

1. **Introduction**

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) comprise 17 goals that were agreed upon by UN Member States to solve some of humanity's wicked problems. They aim to, *inter alia*, combat climate change, reduce inequality, address issues including poverty and hunger, and increase access to education.

The LSE Law School team aims to look into Goal 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and Goal 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). Through engaging with the LSE Law School's expertise, we seek to highlight how the Law School's work relates to addressing the aforementioned goals.

2. **Analysis of the Goals**

2.1 **Goal 7: Clean and Affordable Energy**

Goal 7 seeks to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.

The following section will briefly introduce research conducted by Prof Veerle Heyvaert and Dr Stephen Humphreys of the LSE Law School and delineate how their findings could facilitate development of relevant policy solutions in the energy sector.

Reforming legal instruments: Prof Veerle Heyvaert

Veerle Heyvaert, a Professor of Transnational Environmental Law at the LSE has made an important contribution to our understanding of law in advancing Goal 7.

Her paper titled 'The transnationalisation of law: rethinking law through transnational environmental regulation' focuses on the challenges that arise in the context of environmental regulation, where the legal system is continuously adapting to new scientific knowledge and technological advancements. The paper posits that traditional legal measures, such as prescriptive rules and liability regimes, may not be sufficient to address the complexity and uncertainty entangled with environmental problems. Instead, Heyvaert suggests a combination of traditional and soft law measures is needed to address environmental problems effectively, and that a flexible and adaptive approach is necessary.

By identifying and remedying legal barriers to the adoption of renewable energy, her work can help advance the development of policies and legal modalities to enable the transition to sustainable energy systems. Furthermore, through scrutinising the efficiency of legal

instruments, Heyvaert's exposition is pivotal in advising the formulation of policies that facilitate the adoption of renewable energy.

Connecting law with the broader societal and political context: Dr Stephen Humphreys

In addition to proposing reforms to legal instruments to facilitate the clean energy transition, discerning the role of law in relation to its broader societal and political context is another perspective the LSE Law School brings to analysing and tackling problems within the energy ambit.

Stephen Humphreys is an Associate Professor of International Law at the LSE. He posits, in papers such as 'Equity before "Equity"' and 'Against Future Generations', that a legal system comprises multiple actors and regimes that have to interact with each other in a highly politicised arena under an equity principle to ensure sustainable development. Furthermore, in another paper entitled 'Ungoverning the Climate', he argues that although the politicised and ungovernable scenario ('ungovernance') regarding climate change policies is unavoidable, the law functions as a system that articulates these multiple working parts as a set of norms, rules, goals, and assumptions that can contribute to achieve universal access and expansion of clean energy services and technology transfers.

Therefore, his work can aid the development of policy solutions to achieve progress pertaining to Goal 7 through providing policymakers with theoretical lenses for ideating clean energy solutions.

2.2 Goal 16. Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions

Goal 16 endeavours to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions.

The following section will briefly introduce research conducted by Prof Conor Gearty, Dr Devika Hovell, Dr Giulia Gentile, and Dr Yusra Suedi of the LSE Law School and highlight how their work contributes to Goal 16.

Rethinking counter-terrorism measurements through the lens of civil liberties: Prof Conor Gearty

Conor Gearty, a Professor of Human Rights Law, conducts research focusing on the relationship between terrorism, civil liberties, and security, thereby contributing significantly to ensuring access to justice and accountable institutions.

In recent years, Gearty has published numerous articles that examine the relationship between counter-terrorism measures to safeguard national security and the protection of civil liberties. In his publication 'British Torture, Then and Now: The Role of the Judges', Gearty discusses the reintroduction of torture and other abusive tactics into the British counter-insurgency toolkit with the start of military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq in the early 2000s. It mainly focuses on how judges have dealt with the difficulties that such violent methods have presented, both in their official capacities as judges and also as appointees to a variety of inquiries that started as a result of these actions. In his several other publications, such as the book 'On Fantasy Island: Britain, Europe, and Human Rights', Gearty delivers scrutiny of the Human Rights Act 1998 and explores the criticism of the legislation in offering adequate protection and delivering justice for all.

Envisioning the UN's role in international courts and tribunals on transnational conflict: Dr Devika Hovell

Devika Hovell is an Associate Professor in Public International Law at the LSE Law School. In contributing to the field of international criminal law through a particular focus on topics such as UN Security Council decision-making, her work examines the effectiveness and accountability of international organisations.

Hovell's paper 'On Trust: The UN Security Council' focuses on solidifying trust through application of the fiduciary construct on the UN Security Council's authority. She argues for the importance of reinforcing duties of non-exploitation and due performance on the Council to ensure a strong institution that can fulfil its duties to safeguard international justice for Member States. In the paper, she also reiterates the need to honour the value of transparency in decision-making to support the Security Council's legitimacy. More recently, she also discusses the role of the UN Security Council in the Ukraine-Russia conflict on the blog of the European Journal of International Law, positing that the Council is appropriately deadlocked in such a situation as the UN should always act as a neutral platform that allows states to debate and negotiate despite their conflicting stances.

Promoting effective judicial protection in the EU and investigating human rights in the post-Brexit EU: Dr Giulia Gentile

Dr Giulia Gentile is a Fellow at the LSE Law School. Her research in EU constitutional law and the protection of citizens' rights has several synergies with Goal 16. One example of the synergy between Gentile's research and this goal is her work on effective judicial protection in the EU. In her article 'Autonomous but interdependent: Constitutional traditions on judicial protection and the general principle of effective judicial protection,' she highlights the creative force of effective judicial protection in connection with the protection of the rule of law and the introduction of procedural guarantees both at the national and EU level. Her work highlights the tension between centralisation and pluralism in the standards of effective judicial protection, which needs to be resolved to uphold strong institutions and the rule of law in the EU.

Gentile's research sheds light on the implications of Brexit on the protection of human rights. Professor Conor Gearty and Dr Giulia Gentile have been at the centre of policy-making having offered written evidence to the House of Commons and House of Lords Joint Committee on Human Rights on the Bill of Rights. They highlighted several issues, such as the practical challenges for UK judges, the lower protection granted to selected fundamental rights and the potential for a higher number of violations of the Convention.

Ensuring inclusivity and accountability of international courts and tribunals: Dr Yusra Suedi

Dr Yusra Suedi, a Fellow at the LSE Law School, has made important contributions to examinations of the inclusivity and accountability of international courts and tribunals through exploring the extent to which they accommodate public interest concerns.

Suedi's research firstly focuses on individuals in inter-State proceedings through looking at these proceedings from both the perspectives of individuals and judicial bodies. Her work, 'Self-determination in territorial disputes before the International Court of Justice: From rhetoric to reality?', reveals that the ICJ's legal reasoning has been non-inclusive toward local populations; this is despite typical inter-state disputes being of concern to local populations, who may likely want greater transparency and inclusivity in dispute resolution. This article also suggests how international courts and tribunals can be more inclusive in their judgments and procedures.

Furthermore, Suedi's research agenda also focuses on climate change litigation in international law. She contributes to the field by examining the procedural hurdles and political barriers that States, and certain communities in the African context, may face in litigating for the climate cause, thereby impeding the inclusivity of international judicial bodies.

3. Why LSE Law School

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has raised global energy costs and forced many States to accelerate their green energy transition, thereby undergirding the importance of solutions pertaining to Goal 7. Furthermore, the conflict, in causing disruption to the international legal order, emphasises the need to strengthen international institutions.

Overall, the paper has proven that the LSE Law School is best suited to represent LSE at High Level Political Forum.

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