

## IN MEMORIAM

### SHABTAI ROSENNE—A Tribute



Shabtai Rosenne was born in London on Nov. 24, 1917. He died September 21, 2010 in Jerusalem. Ours is the priceless legacy of those 93 years devoted to scholarship, teaching, lawyering, and diplomacy — much of it in the service of promoting understanding and respect for international law and institutions. This Society marked the achievements of Ambassador and Professor Rosenne:

- by awarding him the Certificate of Merit in 1968 for his great work, *The Law and Practice of the International Court*;
- by making him an honorary member in 1976,
- and by conferring the Manley O. Hudson Medal on him in 1999.

We were not alone. In 2004, he was the very first recipient of The Hague Prize in International Law.

As many of us know, it is difficult to imagine an international career that is not intimately linked to airplanes. That was certainly true of Shabtai Rosenne. He served in the Royal Air

Force from 1940–46. From 1948 to 1967 he served as Legal Adviser of the Israeli Foreign Ministry. Like his counterparts throughout the world, he spent a fair amount of his time in the air. Even here, Shabtai set the standard. Before we indulge in too much self-pity about the decline in amenities on board airliners in the 21st century, consider this:



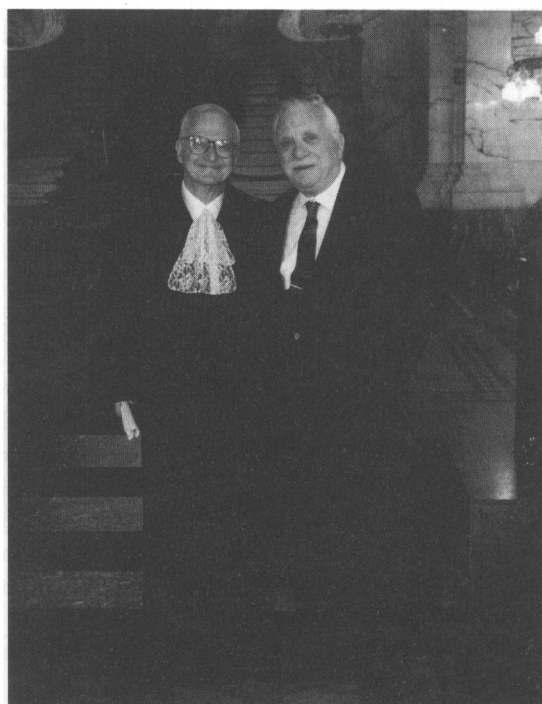
Here is Shabtai en route to Rhodes for armistice talks with Jordan in 1948. One presumes that the lawyer is the sleepless one grabbing the much-needed nap. Like this trip, a fair number of Shabtai's voyages marked important moments in the history of international law and relations.

Many of us still teach our students about the abduction of Adolph Eichmann from Argentina and his trial in Israel for his role in horrific atrocities. Here is Shabtai traveling to Argentina for talks in the aftermath of its complaint to the UN about the abduction carried out on its territory.





Much of Shabtai's travel was to the UN headquarters in NY and Geneva, and to other conferences and meeting sites. He served on the ILC from 1962 to 1971, and was elected to the Institut de Droit international in 1963. Shabtai was no shrinking violet. Here he is in the Sixth Committee in 1979 asking for the floor with some determination. Maurice Mendelson put it this way: "For a diplomat, he had an unusually trenchant style, and often gave an impression of impatience, but his opinions were usually spot on." I can vouch for that. The many years during which I worked with Shabtai at the law of the sea conference and elsewhere were never dull. But Shabtai was also one of the nicest, most dignified, and most respectful people I ever met. Since I arrived at this annual meeting, one colleague after another, noting that I was scheduled to speak tonight, told me what a kind, good, and gentle man Shabtai was.





Shabtai's scholarly contributions to international law are legion. They include his general editorship of the widely consulted Virginia commentary on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. But, what stands out as "Shabtai's major contribution," former ICJ President Stephen Schwebel's observed, is Shabtai's work, "*The Law and Practice of the International Court, 1920–2005*." This, Schwebel continues, "was the pursuit of a lifetime, its first edition having been published in 1965, and the fourth in 2006. That great four-volume work—comprehensively and acutely sets out the history of the Court, its political context, and its functioning. It is the first and sometimes last source consulted by counsel before the Court, the Registry of the Court, and judges of the Court." Judge Hisahi Owada, the current president, noted from the bench that the work "remains an indispensable guide to the role and functioning of this Court."



Near the end of his life, Shabtai was called back into service as a member of the Turkel Commission charged with investigating the incident off Gaza in which Israeli forces boarded a Turkish ship. The Commission's two foreign observers, Lord Trimble and Brigadier-General Kenneth Watkin, concluded their report with the following tribute: "Finally we regret that our acquaintance with Shabtai Rosenne was cut short by his death. He impressed us with his knowledge, experience, insight and, above all, with his character and courtesy. He was a true gentleman."

Please Print	DATE: 25-3-92	No.:
NAME: ROSENNE	INITIALS: SHABTAI	
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FUNCTION: Student of the law		
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For those of us who study and practice international law, then, how best should we remember Shabtai? Here is a small souvenir that may sum it up nicely indeed. It is Shabtai's Peace Palace Library card from 1992, when he was at or nearing 75 years of age. In the blank space next to Function, he wrote "Student of the law."

Thank you, Shabtai.