxyKch10?text=&docid=142701&pageIndex=0&doclang=EN&mode=lst&dir=&occ=first&part=1&cid=1055864 (holding implicitly that, because the Treaty on European Union intended for “an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe, in which decisions are taken as openly as possible and as closely as possible to the citizen,” Greenpeace could bring a claim for access to documents under EU Regulations (EC) 1049/2001 and 1367/2006, and Directive 91/313/EEC).}


\textsuperscript{159} See New T.V. S.A.L., Decision on Interlocutory Appeal, ¶¶ 42–44.

\textsuperscript{160} See id. ¶ 82.

\textsuperscript{161} See id. ¶ 83.
with the entity. The most prominent of these bodies is the ICRC. Both Switzerland, which concluded a headquarters agreement with the ICRC and acknowledged its international legal personality (at least as it concerns the Swiss legal order), and the ICTY recognize the ICRC’s personality. In the Simić case before the ICTY, the tribunal addressed the issue of whether an employee of the ICRC could be compelled to testify to facts acquired in the course of service to the organization. The tribunal concluded that the individuals did not create the ICRC, rather, they vested the organization with important international duties by treaty with widespread adherence. This suggests that the Chamber might have considered the Geneva Conventions as somehow constitutive of the ICRC’s international legal personality. The Chamber later observed, how-

162. See, e.g., Agreement for the Establishment of a World Research Centre, supra note 137.
166. Id.
167. See id.; see also Geneva Convention I for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field art. 9, Aug. 12, 1949, 75 U.N.T.S. 31; Geneva Convention II for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea art. 9, Aug. 12, 1949, 75 U.N.T.S. 85; Geneva Convention III Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War art. 9, Aug. 12, 1949, 75 U.N.T.S. 135; Geneva Convention IV Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, supra note 82.
168. See Prosecutor v. Simić et al. (“Bosanski Šamac”), Case No. IT-95.
ever, that “the ICRC possesses international personality because states have tacitly recognized it as an international person,”169 which reaffirms the understanding that personality for that entity is relative and subjective.

But, the ICRC is not alone. Other entities incorporated under domestic law might also have international legal personality. For example, the International Air Transport Association (IATA)170 and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)171 are considered to have some degree of international personality comparable to international organizations based on their functions. The IATA is an association of various global airlines.172 WADA is a foundation responsible for the World Anti-Doping Code, which harmonizes anti-doping standards across sports.173
International Olympic Committee also enjoys special status in that it operates universally, has drafted the leading standards for global sports organizations, and has a role in both the WADA and the Court of Arbitration for Sport\(^\text{174}\)—although whether it enjoys truly international rights and duties is still unclear.

Other private entities are potential candidates to begin receiving treatment as international legal persons in the near future. The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and the Basel Institute on Governance’s International Centre for Asset Recovery (ICAR) discharge quasi-governmental roles independently from governments and have an international impact, which may eventually transition them into international legal persons based on their roles.\(^\text{175}\) More peculiar examples might include the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), which is a private organization founded by individuals.\(^\text{176}\) It is largely considered a successor organization to the International Standards Association and the United Nations.


Standards Coordinating Committee\textsuperscript{177} and has a prominent role in establishing standards that can be adopted in legally binding instruments, such as the WTO Agreements.\textsuperscript{178} ISO membership includes various scientific associations, many of which are government bodies.\textsuperscript{179} At some point, its significance may justify special treatment as an international legal person, at least for certain purposes, such as immunities for the organization or the ability to enter into treaties. But, for now, these actions are not possible. Similarly, the European Broadcasting Union, which produces the Euronews channel and the Eurovision song contest,\textsuperscript{180} might be another entity with personality poised for transition. On the one hand, it is clearly an association incorporated under Swiss law\textsuperscript{181} that does not assert state immunity or similar treatment,\textsuperscript{182} yet, on the other hand, it receives considerable financial support from the European Union\textsuperscript{183} and benefits from unusual privileges due to its important role in European cooperation and integration.\textsuperscript{184}


\textsuperscript{178} See Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade annex 1, ¶ 2, Apr. 15, 1994, 1868 U.N.T.S. 120.


\textsuperscript{183} See Written Question No. 1664/91 by Mr. Georgios Romeos (S) to the Commission of the European Communities, 1992 O.J. (C 66) 26, 27 (discussing official financial support from the EU to Euronews).

\textsuperscript{184} See Case C-470/02 P, Union européenne de radio-télévision (UER) v. Comm’n of the Eur. Comms., E.C.R., reprinted in 2003 O.J. (C 55), 13–14 (documenting, for example, the role of the European Union in the management and activities of the European Broadcasting Union with respect to the Eurovision song contest); European Commission Press Release IP/00/472, Commission Approves the EBU-Eurovision System (May 12, 2000) (reporting that the European Commission exempted the European Broadcasting Union from normal
Other entities participate, sometimes very intimately, with other international persons; however, it is difficult to consider them international persons, despite functional analysis suggesting otherwise. For example, the Carnegie Foundation is considered to be a “private foundation” in private diplomatic correspondence. Nonetheless, it entered into an agreement with the United Nations for the ICJ to use the premises of the Peace Palace in The Hague, and this agreement was registered with the U.N. Secretary-General and published in the U.N. Treaty Series. Accordingly, notwithstanding the ICJ’s holding in Anglo-Iranian Oil, occasionally, agreements are made between international persons and private corporations and are deposited (either mistakenly or due to the unavailability of a more appropriate vehicle) with the U.N. Secretary-General as if they were treaties. The U.N.-Carnegie Foundation agreement notes, however, that it is “expressly understood that the question of the establishment of the [ICJ] at the Peace Palace exclusively concerns the [United Nations] and the Carnegie Foundation, and is consequently outside the jurisdiction of any other organization. . . .” The reasons behind the unexpected use of the expression “jurisdiction” along with the term “organization” is not entirely clear. Normally, “jurisdiction” is reserved for the lawful authority of states, not organizations. Perhaps, this phrase is intended to exclude the Permanent Court of Arbitration, Peace Palace Library, and Hague Academy of International Law from exercising their “jurisdiction” by interfering with the establishment of the ICJ. In any event, it appears that this agreement is not a mere rental contract under Dutch law. If that is the case, then the foundation has some power to conclude agreements outside of antitrust law regarding Eurovision because, inter alia, “the Eurovision System facilitates cross-border broadcasting and contributes to the development of a single European broadcasting market.”).

185. See U.S. Dep’t of State, First Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, Cable No. 08MADRID52_a, WIKILEAKS paras. 1, 4 (Jan. 18, 2008), https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08MADRID52_a.html# [hereinafter Cable No. 08MADRID52_a] (reporting on the “First Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations,” which was attended by the Carnegie Foundation as a “private foundation”).

186. See G.A. Res. 84 (I), annex A (Dec. 11, 1946).


188. See G.A. Res. 84(I), supra note 186, annex A, art. XV.
normal domestic law agreements and, perhaps on that basis, is not an ordinary Dutch Stichting (foundation). Notwithstanding this unusual “international” agreement and the public function that the foundation serves, it seems uncomfortable to view the foundation as an international person, even though the parallels with the ICRC are difficult to avoid.

In addition, some authorities assert that transnational corporations and NGOs already enjoy a degree of international personality beyond the isolated and peculiar examples cited above.\(^{189}\) Of course, corporations are increasingly being seen as potentially responsible for international crimes,\(^{190}\) and they are leaders in setting international standards,\(^{191}\) similar in some ways to the work of the ISO. Additionally, international litigation between states and international corporations is becoming commonplace,\(^{192}\) and some treaties,\(^{193}\) and possibly even general

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190. See generally Joanna Kyriakakis, Developments in International Criminal Law and the Case of Business Involvement in International Crimes, 94 INT’L REV. RED CROSS 981 (2012).


international law, directly impose rights and duties on corporations.\textsuperscript{194} Even for those NGOs that do not enjoy these kinds of special statuses, many NGOs have been admitted to the U.N. Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as observers.\textsuperscript{195} None of these activities, however, constitute participation in the international sphere in the classic sense. Some authorities even suggest that NGOs and corporations should now have a role in contributing to customary international law\textsuperscript{196} and otherwise forming new international norms.\textsuperscript{197} These developments have led some to conclude that corporations now enjoy limited international legal personality linked to their functions,\textsuperscript{198} especially in the investment dispute context, where the personality is relative and limited to the parties to the dispute, not \textit{erga omnes}.

\begin{footnotesize}

\textsuperscript{195} See U.N. Charter art. 71 (“The Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence.”); Economic and Social Council Res. 1996/31 (July 25, 1996).

\textsuperscript{196} See Dem. Rep. Congo v. Belg., 2002 I.C.J. at 155 (dissenting opinion by Van den Wyngaert, J.) (citing “the opinion of civil society”); Roberts & Sivakumaran, \textit{supra} note 109; Daniel Bodansky, \textit{Customary (and Not So Customary) International Environmental Law, 3 Ind. J. Global Legal Stud.} 105, 108 (1995) (examining the practice of states plus “international organizations, transnational corporations and other nongovernmental groups.”). Also, note that the original proposal to define custom in the statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice, which stated that “practice between nations [is] accepted by them [the nations] as law,” was rejected, suggesting that the practice might not be limited to states only.

\textsuperscript{197} See Azurix Corp. v. Argentina, ICSID Case No. ARB/01/12, Award (July 14, 2006), 14 ICSID Rep. 374; CMS Gas Transmission Co. v. Argentina, ICSID Case No. ARB/01/8, Award (May 12, 2005), 44 I.L.M. 1205 (2005).

\textsuperscript{198} See SHAW, \textit{supra} note 42, at 250 (“[T]he question of the international personality of transnational corporations remains an open one.”); CLAPHAM, \textit{supra} note 27, at 515–16; BROWNlie, \textit{supra} note 3, at 525; David Kinley &
\end{footnotesize}
This possible development is not without precedent. Historically, many colonial companies under the East India Company model entered into agreements with indigenous peoples and European states that were not formal treaties under contemporary international law but were substantively comparable and may have been regarded at the time as true treaties under international law.\textsuperscript{199} While not dispositive,\textsuperscript{200} many of these agreements were even titled “treaty.”\textsuperscript{201} One reason we can infer that the parties regarded them as treaties under international law is that some of the topics covered in such agreements involved matters...
normally covered by public law, such as raising a military, establishing a protectorate, and cessation of territory. In addition, in the nineteenth century, the unique entity of the Hanseatic League operated on the international plane as a trade federation with leadership vested in the cities of Hamburg, Lubeck, and sometimes Bremen. Some of these agreements also clearly dealt with matters of public law. These latter examples of state-corporation treaties of the type used by the East India Company are of course removed from contemporary international law but not so distantly as we might think, as the latest one was concluded as late as 1914. The strange situation involving international colonial companies in international law, while initially tempting to view in contemporary corporate

202. See, e.g., Agreement Between Denmark and Brandenburg Regarding the Supply of Troops and the Composition of Differences at St. Thomas Between the Danish and Brandenburg West India Companies, Apr. 21, 1692, 19 Consol. T.S. 467.


204. See, e.g., Contract of Sale and Cession of the Island of St. Croix Between France and the Danish West India Co., June 15, 1733, 34 Consol. T.S. 47.


206. See, e.g., Consular Convention Between the Hanseatic Republics (Bremen, Hamburg and Lubeck) and the United States, Apr. 30, 1852, 108 Consol. T.S. 91; see also Convention Between France, Great Britain and the Hanse Towns (Bremen, Hamburg and Lubeck), for the Accession of the Latter to the Slave Trade Conventions, June 9, 1837, 87 Consol. T.S. 19 (providing for accession to a treaty of general application to subjects of international law).

207. See Agreement Between the British South Africa Co. (Great Britain) and Portugal Amending the Agreement of 28 August 1913 Relative to the Recruitment of Native Labourers for Rhodesia, July 4, 1914, 220 Consol. T.S. 152.
terms, is probably more accurately viewed as a hybrid state-corporate, quasi-national entity. In any event, this historical study may suggest that international legal personality, as the exclusive quality we see today, may have been far more fluid and liberal in the past.

E. Religious Organizations

Religious organizations also operate on the international plane to some degree, and some of these bodies clearly have international legal personality. While religious organizations do not appear to have a unique legal status in international law based on their missions, they are capable of bearing international legal personality and, at times, are accorded personality on a functional basis.

The most obvious and well accepted example of a religious organization that bears international legal personality is the Holy

208. See Koen Stapelbroek, Chartered Companies, and Merchantile Associations, in The Oxford Handbook of the History of International Law 339 (Bardo Fassbender & Anne Peters eds., 2012).
See. The Holy See is not a state, although it is sometimes referred to as a state or otherwise treated as if it were a state, apparently without much consideration of its unusual nature. For example, the Holy See’s practice is usually considered alongside the practice of states for the formation of customary international law. It is often argued that the distinction between the Holy See and other actors in this article, similar to that of states, is rooted in the difference between original and derivative personality. Like states, the Holy See claims it has “original,


211. See Crawford, supra note 24, at 43–44. But see Jorri Duursma, Fragmentation and the International Relations of Micro-States 374–419 (James Crawford et al. eds., 1996).


non-derived legal personality.”

In an ICJ advisory opinion requested by the WHO on the legality of the use of nuclear weapons in armed conflict under international law, the court held that the crucial factor in determining original and derivative personality focuses on which entity can create another and “invest” it with powers. The difficulty is that some authorities implicitly assert that only states are original persons. In addition, the very notion of originality is relative; international organizations have capacity to create other international organizations and invest them with powers, so, in that relative sense, an international organization could be said to be the original person and the new organization would therefore be derived from it. Nevertheless, the personality of the Holy See does not depend on an act of creation by another international legal person.

The Holy See, however, is not entirely unique. Other religious entities exist with partial and functional, international personality. The most well-known of these strange cases is probably the Sovereign Military Order of Malta (SMOM), otherwise known as the “Knights of Malta.” But, the phenomenon of sovereign military orders historically included entities other than the SMOM. Reaching the same conclusion as this article, other

216. See SHAW, supra note 42, at 247–48, 261 (“States are the original and major subjects of international law.”).
217. See Agreement for the Establishment of the Joint Vienna Institute, supra note 27 (evidencing an international organization created purely by other international organizations).
219. See, e.g., Convention Between the Teutonic Order and the States of the Former Confederation of the Rhine, Aug. 15, 1813, 62 Consol. T.S. 343; Convention Between the Teutonic Order and Wurtemberg, Aug. 15, 1813, 62 Consol. T.S. 351; see also Treaty Between Brandenburg and the Equestrian Order of Prussia, Nov. 12, 1655, 4 Consol. T.S. 21; Karol Karski, The International
authorities have described the personality of the SMOM as “functional.” In addition to the SMOM, we also have the curious Paréage of Andorra, which was adopted between the Count of Foix and the Bishop of Urgell in 1278 and established joint sovereignty over Andorra until 1993, when the entity adopted its modern constitution and became a modern state. At that time, the contemporary heirs to the Paréage were the President of France and Bishop of Urgell, who were functioning as “Co-Princes.” The arrangement was sometimes termed a “condominium,” although it is unclear whether this term is correct when the governance is not by two states sharing sovereignty but rather two individuals acting as co-Heads of State. In any event, apparently, as late as 1993, the international community accepted the possibility of a bishop having the functional capacity to personally dispose of the sovereignty of a state.

The Dalai Lama provides another example of a religious actor having international personality. This religious leader enjoys some aspects of international respect, although his personality is difficult to separate from the personality of Tibet and/or the Tibetan Government in Exile and perhaps overlaps with a
government in exile or an NLM movement. It often remains blurred whether the engagement with the person or office is truly on the political international plane or on a personal, professional, or spiritual level.\textsuperscript{224} Certainly, the Dalai Lama has a significant international influence on political outcomes, and considering our definition of personality as having the capacity for international agreement, legation, and claim, this actor does exhibit characteristics of functional personality.\textsuperscript{225}

Convention Between Great Britain and Tibet, Sept. 7, 1904, 196 Consol. T.S. 312; Exchange of Notes Regarding the India-Tibet Frontier, Mar. 25, 1914, 219 Consol. T.S. 339; Trade Regulations Between Great Britain and Tibet, July 3, 1914, 220 Consol. T.S. 148. There are no agreements registered, however, with the U.N. Secretary-General that list Tibet or the Dalai Lama as a party.

\textsuperscript{224} See, e.g., U.S. Dep’t of State, Possible Dalai Lama Visit to Italy and Vatican, Cable No. 1973ROME5798_b, WIKILEAKS paras. 1–3 (June 22, 1973), http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1973ROME05798_b.html (reporting on the Dalai Lama’s contacts with the Italian government and noting that if the People’s Republic of China (PRC) demanded an explanation, the government of Italy would explain that the visit was “religious and cultural”); U.S. Dep’t of State, PRC Reaction to Dalai Lama, Cable No. 1973COPENHAGEN2125_b, WIKILEAKS (Sept. 5, 1973), http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1973COPENH02125_b.html (reporting on PRC pressure on the Danish Embassy to refuse a visa to the Dalai Lama and the Danish reply that the visit was purely as a “religious leader” and not as a “political figure”); U.S. Dep’t of State, Dalai Lama Visit to Austria, Cable No. 1973VIENNA7734_b, WIKILEAKS para 2. (Sept. 19, 1973), http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1973VIENNA07734_b.html (noting that Austria agreed to issue a visa on condition of a “commitment from Dalai Lama to refrain from all political activity.”); U.S. Dep’t of State, Foreign Minister Comments on Possible Dalai Lama Visit, Cable No. 06ULAANBAATAR634_a, WIKILEAKS para 3 (Aug. 18, 2006), http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06ULAANBAATAR634_a.html (“[T]he U.S. likely would reiterate publicly our [U.S.] belief that the Dalai Lama is an international man of peace who should be allowed freedom to travel.”).

\textsuperscript{225} See, e.g., G.A. Res. 1353(XIV) (Oct. 21, 1959) (“Gravely concerned at reports, including the official statements of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, to the effect that the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the people of Tibet have been forcibly denied them. . . . ” (emphasis added)); U.S. Dep’t of State, Dalai Lama Visit to Italy, Cable No. 1973ROME9464_b, WIKILEAKS (Sept. 11, 1973), http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1973ROME9464_b.html (reporting on the Dalai Lama’s representative contacts with the Italian Foreign Ministry and other multiple European governments); U.S. Dep’t of State, The Dalai Lama’s Representative in New Delhi, Cable No. 1975NEWDE13760_b, WIKILEAKS (Oct. 15, 1975), http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1975NEWDE13760_b.html (discussing a proposed meeting between Embassy Political Section officials and the Dalai Lama’s representative); U.S. Dep’t of State, July 3 MFA Press Briefing: Yang DPRK Visit, Papal Letter, Tibetan Envoy, Climate Change, Food Safety, Visits, More, Cable No.
The Ismaili Imamat is another religious actor with unclear personality. More obscure than the Dalai Lama or Pope, and

226. See, e.g., Treaty Between the Republic of Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Ismaili Imamat for the Establishment of the University of Central Asia, Aug. 28–31, 2000, 2159 U.N.T.S. 161 [hereinafter Treaty for the Establishment of the UCA]. The text and language of the agreement is clearly intended to be a treaty, although it is not entirely clear whether the Imamat was truly considered a treaty partner or if the agreement was a treaty only because there was more than one state in agreement. See also U.S. Dep’t of State, Tajikistan: Aga Khan Serena Hotel Probably Down the Tubes – ’Who Wants On ’Old-Shoe Hotel’?’, Cable No. 06DUSHANBE402_a, WIKILEAKS paras. 10 (Mar. 1, 2006), https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/06DUSHANBE402_a.html [hereinafter Cable No. 06DUSHANBE402_a] (noting that the Aga Khan is “revered . . . as a sovereign” in the Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast in Tajikistan, is accorded “almost quasi-governmental status [in Tajikistan] because it essentially provides the lion’s share of all

07BEIJING4457_a, WIKILEAKS (July 3, 2007), http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/07BEIJING4457_a.html (reporting on travels of the Dalai Lama’s “Special Envoy”); U.S. Dep’t of State, Dalai Lama’s Representative Predicts Continued Unrest in Tibet, Cable No. 08NEWDELHI1808_a, WIKILEAKS para. 1 (Mar. 18, 2008), http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08NEWDELHI1808_a.html (reporting on a meeting between a U.S. Ambassador and the Dalai Lama); U.S. Dep’t of State, Tibet: MFA Says Talks with Dalai Lama Representatives “Mark a New Beginning,” Cable No. 08BEIJING1715_a, WIKILEAKS paras. 3 (May 5, 2008), http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08BEIJING1715_a.html (discussing the meeting of PRC leadership representatives with private representatives of the Dalai Lama); U.S. Dep’t of State, July 8 MFA Press Briefing: Six-Party Talks, Dalai Lama Talks, Human Rights, Olympics, Xinjiang Mosque, Aid to DPRK, Sudan, Cable No. 08BEIJING2666_a, WIKILEAKS para. 3 (July 8, 2008), http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/08BEIJING2666_a.html (reporting on “contact” between “competent parties” in the Chinese Government and the representatives of the Dalai Lama); U.S. Dep’t of State, Dalai Lama Seeks U.S. Engagement with China on Climate Change in Tibet, Says Political Agenda Can Wait, Cable No. 09NEWDELHI1667_a, WIKILEAKS para. 7 (Aug. 10, 2009), https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09NEWDELHI1667_a.html (reporting on a meeting between a U.S. Ambassador and the Dalai Lama); U.S. Dep’t of State, Tibet Party Official Derides Dalai Lama, Yet Welcomes Him “Home,” Cable No. 09CHENGDU248_a, WIKILEAKS paras. 4, 10 (Nov. 6, 2009), http://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/09CHENGDU248_a.html (discussing that “[f]rom 2002-2008, there were nine rounds of talks held with the personal representatives of the Dalai Lama” and reporting the Dalai Lama’s speech to the European Parliament, where he advocated for the creation of a self-governing democratic Tibet “in association with the People’s Republic of China”).
therefore requiring more explanation, the Ismaili Imamat is the religious leadership of the global Ismaili community, which is led by the Aga Khan and has its own internal governance.\footnote{227} While the Aga Khan’s position has been compared to the Roman Catholic Pope\footnote{228} due to his unusual mixture of religious and temporal authority,\footnote{229} his precise position within the Ismaili religious community defies parallels to Western notions of religious leaders.\footnote{230} The lineage of the hereditary imams is claimed to development and even basic social support to the Pamiri people of Badakhshan,” and that “[t]he current conventional political wisdom is that no one dares challenge the political power of the ‘Khan of Tajikistan,’ [the Aga Khan”). But see His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan v. Nagib Tajdin et al., [2011] F.C. 14, \ff{25}, 58–59 (Can. F.C.) (observing similarly that the Aga Khan submitted himself to a discovery interview apparently without any considerations of immunity); Cable No. 08MADRID52_a, supra note 185, paras. 1, 4 (reporting on the “First Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations,” which was attended by the U.N. Sectary-General and many heads of state, including a representative of the Aga Khan, and alternatively describing the Aga Khan as a “private foundation” akin to the Carnegie Foundation); supra Part I.D (discussing the Carnegie Foundation).

\footnote{227} See Nagib Tajdin et al., [2011] F.C. \ff{53–54} (making reference to the 1986 and 1998 “Constitutions” of the Imamat); U.S. Dep’t of State, The Agha Khan Tries to Solve Electoral Impasse, Cable No. 09KABUL3383_a, WIKILEAKS para. 2 (Oct. 21, 2009), http://wikileaks.org/plussd/cables/09KABUL3383_a.html [hereinafter Cable No. 09KABUL3383_a] (“The Agha Khan became Imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims in 1957. He is the 49th hereditary Imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims and a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad though his cousin and son-in-law Ali, the first Imam, and his wife Fatima, the Prophet Muhammad’s daughter. The Ismailis live in 25 countries, mainly in West and Central Asia, Africa and the Middle East, and North American and Western Europe.”); U.S. Dep’t of State, Rumored Exodus of Aga Khan Followers from Mozambique, Cable No. 1974-LOUREN-00275_b, WIKILEAKS para. 1 (Apr. 25, 1974), https://www.wikileaks.org/plussd/cables/1974LOUREN00275_b.html (“We have heard a rumor circulating around Lourenco Marques’ Indian community that Aga Khan followers (Ismaili) have been instructed by Aga Khan to leave Mozambique and establish themselves in another country with more promising economic climate – e.g. either metropolitan Portugal or Canada.”).

\footnote{228} See Thomas Thompson, Three Faces of the Fourth Aga, 63 LFE, no. 2, 1967, at 43 (comparing the Aga Khan to the Catholic Pope)

\footnote{229} See Haji Bibi v. H. H. Sir Sultan Mahomad Shah Aga Khan, 2 Ind. Cas. 874, para. 130 (1908) (India) (finding that the religious, monetary offerings made to the Aga Khan by his followers is his personal property); Nagib Tajdin et al., [2011] F.C. \ff{62–63} (observing that the defendant refused to conduct the discovery interview of the Aga Khan).

\footnote{230} See, e.g., Nagib Tajdin et al., [2011] F.C. ¶ 44 (observing that the defendants had great difficulty explaining the relationship of the Aga Khan and
begin with the Prophet Mohammed, with the four most recent imams (including the current one) holding the title “Aga Khan.” The Aga Khan is a British citizen but is also granted the privilege of using a French diplomatic passport. Even today, he is sometimes considered a “royal” or even “sovereign” person without territorial sovereignty.

Analyzing the international rights of treaty, legation, and claim, the general international legal personality of the Imamat remains unclear, though there may be some rudimentary, functional rights. The Imamat, however, is party to at least one treaty registered with the U.N. Secretary-General. In 2000, the states of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan agreed with the Ismaili Imamat to create the University of Central Asia (UCA). Of course, the founding of a university by treaty is not entirely unusual, even a treaty that includes a noninternational legal person as a party. This is reminiscent of BIS and

his followers outside of the Ismaili frame of reference); Haji Bibi, 2 Ind. Cas. para. 130.


235. See Treaty for the Establishment of the UCA, supra note 226. Note that the Aga Khan represented the Imamat as an Imam.

236. See id.


238. For example, the Riga Graduate School of Law was created in 1998 as a limited liability nonprofit corporation under Latvian law by an international agreement between Sweden, Latvia, and the Soros Foundation, which also
GAVI. In addition, the establishment of a university with personality—apparently on the international plane—has precedent in the cases of the University for Peace and the European University Institute, both of which were created by treaty and enjoy certain immunities on the international plane.\textsuperscript{239} Furthermore, it is possible for international legal persons to enter into an agreement registered with the U.N. Secretary-General, yet not be considered a treaty.\textsuperscript{240} Nonetheless, in the case of the UCA, the instrument was expressly considered a treaty and registered as such,\textsuperscript{241} although designation of an instrument as a “treaty” is only informative of its nature and is not by itself determinative.\textsuperscript{242} The treaty did, however, include language that characterizes it as a treaty.\textsuperscript{243} It identified all parties as the “Founders” and clearly identified the states parties as “Founding States.”\textsuperscript{244}
The text does not explicitly state whether the treaty qualifies as such under the VCLT; and it may be that the states considered the Imamat as a noncontracting, third-party (albeit a “Founder”). An alternative understanding could be that all the parties are equal actors and that the agreement is truly multilateral. After all, the Aga Khan’s signing of the instrument is atypical of a mere third-party beneficiary. The treaty can also be contemplated as bilateral between the states on the one hand and the Imamat on the other. If the Imamat was a third-party beneficiary, then it would not necessarily need to be considered an international legal person, though that possibility is not excluded. If the treaty was either multilateral or bilateral, however, the Imamat would need to be considered an international legal person with at least functional treaty-making powers. The Charter of the UCA, which is annexed to the treaty, simply says that the agreement is an “international Treaty entered into among the Republic of Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Ismaili Imamat.”245 The use of the word “among” suggests a truly multilateral treaty among persons with treaty-making powers. This may lead to the outcome where at least several states in the world may consider the Imamat an international legal person, at least insofar as the UCA treaty is concerned.

Turning to the other international capacities, we find that, generally, the Imamat is not considered an international legal person. For example, the current Aga Khan and his predecessor were parties to civil lawsuits, however, they have not, thus far,

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245. Treaty for the Establishment of the UCA, supra note 226, annex, Charter of the University of Central Asia.
claimed sovereign immunity. In addition, the Imamat does not appear to engage in active and passive legation. The Aga Khan is intimately involved in international politics and is accorded considerable respect and attention in diplomatic circles but

246. His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan v. Nagib Tajdin et al., [2011] F.C. 14, ¶ 25, 58–59 (Can. F.C.) (observing that the Aga Kahn submitted himself to a discovery interview and that the Aga Khan authorized the lawsuit as a plaintiff); Haji Bibi v. H. H. Sir Sultan Mahomad Shah Aga Khan, 2 Ind. Cas. 874 (1908) (India) (noting the ability of the Aga Khan to sue in his personal capacity).


248. See Cable No. 09KABUL3383_a, supra note 227, paras. 1, 3, 6, 8, 9. The U.S Department of State held multiple meetings and diplomatic-level conversations on the future of Afghanistan with respect to the Aga Khan. The discussions included the following:

1. (C) Summary and Comment. The very well-informed Aga Khan told assembled ambassadors 14 October that he had met separately with President Karzai and leading opposition candidate Abdullah Abdullah, and had told them that the political process in Afghanistan has failed. ... With his access and the high level of assistance the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) affords to Afghanistan, the Aga Khan is a serious voice that Afghans, including Hamid Karzai, respect and listen to. ... 

3. (C) On 14 October the Aga Khan met with Ambassadors of the United States (Eikenberry and Carney), France, UK, India, Pakistan, Germany, EU, and the Commander of International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF). The Aga Khan’s representative, Ali Mawji, organized the event. After presentations by the assembled guests that generally emphasized Afghanistan’s perilous security and political conditions, the Aga Khan embarked on an informative tour d’ horizon, including details of his suggestions following earlier meetings with President Karzai and Dr. Abdullah. ... 

6. (C) The Aga Khan’s third point centered on the political situation. The Aga Khan explained that he had solicited Karzai’s and Abdullah’s views on the future of the country in the face of a failed political process. He recounted that he had advised both candidates that, regardless of the election outcome, they should work together. ...
his precise legal authority fluctuates between quasi-governmental authority\textsuperscript{249} and unofficial capacity.\textsuperscript{250} The one representative office of the Imamat, located in Canada, carefully refers to itself as a cultural “delegation” and not a political office.\textsuperscript{251} Part

8. (C) In his presentation, the Aga Khan mentioned his awareness that the Afghan Constitution does not allow for a prime minister; whatever position Abdullah would occupy must be constitutional and must factor in parliamentary sensitivities. . . . He took on board without comment the French Ambassador’s suggestion that a “Senior Minister” be named who could perform the role of a PM, without the title, but that ensuring parliamentary acceptance would be vital.

9. (C) In response to questions and observations, the Aga Khan noted that he does not favor changing the Constitution.

\textit{Id.}

\textsuperscript{249} See Cable No. 06DUSHANBE402\textunderscore a, \textit{supra} note 226, para. 10; \textit{Five Things to Know About the Aga Khan}, \textit{Radio Free Eur. Radio Liberty} (Feb. 23, 2014), http://www.rferl.org/content/aga-khan-explainer/24686969.html (discussing that the Aga Khan is treated with “a certain degree of suspicion” or “caution in some political circles in Tajikistan” because Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous province is the only predominantly Ismaili region in the world, is occasionally agitating for independence from Tajikistan, and “the local populations there have more faith in and respect for the Imam Aga Khan than for President Emomali Rahmon”).

\textsuperscript{250} See Cable No. 06DUSHANBE402\textunderscore a, \textit{supra} note 226, para. 10 (reporting that the Aga Khan was building a luxurious Ismaili Center in Tajikistan); U.S. Dep’t of State, Afghanistan: All Systems (Still) Go for Former King’s Return, Cable No. 02ROME1797\textunderscore a, \textit{WikiLeak} para. 10 (Apr. 10, 2002), https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/02ROME1797\textunderscore a.html (reporting that the Aga Khan loaned the airplane used by the former Afghan king’s son-in-law, who was arranging for the former king’s return to Afghanistan); U.S. Dep’t of State, Private Trade Opportunity: Construction of Teaching Hospital, Cable No. 1974KARACH01414\textunderscore b, \textit{WikiLeak} para. 10 (July 5, 1974), https://wikileaks.org/plusd/cables/1974KARACH01414\textunderscore b.html (describing the “[p]roject being built and financed by Aga Khan Hospital and Medical College, a charitable foundation in Pakistan supported by the wealthy international Muslim sect called Ismaili led by His Highness, the Aga Khan”).

of the explanation for the international community’s treatment of the Aga Khan may be due to his religious and traditional capacity but may also derive from his wealth and management of the prominent NGO, the Aga Khan Development Network. This suggests that the Imamat commands a certain degree of reverence on the international plane but does not operate fully as an international legal person, especially in comparison to the Holy See. Thus, the functional analysis concludes that the Ismaili Imamat is not an international legal person in the broadest sense, although it may be treated as such from time to time on a functional level.

F. The Individual

The last category for comparative purposes is the individual. Historically, certain persons, usually members of royal houses,252 but not exclusively so,253 were seen to have interna-

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253. See, e.g., Concordat Between the Abbess and Foundation of Quedlinburg and the Elector of Saxony, Feb. 18, 1685, 17 Consol. T.S. 199; Agreement Between Brandenburg, Duke August of Saxony (as Administrator of Magdeburg) and the Council of the City of Magdeburg, May 29, 1666, 9 Consol. T.S. 179; Preliminary Agreement Pursuant to the Agreements of 1(11) February 1693 and 4(14) March 1694 for the Maintenance of the Harmony of the Empire etc. Between the Bishop of Worms (also Head of the Teutonic Order), the Bishops of Wurzburg, Constance and Munster, the Abbot of Fulda, the Duke of Saxe-Gotha and Margrave of Baden-Durlach, the Dukes of Wolfenbuttel, the Landgraves of Hesse-Cassel and Hesse-Darmstadt, the Margrave of Baden-Baden, the King of Denmark (as Duke of Holstein) and the House of Anhalt, Feb. 15, 1700, 22 Consol. T.S. 449; see also Paréage Creating Andorra, op cit.
tional personality to conclude international agreements on everything from military arrangements (which are inherently agreements under public law)\(^{254}\) to marriage and inheritance (which are not, at least to modern observers).\(^{255}\) In many of these cases, though, it is not entirely clear whether the person, as the contracting entity, was acting in a private or public capacity of the state. Such distinctions were not made before the widespread expansion of democratic sovereignty many centuries ago.\(^{256}\) Similarly, in an international agreement made by and in the name of the Pope,\(^{257}\) rather than the Holy See or Vatican City State, it is not completely clear whether it was the true intention of the parties to bind the individual or the church as the international legal person. The treaties between Napoleon and the King of France, in which Napoleon ceded authority back to the

\(^{254}\) See, e.g., Treaty of Defensive Alliance Between the German Princes, Aug. 22, 1667, 10 Consol. T.S. 319; Defensive Armed Union Between the Princes of the Empire (Wurzburg, Munster, Worms, Eichstadt, Saxe-Coburg, Baden-Durlach, Brandenburg-Culmbach, Brandenburg-Onolzbach, Hesse-Darmstadt, Denmark (Holstein), Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel, Baden-Baden and Saxe-Eisenach), July 15, 1700, 23 Consol. T.S. 35; Agreement Between the Princes of the Empire in Opposition to the Ninth Electorate, July 1701, 23 Consol. T.S. 447.

\(^{255}\) See, e.g., Inheritance Agreement Between the Elector and the Margrave of Brandenburg, Mar. 3, 1692, 19 Consol. T.S. 397; Matrimonial Treaty Between Maximilian Emmanuel, Elector of Bavaria, and John III, King of Poland, in the Name of His Daughter, the Princess Theresa Cunegunda, Bavaria-Poland, May 19, 1694, 20 Consol. T.S. 369; Treaty for the Marriage of King John V and the Archduchess Maria Anna, Between the Emperor and Portugal, June 24, 1708, 26 Consol. T.S. 185 [hereinafter Treaty for the Marriage of King John V and the Archduchess Maria Anna].

\(^{256}\) See, e.g., Agreement Between the Palatinate, the Dukes of Brunswick-Wolffenbüttel, Brunswick-Zell and Wurtemberg, and the Landgraves of Hesse-Cassel and Hesse-Darmstadt, Apr. 17, 1662, 7 Consol. T.S. 131; Postal Treaty Between Prussia and Thurn and Taxis, May 22, 1722, 31 Consol. T.S. 375; Agreement Between Hamburg and the House of Holstein, May 27, 1768, 44 Consol. T.S. 187; Treaty for the Marriage of King John V and the Archduchess Maria Anna, supra note 255; Treaty of Confederation of the States of the Rhine (France, Bavaria, Wurttemberg, Mayence, Baden etc.), July 12, 1806, 58 Consol. T.S. 459; Accord Between the Archduke Leopold of Austria (as Grand Master of the Teutonic Order) and the Netherlands, June 14, 1662, 7 Consol. T.S. 181; see also Jacques-Antoine Dulaure, 6 Histoire de Paris 298 (1834) (citing the French King’s Address to the Parliament of Paris of April 13, 1655, in which he uttered the famous, and likely apocryphal quote, “L’état c’est moi”).

\(^{257}\) See Agreement Between Hanover and the Pope, Mar. 26, 1824, 74 Consol. T. S. 111.
historic French dynasty, appear to be personal treaties, and in light of precedent are not so surprising, though perhaps they were already anachronistic by the time of their conclusion. From a historical perspective, therefore, it is not surprising that international legal personality for sovereign (and comparable) individuals was phased out of practice in contemporary international law. Now, however, questions are being raised regarding whether every individual has some capacity for international personality.

Some scholars now argue that international law is evolving to embrace the individual. Even in interstate disputes, the con-

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258. See Treaty of Fontainebleau, Apr. 11, 1814, translated in 1 Alphonse Marie Louis de Lamartine, The History of the Restoration of Monarchy in France 201–06 (1854) (“His Majesty the Emperor Napoleon on the one part, and their Majesties the Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary and Bohemia, the Emperor of all the Russians, and the King of Prussia, stipulating in their own names, as well as in that of all the allies, on the other . . .”).

259. Thus, contemporary treaties in the name of the monarch are always regarded as being in effect in the name of the state. See, e.g., Anthony Aust, Modern Treaty Law and Practice 19 (3d ed. 2013).

cern for and protection of the individual is increasingly important.\textsuperscript{261} Certainly, individuals can violate international criminal law.\textsuperscript{262} In addition, the U.N. Security Council has issued resolutions directly imposing obligations on individuals under international law.\textsuperscript{263} Furthermore, individuals have been granted rights directly under international law, for example, in human rights treaties and bilateral investment treaties.\textsuperscript{264} Surely, international law contemplates that individuals can bear duties and rights directly under international law, but what remains unclear is whether all individuals have the kind of capacity that ancient sovereigns have had to enjoy a wider scope of international legal personality. In \textit{Prosecutor v. Karadžić}, the defendant argued that he had reached an agreement with Richard

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{261} See Questions Relating to the Obligation to Prosecute or Extradite (Belg. v. Sen.), Request for the Indication of Provision Measures, Order, 2009 I.C.J. Rep. 139, ¶ 21 (May 28) (dissenting opinion by Cançado Trindade, J.). Justice Trindade noted:

\begin{quote}
Nostalgics of the past, entrapped in their own dogmatism, can hardly deny that, nowadays, States litigating before this Court, despite its inter-State contentious procedure, have conceded that they have no longer the monopoly of the rights to be preserved, and, much to their credit, they recognize so, in pleading before this Court on behalf also of individuals, their nationals, or even in a larger framework, their inhabitants.
\end{quote}

\textit{Id.}

\item \textsuperscript{262} See United States v. Goering et al., \textit{in XXII TRIALS OF WAR CRIMINALS BEFORE THE NUREMBERG MILITARY TRIBUNALS [T.W.C.] 466 (1947).}


\item \textsuperscript{264} See, \textit{e.g.}, Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 999 U.N.T.S. 302; Asian Agricultural Products Ltd. (AAPL) v. Sri Lanka, ICSID Case No. ARB/87/3, Final Award (June 27, 1990), 6 ICSID Rev. 526 (1991) (rendering an award in the first investor arbitration claim case of its kind brought under a bilateral investment treaty).
\end{enumerate}
Holbrooke, the U.N. envoy on the Bosnian peace process, which provided Karadžić with immunity and protection against prosecution. While Karadžić failed to prove the existence of the agreement, Karadžić seems to suggest that, had it been produced, the agreement would have been valid under international law.\footnote{265} This claim, while dubious, reflects ancient practice. Some scholars argue that individuals, or at least collective groups of individuals in the sense of civil society, should contribute to the formation of customary international law instead of or alongside the state.\footnote{266} Some even assert that the individual is the only original, natural person in international law,\footnote{267} which harkens back to the skepticism over the distinction between original and derived personality. Once again, practice evolves to address the “requirements of international life,” with individuals occasionally enjoying a functional, relative degree of personality.\footnote{268} Our conclusion must be that the existence and degree of international legal personality in individuals is fluctuating and relative depending on the state of international law and the needs of the international community, which potentially keeps the door open for future expansion of personality.

CONCLUSION

Some scholars argue that personality, as a notion, should effectively be abandoned in favor of a new way to think about actors in international law.\footnote{269} This perspective is attractive and


266. See Legal Consequences for Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia, 1971 I.C.J. at 69–70, 74 (separate opinion by Ammoun, J.); Western Sahara, 1975 I.C.J. at 100 (separate opinion by Ammoun, J.).


268. See Reparation for Injuries Suffered in Service of the United Nations, 1949 I.C.J. at 179; Legality of the Use by a State of Nuclear Weapons in Armed Conflict, 1996 I.C.J. at 78–79, 198 (dissenting opinion by Koroma) (“I agree with the Court that because of the necessities of international life, it is accepted that international organizations can exercise implied powers, which are not in conflict with their constitution and are required to ensure their effectiveness.”).

269. See, e.g., Rosalyn Higgins, Problems and Process: International Law and How We Use It 49–51 (1999).}
can certainly be considered, but, for now, personality retains an important status. The difficulty is that the rights of personality are fragmenting, and the international community needs to develop a coherent understanding of how to identify and draw consequences from personality.

The preceding survey of the various ways that personality is understood in international law suggests that the common thread is one of functionality. International organizations are the most obvious entity based on functional existence, but we also find quasi-international organizations may be treated as if they were international organizations depending on their function. Additionally, the article observes that other collective entities, such as corporations and NGOs, as well as singular entities (individuals), similarly enjoy aspects of international legal personality based on how they function within the international legal order. Some of these entities, such as NLMs, indigenous peoples, or insurgents, have some kind of territorial existence, and their personality blurs into statehood. The most obvious of these is the collective triumvirate of the PLO, the Palestinian Authority, and the state of Palestine. In each of these cases, the distinction between being an international legal person and being treated as an international legal person dissolves, and we are left with relative rights and duties as the basis for or manifestation of personality.

The dominant paradigm of the functionalist premise for the law of international organizations assumes that organizations fulfill functions, in that they are cooperative endeavors between states. For the other entities in this article, however, there was a similar political choice to view the entity as fulfilling a similarly important function, and treat the entity as having personality for that purpose. On this basis, this article concludes that questionable entities may be regarded as relative international legal persons depending on the function at issue. For example, insurgents have personality as a basis for the application of international humanitarian law, NGOs have personality in order to insulate them from state politics, and certain religious organizations have personality for the promotion of the religious mission. In this way, the functionalist, analytical approach that
forms the core of the theory of the law of international organizations is also the preferred approach to assessing the personality of questionable entities in the international legal system.

Perhaps then it is time to retire the notion of the monolithic, singular status of the international legal person and instead recognize that personality is essentially a status of holding rights and duties, and that rights and duties fluctuate based on functions. We might still place states in a special category as the grantors of rights, but we need to acknowledge that other entities are increasingly enjoying relative personality based on their functions.