

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PENAL LAW

WELCOME NOTE

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Acting in my capacity as Secretary General of the International Association of Penal Law (AIDP) and as professor of criminal law at the University of Luxembourg, it is an honour to contribute a welcome note to the establishment of the Russian Law Journal. In fact, English language periodicals from Russia in the field of comparative law are long overdue in the international legal debate where the reception of Russian legal thinking does hardly correspond to the eminent political role that Russia is traditionally playing in the world. One of the main reasons for this lamentable gap is simply the language barrier. In penal law – the discipline I represent – internationalisation has been a particularly recent phenomenon. Not only has penal law long been a domestic phenomenon largely communicated in our respective mother tongues. Beyond that, penal law has always been looked at – and defended – as a cornerstone of national sovereignty. That we as penal law scientists have to express our thoughts in a foreign language is, thus, a fairly new experience to all of us. Apart from the pioneers of the AIDP with their genuine interest in legal comparison, the emergence of international criminal justice after the Second World War and, then again, after the end of the Cold War, as well as the ongoing process of European integration fueled this development to reach the present level. Against this background, I look at the Russian Law Journal not only as a most welcome enrichment of our common legal culture but, moreover, as a long missing link for legal science in Europe, Asia, and the world.

I personally had the privilege to experience the vivid and inspiring exchange with Russian colleagues on the occasion of the preparatory colloquium of the AIDP titled 'Information Society and Penal Law' that took place 24–27 April 2013 in Moscow. Not only did this colloquium prompt considerable intellectual gain, but moreover left us with numerous personal friendships as a prosperous platform for future dialogue.

I wish this publication all the success that it surely deserves and look forward to many interesting discussions, contributions and insights provided accordingly.

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