

# THE FLETCHER FORUM *of* WORLD AFFAIRS

THE FLETCHER SCHOOL, TUFTS UNIVERSITY

WINTER 2015 VOL.39:1 \$11.00 USA

## EDITOR'S NOTE

2014 was an eventful and in many ways difficult year for students of international affairs. The world lurched from one crisis to another with devastating consequences. War contributed to the largest flow of forced displacement since World War II—over 50 million people. The rise of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) created a grim new reality for millions of Syrians and Iraqis, while authoritarian regimes across the Middle East continued to reverse the gains of the Arab Spring for many. Vladimir Putin's annexation of Crimea cast a long, haunting shadow over Ukraine and the rest of Europe. Clashes between China and its neighbors in the East and South China Seas raised fears of regional war, and brought into question America's willingness to exercise its military capability in the region. Ebola ravaged Western Africa and sparked fears of a global pandemic.

The first part of this Winter 2015 issue reviews the events that defined 2014, and examines the complex set of decisions required to manage these crises. The second part of this issue takes on an entirely different time horizon. These remaining articles seek to answer how the crises of today will define tomorrow's international order.

In the opening piece of this issue's first section, **JUSTUS REID WEINER** investigates the recent prisoner exchange for U.S. Army Sergeant Bowe Bergdahl and presents a number of confounding questions for U.S. diplomats: Do we negotiate with terrorists? If so, what price do we place on human lives? And what can we learn from the experiences of our allies, who have successfully negotiated the release of a number of their citizens taken hostage by ISIS in Syria?

With the overall success of the Arab Spring still very much in doubt, **MARK GREEN** and **HALLAM FERGUSON** look to settle a broader yet equally controversial question facing the Middle East today: is Islam compatible with democracy? Pointing to recent electoral successes in Indonesia, Tunisia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, the authors argue that Islam is actually experiencing a "long-term expansion of democracy," despite the turmoil that dominates our news. Shifting focus to the Pacific, **EIRIK TORSVOLL** offers a blueprint for containing and deterring the brewing military conflict between China and the United States. Addressing one of the deadliest epidemics of our time, **NAVEEN**

**GUNARATNE** argues that the Ebola virus could be transformed into an agent of bioterrorism. **SHASHI THAROOR** reexamines the largest crisis of the last century by assessing the ways by which India has grappled with its participation in World War I.

Opening the second half of our issue, **JAMES STAVRIDIS** argues that the calamities considered in the first section of this issue have led to a “zeitgeist of gloom and despair.” Breaking this cycle requires us to take a step back from present crises and instead embrace lessons learned from recent “wins” on the international stage. To this end, the former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO and current Dean of The Fletcher School offers five concrete examples of success that should be integrated into current and future policy-making efforts.

In the first of a series of articles that offer a glimpse into the next century of international affairs, **GIAN LUCA BURCI** outlines a future in which global health institutions like the World Health Organization will be increasingly important to human security. **JOAN JOHNSON-FREESE** examines America’s declining leadership in space and considers a future in which space is no longer dominated by a single global power. **SIOBHAN MACDERMOTT** argues that the Internet and social media will create an open-source alternative to track I diplomacy, disrupting, if not fully replacing, traditional state-to-state interactions. Similarly, **SARAH LANGE** posits that international education will continue to be a potent tool against autocratic governments. Looking north, **LAWSON BRIGHAM’S** article on the Arctic, set in 2050, offers a plausible future scenario of life on the last frontier of Earth. Finally, **AUBREY DE GREY** defends the economic and humanitarian imperatives of accelerating the development of anti-aging technologies.

The issue closes with a call to change. Urging for greater morality and rationality on the international stage, Nobel Laureate **MOHAMED ELBARADEI** outlines ways to reform international institutions that allow for more efficient, and equitable, mechanisms for dispute resolution. As ElBaradei reminds us, “If we invest half as much creativity and resources into human dignity as we spend on weapons of war, our world will become more tolerant and secure.”

It has not escaped the editorial team that a majority of the pieces touching on the future state of international relations strike a hopeful tone. In the face of the remarkably difficult and often frightening challenges facing us today, leading academics and experts are finding sincere reason to be optimistic about our future.

This issue would not have been possible without the tireless work of the entire staff here at The Forum. I must in particular thank our Managing Editor for Print, Laura London, who was the real engine behind this issue.

**CHRISTOPHER MAROSHEGYI**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, 2015