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Letter from the Editor

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HUMAN RIGHTS BRIEF

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Dear Reader:

As we come to the end of an academic year that has been marked by unique challenges and prepare to hand off our dear publication to its next leadership team, we have been reflecting on the changing nature of the threat to human rights, while noting that some challenges are stubbornly stagnant.

In this issue, academics, professionals, and students explore the role that international legal systems can play in addressing pandemics. This issue then turns to modern versions of age-old problems: refugee rights and sovereignty. New technologies, varied conflicts, and climate changes require new solutions, or at least newly imagined ways of using our existing systems. In a time when the world is holding a magnifying glass to systems of oppression around the globe, a human rights-based approach is crucial in reaching agreements about disputed territory and ethnic conflict.

Yet, in addressing these large-scale global questions, we cannot ignore those individuals who have been historically erased or ignored by society. As India implements an imperfect law protecting the rights of transgender individuals, we see progress towards gender equality despite the law's shortcomings. In Mexico, we see that international systems are not always fit to address violations of individual rights, despite the modern human rights legal regime's attempt to bridge that gap. The Student Columns and Regional Systems articles continue on this theme — individuals are harmed, and legal systems should prevent the harm, or, at the very least, provide effective remedy for it.

The question we are left with is “what’s next?” While we do not have answers, we seek to find pathways to answers. Throughout this issue, we saw the need to evaluate systems and laws through a human rights lens, and we were inspired by the energy and imagination that we felt in each of the following articles.

We are grateful for your continued support as we all advocate for a world that is more just and more rights-respecting.

Sincerely,
Samira & Kate

Samira Elhosary & Kate Morrow
Co-Editors-in-Chief
Human Rights Brief