FOREWORD

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While normative provisions promulgated with a view toward prohibiting acts of aggression and violations of humanitarian law have been the subject of many articles, books and conferences, the same emphasis seemingly has not been given to the question of the enforcement of these normative provisions. The Duke Journal of Comparative & International Law seeks to do just that in this special Symposium on the Enforcement of Humanitarian Law.

This year heralds the 50th anniversary not only of the United Nations, but also the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg which convened at the close of World War II. This ad hoc tribunal, comprised of representatives of the four victorious powers, weighed the evidence presented as against charges of crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity. It thereafter rendered judgment upon twenty-two German war criminals, sentencing twelve to death, seven to varying terms of imprisonment, and acquitting three. More importantly, with respect to violations of international humanitarian law, this first international tribunal established a precedent of accountability to the rule of law. Notwithstanding worldwide acceptance of the Nuremberg Principles, the international community went for a period of almost five decades without any further attempts to bring to justice those who committed violations of the Geneva Conventions or the laws of war, although such violations were clearly documented in conflicts in Korea, Cambodia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

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3. "That four great nations, flushed with victory and stung with injury, stay the hand of vengeance and voluntarily submit their captive enemies to the judgment of the law is one of the most significant tributes that Power has ever paid to reason . . . ." Robert H. Jackson, American Chief Counsel for the Prosecution (and Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court), in his opening statement to the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg on November 20, 1945.

On May 25, 1993, prompted by widely publicized accounts of atrocities committed by the warring factions in the Balkans, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 827 establishing the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia Since 1991.⁵ As of the time of this writing, the Tribunal has indicted over fifty suspects, including Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and his military chief, General Ratko Mladic, yet only one trial has commenced—that of Bosnian Serb Dusan Tadic who is already in the Tribunal’s custody.⁶

This ad hoc Tribunal, although limited in jurisdiction to certain specified offenses⁷ which have occurred in the Former Yugoslavia
since January 1, 1991, represents the first international effort since World War II to bring to justice those who have violated international criminal law. It differs significantly from what occurred fifty years ago in that the Nuremberg Tribunal was chartered only by the four victorious powers of World War II, while the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia is empowered by the United Nations, representing ostensibly the entire international community. Further, the Tribunal is forbidden from having trials in absentia (as was done in the Nuremberg case of Martin Bormann), and is limited in its sentencing to life imprisonment. More significantly, the Tribunal does not have an independent power of arrest, and must rely on states to cooperate as far as the apprehension, detention and ultimate surrender to the Tribunal of persons indicted.

A pivotal question regarding the Tribunal is whether its authority and credibility will survive in the context of an international quest for peace in the Balkans. If given the choice between brokering a lasting peace, which may depend upon the cooperation of those same individuals which the Tribunal has indicted or may in the future indict, will the international community opt for strict enforcement of the rule of law or the possible chance for a peaceful settlement? Or can both be accommodated? The answer to that question may come soon now that a peace agreement has been initialed in Dayton, Ohio, between Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia, Franco Tudjman of Croatia, and Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although the agreement calls for all parties to cooperate with the Tribunal, it remains to be seen whether Karadzic, Mladic and other high-ranking Serbs will be surrendered to the Tribunal.

The inherent limitations and problems associated with an *ad hoc* tribunal beg the question of whether the international community would be served better with the establishment of a *permanent* international criminal court, as has been often suggested. Much concerning this concept remains to be resolved and agreed to, especially regarding the crimes over which such a permanent court

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8. *Id.* arts. 21(4)(d), 24. Article 24, after establishing imprisonment as the maximum punishment available to the Tribunal, goes on to state that “in determining the terms of imprisonment, the Trial Chambers shall have recourse to the general practice regarding prison sentences in the courts of the former Yugoslavia.”

9. *Id.* art. 29.

would have jurisdiction, but it remains the hope of many who see in it a firm and lasting commitment to the rule of law that would not and could not be swayed by the international politics of the moment.

In the pages of the *Journal*, you will find a discussion of these and many other issues respecting the enforcement of international humanitarian law. The articles are drawn from papers presented at two separate conferences which were co-sponsored by the Center on Law, Ethics and National Security at Duke University School of Law, and the Center for National Security Law at the University of Virginia. The first conference, entitled "Deterring Humanitarian Law Violations: Strengthening Enforcement," was held in Charlottesville, Virginia, on November 4-5, 1994, while the second, entitled "Strengthening Enforcement of Humanitarian Law", was held in Durham, North Carolina, on March 10-11, 1995. We believe the articles contained herein represent a significant contribution to the literature in this extremely important area of the law.