

THE FLETCHER FORUM of WORLD AFFAIRS

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EDITOR'S NOTE

In the last two years, three crises defined our study of international affairs at The Fletcher School: the outbreak of a brutal war in northern Ethiopia, the American withdrawal from Afghanistan, and Russia's brazen invasion of Ukraine. Not only are these events tragic, but they also have perpetuated a trend of mass atrocity that many had hoped was on the decline. In the face of such brutality, it has become clear that the post-World War II structures of global governance, along with the revitalization of human rights and international law in the mid-1990s, are insufficient to prevent the repetition of past and devastating events. And thus, these events have intensified a search for new answers—not simply a repackaging of old ones—to resolving and preventing armed conflict. This is the guiding theme for the Summer 2022 edition of *The Forum*.

Also, in the spirit of positive change, *The Forum* has also taken on a new strategic direction. In 2022, *The Forum* acknowledges an urgent need for a pragmatic approach to international affairs discourse, which values accessibility and diversity in its discussion of emerging global issues. As such, *The Forum* reintroduces itself as a foreign policy journal that platforms thought-provoking analysis by world-leading scholars, practitioners, and experts, aimed at a broad audience of policymakers and the general public. Accompanied by our traditional perspectives and book review sections, the print edition's feature length will now be the analytical essay of about 3,000 to 5,000 words. Maintaining the academic rigor of past Forum editions, the essays presented herein will be in semi-formal, concise, digestible form, providing decision-makers of multiple levels of States and society access to modern debates of international affairs.

We are proud that this edition includes a wide range of topics and viewpoints on contemporary armed conflict, from furthering the debate on international humanitarian law (IHL) to women-led movements to overcome war's egregious impacts on civilians. **CORDULA DROEGE** opens the edition with a sobering, yet hopeful assessment of IHL's current day relevance. **LENA TRABUCCO** and **KEVIN JON HELLER** then engage in a scenario analysis of autonomous weapon systems to challenge popular legal arguments against the use of "killer robots." In a similar vein, **TARA SONENSHINE** continues the edition with her overview of the uses of drones in contemporary conflict,

extending beyond weapons systems to international journalism and humanitarian assistance. **ENRIQUE OCHOA** then discusses the challenges of delivering aid amid urban warfare, a critical analysis in the context of rapid global urbanization. **DAVID D. SUSSMAN** returns in this edition to advocate for a broader conceptualization of the role of resources in armed conflict. **NADA MUSTAFA ALI** and **NAGLAA ABDULWAHID** then present their research among women farmers in South Kordofan, Sudan, and their efforts to overcome the weaponization of food through the movement for food sovereignty. Through examples in Iraq and Myanmar, **SLOBODAN DJINOVIC** points to the non-violent struggle of activists as a way forward for dealing with non-state parties to conflict. In light of the American withdrawal from Kabul, **SHREYAS DESHMUKH** then reflects on the achievements, or lack thereof, of coalition forces in Afghanistan. **LAURA JONES** considers how a framing of irregular warfare will aid states' future efforts to prepare for and manage armed conflict. **ROBERT LAWLESS** postulates on the legal framework that might govern conflict between the U.S. and China in and around Taiwan. Next, **JEAN-PIERRE LACROIX** summarizes the reforms achieved by UN peacekeepers and the department's vision for future missions. Rounding out the theme of armed conflict is an interview with **GENERAL RICHARD CLARKE**, who discusses the war in Ukraine, how to understand contemporary conflict, and the critical threats posed by evolving means and methods of warfare. This edition's general section on international affairs will consider the legal struggle for LGBTQ+ rights in Botswana, global governance of non-fungible tokens, and a review of James Stavridis' latest book, presented by **MILI GUPTA**, **HUGH HARSONO**, and **ADMIRAL HARRY HARRIS**, respectively.

It is our hope that the ideas discussed in this edition will not only expose ongoing challenges, but also provide scholars and practitioners with new directions to explore the management of contemporary armed conflict. I would like to thank our remarkable student editors, who dedicate countless hours outside of their normal studies and employment to produce each edition of *The Forum*. I specifically want to spotlight our Managing Print Editor, Anna Braverman, who seamlessly took forward the work of the print team with superb leadership. As always, thank you to *The Forum*'s Executive Team, without whom the publication would not be as professional and successful as it is today. Finally, I am elated to hand over the Editorship of the publication to Lillian Hartzell, whose unfettered brilliance will surely produce another wonderful year of *The Forum*. On behalf of this past year's team, I wish the best to all of our readers and The Fletcher School community in the coming semesters.

DELIA C. BURNS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
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