What is meant by public international law?

Public international law, also known as the Law of Nations, is a set of norms aimed at regulating the interaction between the subjects of international law that participate in international relations. Public international law norms create a common framework within which the subjects of international law operate and contribute to the existence of generally stable, organized, and consistent international relations.

What is the difference between public and private international law?

While public international law governs the relationship between the subjects of international law, such as States, private international law addresses the private law rights of natural or legal persons. Private international law consists of a set of conflicts of laws rules applicable in international cases. These rules determine the applicability of a certain law in circumstances involving a choice between the municipal law of different States.

Who does public international law apply to?

Public international law applies to the subjects of international law, such as States and international organizations, who consent to be governed by it. While the traditional doctrine of international law did not regard individuals as subjects of international law, a more contemporary approach dictates that the individual is indeed a subject of international law and the owner of rights and obligations in the international arena (in particular in areas such as international human rights law, international criminal law, and international humanitarian law). However, it should be noted that, subject to certain Resolutions by the United Nations Security Council, there is no generally accepted coercive authority that can bind sovereign States to a body of international law.