

PRIVATISATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE AGE OF GLOBALISATION

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PREFACE

The book you hold is the result of a joint research project on *Privatization and Human Rights* under the auspices of the Center for Human Rights (University of Maastricht, the Netherlands) and the Institute of Human Rights Pedro Arrupe (University of Deusto, Basque Country, Spain).

The research project gathered academics from different parts of the world and combined both a theoretical and a practical approach to a very controversial issue of contemporary international and national economic relations: privatisation as one of the main ingredients of the current process of globalisation. This project aspires to fill a gap in the analyses made of privatisation so far, which mostly take an economic approach. Only recently research has started on the potential human rights implications of privatisation.

The project was launched in 2003. A very fruitful author's conference was convened on the premises of the European Inter-University Center for Human Rights and Democratisation (EIUC, Venice, Italy). Taking into account the comments made by the authors and invited guests, we initiated the editorial review process that led to the publication of *Privatisation and Human Rights in the Age of Globalisation*. At the occasion of the publication of the book, a Conference took place in Maastricht on the 25th February 2005, with the presence of most of the contributors. The book has also served as the basis for a specialized course in the framework of the European Master Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation at the Institute of Human Rights of the University of Deusto.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank all people that participated in the long process of completion of this book. We would like to explicitly mention the staff of the Maastricht Center for Human Rights under the academic guidance of Professor Fons Coomans, and under the administrative coordination of Chantal Kuypers. Our publisher, Intersentia, showed great interest in the project from the beginning, and offered unrelenting support in all stages of production of the book.

Felipe Gómez Isa and Koen De Feyter
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