

EDITORIAL

You will notice that this double issue is a very large one, with much space devoted to United Nations matters. Two of the articles discuss possible developments in those areas of particular interest to us.

In this connection we have learnt with interest that:

– a recent UN report has confirmed that a growing number of business and industry groups are making efforts to improve their environmental and social performance, especially in such fields as global warming;

– the UN Secretary-General has urged individual citizens “to use their power” through their votes and as consumers to achieve environmental change through constant pressure on their governments; and

– the UN has still not decided who will take on the post of Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, which sets an overall framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle the challenges posed by climate change.

On a national level, a positive development is that taken by the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which has approved a “sense of the Senate” resolution calling for US participation under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change to establish mitigation commitments for all countries that are major emitters of greenhouse gases. We are hoping that this will lead to a more cooperative and positive spirit rather than a downward rush to the smallest common denominator.

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We mourn the death of Prof. Louis B. Sohn, one of the great personalities who left Poland just before Hitler invaded his country. He had an extraordinary career and left an indelible mark on international law and institutions.

The UN Secretary-General paid a special tribute to him, noting that he was a member of the US delegation at the 1945 San Francisco conference, at which the UN Charter was drawn up, and was involved not only in the drafting of the Law of the Sea Convention, but also the Declaration of the Stockholm Conference in 1972.

I personally was always proud to receive from him not only compliments but also a critical word from time to time, on which I was always glad to act.

25 July 2006

- Wolfgang R. S. -