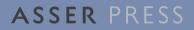
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# NETHERLANDS INTERNATIONAL LAW REVIEW

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### Moral Responsibility & Military Effectiveness

Edited by

Herman Amersfoort, René Moelker, Joseph Soeters & Désirée Verweij

The missions of armed forces are required to be effective. Thus missions are oriented to objectives that help prevent, contain or solve problems. A soldier, for example, who skillfully neutralizes his or her target is not effective when the problem is not prevented, contained or solved. Political, legal and moral awareness is important to the soldier, because doing things right is not the same as doing right or rightful things. The soldier wishes to avoid unlawful orders, but also tries to avoid casualties among non-combatants. Normally responsibility lies with higher authorities, but the fact remains that the soldier is the one who pulls the trigger. It is not simply a matter of veering between two evils, because a mission that is without moral grounds should not have been initiated in the first place and when pursued against better knowing it will probably lose effectiveness in the end. It is impossible to make compromises here. But it is also not possible to foresee all the consequences of military action, and unanticipated consequences can easily backfire. Dilemmas are bound to occur when the soldier is caught up in blurred conflict situations. This volume tries to add to our understanding of the problem of creating and maintaining a balance between effectiveness and moral responsibility.

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## NETHERLANDS INTERNATIONAL LAW REVIEW VOL. LX 2013/3

#### CONTENTS

#### Articles

X.E. KRAMER, Cross-Border Enforcement and the Brussels I-bis Regulation: Towards a New Balance between Mutual Trust and National	
Control over Fundamental Rights	343
S.J. TANIA, Least Developed Countries in the WTO Dispute Settlement System	375
M. DEN HEIJER, Shared Responsibility before the European Court of Human Rights	411
Netherlands Judicial Decisions on Public International Law	
Supreme Court (Hoge Raad), State of the Netherlands v. Mustafić et al., State of the Netherlands v. Nuhanović, Judgments of 6 September 2013 – Introductory note by C. RYNGAERT	441
Book Reviews	
R. Feenstra, ed./transl., Hugo Grotius. Mare liberum 1609-2009 (C. Roelofsen)	487
R. Garnett, Substance and Procedure in Private International Law (D. Anton)	489
F. Grimal, Threats of Force: International Law and Strategy (K. Hulme)	493
M. Herdegen, Principles of International Economic Law (P. Sean Morris)	496
D. Ortolland; JP. Pirat, <i>Atlas géopolitique des espaces maritimes:</i> <i>Frontières, énergie, transports, piraterie, pêche et environnement</i> (B. Kwiatkowska)	499
I. Venzke, How Interpretation Makes International Law: On Semantic Change and Normative Twists (G. Molier)	503
X. Yang, State Immunity in International Law (R. van Alebeek)	508
Hague Case Law – Latest Developments (E.V. KOPPE)	515
Books Received and Available for Review	517
Contents of Volume LX	519

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#### CONTENTS OF THE NETHERLANDS INTERNATIONAL LAW REVIEW (NILR)

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