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Solutions for post-territorial sovereignty in maritime states

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Climate change threatens national security. Our research is based on one of the most vulnerable groups: the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), whose lands will be submerged partially or entirely by 2100 (AOSIS, 2015). Their consequential loss of territory would result in the loss of legal status as nation-states. Thus, the need for policy measures and international legal counsel should be recognized as early as possible. We will analyze the feasibility of their relocation plans to optimize an efficient process of resettlement, based upon multiple criteria such as cultural compatibility, the presence of available dispute resolution mechanisms, geographical proximity, and temporal and spatial practicality. Then, we will consider possible solutions to maintain the nation-state status of maritime countries. From an international law perspective, we will explore the possibility of amending international treaties to ensure that the submerged land be recognized as legitimate state territory. This research will analyze possible legal solutions based on historical precedents; support from other countries and international organizations; spatial and temporal implications; and the practical applicability of these methods. This research has implications for the global community because rising sea levels will affect two-thirds of the world population living within 100 kilometers of any coastline (UNEP, 2005). This paper aims to provide a legal reference and practical guide for maritime states in the years to come.

Biography

Annie Kim received her Bachelor of Arts in International Relations with distinctions from Western University. She is pursuing Master's degree at Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University in Ottawa. Her various research interests include global environmental politics, Southeast Asian studies, and Cuban history and culture.

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