

Summary

The European Union and the International Law of Cultural Diversity - Elements of a Beautiful Friendship

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Cultural Diversity is an important topos in the European Union. It is part of the Union's self-portrayal, can be found in diverse legal instruments, and is the rationale behind numerous legal provisions. At the same time, concern for cultural diversity gives reason for grave reservations concerning the Union. This article is intended to assist, on the basis of international law, in distinguishing appearance and reality. The Union will be analysed firstly as a situation of application of the international law of cultural diversity, secondly as regional executive of this international law, and thirdly as its global promoter. It shows that international law and Union law reinforce each other.

The former conveys to the Union instruments for pursuing European unification which at the same time serve its own implementation. Furthermore, it does not set limits to European unity since it protects only cultural pluralism but not state-supported identity, *distinctiveness*. A prerequisite for this consonance is that the Union's constitutional law allows for political unity without cultural unity and that international law remains mute about important questions on European unification.

From an international law perspective, the motto of the Union is thus more illusory than real; however, the international law perspective does not fully exhaust the problem. Conformity with international law alone cannot dissipate the concern for the future of cultural diversity in the Union.