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## Prologue

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# PROLOGUE

SHERWET H. WITHERINGTON\*

Unprecedented world events in 2020 led to a unique gathering of international legal talent, coming together across time zones, for a necessary discussion about global pandemics and international law. This special issue of the *American University International Law Review (AUILR)* features those comments from International Law Commissioners and Washington College of Law (WCL) faculty and staff in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On November 18, 2020 WCL and the Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law co-sponsored “Pandemics and International Law: the Need for International Action” along with the Centre for International Law, National University of Singapore; the School of Law, National University of Hanoi; the Autonomous University of Lisbon; Florida International University; the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights; and the WCL chapter of the International Law Student Association (ILSA). During the first panel, five members of the International Law Commission presented on their positions related to the creation of a convention on pandemics. The second panel consisted of five WCL faculty and staff who presented on how the pandemic affected their specific areas of expertise. The event was organized by Dean Emeritus Claudio Grossman, ILSA, and the Latin American Law Students Association.

Special thanks to Dean Emeritus Claudio Grossman, for presenting *AUILR* with the unique opportunity to publish this timely panel. Thank you also to Damely Perez and Emma Kenyon for spearheading this effort on behalf of *AUILR* and Lena Raxter for her tireless support and work on this project. Thanks are also due to Lauren LaVare, for jumping in the deep end with *AUILR* to get this issue ready for publication. Additionally, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the *AUILR* Volume 36 and Volume 37 editors and staff:

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\* Editor-in-Chief, Volume 36 *American University International Law Review*; 2021 graduate of the Washington College of Law.

Courtney Burne, Natalie Watts, Stephanie Aviles, Femi Fedyi, Eric Wentz, Mohammad Chaudry, Lily Baron, Daniel Atchue, Sarah Duncan, and Sophie Lin for their enthusiasm and strong work when their Editor-in-Chief presented them with an unplanned fifth issue just before final exams and commencement. Thank you for doing what it takes for the team, the team, the team.

Finally, thank you to all the authors for their participation in the panel and responsiveness in helping *AUILR* transform their comments into a published issue. You are the leaders in international law and we thank you for the trails you blaze.

*Editor's Note: The following articles express the views and opinions of the authors and do not reflect the views or opinions of AUILR, the Washington College of Law, or American University.*