EDITORIAL

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Today is a great day for me, and I hope it is also a great day for the academic community and for the legal practitioners involved, in one way or another, in extradition proceedings.

Thanks to the support of the Institute for Legal Studies and Research (INEJ), Nicaragua, the University of the Balearic Islands (UIB), and the United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (ILANUD), the *International Review of Extradition Law* is being launched under my direction. Its inaugural issue is now available to readers via open access. This marks the first step of a Spanish–English bilingual project that will be published twice yearly (in December and July).

The aim is to establish the journal as an international benchmark in the field of extradition. To that end, we are honoured to have the support of a distinguished group of renowned scholars from around the globe, who have agreed to serve on the international review board, the editorial board, and the review committee. I would like to thank them once again for accepting my invitation with such enthusiasm.

The journal seeks to fill an inexplicable gap well into the twenty-first century: the absence of a periodical publication devoted specifically to extradition law. A subject of such far-reaching significance, given the fundamental rights at stake and the invariably complex, competing interests involved (state sovereignty versus the protection of the requested person's fundamental human rights), cannot remain in the shadows. My ambition is, therefore, to put an end to this silence at the international level by addressing the challenges of extradition proceedings from a global perspective, with broad vision, and by giving voice to authors from all parts of the world. This is how I understand legal scholarship: analysing comparative law not so that we may be dazzled (often uncritically) by the sometimes merely apparent virtues that come from abroad, but rather to avoid repeating the mistakes of others. Sharing research on extradition proceedings will allow us to examine how each State resolves the same reality, since experience shows that a single extradition request receives markedly different responses depending on the requested State. This fosters regrettable forum shopping by requesting States, many of which patiently wait for their target to leave their country of residence (or a less favourable jurisdiction) in order to request extradition or even secure instrumental pre-trial detention as a means of pressure. While it is natural for each State to offer diverse so-

lutions to the same problem—and I am aware that we cannot aspire to any form of legal imperialism—I nonetheless believe that minimum standards should prevail in the field of extradition law in the interest of liberty and legal certainty, above all, and with no excuse, within the single area of freedom, security and justice constituted by the European Union (Articles 67.1 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and 3.2 of the Treaty on European Union). It is wholly inconsistent to celebrate this achievement and, at the same time, observe how decisions rejecting extradition requests issued by one Member State at the behest of third States have no *res judicata* effect in the next Member State in which the requested person "lands," thereby forcing that person to endure successive procedural peregrinations.

Extradition is an instrument of international cooperation in criminal matters by which one State (the requesting State) asks another (the requested State) to surrender a person located in its territory (the *extradendus*) to be tried (extradition for prosecution) or to serve a previously imposed sentence (extradition for execution). It is a procedure of a mixed nature, both governmental and judicial, in which the executive and judicial branches interact. Contrary to an inexplicably widespread belief, extradition proceedings do not concern the determination of the requested person's criminal liability; rather, in a much more limited sense, they focus on whether surrender to the requesting State is appropriate under the applicable sources of extradition law. Their scope is therefore narrow, and, as the Constitutional Court aptly summarised in Judgment 147/2020, extradition is "a proceeding about another criminal proceeding."

Extradition raises significant and complex legal issues on a daily basis. International judicial cooperation in criminal matters, particularly in extradition, is far from being a quasi-automatic enforcement mechanism; it requires scientific and technical knowledge. Legal scholarship is called upon, today more than ever, to contribute with its insights to dialogue with State policies, the international bodies that draft extradition instruments, and above all, with the case law that applies them. In today's global and interconnected world, extradition law ought to enjoy its own interdisciplinary autonomy within criminal law, criminal procedure, and international law. This journal aims to contribute to that endeavour.

In this first issue—our calling card that will largely determine the project's success—we have been fortunate to count on both national and international authors, including, among the former, the two authors of the leading monographs on extradition law in Spain. My sincerest thanks go to all contributors for meeting the submission deadlines and adhering to the strict quality standards, but above all, for complying with the style guidelines imposed, directly or indirectly, by accreditation processes whose inherent difficulties and setbacks I am fully aware of.

Come and see for yourselves.

Spain, 15 December 2025.