

# 'Fair and Equitable Treatment' in International Investment Law

A breach of fair and equitable treatment is alleged in almost every investor-state dispute. It has therefore become a controversial norm, which touches many questions at the heart of general international law. Roland Kläger sheds light on these controversies by exploring the deeper doctrinal foundations of fair and equitable treatment and reviewing its contentious relationship with the international minimum standard. The norm is also discussed in light of the fragmentation of international law, theories of international justice and rational balancing, and the idea of constitutionalism in international law. In this vein, a shift in the way of addressing fair and equitable treatment is proposed by focusing on the process of justificatory reasoning.

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# 'Fair and Equitable Treatment' in International Investment Law

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# Foreword

International investment law has grown considerably in importance in recent years, as evidenced by the great increase in the number of international investment agreements, in the scholarly literature and even in the number of awards. Nevertheless, the doctrinal foundations of international investment law have remained highly contested: it is easier to draw up a list of disputed than agreed propositions. Dr Kläger's work seeks to address this problem in respect of fair and equitable treatment, a central norm of international investment law. In doing so he discusses fair and equitable treatment in relation to general theories of international law, legal method and even international justice.

In Part I he argues that exploring these doctrinal foundations gives a broader justificatory basis to the fair and equitable treatment standard and thereby conduces to greater consistency and legal certainty. This contrasts with a persistent trend of opinion that fair and equitable treatment is irreducibly vague, and that it authorises international tribunals to conduct an 'all things considered' examination of host State action or inaction. On this view, arguments derived from the general rules of interpretation are of little use in the application of fair and equitable treatment: the only important question is what the current tribunal decides happened and whether it was - at some adjectival level - unfair or inequitable to the investor. By way of reaction, other tribunals (notably in Glamis Gold) have constricted the meaning of the formula to an outdated and excessively rigid version of an international minimum standard, based on cases (especially Neer) involving a distinct factual matrix. The oversimplification of traditional approaches towards fair and equitable treatment highlights the growing disunity of the law.

The discussion of 'fragmentation', as it has come to be called (as if international law had once been unfragmented and immaculate),

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suggests an alternative. Dr Kläger suggests ways to integrate arguments from other sub-systems of international law into international investment law. On this view, vague provisions like fair and equitable treatment serve as gateway clauses allowing a systemic exchange between different sub-systems.

Part II looks at the actual argumentation of arbitral tribunals and the ideas of justice behind their decisions. The notion of fair and equitable treatment already implies an affiliation to underlying perceptions of justice. By reviewing international theories of justice, he argues that the application of fair and equitable treatment is the result of a process of balancing of often conflicting arguments and the competing poles of stability and discretion. It is suggested that there is already a series of argumentation patterns or *topoi* which may be considered as subelements or principles of fair and equitable treatment. These principles are further explored with respect to their comparative law background, their contours in arbitral jurisprudence as well as their role and weight in decision making. Thereby, it is argued that the structure, intensity and rationality of arbitral review may converge to achieve a convincing construction of fair and equitable treatment.

In a final Part, the book tries to assess the impact of this conceptual scheme of fair and equitable treatment in the broader context of the international legal system. The author argues that, within the system of international law sources, fair and equitable treatment has not undergone transformation of status so as to become a conventional norm: in other words, he rejects the customary law character of fair and equitable treatment. Nevertheless, the principles underlying the idea of fair and equitable treatment disclose an emerging justificatory deep-structure that resembles some elements of a process of constitutionalisation in this area of law.

This is a valuable attempt to give some rigour to a term which has sometimes seemed devoid of meaning and a jurisdiction consequently controversial and insecure. Whether one shares its conclusions, its aim is surely right – and its appearance in Cambridge Studies in International and Comparative Law consequently to be welcomed.

James Crawford Lauterpacht Centre for International Law University of Cambridge

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# **Abbreviations**

AJIL American Journal of International Law

AJIL Spec. Suppl. AJIL Special Supplement
ALI The American Law Institute

Am. U. Int'l L. Rev. American University International Law

Review

Arb. Int'l International Arbitration
ArchVR Archiv des Völkerrechts

ARSP Archiv für Rechts- und Sozialphilosphie
ASIL ASIL Proc. ASIL Proceedings of the Annual Meeting
Asper Rev. Int'l Bus. & Asper Review for International Business and

Trade L. Trade Law

AWD Außenwirtschaftsdienst des Betriebs-Beraters

BCSC Supreme Court of British Columbia
BIICL British Institute of International and

Comparative Law

BIT Bilateral investment treaty

Bus. L. Brief (Am. U.)

Business Law Brief (American University)

BYIL

British Yearbook of International Law

Cal. L. Rev. California Law Review

Can. Bus. L. J. Canadian Business Law Journal CARICOM Caribbean Common Market

Chicago J. Int'l L. Chicago Journal of International Law
Chinese JIL Chinese Journal of International Law
CMLR Common Market Law Review

CIVILK COMMINION Market Law Review

Cmnd Command

Colum. J. Transnat'l L. Columbia Journal of Transnational Law

Colum. L. Rev. Columbia Law Review

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#### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS XXXVII

COMESA Common Market for Eastern and Southern

Africa

Conn. J. Int'l L. Connecticut Journal of International Law

Cornell Int'l L. J. Cornell International Law Journal DR-CAFTA Central America–Dominican

Republic-United States Free Trade Agreement

Duke L. J. Duke Law Journal EC European Community

ECHR European Convention on Human Rights

ECJ European Court of Justice
Ecology L. Q. Ecology Law Quarterly
ECR European Court Reports

ECtHR European Court of Human Rights

ECT Energy Charter Treaty

EJIL European Journal of International Law

Ent. L. R. Entertainment Law Review

EU European Union EuR Europarecht

EuZW Europäische Zeitschrift für Wirtschaftsrecht FCN treaty Treaty of friendship, commerce and

navigation

FDI foreign direct investment

Finnish YIL Finnish Yearbook of International Law Fla J. Int'l L. Florida Journal of International Law Fletcher F. World Aff. The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs Fordham Int'l L. J. Fordham International Law Journal

Fordham L. Rev. Fordham Law Review
FTA Free Trade Agreement
FTC Free Trade Commission
Ga L. Rev. Georgia Law Review

GATS General Agreement on Trade in Services
GATT General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

GC Grand Chamber

Geo. Int'l Envtl L. Rev. Georgetown International Environmental

Law Review

Geo. Mason L. Rev. George Mason Law Review
German L. J. German Law Journal

German L. J. German Law Journal
CYII German Yearbook of

GYIL German Yearbook of International Law Harv. Int'l L. J. Harvard International Law Journal



**ICCA** 

Cambridge University Press 978-0-521-19771-7 - 'Fair and Equitable Treatment' in International Investment Law Roland Kläger Frontmatter More information

#### XXXVIII LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Harvard Law Review Harv. L. Rev.

Hastings W.-N. W. Hastings West-Northwest Journal of **Environmental Law and Policy** J. Envtl L. & Pol'y **ICC** International Chamber of Commerce

Arbitration

**IC**J International Court of Justice

ICLQ International and Comparative Law Quarterly

International Council for Commercial

**ICSID** International Centre for Settlement of

**Investment Disputes** 

ICSID Rev. - FILJ ICSID Review - Foreign Investment Law

IIA international investment agreement Institute for International Law and Justice IILI **IISD** International Institute for Sustainable

Development

ILA International Law Association ILC International Law Commission ILM **International Legal Materials** ILO International Labour Organization ILSA Journal of International and

Comparative Law

International Monetary Fund **IMF** 

Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies Ind. J. Global Legal

Stud.

ILSA J. Int'l & Comp. L.

Int. ALR International Arbitration Law Review International Journal of Cultural Property Int. J. of Cultural

**Property** 

Int'l Law. The International Lawyer International Law Quarterly Int'l L. Q.

Int'l Tax & Bus. Law. International Tax & Business Lawyer Int. TLR International Trade Law & Regulation

Iowa L. Rev. Iowa Law Review

International Organization for ISO

Standardization

ITO International Trade Organization Journal of International Economic Law J. Int'l Econ. L. Journal of Transnational Law & Policy J. Transnat'l L. & Pol'y

**IWIT** Journal of World Investment & Trade



#### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS XXXIX

JWT Journal of World Trade

JZ Juristenzeitung

L. & Bus. Rev. Am. Law and Business Review of the Americas

Law & Contemp. Law and Contemporary Problems

Probs.

Law & Pol'y Int'l Bus. Law and Policy in International Business
Leiden J. Int'l L. Leiden Journal of International Law
Maastricht J. Europ. & Maastricht Journal of European and

Comp. L. Comparative Law

MAI Multilateral Agreement on Investment
Manchester J. Int'l Manchester Journal of International

Econ. L. Economic Law

Max Planck UNYB Max Planck Yearbook of United Nations Law MERCOSUR Mercado Comun del Cono Sur (Southern Cone

Common Market)

Mich. J. Int'l L. Michigan Journal of International Law

Mich. L. Rev. Michigan Law Review

MIGA Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency

Minn. J. Global Trade Minnesota Journal of Global Trade Minn. J. Int'l L. Minnesota Journal of International Law

Minn. L. Rev. Minnesota Law Review

mn. Margin number

NAFTA North American Free Trade Agreement

NAFTA FTC NAFTA Free Trade Commission N. C. L. Rev. North Carolina Law Review

NILR Netherlands International Law Review

NPM non-precluded measures

Nw. J. Int'l L. & Bus. Northwestern Journal of International Law

and Business

NYU Envtl L. J. New York University Environmental Law

Journal

NYU J. Int'l L. & Pol. New York University Journal of International

Law and Politics

OECD Organization for Economic Cooperation and

Development

OSPAR Oslo/Paris Convention (for the Protection of

the Marine Environment of the North-East

Atlantic)

Pace Envtl L. Rev. Pace Environmental Law Review



#### xl LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Pac. McGeorge Bus. & Pacific McGeorge Global Business &

Dev. L. J. Development Law Journal
PCA Permanent Court of Arbitration
PCB polychlorinated biphenyl

RdC Recueil des Cours

RGDIP Revue Générale de Droit International Public

RIW Recht der internationalen Wirtschaft SCC Stockholm Chamber of Commerce

SchiedsVZ Zeitschrift für Schiedsverfahren
SLA Softwood Lumber Agreement

St John's J. Legal St John's Journal of Legal Commentary

Comment.

Suffolk Transnat'l Suffolk Transnational Law Review

L. Rev.

TEU Treaty on European Union

TDM Transnational Dispute Management
Tex. Int'l L. J. Texas International Law Journal

TFEU Treaty on the Functioning of the European

Union

Touro Int'l L. Rev. Touro International Law Review

TRIMS Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of

**Investment Measures** 

TRIPS Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of

**Intellectual Property Rights** 

U. C. Davis J. Int'l L. & U. C. Davis Journal of International Law and

Pol'y Policy

UCLA J. Int'l L. & UCLA Journal of International Law and

Foreign Aff. Foreign Affairs

U. Miami Inter-Am. University of Miami Inter-American Law

L. Rev. Review

U. Miami Int'l & Comp. University of Miami International and

L. Rev. Comparative Law Review

UN United Nations

UNESCO UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization

UNCITRAL UN Commission on International Trade Law UNCTAD UN Conference on Trade and Development UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific, and

**Cultural Organization** 



#### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

xli

UN RIAA UN Reports of International Arbitral Awards

UNTS United Nations Treaty Series

U. Pa J. Int'l Econ. L. University of Pennsylvania Journal of

International Economic Law

Urb. Law. The Urban Lawyer
US United States
USD US dollar

US PPI US Producer Price Index

Va J. Int'l L. Virginia Journal of International Law

VAT value-added tax

VCLT Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties

Vol. Volume

Wis. L. Rev. Wisconsin Law Review

VwVfG Verwaltungsverfahrensgesetz (German Code

of Administrative Procedure)

WTO World Trade Organization
Yale J. Int'l L. Yale Journal of International Law

Yale L. J. Yale Law Journal

ZaöRV Zeitschrift für ausländisches öffentliches Recht

und Völkerrecht