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Acknowledgements

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A society is always eager to cover misdeeds with a cloak of forgetfulness, but no society can fully repress an ugly past when the ravages persist into the present. America owes a debt of justice which it has only begun to pay. If it loses the will to finish or slackens in its determination, history will recall its crimes and the country that would be great will lack the most indispensable element of greatness — justice.

— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The *Buffalo Human Rights Law Review* is proud to present this special edition volume dedicated to transitional justice. It will be a half a century this August 28th, 2013 since Martin Luther King Jr. captivated the world with his dreams for a brighter future as he spoke in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. What better way to open a volume on transitional justice than with the wise, enduring words of an individual who devoted his life to evoking justice and generating transition for the purpose of a brighter future.

Transitional justice is the process by which societies can raise themselves from eras of violence to brighter futures, and truth and reconciliation commissions have emerged as one of the most common mechanisms of that process. This past year, experts on truth and reconciliation commissions from around the world gathered at the SUNY Buffalo Law School to discuss the national experiences of South Korea, Cambodia, Peru, and South Africa. The purpose of the symposium was to extrapolate lessons from these experiences so that they may guide South Korea to effective implementation of the recommendations of its Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The articles in this volume, however, offer lessons not only for South Korea, but for any society trying to navigate the delicate transition from dark pasts to brighter futures.

On behalf of the *BHRLR* I would like to thank everyone who helped make the symposium, as well as this special volume possible. Vital to both were the special editors to this Volume, Tara J. Melish with Mark A. Nathan and Errol Meidinger. The Baldy Center for Law & Social Policy, the Asian Studies Program, and the Buffalo Human Rights Center cosponsored the symposium, thereby providing the forum where the lessons now detailed in this volume were delivered. Dr. Theresa Chun inspired the symposium and lent her personal story to its attendees and now readers, which reminds us of the true import of effective transitional justice. All of the authors provided unique perspectives, permitting readers to see national experiences with transitional justice through expert eyes. The translators did excellent work translating to English for the first time the Final Recommendations of the South Korean Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

For their continued devotion to human rights and support to both the *BHRLR* and the *Buffalo Human Rights Center*, I thank Dean Makau Mutua and Professor Melish. For the guidance that he provides to all of the journals at the SUNY Buffalo Law School, I thank Professor Rick Su.

Finally, I thank each member of the *BHRLR* who played a role in the editing process of this volume, for which I am also tremendously appreciative. I specifically express my deepest gratitude to Sabrina Housh, the *BHRLR*'s executive editor, for her extraordinary and tireless efforts preparing this volume for publication. Our members, through our publications, are dedicated to contributing to and advancing the international discourse on human rights. We aim to spread ideas, conjure curiosity, inspire action, and ultimately contribute to the eternal campaign for human progress. Heeding the wisdom of Dr. King, we will not slacken in our determination for justice. To that end, we hope the words within this special volume impart knowledge unto our readers, and we ask our readers to use that knowledge to improve future transitional justice efforts.

Joshua J. Moldt
Editor-in-Chief