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**Furthering the fight against impunity in Latin America: the contributions of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to domestic accountability processes**

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This dissertation is inspired by the question how national authorities can be motivated to advance the fight against impunity by investigating and prosecuting those responsible for mass atrocities through their domestic justice systems. Whereas international scholarship has often sought to answer such questions by looking at international criminal courts – and in particular at the International Criminal Court – this study proposes instead to turn our gaze beyond The Hague, towards the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR).

Since the days of the Cold War, the Inter-American human rights system has been an important ally for victims and civil society groups pushing their governments to recognize and investigate serious and systemic violations of human rights and bring the perpetrators to justice. It has thus been involved in the fight against impunity for decades. Its contributions to that fight remain, however, underexplored by international legal scholarship.

This dissertation examines both the legal doctrines developed by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to further the fight against impunity and the practical contributions of those doctrines to domestic accountability processes in Latin America. It argues that the Inter-American system has made important contributions to several aspects of domestic accountability processes. However, in order to understand these contributions, we have to step outside the compliance framework often employed in legal scholarship to the study of international courts.

*This is a volume in the series of the Meijers Research Institute and Graduate School of the Leiden Law School of Leiden University. This study is part of the Law School's research programme 'Exploring the Frontiers of International Law'.*

# Furthering the fight against impunity in Latin America

*The contributions of the Inter-American  
Court of Human Rights to domestic  
accountability processes*

H. BOSDRIESZ