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INTRODUCTION

The theme for the Society's 119th Annual Meeting—"Traditions and Transitions in International Law"—was designed to address the complex reality that our international legal order faces both longstanding and novel challenges. From changing cultural norms and climate and biodiversity crises to the resurgence of international armed conflict, democratic backsliding, revitalized nationalism, the ubiquity of big data, and groundbreaking technological innovations, we challenged our panels to critically examine which traditional elements of international law and institutions remain effective and where transitions are emerging in areas where existing frameworks may be falling short of achieving the shared goals of the international community.

During initial planning in early 2024, we acknowledged the 2025 Annual Meeting would occur at a critical moment in history and offer a special opportunity to explore the reality, meaning, and impact of international law. To build bridges rather than silos, we focused on generating an interdisciplinary dialogue and supporting new voices in international law discourse. As a result, this Annual Meeting provided a unique forum where international lawyers from all sectors of the profession engaged alongside diplomats, journalists, natural and social scientists, civil society representatives, technology experts, and commercial actors. These non-legal perspectives proved invaluable as we probed the efficacy of both traditions and transitions, bringing practical expertise and fresh insights that deepened our analysis.

The vitality of this interdisciplinary approach was particularly evident in our late-breaking panels, which addressed some of the most pressing developments of our time. Our first late-breaking panel, "Syria's New Dawn: Legal and Political Challenges Post-Assad," examined the complex legal and political implications of Syria's transition, including governance structures, minority rights protection, transitional justice mechanisms, and the broader regional implications for international law and security. The second late-breaking panel, "The Trump Administration and International Law 2.0: A Conversation with Harold Hongju Koh," provided an opportunity to explore the shifts in the global arena and reconsider the United States' relationship with international law with substantial, anonymous audience participation.

What emerged throughout the Annual Meeting was a nuanced understanding that while certain traditions in international law continue to provide essential stability and guidance, meaningful transitions are both inevitable and necessary. The diverse perspectives brought by our interdisciplinary participants enriched these discussions, demonstrating that the development of international law depends not only on legal expertise but on collaboration across disciplines and the continuous integration of new voices into our field.

We are honored to have served as your Co-Chairs for this pivotal Annual Meeting and grateful to the Society for the opportunity to facilitate these fundamental conversations about the future of international law.

By Susan Franck
Belén Ibañez
Nawi Ukabiala
Co-Chairs, 2025 ASIL Annual Meeting

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