Preface

The aim of the present English edition is to allow the English-speaking readers to access a monograph on the foundations and main doctrines of international law, which existed up to this date only in French. There are not many English-written monographs devoted to this apparently quite stern subject-matter, and I could thus perhaps be forgiven for venturing to close something of a gap by having translated the French text so as to render it available to a number of new readers. I have to thank very warmly once again my ‘patented’ translator, Alan Perry, former Solicitor, for his careful and outstanding translation, which reveals once more his mastery of the English language. Further, I ought to emphasise that I have largely left the text as it stood in the French edition of this book, dated 2007. Nothing really novel has been presented in the last ten years on the fundamental doctrines of international law. I have, however, updated the literature, especially in the bibliography. Since the main arguments on the foundation of the law of nations have been presented from the end of the nineteenth century to 1945, there is a large focus on older contributions. Finally, I do not discuss in the compass of this text the many ‘critical legal theories' of the last decades, because these concern the structure of the international legal argument rather than the foundation of international law. In other words, they concentrate on how international law is used and not on why international law is binding.

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