

Since the founding of the United Nations, the antagonism between power and law – the dilemma of power politics – has remained unresolved, undermining the organization’s mission of collective security. With the privileges accorded to the Security Council’s permanent members, the UN Charter represents a system where the rules cannot be enforced against the main enforcers.

Ignored by most, the Charter provides the framework where the “great powers” – as arbiters and enforcers of international peace and security, not bound by the will of the majority – negotiate the balance of power all among themselves, to the detriment of all the others.

(From the Foreword)

The texts published in this volume were presented in September 2024 at an international roundtable consultation at Çırağan Palace in Istanbul. Scholars and practitioners from Austria, Brazil, China, Denmark, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, the Netherlands, Russia, Switzerland, Türkiye, and the United States explore and analyze the dynamics of global power relations and the challenges to the rule of law under UN auspices. The chapters deal with: “The United Nations and the Rule of Law: Real vs. Ideal,” “The Security Council and Global Power Politics,” “The Dilemma of Sovereignty in the UN System,” and “National Sovereignty or Global Governance? Prospects for Reform.”



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SOVEREIGNTY AND COERCION

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The United Nations in the Web of Power Politics

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