The German military theorist Carl Philipp Gottfried von Clausewitz famously said that war is diplomacy by other means. In today’s world, as Ruti Teitel explains in her timely new book, *Humanity’s Law*, international conflict—and cooperation—is increasingly played out in the language of law, not diplomacy. Cold-war concepts like deterrence and containment have, in the wake of the human rights revolution, given way to a revival of an idea that had been discredited for centuries, that of just war, not for the sake of God (as in the past) but for the sake of humanity.

Reaching back as far as the origins of international law in the modern era, and the ideas of its Dutch founder Hugo Grotius, and then fast forwarding to the transformative political, economic, and social events of our own times—from the end of the Cold War to the Yugoslav conflict to 9/11 to the crisis of globalization—Teitel offers a compelling account of how the rights and wrongs of conflict have been recast in human rights and humanitarian terms, the language of state security overtaken by that of human security.

Beginning with Kosovo and culminating in the Security Council’s go ahead for air strikes on Libya, it has become legitimate to use force to protect civilians, enforce human rights, and prevent humanitarian disaster. As Teitel provocatively argues, the humanity-based use of force carries its own dilemmas and dangers, where, for example, today’s interventions, whether Afghanistan, Iraq or Libya, are judged daily on the basis of how many civilians have been killed rather than saved by the use of force.

Teitel, a legal scholar who invented the concept of “transitional justice” in her previous book of that name, also chronicles how the prosecution of war crimes has shifted from an instrument of post-conflict political transition (the case of Nuremberg) to a weapon of human rights and humanitarian-based just war, with criminal indictments a frequent occurrence in the very midst of on-going conflict. In her comprehensive account of the evolution of international criminal justice from Nuremberg to the ad hoc tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda to the permanent International Criminal Court, Teitel poses hard questions about the use and abuse of criminal accountability in conflict—questions that will be as uncomfortable for international lawyers as for policymakers. Have criminal trials far from the scene of conflict made it more not less difficult to heal old grievances, for example in the Balkans? Did the international legal community jump the gun in threatening Ghadaffi and his family with criminal indictments, taking off the table options such as amnesties or exile that might have led to an earlier and less bloody regime change in Libya?

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Have the competing allegations of war crimes and humanitarian violations made in harder rather than easier to have meaningful peace talks between Israel and Palestine, distracting from the underlying political claims at issue?

Providing examples from around the world, *Humanity's Law* considers legal and political developments related to violent conflict in Europe, North America, South America, and Africa. This interdisciplinary work is essential reading for anyone attempting to grasp the momentous changes occurring in global affairs as the management of conflict is increasingly driven by the claims and interests of persons and peoples, and state sovereignty itself is transformed.

Praise for *Humanity’s Law*:

“Ruti Teitel has written a profound and important book. Her concept of ‘humanity law’ is the first successful effort that I have seen to capture and frame the deep paradigm shift that is taking place in international law and relations. She draws from the basic principles of the law of war, human rights law, and international criminal law to develop a powerful unifying framework based on the protection of persons and peoples both within states and between them. The rich tapestry of ideas and sources that this book weaves together will be studied for many years to come.” —Anne-Marie Slaughter, Professor of Politics and International Affairs, Princeton University, and former Director of Policy Planning for the US State Department

“Ruti Teitel offers a fascinating guided tour of the emerging synthesis of the international laws once separately described as human rights, the laws of war and international criminal justice. She traces both their separate origins and the many ways they have shaped and are reshaping each other. This book is essential reading for every student of international law and politics.” —Michael Doyle, Professor of US Foreign and Security Policy, Columbia University

“Ruti Teitel has written a passionate and scholarly account of the emergence of a new transnational law centered on persons and peoples and infused with liberal and egalitarian values. *Humanity's Law* implicitly raises a fascinating question: How will humanity law adapt to the rise of Chinese power, and what will its impact be in a genuinely multicultural world order?” —Robert O. Keohane, Professor of International Affairs, Princeton University

“Ruti Teitel is an international legal theorist who empirical scholars of international relations always find worthwhile to engage. In describing the paradigm shift from the law of nations to the law of humanity, she always keeps in sight the political context that motivates and reflects these changing legal ideas.” —Jack Snyder, Professor of International Relations, Columbia University

“This is an important book because it introduces us to the idea of ‘Humanity Law’—a paradigm shift in the way the world is governed in which law has a bigger place and in which individuals as well as states are the subjects of law.” —Mary Kaldor, Professor of Global Governance, London School of Economics and Political Science

About the author

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