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Acknowledgements

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The human rights field is facing a changing landscape. In selecting articles for this year’s volume, we aimed to capture not only the different points of view on current human rights law, but also provide a detailed portrayal of the pervasiveness of human rights and its development in various cultural settings. Now, more than ever, the field is in need of visionary thinkers, constructive critics, and passionate advocates to guide human rights as the movement gains momentum in the legal stratosphere. We hope these articles offer a glimpse of the current human rights dialogue, and present you, our readers, with a dynamic analysis of the critiques and legal concepts being discussed as the human rights project takes a step forward into potential reconstruction in the new age.

This volume opens with a discussion of international human rights law in a domestic setting as K. Benson’s article, *Killing a Cleric: The Chaplaincy Exception in International Humanitarian Law and “American-born-cleric” Anwar al-Awlaki*, examines the legality of the Obama administration’s killing of Anwar al-Awlaki under International Humanitarian Law (IHL), and its relation to the Global War on Terror (GWOT). Benson’s article proposes that the targeted extrajudicial assassination sets a precedent that has very significant ramifications for the chaplaincy exemption under IHL, and for the GWOT as a general matter.

Next, an essay by Elizabeth M. Bruch examines the emerging field of humanitarian intervention and the everyday work that human rights lawyers conduct with the United Nations and Inter-governmental organizations (IOGs). Bruch’s empirical investigation in this growing field of global governance offers an insight into the unknown intricacies of being a human rights lawyer and working to shape the laws they work with as advocates. Bruch’s essay presents the reader with the opportunity to enter the human rights world through the perspective of its advocates, and reveals dimensions of the practice of international law in a novel way.

The third article, *Human Rights Conventions and Reservations: An Examination of a Critical Deficit in the CEDAW*, written by Michael L. Buenger, is a critical approach to the repercussions of the adoption of reservation provisions in some of the most significant human rights treaties. Buenger uses CEDAW as the focus of his analysis, and draws attention to an important issue plaguing the human rights field and affecting the application of vital rights and guarantees written into human rights agreements. Buenger’s contention that reservations to these agreements renders the instrument null, and in turn is counterproductive to the international community’s efforts to protect human rights, provides a starting-point for a constructive critique of the current human rights project and a theoretical
framework for the critique of the possibility of universal application of human rights instruments.

The focus of this volume then shifts to the practical application of human rights law and its relation to events happening in our world today. Rob Dickinson’s piece, Responsibility to Protect: Arab Spring Perspectives, broaches the legitimacy of government and third-party intervention in the affairs of the sovereign State. Dickinson’s article emerges in the light of the ever-increasing controversy of the legitimate extra-territorial intervention in the conflicts of the sovereign State, and the responsibility of the international community to respond to intra-territorial turmoil in the name of protecting human rights. Dickinson uses the events of Arab Spring to not only draw lessons for States in conflict, but also proposes an applied approach to the concept of third-party intervention.

Our geographical focus then shifts to the changing political environment in Kenya and concludes with a look at its effect on the customs of the judicial branch. The Chief Justice and President of the Supreme Court of Kenya, Dr. Willy Mutunga, provides a multidimensional analysis of the historical and socio-economic change in the judicial dress of the Kenyan Court. In his piece, Dressing and Addressing the Kenyan Judiciary: Reflecting on the History and Politics of Judicial Attire and Address, the Chief Justice’s conclusion that overly formal attire adversely effects citizens’ access to justice draws an interesting relationship between a State’s cultural foundation and an individual’s guarantee of access to the judicial system.

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Editor-in-Chief