

## Foreword

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Welcome to the first-ever edition of *The Army Lawyer* devoted entirely to international and operational law topics. It is an exciting time to be a student of these burgeoning legal disciplines as, arguably, there has never been such a fast-moving period in international law. While Coalition forces continue to wage pitched battle in Afghanistan and Iraq, Judge Advocates are deployed in unprecedented numbers and with unparalleled frequency. Those serving far forward are not surprisingly, performing magnificently as they handle incredibly complex international legal challenges.

What is surprising, however, is the topics they master and issues they handle. Long considered a “niche” practice unique to but a few Judge Advocates, this subject matter has become a core competency of all military attorneys and even part of the American lexicon. The mass media, talk show hosts, and ordinary citizens debate some of the very issues with which our uniformed judge advocates wrestle daily: the status of combatants and non-combatants, civilian protections, detainee operations, and intelligence interrogations, to name a few. The Geneva Conventions are the subject of cocktail party banter and the long-used military acronym “GTMO” is probably one of the most frequently “Googled” terms in the world.

With that recognition, let us embark on our journey. Following are pieces on a wide variety of different, yet inexorably linked topics. They originate in The Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, the Pentagon, and in the field. Whatever their source, they are intended to meet the true spirit of *The Army Lawyer*—to aid the practitioner. The edition has a great and provocative beginning with Colonel Dick Jackson's essay on the importance of maintaining the moral high ground through steadfast adherence to the Law of War. Subsequent pieces include a primer on intelligence interrogations, a thorough examination of the Law of War as it relates to Cultural Property, and a prospective look at the effects of transformation on International Agreements.

We hope that the contents of this *Army Lawyer* will succeed in its ultimate mission—to inform and assist the practitioner in the field. We hope also that a venture such as this will inspire those who do the “heavy lifting” in these important areas to share their thoughts and experiences with the rest of us.