## PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF REFUGEES BEYOND EUROPEAN BORDERS

# PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF REFUGEES BEYOND EUROPEAN BORDERS

# Establishing Extraterritorial Legal Responsibilities

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#### Protecting the Rights of Refugees Beyond European Borders. Establishing Extraterritorial Legal Responsibilities

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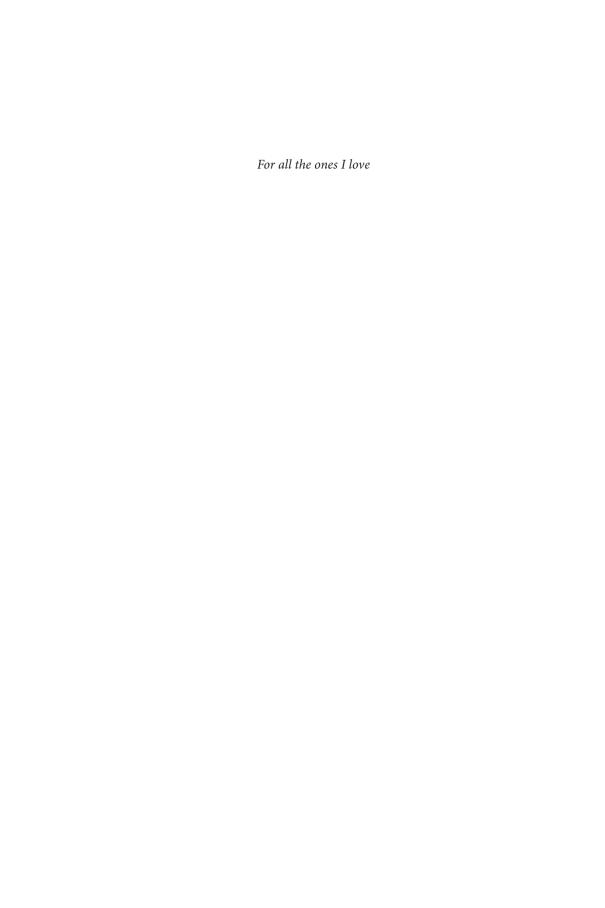
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Artwork on cover: Caroll Lynn Tice - 123RF

ISBN 978-1-78068-614-1 D/2018/7849/16 NUR 828

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data. A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.



#### **PREFACE**

In August 2017, several European and African leaders met on the invitation of the French President Macron in Paris in order to develop new strategies and new ways of cooperation to cut migration into Europe from northern Africa in order to resolve the proclaimed 'migration and refugee crisis' and to protect the European Union from unwanted migrants.

From the outset, the European migration and asylum policy has been shaped by efforts to establish an efficient migration management system in order to protect the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice from the new security threat 'irregular migration'. The extraterritorialisation of immigration control measures beyond actual territorial borders forms part of this strategy. Pre-border control mechanisms composed of administrative, legislative and operational measures, are largely perceived as effective means to channel flows of migrants prior to the borders, avoiding logistical and financial burdens for Member States. From a legal perspective, the shift of borders raises important questions related to the creation of nebulous legal zones where responsibilities for norms related to the protection of refugees may be circumvented by states and other actors involved in migration control activities.

This book tries to reconcile the motives behind extraterritorialisation strategies with their actual legal consequences. It focuses on the examination of the legal frameworks governing situations where a refugee meets state authority in the context of extraterritorial immigration control measures. It approaches the topic from the hypothesis that international and European obligations not only constrain extraterritorial acts of states or specialised agencies, but give rise to concrete responsibilities. The study shows that international, European and human rights law provide for a rather well-equipped 'tool box' to hold states responsible for violations of protection norms even if occurring outside the territory of a state or beyond European borders. Furthermore, the study proves as well that the establishment of responsibilities for violations of protection related norms occurring in the context of extraterritorial immigration control measures is a rather theoretical undertaking without major practical implications. Opportunities to invoke responsibilities for human rights violations occurring in the context of extraterritorial immigration control measures are still limited, undermining the effective access to protection for refugees and persons in need of international protection.

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#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

My first debt is to many colleagues and friends over the last few years who not only helped me to develop my thoughts on refugees, human rights and legal responsibilities but who also encouraged and supported me throughout the whole period. Without all the fruitful debates, their advice and their critique, this publication would not have taken shape.

My thanks go first to Prof. Wolfgang Benedek from the Institute of International Law and International Relations of the University of Graz whose continuous support and inspiration made this research possible. I am further particularly grateful to Prof. Hubert Isak for his comments and advice.

The first ideas for researching the topic were sketched during a research stay at the University of Deusto, Bilbao, Spain. I am thankful for the Marie Curie Early Stage Researcher Fellowship I have been awarded and would like to express my sincere gratitude to Osane Uriarte and her colleagues at the University of Deusto for providing me with such an opportunity.

The next huge share of gratitude is owed to my dear colleagues at the Institute of International Public Law and the European Training and Research Centre for Human Rights and Democracy of the University of Graz. Besides benefitting from the invaluable academic support, the comments and critique of Gerd Oberleitner, Christian Pippan, Stefan Salomon, Kushtrim Istrefi Pia Niederdorfer, Gregor Fischer and Lorin Wagner, I am especially thankful for having the possibility to work with such multi-talented, open-minded, inspirational and intelligent people.

Last but not least, my deepest gratitude goes to my family and closest friends who sustained and encouraged me especially in times when I worked more than we all would have wished.

Lisa Heschl

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#### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEDH Association Européenne pour la défense des Droits de l'Homme

AFSJ Area of Freedom, Security and Justice

AP Action Plan

ASR Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally

Wrongful Acts

CAT Committee Against Torture Convention Against Torture

CEAS Common European Asylum System

CEDAW Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

against Women

CERD Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial

Discrimination

CFREU Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

CFSP Common Foreign and Security Policy
CJEU Court of Justice of the European Union

CoE Council of Europe

CPT European Committee for the Prevention of Torture

CRC Convention on the Rights of the Child EASO European Asylum Support Office

EBCGA European Border and Coast Guard Agency

EC European Community

ECHR European Convention on Human Rights EComHR European Commission of Human Rights

ECOSOC Economic and Social Council ECtHR European Court of Human Rights

EEAS European Union External Action Service

ENP European Neighbourhood Policy

EP European Parliament

ESM European Stability Mechanism

EU European Union
ExCom Executive Committee
FRA Fundamental Rights Agency

Frontex European Agency for the Management of Operational

Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States

of the European Union

GAM Global Approach to Migration

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GAMM Global Approach to Migration and Mobility

GRC Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees 1951

HLWG High Level Working Group HRC Human Rights Committee

IACHR Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

IACtHR Inter-American Court of Human Rights

IBM Integrated Border Management

ICCPR International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

ICESCR International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

ICJ International Court of Justice
ILC International Law Commission
ILO International Labour Organization

JHA Justice and Home Affairs

MS Member States

OHCHR Office of the United Nations High Commissioner

for Human Rights

OLAF European Anti-Fraud Office

PCIJ Permanent Court of International Justice

QMV Qualified Majority Voting

RABIT Rapid Border Intervention Team

SBC Schengen Borders Code SEA Single European Act

SIC Schengen Implementation Convention

TCN Third Country Nationals
TEU Treaty of the European Union

TFEU Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

UDHR Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UN United Nations

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

VCCR Vienna Convention on Consular Relations VCLT Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties

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