

THE FLETCHER FORUM *of* WORLD AFFAIRS

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EDITORS' NOTE

Work on this edition of *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* coincided with the thirty-year anniversary of 1989—a defining year that witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall, the beginning of the unraveling of the Soviet regime, and a potential “end of history.” Francis Fukuyama, who so famously penned this phrase, posed the question of whether history had begun marching toward the “universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.” Thirty years on from 1989, however, the inevitability of this universalization seems in doubt. Throughout the world, numerous challenges have arisen to democratic order and to the established rule of law. In this edition, *The Forum* examines these challenges against Fukuyama’s hopeful outlook.

The edition opens with three articles on challenges and opportunities for reform in international law. **JORIS LARIK, RICHARD PONZIO,** and **WILLIAM DURCH**—a trio of Stimson Center representatives from its Just Security 2020 program—argue that lasting solutions to global problems must address underlying justice and security concerns. In a similar spirit, **KHATUNA BURKADZE**—a professor at the Caucasus International University and graduate of the Fletcher School—questions how legal structures might better be made applicable to “armed” attacks in cyberspace. Finally, **DAVID WIGMORE**—a professor at the National Defense University and senior official at the United States National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC)—offers a proof of concept for a course aimed at empowering U.S. officials to more widely and accurately recognize the precursors of mass atrocities.

Our next section turns to a bevy of national and regional case studies which bring unique perspectives to the edition’s overall theme. First, **MERVE TAHIROGLU**—the current Turkey Program Coordinator at the Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED), a Washington-based research and advocacy NGO—offers a biting critique of the Turkish government’s systematic efforts to undermine judicial independence throughout

the country. **CORNELIA WEISS**—a retired colonel in the U.S. Air Force Reserve Judge Advocate General Corps who has completed extensive legal studies on Colombian law—next explores the most recent “peace” agreement in Colombia to analyze the triumphs of and obstacles against ending the country’s discrimination against women and creating a lasting culture of peace. From Myanmar, **CRAIG EVAN KLAFTER**—who served as Rector and Professor of History at the American University of Myanmar from 2014 to 2018—writes of the dire consequences of the nation’s imperfect legal inheritance, further arguing that Aung San Suu Kyi’s National League for Democracy must act to prevent future atrocities and that the international community has a responsibility to recognize this imperfect legal inheritance and extend assistance. On the rule of law in the Middle East, our editors sat down with **DENNIS ROSS**—who currently serves as counselor and William Davidson Distinguished Fellow at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy—to discuss the impact of leadership and legal frameworks alike in the context of the region’s tumultuous politics. Finally, Fletcher’s own **JOHN SHATTUCK**—Professor of Practice in Diplomacy and Harvard Kennedy School’s (HKS) Senior Fellow at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy—sat down in similar fashion to reflect on his work dealing with populist and authoritarian movements since and before the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Our final section reflects on the “state” of the United States vis-à-vis the rule of law at home. **JOAN DONOVAN**—Director of the Technology and Social Change Project at HKS’ Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy—first sat down with us to discuss how digital disinformation poses a growing threat to the structure that defines modern American democracy. **RICHARD HAASS**—longtime president of the Council on Foreign Relations—reflects on the changing U.S. role in the Twenty-First Century World Order. Finally, **BILL WELD**—Republican candidate for President of the United States in the upcoming 2020 election—corresponded with us throughout the fall to lend his thoughts on how domestic changes to the U.S. rule of law will have ripple effects far beyond its borders.

It has been our great pleasure to edit this journal for your readership. We hope that its tacit, well-researched perspectives on law, its detractors, and its champions will challenge your own perspective on a truly global issue.

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