

*Władysław Czapliński*

## EDITORIAL

One of the former directors of the Institute of Law Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, who was also the previous Editor-in-Chief of the Polish Yearbook of International Law, used to say that being in one's 40s is the best age for scientists: one has already learned everything, and yet still has the power and will to share this knowledge with others.

We have the pleasure and honour of introducing Readers to volume XL of the Polish Yearbook of International Law, in the form of a jubilee edition. It is always difficult to prepare a laudation for one's own work. It seems that the Yearbook is entering its best years (interestingly the majority of its editors are also in the corresponding age bracket), but we can be very proud of the work that has been done over the past 50 years.

Poland always had much to say in the domain of public international law. It was quite a natural development that Polish international lawyers began publishing a law journal that on one hand would make it easier for them to publish important texts in English (an international lingua franca), and on the other hand would allow them to disseminate the legacy of Polish international legal writing in the world. The Polish Yearbook of International Law has fulfilled both tasks.

The Yearbook commenced at a difficult time in the late 1960s; a time indeed not favourable for Polish authors. However, we have succeeded in overcoming the political, financial, technological and other obstacles. Step by step the Yearbook has developed, and subsequent editors' ambitions were focused on raising the rank of the journal and making it recognizable and present in the world of science. We have succeeded in introducing the Yearbook not only into leading libraries, but also in most important global databases (including most recently the prestigious Scopus database), and we are doing our best to follow the technological developments. We were particularly happy when the Yearbook was quoted in judgments of the International Court of Justice.

As part of the current jubilee volume, we also pay special tribute to Prof. Janusz Symonides, the former editor-in-chief of our Yearbook (1976-1985), who passed away last year. Prof. Symonides was a well-known Polish jurist and diplomat, specializing in human rights, the Law of the Sea, protection of cultural heritage, and international relations. He was one of the Polish representatives during the work on the Convention on the Law of the Sea, an expert of the OSCE, a conciliator of the Montego Bay Convention, and Director of both the Polish Institute of International Affairs and the Division

of Human Rights, Democracy, Peace and Tolerance at UNESCO. He was also a prolific author, with his textbooks still being taught at Polish universities.

The current volume includes several texts which discuss the ideas that preoccupied Prof. Symonides, refer to his scientific achievements, or deal with other issues relating to his academic and diplomatic work.

We hope that our current Readers will stay with us and new Readers will join us – at least in this 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary volume of the Yearbook – in taking an active part in these difficult and turbulent yet fascinating times for international lawyers.

*Warsaw, Summer 2021*