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EDITOR'S NOTE

Today, a global resurgence of populism, nationalism, and anti-elitism is eroding institutions and straining widely-held political and social norms—yet the full ramifications of this trend remains the subject of fierce debate. Over the course of the fall 2017 semester, these “dueling narratives” have been *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*'s thematic line of inquiry, and we are proud to present analytical essays and insightful interviews with experts, scholars, and politicians assessing the threats of the present hour as they experience them.

In the 42.1 edition, *Dueling Narratives: The Global Battle for Truth*, we first examine these narratives as they relate to American politics. **PROFESSOR MICHAEL KLEIN** explores competing arguments on the potential costs of international trade, while former Ambassador of the United States to Israel **DANIEL SHAPIRO** unpacks the emerging alliances in the Middle East. **JASON COOLEY**'s piece explores the populist wave through an examination of recent events in Hungary and Venezuela, as well as the United States since the inauguration of President Donald Trump. **MAC REGAN**, author of *Global Citizen Patriots*, posits America will best rebalance its system if it can use the levers of capitalism to advance its democracy while democratizing some of the least attractive features of its capitalism. Finally, **PAUL STARES**, Director of the Center for Preventive Action, argues that the United States and China need to come to a common understanding regarding global norms and institutions.

The second section delves into the theoretical underpinnings and current salient concerns regarding the implications of these dueling narratives on a global scale. **HADY AMR** outlines the recent developments in the Middle East, his work on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and prospects for American relations with Middle Eastern countries under the Trump administration. **DAN DIMANCESCU**, Fletcher alum from

the class of 1967, examines a case study of Romania and its geopolitical exposure to Russia's violent annexation of territory in Eastern Ukraine. He highlights the vulnerabilities that small states face, providing historical context to present-day security issues. This is followed by a conversation with **PRESIDENT KOLINDA GRABAR-KITAROVIĆ OF CROATIA**, who shares a multidimensional approach to the issues facing Eastern Europe and reminds us that, "solidarity—is what will protect us from future dangers." **CHRISTOPHER C. HARMON** explores the challenges of meeting and countering "violent extremism" in the media age, which allows terrorists and insurgents greater reach than ever before. Finally, the issue closes with **LORD MICHAEL DOBBS**, best-selling author of the House of Cards trilogy. He shares his take on global politics, leadership, and writing in an age where misinformation spreads rampantly.

Evaluating dueling narratives, choosing which to believe, and ultimately determining what to do on that basis is the province of this edition. This issue would not be possible without the administration, faculty, and staff of The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, the renowned contributors, and *The Forum's* executive team and staff who have worked tirelessly to put this together. Thank you to our readers for your support and readership. We hope you can utilize the ideas presented to engage with the current dueling narratives, and ultimately lead us in the battle for truth.

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