

think.

ISRAEL *and* INTERNATIONAL LAW

Business Plan 2021

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© 2021 **thinc.** The Hague Initiative for International Cooperation

An initiative to study the relationship between Israel and the nations to promote international peace and security, friendly relations amongst nations, and peaceful resolution of conflicts based on the principles of justice and international law.

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1. Introduction

The Hague Initiative for International Cooperation (thinc.) is an independent research organisation dedicated to the promotion of the Rule of Law in international relations. We believe the fair and unbiased application of the Rule of Law is an essential component of the peaceful resolution of conflicts between nations.

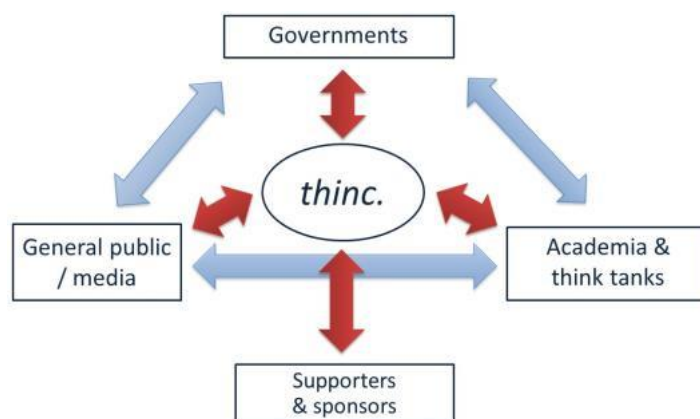
Because law and politics are so closely intertwined, the international legal system is at risk of manipulation by groups of nations to achieve military or ideological ends. A striking example of this is the Israel-Palestine conflict. The instrumental use of the international legal system not only impedes peaceful negotiations, it threatens to undermine the sovereign equality of states and the human rights of peoples.

We challenge existing perspectives of the Israel-Palestine conflict and promote both balance and context in the interpretation and application of international law with respect to Israel and the Israel-Palestine conflict. We critically evaluate the use of international law in its historical, political, religious and military contexts. We educate and facilitate research, discussion, briefings and publications by international lawyers, historians and other experts.

Our aim is to help politicians and policy makers to make informed decisions on the fair and non-discriminatory application of international law to the Israel-Palestine conflict, and to advance the non-violent resolution of the conflict and cooperation between the parties.

thinc. has four areas of activity:

- Engaging in academic research and dialogue
- Counselling governments
- Informing the general public and the media
- Building a network of supporters and sponsors



This *Business Plan 2021* contains the activities we plan to execute in 2021, in accordance with the strategic direction set by the Supervisory Board and subject to available resources.

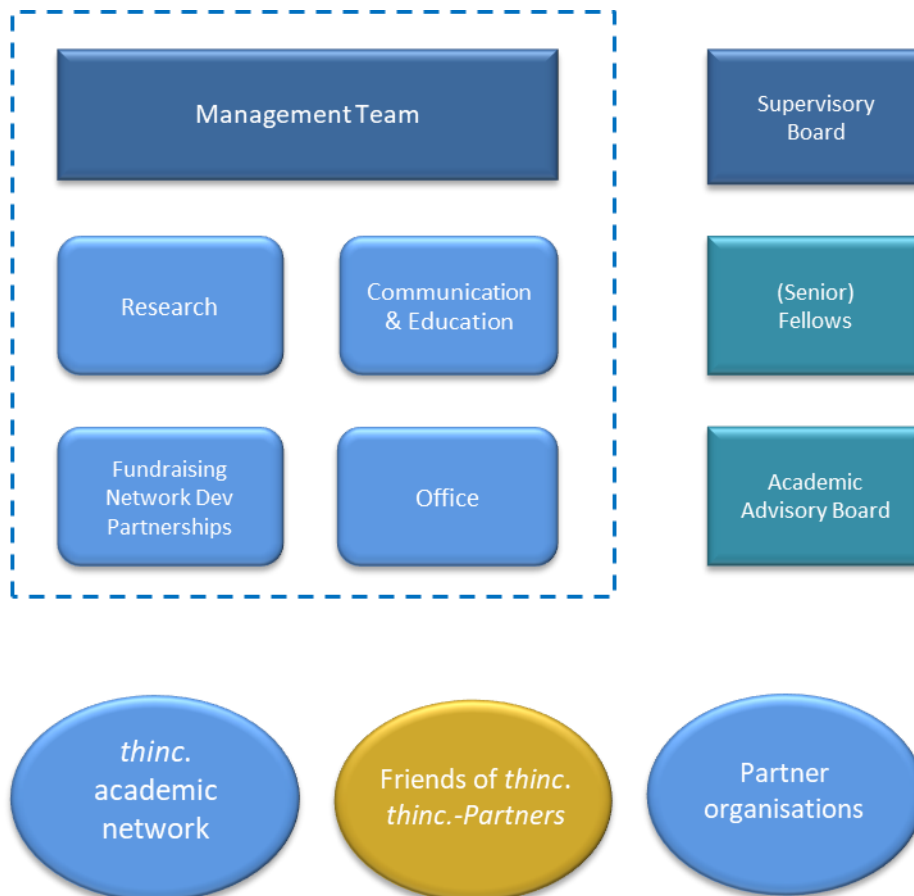
We plan to intensify the creation and dissemination of legal content i.a. by expanding our network of international legal academics and cooperation with academia on several continents; see Section 3.

The activities in the Government area will comprise group events, such as conferences, workshops and seminars, that we will organise in cooperation with local and regional partners, and one-to-one consulting activities; see Section 4.

We plan to invest in the development of state of art publishing and distribution means, i.a. via social media, for our products including written materials, podcasts and videos; see Section 5.

2. Organisation

thinc. is a foundation under Dutch law, seated in The Hague. We comprise a global network of experienced legal practitioners and academics in the field of international law (*associates*), who endorse our goals and are willing to contribute to *thinc.* Associates who contribute in a special way to the work and achievements of *thinc.* may be appointed Fellow or Senior Fellow.



Management Team (MT): the MT consists of Pieter Hoogendoorn, Director Operations and Andrew Tucker, Program Director. Both directors are engaged with *thinc.* on part time basis.

Supervisory Board: the Supervisory Board consists of Gijs Cremer Eindhoven, chair, and Michiel Malotaux.

Fellows: two international law academics have been appointed Senior Fellow of *thinc.*, viz. Dr. M. de Blois (Professor emeritus, University of Utrecht) and Dr. C.D. Wallace (former senior adviser to the UN, Geneva).

Academic Advisory Board: the organisation is advised by Prof. Dr. Li-ann Thio, National University of Singapore, Prof. Robbie Sabel, Hebrew University and Prof. Gregory Rose, University of Wollongong. We intend to expand the Academic Advisory Board.

thinc. academic network: the global network of experienced legal academics, practitioners, and academics in related fields such as history, political science and religion.

Friends of thinc. and *thinc.-partners*: we receive no direct government subsidies, we are funded entirely by private donors, i.e. 'Friends of *thinc.*' and '*thinc.*-Partners' (see Section 6).

Partner organisations: we cooperate with three types of organisations, viz. (i) professional organisations in the field of international law and international relations, (ii) academia and law schools, and (iii) organisations in the field of public diplomacy.

thinc. enjoys the so-called 'ANBI status'. This is a non-profit tax designation in the Netherlands, issued by the Tax Office in accordance with the general tax laws. This coveted status is issued to organizations which meet the stringent ANBI criteria. The ANBI status entitles donors to certain tax benefits in the Netherlands.

thinc. Fellows and the members of the Supervisory Board receive no remuneration, expenses are compensated. See www.thinc.info for further information and details.

3. Academic research and dialogue

3.1. Academic Program 2020-2022

Objective: Expanding the *thinc.* network of academics.

Engage leading academics

We will continue to approach leading international lawyers/academics to participate in the work of *thinc.*, i.a. in projects and the Academic Advisory Board.

Find and engage associates

We will continue to identify and engage with international lawyers (academics and practitioners) in Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia/Pacific, and invite those who satisfy the criteria to become *thinc.* associates or fellows. We will invite them to:

- write articles and blogs for the website
- attend or participate in *thinc.* events
- contribute to research projects.

3.2. Research Projects and Publications

Objective: research core legal issues and publish various kinds of material.

Research Projects and Papers

These are strategic activities, primarily directed at the (legal) academic audience, whereas the results will also serve as a basis for informing stakeholders and recipients in the Government and other domains. The planned research themes are:

- *Cases & Materials on the Israel-Palestine Conflict* – a strategic collaborative project of international law students and graduates from different universities under the supervision of senior *thinc.* staff that will result in a collection of key documents related to the Israel-Palestine conflict.
- *The EU's two-state policy – does it still make sense?* – a research project leading to a report on the evolution of the relationship between European countries and Israel under international law since the 1970's, providing evidence that international law has been unfairly interpreted and applied to Israel and the Jewish people. Since 1980 a 2-state solution has been discussed, and many proposals have been made, but the

prospect of a negotiated 2-state solution seems more unlikely than ever. We will investigate what the impediments and permissible alternatives are under international law to promote peace between Israel and the Palestinians based on the principles of justice and international law.

- *The Abraham Accords* – a theme that gains increasing attention in the international political arena. What is the scope of these agreements and what is their significance under international law?

Academic articles

We will coordinate the production of several academic articles for publication in peer-reviewed legal journals.

Monographs (books)

Publication of a new book on the legal foundations of the State of Israel against the background of the political discourse in the UN and the Media by Senior Fellow Dr. Cynthia D. Wallace.

3.3. Conferences, seminars and events

We plan to organise several conferences and seminars, i.a. in response to the prospective decision of the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber regarding 'the situation in Palestine', the presentation of the Report about the EU's two-state policy and the Abraham Accords – either onsite in The Hague, if circumstances permit, or online – with an expected audience of 80-100 people.

3.4. Education and training

We aim our education and training at:

- Academic teachers, students and (young) leaders – worldwide;
- Politicians, diplomats and policy makers, to provide them with information and tools to initiate policy change.

We will develop an online, multi-disciplinary educational program for students and other interested people about *International Diplomacy, Law and Security in Arab-Israel Relations*, i.c.w. the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya. The curriculum is broad and current, and will be based on the *Cases & Materials* project mentioned above.

4. Counselling governments

Objective: Advising political leaders and their advisers about -

- a) the sovereign rights of the Jewish State of Israel and other states in the region, including the right to sovereign equality, secure borders, political autonomy and territorial integrity; and
- b) the application of the Rule of Law to advance Israeli/Palestinian cooperation and the social and economic advancement of the Palestinian people.

Method: Information sharing, seminars and consulting.

Information sharing

We distinguish two ways of information sharing; push and pull. Nowadays, information push across the society, including the Government domain, largely happens via the social media. This requires the editing and packaging of the information such that the message can be pushed to the recipient in a state-of-art way, in the format of text or video.

Information may also be pulled, usually from our website. Also here the message must be packaged in a state-of-art way. Eventually, the recipient may decide to download the information in pdf format.

We will continue to distribute books, *Policy Papers*, briefings and other materials to key government people as may be appropriate.

Policy Papers

We will produce Policy Papers on international legal topics for policymakers, politicians, and others interested in international relations and foreign policy relating to Israel/Palestine. Proposed topics include:

- *The EU's two-state policy – does it still make sense?* This paper/report will examine whether the 'two-state solution' as formulated by the EU and UN reflects a fair and balanced interpretation of international law. What other solutions are possible?
- 'The status of Jerusalem', including location of foreign embassies in Jerusalem.

Seminars

Seminars on the themes 'The future of the EU two-state policy' and 'The status of Jerusalem under international law' will be organised for MPs, policymakers, international lawyers and opinion leaders in different regions worldwide. Potential locations of onsite seminars include:

- Central/East European capital – for a mostly Central/East European audience
- Brussels – seat of the EU Parliament, including African missions
- New York – seat of the UN, including missions from Asia/Pacific and Latin America.

The seminars will be organised in cooperation with local and regional partners; *thinc.* will be responsible for the seminar program, the partner(s) for the logistics.

Consulting

We will endeavour to acquire several consulting assignments from governments and political parties to provide them with international law-based materials and advice on which they can base their position regarding the rights of the State of Israel and the Israel-Palestine conflict in the EU, the UN and related institutes.

5. General Public / Media

Objective: Making the general public and the media aware of the *lawfare* against Israel.

We will inform the general public and the media about the application of international law to the Israel-Palestine conflict. This requires

1. condensing our information into bite-sized chunks of information,
2. presenting information in a language and style that is intelligible for non-lawyers,
3. communicating via various media forms and channels, incl. social media.

A specific activity in this area is the editing of a series of video interviews with experts in the fields of international law, history and national security.

Lectures and presentations

We will seize opportunities to give lectures and presentations for general and academic audiences on the topics of research and policy papers, at (near-)zero costs.

Articles, Blogs, Commentaries and Op-Eds

We will submit articles for publication in respected journals, newspapers and websites such as The Commentator, NYT, Australian, and Times of Israel.

5.1. Media

We will seize opportunities to share our message via existing media channels and outlets such as newspapers, TV and radio interviews, at (near-)zero costs.

6. Supporters and Sponsors

Objective: Liaising with supporters and sponsors.

We will continue to send out our *Newsletters* on a monthly basis to our supporters, sponsors and other interested people to highlight important current developments, update them on our work and inform them of our (financial) needs.

6.1. Friends of *thinc.*

We will continue the 'Friends of *thinc.*' program we launched in November 2020. 'Friends of *thinc.*' is a group of individuals, enterprises, foundations and funds who provide ongoing financial support to enable the work of *thinc.*

6.2. *thinc.*-partners

'*thinc.*-Partners' are individuals, enterprises and organisations who enter into a long-term partnership with *thinc.* on the basis of (mutual) strategic interest. *thinc.*-Partners provide ongoing financial support to *thinc.* whereas *thinc.* will support the Partner with specific *content* tailored to the Partner's needs.

7. Budget

The MT undertakes to perform the activities in the different areas as much as possible on a project by project basis, and to acquire grants and recruit sponsors for the financing.

Expenses (Euro x 1000)	2021	Income (Euro x 1000)	2021
Research	84	Guaranteed donations	29
Communication & Education	43	Grants & project sponsoring	19
Network development	8	Book & report sales	4
Office & Management	42	<i>thinc.</i> Friends & Partners	160
Events	35		
Total	212	Total	212

Clarification

- *Office & Management* includes the costs of staff, travel and lodging, administration, office and ICT.
- *Events* concerns the net costs of onsite events after deduction of participation fees.
- *Guaranteed donations* are donations pledged in the past.
- *Grants & project sponsoring* includes subsidies for specific activities, such as writing a series of articles, and financial contributions to projects, e.g. the *Cases & Materials* project (cf. Section 3.2).