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Dear reader,

Appreciative of your readership and hopeful to reward it, we are delighted to introduce Volume 64, Issue 2 of the Harvard International Law Journal.

This Issue calls attention to often overlooked, yet consequential, features of the modern normal: legal academia's fraught relationship with politics and legislation; the privatization of human rights provisions and remedies; the application of longstanding mainstream legal frameworks to new frontiers; the tension between widely accepted financial practices and domestic law in the People's Republic of China; and the influence of relative newcomers in the international human rights order. The authors take these in turn.

Dr. David Hughes and Dr. Yabli Shereshevsky expose ties between legal scholarship and lawmaking, revealing instances where scholarship's perceived neutrality is leveraged to advance normative preferences. By highlighting the interaction between scholarship and policymaking, *State-Academic Lawmaking* reminds scholars and publishers of their responsibility to promote reliable, rigorous scholarship, and prompts policymakers to be mindful of their readership.

Lisa J. Laplante dissects the now-widespread use of private operational-level grievance mechanisms ("OGMs") to address human rights grievances. Laplante's *Wild West* is in conversation with Brenda Dvoskin's *Expert Governance of Online Speech*, published in Volume 64(1). Both authors explore the privatization of human rights adjudication, albeit through different lenses: Laplante via operational-level grievance mechanisms ("OGMs") and human rights remedies; Dvoskin via corporate technocracy and implications for free speech protection.

Dr. Gersbon Hasin's article explores law's application at the final frontier, advocating for the adoption of a novel approach in the emerging field of space law. Hasin stresses that the mainstream approach to 'space law' accepted by many international law scholars is insufficient to cope with pressing policy issues and externalities. Instead, he proposes a policy-based governance perspective as a more stable and malleable framework, one more conducive to engaging imminent policy questions and adapting to as-yet unknown challenges.

Dr. Shitong Qiao considers the phenomenon of 'finance against law' in China. Using variable interest entity ("VIE") structures and keepwell deeds, Chinese entities and investors are able to contract around strict rules—even bans—in domestic financial regulation. Dr. Qiao's analysis of these phenomena—which diverge significantly from Western norms—complements Minhao Benjamin Chen and Zhiyu Li's *Courts Without Separation of Powers*, published in Volume 64(1). Both pieces rattle assumptions often taken for

granted in Western legal thought: Is political independence essential to a functional judiciary? Is law essential to cultivating a sophisticated market?

Jackson Neagli closes the Issue with a further interrogation of Euro-centric assumptions in the context of China's rise. *Bend, Don't Break* studies a thematic tendency in Chinese foreign relations: working within existing international institutions to mold them in China's favor, rather than undermining and replacing those institutions. Chinese human rights theory will play a role in the future of the international human rights regime, and Western powers would be wise to study the contents of Chinese human rights proposals. Despite significant differences, Chinese and Euro-American human rights frameworks remain mutually intelligible. Neagli concludes this Volume by reminding us that, even as geopolitical acrimony increases, legal progress remains possible.

We conclude the final issue of our tenure with gratitude to our wonderful J.D. and L.L.M editors, who are the beating heart of the journal. It was a pleasure working with all of you to bring this Issue to life. We look forward to watching the Journal continue to grow under the steady hand of the new Editors-in-Chief.

With gratitude,
Ennely Medina, Lorea Mendiguren, and Jackson Neagli