Preface

Dame Rosalyn Higgins wrote of her invitation to teach the General Course in International Law at the Hague Academy in 1991: ‘Can there really be anything new or interesting still to say, or is not all wisdom and scholarship already gathered in the Collected General Courses?’¹ Given her achievements and status as a scholar of international law even then, one might consider it folly to ever endeavour to write comprehensively on the topic of public international law. Of course, Higgins did deliver the Course and publish her highly regarded *Problems and Process* thereafter, and went on not only to publish important works but to preside over the World Court and deliver important opinions and decisions.

The point of course is that, like international law itself, scholarship must continue to be written. As the law progresses or recedes, as challenges to conceptions and practices of international law arise, new ideas and perspectives emerge. These ideas and perspectives need to be developed and explained through a range of academic and practice experiences, as reliance on the same views over time threatens to stifle thought and debate in a profoundly dynamic area of law. This book then is a modest contribution to this ever-evolving scholarship.

The writing of a book is in some ways a profoundly solitary exercise. At the same time, a work of this nature would not be possible without the wisdom and the assistance of others. Pascale Chifflet, whose grasp of structure, clarity of thought and great intellect is perhaps matched only by her modesty, I would like to thank for her meticulous review and advice. Thanks also to Gerry Simpson for reviewing some of this work and bringing to bear on it his perspicacity. I am grateful to Andrew Roe and Sylvester Urban, who provided highly valuable research assistance, as I am to a small hoard of researchers who aided this project in various ways: Irene Argeres, Sayomi Ariyawansa, William Bartley, Julia Kahan, Tyrone Liu, Patricia Saw, Jeremy Shelley, Marika Sosnowski and

¹ Rosalyn Higgins, *Problems and Process: International Law and How We Use It* (1994), 1.

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