

Letter from the Editor

Halima Woodhead

Dear Reader,

As a student of international affairs, I am astounded by the complexity of the ways that we shape our world in the 21st century. The articles in this issue provide an excellent illustration of the variety of issues we face and highlight contexts in which gender, medicine, communication, religion, technology, oil, international institutions, public health, foreign aid, child soldiers, post-war reconstruction and reconciliation, trade, economics and a myriad of other factors shape our past, present, and future.

In finalizing the articles presented in this issue, our staff discussed the possibility of creating thematic groupings; but found that geography was the only way to categorize them. At first, thinking that we had excellent yet disconnected papers, I looked through old issues of the *Journal of International Service* and its predecessor, *Swords and Ploughshares*, for inspiration. I discovered that former editors, too, had lamented the *Journal's* thematic bankruptcy. The reality, as my predecessors often pointed out, is that it is nearly impossible to publish a journal by graduate students from the School of International Service that contains articles neatly labeled by category. Students' interests, passions, and opportunities are too varied for such conventions.

What the articles we publish do have in common is the idea that no policy issue can be analyzed in a vacuum. Even the narrowest of policies have consequences beyond their immediate, intended effects that make real differences in people's lives and for our global future. The interconnectedness not just of people, but also of policies, is the overarching theme of the last 20 years of publications by this organization. I am confident that this compensates for any issue-specific thematic deficit.

On behalf of all of the students behind the *Journal of International Service*, a special thanks to everyone who contributes to the *Journal's* success. This *Journal* would not be possible without the dedication of our staff, talents of our authors, efforts by professors to encourage submissions, and the guidance and support of Dean Louis

Goodman and the Graduate Student Council. As a community we are fascinated by the work of our peers, and the Journal is an opportunity for each of us to witness what inspires and motivates our classmates. My hope is that each reader will find inspiration for his or her own work within these pages.

Best,
Halima Woodhead
Editor-in-Chief
editor@journalofinternationalservice.org