

2015 YEAR IN REVIEW



# Adapting to a Rapidly Changing World



American Society  
of International Law



# LEADERSHIP LETTER



Dear Colleagues:

From its origins at the dawn of the 20th century, the American Society of International Law has worked to foster the development and effectiveness of international law. Our founders were lawyers, scholars and diplomats deeply engaged in practical affairs and committed to the role of international law in building a more just and peaceful world.

Yet barely a decade later, the First World War shattered illusions that international law could bring about an end to war. In April 1918, the Society went so far as to declare that it "considers the very existence of international law is now at issue." The founders' vision would continue to be battered by aggression, genocide, and crimes against humanity. Even so, the Society has never wavered in its commitment to international law as an instrument for advancing a world order based on justice. Our leaders and members have been in the vanguard of efforts to elaborate and strengthen the international legal framework by adapting to changing conditions.

The need to adapt has become even more acute in the year just past, with the continued disintegration of Syria and Iraq, the spread of new, virulent strains of violent extremism, and a widening refugee crisis that has tested the resources and resolve of the Western democracies. Yet even in the midst of strife and disorder, the nations of the world managed to take steps to limit weapons of mass destruction, contain pandemics, and respond to global climate change.

All of these issues were front and center at our 2015 Annual Meeting, whose theme, "Adapting to a Rapidly Changing World," could not have been more timely. For four days, nearly a thousand scholars, practitioners, judges, government officials, advocates, and students came together from around the world to discuss the challenges facing the international legal order and the adaptations that will be needed if international law and institutions are to meet those challenges.

Our founders would have been proud of the scope and ambition of that dialogue—and astonished to see how much the conversation has broadened to include voices that played no part in their deliberations. Over the past year we have continued to enlist an ever more diverse group of scholars and practitioners as leaders and shapers of the Society, and we have entered into new partnerships, notably in collaborating with Columbia Law School, the Columbia Global Centers, and regional partners to hold our first-ever Middle East conference in Amman, Jordan.

This report also highlights the strategic investments we are making to expand and enrich our services to our members, policy makers, and the public; to reach new audiences in new ways; and to secure the Society's financial future. These efforts would not be possible without the leaders, volunteers, contributors and staff members who so generously support and sustain our work. It is their devotion that ensures that this venerable Society will continue to renew and reinvent itself, while remaining true to its founding vision, in the years to come.

Sincerely yours,

Lori Fisler Damrosch  
President, 2014–2016

Mark Agrast  
Executive Director



## WHO WE ARE

The American Society of International Law (ASIL) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, educational membership organization founded in 1906 by U.S. Secretary of State Elihu Root and chartered by Congress in 1950.

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., its mission is "to foster the study of international law and to promote the establishment and maintenance of international relations on the basis of law and justice."

ASIL holds Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and is a constituent society of the American Council of Learned Societies.

### *Marshalling the expertise of the global international community to promote peace and justice through rule of law*

The Society's nearly 4,000 members hail from more than 100 nations with nearly 40% residing outside the United States. Its members include scholars, jurists, practitioners, government officials, leaders in international and nongovernmental organizations, students and others interested in international law.

Through its many publications, conferences, briefings and educational events, ASIL seeks to serve the needs of its diverse membership and to advance understanding of international law among policymakers and the public.



Student participants in ASIL Academic Partner George Washington University's Pre-College Program on Government, Law, and International Relations visited ASIL on July 29.



From left, Dean of American University Washington College of Law Claudio Grossman, Grotius Discussant Dame Rosalyn Higgins, Grotius Lecturer Kenneth Keith, ASIL President Lori Damrosch, and ASIL Executive Director Mark Agrast.

ASIL is a volunteer-led organization governed by a 60-member Executive Council elected by its membership. In partnership with the elected leadership, ASIL is led by an executive director and supported by a professional staff of 15.



From left, outgoing Women in International Law Interest Group (WILIG) Co-Chair Clara Brillembourg and WILIG Co-Chair Christie Edwards present former ASIL President Anne-Marie Slaughter with the group's 2015 Prominent Woman in International Law award.

# ASIL TODAY – What We Are Achieving

## Notable Achievements of 2015

### ASIL Exceeds \$3 Million 21st Century Campaign Goal Campaign Completed; Foundation Laid for Future Giving

In 2012, ASIL embarked on the five-year, \$3 million 21st Century Campaign to invest in the infrastructure of the Society and expand its educational and outreach activities. Its aim was to strengthen the level of knowledge, dialogue, and engagement among practitioners, policymakers, scholars, students, and members of the general public who wished to promote peace and justice through greater understanding and use of international law. In December 2015 the Society reached its \$3 million goal.

Thanks to the participation of nearly 500 donors over a four-year period, the campaign raised \$3,044,808. Many generous contributors and ASIL Patrons made multiple-year gifts, including an anonymous Patron match in December 2015. Through their generosity, these donors have truly raised the bar, underscoring the essential role of individual philanthropy in meeting the needs of the Society. Throughout the campaign, each donation was put to immediate use in accordance with the goals and priorities established at the outset. Some of the major new assets created with this investment are described below.

#### Establishment of the Howard M. Holtzmann Research Center for the Study of International Arbitration and Conciliation

The Center, made possible by a generous gift from the Jacob L. and Lillian Holtzmann Foundation, has become the focal point for Society educational programs and research on international arbitration and dispute res-

olution. Through the Center, conferences, programs, and webinars are presented on current scholarship in the field. Thanks to an additional grant from the Holtzmann family, the Society undertook the archiving and partial digitization of the Howard Holtzmann Papers, completing that project this past year. This new public archive is a treasured resource at ASIL and will serve to advance the legacy and work of Judge Holtzmann among scholars, practitioners, and the public.

#### Upgrading Technology and Strengthening the ASIL Community

ASIL's new website debuted in the fall of 2013, introducing a new look and functionality and improving access to the Society's unmatched collection of online materials. The ASIL Community ([www.asil.org/community](http://www.asil.org/community)) has become the virtual meeting place for ASIL members worldwide to engage with each other by sharing their profiles, articles, and news of recently authored books; commenting on interest

Judicial Advisory Board Members, led by Justice Ginsburg, meet at Tillar House.



group blogs and sharing information and insights on group discussion fora; and posting and searching for jobs on the Society's new job board.

#### Continuing Legal Education (CLE).

During the fall of 2015, the Society launched an online CLE platform to provide American attorneys with easily accessible live and on-demand courses. This new resource, which can be accessed via [www.asil.org/cle](http://www.asil.org/cle), features a growing library of programs on all aspects of international law, and ASIL members receive a 30% discount on all courses.

#### Reinvigorating Society Publications

In 2014, *AJIL Unbound*, an online, open access companion to the *American Journal of International Law* (AJIL), made its debut. It features web-exclusive essays, symposia, and timely commentary on the latest developments in international law. It also expands opportunities for authorship and engagement by offering an interactive platform for shorter, more accessible scholarly contributions. The Society also launched a formal review of AJIL's operations with the aim of improving revenues and creating greater efficiencies while maintaining the Journal's renowned scholarly standards.

These are among the many new resources and institutional capacities created by 21st Century Campaign investments and now serving international law communities across the globe. The Society sincerely thanks the leaders of the campaign including former ASIL Presidents **Charles N. Brower**, **David**

**Caron**, and **Donald Donovan**, President **Lori Damrosch**, former Development Committee Chair **Mahnoush Arsanjani**, and the hundreds of donors who supported this vital, multi-year effort, many of whom will be highlighted in this edition of the Year in Review. Contact ASIL Director of Development **Michael Farley** at [mfarley@asil.org](mailto:mfarley@asil.org) with any questions concerning the campaign or other development matters.

### ADVANCING INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE AND GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

2015 was a signature year in ASIL's efforts to reach across multiple dimensions, strengthening its membership and nurturing new and existing relationships with colleague societies, policy makers and the public around the world. Of special note are the following:

**Convening an International Legal Dialogue in the Middle East** – We collaborated with Columbia Law School and the Columbia Global Centers to organize a wide-ranging conference in Amman, Jordan—our first such gathering in the region.

**Collaborating with our Colleague Societies** – We participated in joint programs and meetings in London, Oslo, Strasbourg, Taipei, Bangkok and Montreal.

**Building Bridges with the Diplomatic Community** – We initiated a series of off-the-record breakfast gatherings to enable legal attachés in the Washington diplomatic community to interact with senior U.S. officials and other guest experts in an informal and confidential setting.

**Working with the Judiciary to Advance Understanding of International Law** – We convened the ASIL Judicial Advisory Board, which brings together federal and state appellate judges to share information on international legal issues that come before their courts and to advise the Society in developing educational resources for the judiciary.



International Court of Justice Judge Joan Donoghue (third from left) and former U.S. State Department Legal Adviser Harold Koh (fourth from right) speak with attendees at the New Professionals Interest Group reception at the ASIL Annual Meeting.



From left, Muna Baig, Maha Shomali, Mark Agrast, Lori Damrosch, Ibrahim Aljazy, Shahla Matar, and Jamil Sbitan in Amman, Jordan.





Detlev Vagts, for whom a Roundtable was established in memoriam to promote scholarship and connections between young scholars and the practicing bar.



Following his policy address on the U.S. use of military force since 9/11, then U.S. Department of Defense General Counsel Stephen Preston (left) greets ASIL Membership Committee Co-Chair David Bowker and another conferee.

## PROMOTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INCLUSION

2015 was a high water mark for the Society's commitment to inclusion and to the professional development of all its members, wherever they may be in their career paths in international law. Among the notable initiatives of the past year:

### Presenting the Fifth Annual ASIL Research Forum

– The Research Forum, hosted by ASIL Academic Partner American University Washington College of Law, featured presentations and discussions of the most exciting new scholarship in the field.

### Inaugurating the Detlev Vagts Roundtable on Transnational Law

– Through a generous gift from the Vagts Family, the Society created a new forum to showcase the scholarship of young academics and foster connections between scholars and the practicing bar in the field of transnational law.

**Promoting Diversity and Inclusion** – The Society continued its multi-pronged efforts to enhance diversity and inclusion with the field and the Society itself. Through its



Students attending the April 7 BASIL-sponsored speed mentoring event at Howard University speak with and receive advice from (left) Natalie Reid and Adrien Wing.

Women in International Law (WILIG) and Minorities in International Law (MILIG) Interest Groups, the Society continued its efforts to promote and enhance the careers of women and minority lawyers in the field of international law. The Society's BASIL (Blacks of the American Society of International Law) initiative has brought new energy to these efforts, working to affirm and strengthen the role of black international lawyers, jurists, and academics in the United States and to provide mentoring and career development opportunities for black students interested in international law.

### Launching an On-Demand Platform for Continuing Legal Education (CLE)

– The Society unveiled an online CLE platform to provide an ever-expanding inventory of well-produced and easily accessible courses on all aspects of international law.

### Fostering Career Development through Fellowships and Mentorship

– The Society has continued to help prepare law students and new professionals for fulfilling careers in international law. To date, 364 young professional women in international law have worked with mentors in the U.S. and around the world, and 92 Helton Fellows have served in 48 countries since 2003.



Steven Koh (left) and Adom Cooper participate in an ASIL international law career panel and speed mentoring event at Howard University this past April.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

2016 marks the 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Society. We have much to be proud of. As one of our distinguished members has written:

*"ASIL is hugely important. It creates a community of individuals engaged with international law as scholars, practitioners, and policymakers who can both collaborate with and challenge one another. It promotes the most rigorous standards of thinking about international law and related subjects. And it stands for the importance of international law to any society committed to rule of law."*

But we are not resting on our past successes. We have undertaken a rigorous strategic review of our operations and activities, examining how best to advance our mission and serve the needs of our members; which of our many activities should be our highest priorities; which strategic partners will best enable us to meet our goals; and how to secure the financial resources we need to sustain and expand our work. We are seeking the views of our members and other constituencies to determine where the Society should commit its energies and resources in the years ahead.

As part of this review, the leadership of the Society is considering how best to leverage the new capacities made possible through the 21st Century Campaign and how to build on our core strengths:

- **Informing the Policy Debate** – Marshalling the resources of our membership to provide accessible, balanced, and authoritative information to policy makers and the public.
- **Convening Thought Leaders to Develop Solutions** – Bringing together scholars, practitioners, and experts from other professions to bring international law to bear on today's most urgent global problems.
- **Engaging a Global Constituency for International Law** – Building a worldwide community committed to the advancement of law and justice in international relations.

Our successes of the past year reflect our members' commitment to the Society's values and aspirations. Our challenge is to continue to evolve and adapt as we seek to respond to a rapidly changing world.



The inaugural INT-LAW discussion—Legal attachés in the Washington diplomatic community convene at Tillar House to interact with U.S. officials and other experts.

# HOW WE ARE ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY

**364** ♀

young professional women have enrolled in ASIL's mentoring program as mentors and mentees in **17 cities** from Tucson to Singapore since **2013**

"To develop our full potential as a 'Society,' we must be – and be perceived to be **genuinely inclusive** in membership and leadership opportunities."  
ASIL President Lori Damrosch

3500+ members in **100** countries

"ASIL has been **an essential part of my professional development**, giving me access to a **global network**...and opportunities to share my scholarship."

Academic Partner School Law Professor



**44**

Academic Partners

"ASIL serves as a rich and **invaluable asset** for students interested in international law...It has opened a door to a **welcoming community** and provided **unique opportunities** to rub elbows with the 'who's who' of international law."

Law Student

**1,999**

ASIL MEMBERS  
(60%) active in

**35**

INTEREST GROUPS

"The Society IS really its members, and is **enriched by age, race, gender, nationality, ideology**...GET INVOLVED... you'll meet people you continue to see throughout your career, and you can support a terrific organization."

ASIL Patron and Heritage Circle Member



**11**

International Law Firm Members

**16**

professional colleague societies of international law collaborate and co-sponsor programs on every continent

"All serious scholars and practitioners in the field... belong to ASIL, and our **partnership is an important part of our overall law publishing strategy.**"

Publisher Partner

**150**

substantive programs annually throughout the U.S. in collaboration with over 20 colleague societies and organizations



**1,200+**

participants at the 109<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting from 53 Countries

"(ASIL) promotes the most rigorous standards of thinking about international law...**It is the most important law forum in the United States.**"

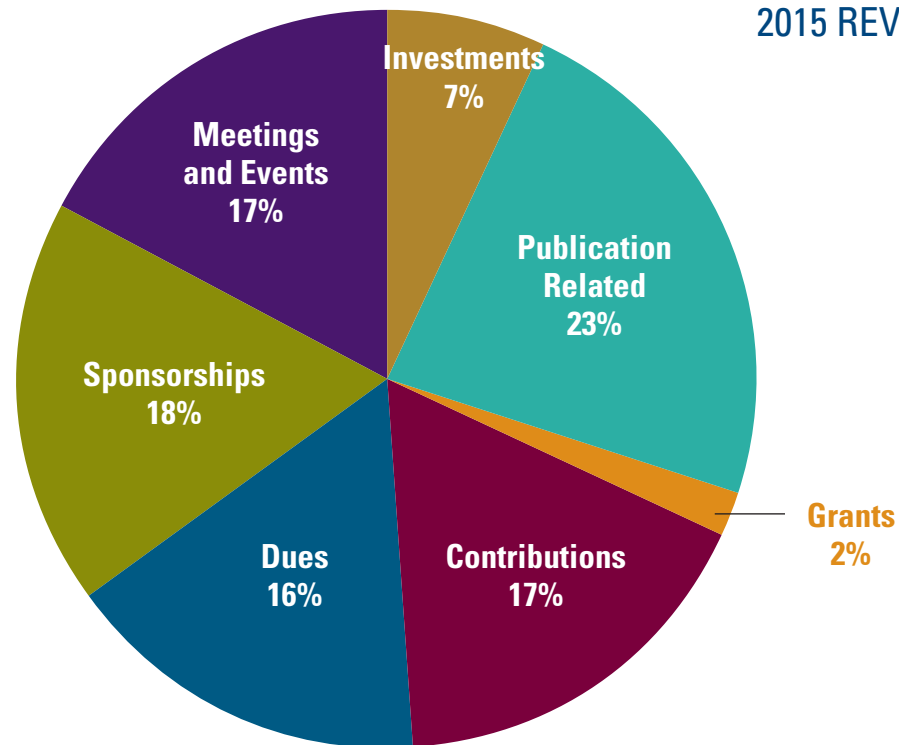
ASIL Law Firm Member

**2,500+**

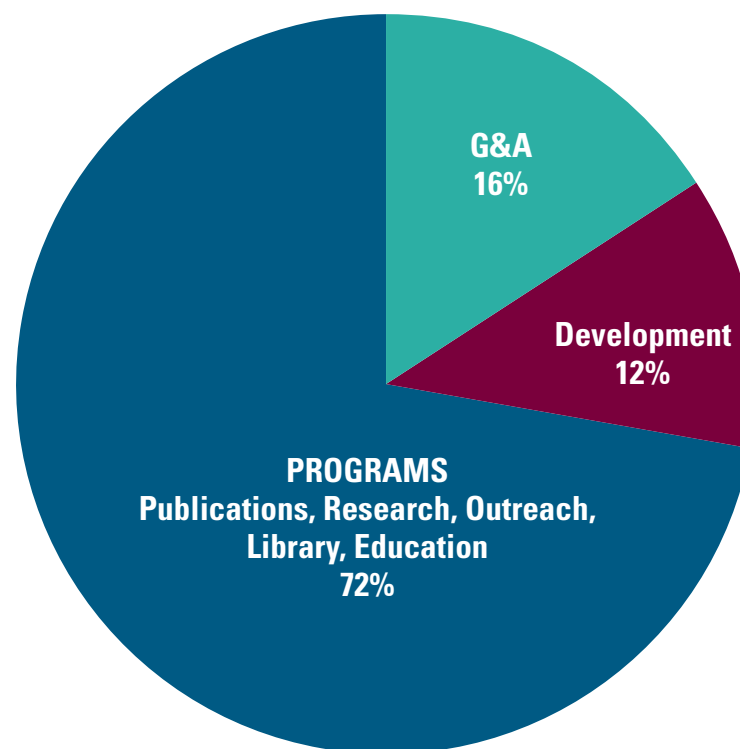
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# SOURCES OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES FOR 2015

2015 REVENUES



2015 EXPENSES



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