3. The Fundamental Principles Governing International Relations

This chapter discusses the fundamental principles governing international relations. The principles represent the fundamental set of standards on which States are united and which allow a degree of relatively smooth international dealings. They make up the apex of the whole body of international legislation. They constitute overriding legal standards that may be regarded as the constitutional principles of the international community. These principles are: the sovereign equality of States; the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs; the prohibition of the threat or use of force; peaceful settlement of international disputes; the duty to co-operate; the principle of good faith; self-determination of peoples; respect for human rights; and the prevention of significant environmental harm. The discussions then turn to the distinguishing traits of the fundamental principles and the close link between the principles and the need for their co-ordination.
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