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Letter From the Editor.

Samina M. Bharmal

American University Washington College of Law

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

The fourth volume of the *National Security Law Brief* brings fresh perspectives to the scholarship in the field of national security. Over the past year in particular, the term “national security” has thrust to the fore legal questions with reverberating impacts through policy, economic, political, and international realms. The importance of understanding the legal impacts of our nation’s actions in this field has moved beyond the interests of policy makers and academia, and has reached the attention and concern of the public at large.

This issue contains scholarly discourse on the substantive legal dimensions implicated in the nation’s quest to ensure national security. In *Textualism in the Zone of Twilight*, Russell Balikian examines textualism’s effects on Congress’ ability to check Executive power in the fields of national security and foreign affairs. Joshua Kuyers’s article, “Operational Preparation of the Environment”, provides insight into the legal schema shaping on-the-ground military and intelligence operational realities critical to national security enforcement strategy. The recent rise in national tragedies involving violent weaponry has risen to the forefront of public concern, and Dori Persky explores legal mechanisms for addressing newly exploited threats to public safety in *Common Materials Turned Deadly*. Finally, Jared Kleiman looks forward in *Beyond the Silk Road*, examining the rising drone of apprehension regarding unregulated currency in a virtual black market. The variety of *lex lata* concepts and normative arguments contained within these articles places high-priority national issues into the context of advancing legal scholarship in the rapidly evolving field of national security law.

This Volume is more than just the pages contained here. The dedicated members of the *National Security Law Brief* consistently provide informed commentary, legal analysis, and in-depth research on the latest developments in national security law. At our Fall 2013 Symposium, the Brief was honored to host panels of internationally renowned experts to explore the national security and legal implications of U.S. military intervention in the civil war in Syria and of past U.S. intervention in Libya. Through their constant dedication and invaluable perspectives, each member of the *National Security Law Brief* has contributed to the quality and depth of scholarship presented by the Brief.

With great thanks to the originality and commitment of the members and advisors of the *National Security Law Brief*, I hope the pages herein will contribute to our readers’ understanding of the interplay between the law and the most pressing issues facing our nation’s security today.

Sincerely,



Samina M. Bharmal

Editor-in-Chief

American University National Security Law Brief