Preface

This book is based on research I conducted during my years at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva. In this context, I would like to express my gratitude to Professors Andrea Bianchi, Vera Gowlland-Debbas and Maria Gavouneli for their critical observations and constructive suggestions on drafts of the text. The final manuscript draws inspiration therefrom.

I am most indebted to the late Professor Vera Gowlland-Debbas. I had the chance to be her pupil and then her last teaching and research assistant before her retirement, and I was always struck by her humility, generosity and warm personality, her idealism and strong convictions, her broad vision on international law. The idea for this book was conceived during one of her courses and her writings have shaped my thought. She will always remain an academic and life mentor for me.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Professor Laurence Boisson de Chazournes. This book never would have seen the light of day without her constant support and encouragement. I owe her for our collaboration in various research projects and for our discussions on various aspects of international law. During the most difficult moments of this journey, she never let me doubt myself about being able to deliver. Special thanks also go to Professor Miltiadis Sarigiannidis, with whom I discussed parts of the argument and who offered me the opportunity to assist his courses at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and test some of my ideas in the postgraduate programme.

This monograph is the outcome of long hours of research. In this endeavour, I have benefited immensely from the help of the Graduate Institute’s library personnel. I would like to thank Martine Basset and Marie-Pierre Flotron in particular for their availability and for facilitating my visits to the library. I am also grateful to the Edward Elgar team for all their help in the preparation of the manuscript and the production of the book, to Claire Mahon for reviewing my English, and to Konstantinos Christoglou for uniformizing citations and helping with the bibliography. I should also mention the Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund Program of the Tokyo Foundation and the Graduate Institute for financing part of this research.
The writing of a book is an exercise in solitude. Thankfully, my friends have always been there when most needed, to divert my thoughts towards other ‘life pleasures’. Special thanks go above all to Patrick, Evgenia, Georgina, David, Konstantinos, Mamadou, Antonella, Nagia and the Thessaloniki ‘clan’ for putting up with me during that time.

Last but not least, I want to extend my gratitude to my family, and particularly to my parents. They have been a constant source of support and inspiration. I owe them greatly and this book is dedicated to my late father and my mother.

Thessaloniki, 27 December 2016