

## FOREWORD

### THE REACH AND LIMITS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW TO SOLVE TODAY'S CHALLENGES

The 117th Annual Meeting of the American Society of International Law took place in Washington, D.C., from March 29 to April 1. The theme of the Annual Meeting, *The Reach and Limits of International Law to Solve Today's Challenges*, posed profound questions concerning international law and its continued function, utility, relevance, and capacity to provide solutions in our increasingly complex world. The Annual Meeting program challenged attendees to question their underlying assumptions about international law and to ask themselves what are the current limits of international law, and how can we extend law's reach to meet today's challenges.

For the third year in a row, the Society organized its Global Engagement series of online events in cooperation with our regional colleague societies in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. Offered free of charge to attendees all over the world, the Global Engagement series covered topics of regional significance, including the future of the Convention on Biological Diversity and electoral democracy in Africa.

The Society was delighted to see a return to pre-pandemic Annual Meeting registration levels, with over 1,000 people in attendance at the Annual Meeting. The program covered subjects such as the right to a healthy environment, international law and technology, decolonization and racial justice, the reform of international arbitration, and much more.

Wednesday, March 29, began with the spring meeting of the Executive Council, which took place at the headquarters of the World Bank in Washington, D.C. The afternoon saw a departure from the Society's usual Annual Meeting schedule and offered substantive sessions as well as professional development activities. That evening, the Annual Meeting was officially opened by President Gregory Shaffer who, together with Dean Roger Fairfax of American University Washington College of Law, introduced the 25th Grotius Lecture. The lecture was delivered by Professor Kim Lane Scheppele of the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs. Her theme was "Restoring Democracy Through International Law," and the response was offered by Manuel José Cepeda Espinosa of the High Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom. The lecture was followed by the traditional Grotius Reception, sponsored by the American University Washington College of Law.

Thursday's program included the Eleventh Annual Charles N. Brower Lecture, delivered by Sir Christopher Greenwood, and the Hudson Medal Luncheon, at which Hudson Medal Honoree, Antony Anghie of the National University of Singapore, engaged in a conversation with E. Tendayi Achiume of UCLA School of Law. Thursday also saw the Eighth Annual Detlev F. Vagts Roundtable on Transnational Law, which explored "Sanctions, Immunity, and Central Bank Assets."

The Society's Assembly took place on Thursday evening and included the election of our incoming leaders, the presentation of the honors and awards of the Society, the recognition of new Emeritus Members, and the commemoration of members lost over the past year, including special tributes to Karen Knop, Megan A. Fairlie, and John L. Washburn. The Assembly Keynote featured

a conversation between Sharmila (Mona) Sinha, Global Executive Director of Equality Now, and Michele Bratcher Goodwin, President-Elect of the Law & Society Association. The Assembly was followed by the President's Reception, sponsored by the University of California at Irvine School of Law.

Friday morning, the newly constituted Executive Council met to elect new members of the Editorial Board of the *American Journal of International Law* and the Editorial Advisory Committee of *International Legal Materials*, and to conduct other business. Substantive sessions continued throughout the day, including a late-breaking panel on the International Criminal Court arrest warrant for Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation. Friday afternoon included presentation of the 2023 Prominent Woman in International Law Award to Gillian Triggs, of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. After lunch, Ambassador Martin Kimani, Permanent Mission of Kenya to the United Nations, delivered the policy keynote on "Enabling Multilateralism in a Multipolar Order." The Goler T. Butcher Medal Lecture also took place on Friday and was given by Medal recipient, Patricia Viseur Sellers, of the International Criminal Court Office of the Prosecutor, on the subject "Chanting Their Names," which advocated action to include slavery and the slave trade among the most serious of international crimes.

Friday evening, the Annual Meeting traveled to the National Press Club for the Hague Reception and Closing Plenary on "Pursuing Global Accountability for Atrocity Crimes: Needs, Challenges and the Path Forward," co-organized by the T.M.C. Asser Institute and sponsored by the Municipality of the Hague.

The Annual Meeting's Saturday program took place offsite at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art and featured a panel on "Protecting Cultural Heritage in Conflict Zones: Multi-Disciplinary Approaches." The panel was sponsored by the Smithsonian and the newly formed Cheng-Harrell Institute for Global Affairs. Private tours of the Museum were offered to attendees on a limited basis, ahead of the program.

The Annual Meeting is the product of many dedicated hands, beginning with the extraordinary and hardworking Annual Meeting Committee, led this year by co-chairs Jennifer Permesly, Priya Pillai, and Sergio Puig. I would also like to express my gratitude to the staff of ASIL, especially Taylor Kilpatrick, who demonstrated extraordinary leadership when our much-admired Deputy Executive Director Wes Rist was called to an important new role at the U.S. State Department just one month before the Annual Meeting. Taylor stepped into the breach, ably supported by Justine Stefanelli and the entire team. I would also like to thank our event planner, Eden Capuano, and her team at Voila! Inc., and our technology partner, Silo Virtual Event Solutions.

Finally, we thank Erin Lovall, the editor of these *Proceedings*, and our speakers, sponsors, partners, exhibitors, and registrants who made the 2023 Annual Meeting such a delightful and thought-provoking experience.

MICHAEL D. COOPER

*Executive Director*

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