

Preface

Paul Oberhammer

Dean of the Faculty of Law of the University of Vienna

The Faculty of Law of the University of Vienna is proud to host the Mexican-Austrian academic Symposium “In the Spirit of Isidro Fabela: Mexican and Austrian Approaches to the Challenges of International Law”: as Austrians, we will be forever grateful for the solidarity shown by Mexico in March 1938, and, therefore, this symposium is meant to be a celebration of this historical fact. It is a true privilege that we are able to commemorate these events together with our Mexican friends. We are very grateful that Ambassador Alicia Buenrostro Massieu took the initiative and contacted us to discuss what could be done in this respect a year ago.

Discussing international solidarity, multilateralism and the rule of law in international relations is an excellent way of reflecting the tragic events which took place in this country 80 years ago. The *Juridicum* - as our institution is usually called - is strongly committed to a culture of remembering this darkest period of our history, and this Symposium is one of a number of milestones in this respect. We are proud to be the oldest law faculty in the German speaking countries. Embracing this tradition, however, is not only a motivation for future excellence in teaching and research, but must also be based on a true understanding of our history - and this, of course, includes remembering the students and professors who became victims of Nazi crimes, dealing with the lasting effects of all this in post-war Austria and accepting that antisemitism and national socialism were not simply “imported” from Germany, but had their roots also in Austria well before 1938 and that our University was no exception in this respect.

We are extremely honored that the former Federal President of the Republic of Austria, Professor Heinz Fischer, - who is an alumnus of our faculty - agreed that this Symposium might take place under his auspices. The cooperation with the Mexican embassy was a true pleasure, and we do hope that this will result in future cooperations. Finally, I have to thank Vice Dean Professor Franz Stefan Meissel and his team for organizing this event on our side!