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## Preface

Modern democracies, in their roles of legislator, administrator or judge, are nowadays constantly confronted with international human rights. This includes – and increasingly so – the implementation of decisions taken by international bodies supervising the compliance with those rights and freedoms. When the European Court of Human Rights finds a violation the state party to the European Convention must remedy the situation; when the Committee supervising the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights establishes a violation there is at least a strong moral duty on the state concerned to comply with such a ‘view’.

Implementation of international decisions – as to the ways and means – still is to a large extent left to the states: international supervision regarding the requisite implementation is scarcely out off the egg.

States like the Netherlands and Belgium have a long experience applying self-executing international law provisions; there is a vivid, though perhaps not steady, practice to abide by international treaties such as the European Convention and the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Time has come to focus on those legal systems, compare them with others and study in which manners decisions of international supervisory bodies are handled. Therefore it seems most appropriate and expedient that the Leiden Faculty of Law put the issue on the agenda and convened a symposium for a first analysis of it on the 14th of November 1997.

The material collected by the participants in the symposium shows a great variety. Within their respective constitutional powers the courts, the administrative authorities and the legislator as the case may be follow – if any – different policies dependent on the subject-matter. It lies in the nature of things that reparation of human rights violation takes other forms in penal cases than in civil or administrative cases. Remarkably though, implementation after some decades of experience, apparently still is in an exploratory