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## Introduction

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# INTRODUCTION

**John Makdisi**  
**Dean, University of Tulsa College of Law**  
**November 20, 1993**

The walls are tumbling faster than anyone might have imagined even a few years ago. Not only has the Berlin Wall come down but the Iron Curtain has lifted, the European Community has opened its doors and the North American response in the NAFTA has just received approval in the United States Congress. It is no longer possible to live in a world of isolationism. Technology, communication and economies of scale encourage us, if not force us, to stretch out our hands in peace, friendship, and cooperative enterprise. The world has truly become a smaller place.

In the midst of this new revolution in world cooperation there arises a tremendous need for mutual understanding. More than ever before, we need to expand our horizons of learning to encompass the languages, cultures, and legal systems of other countries. We need to shake ourselves loose from the inhibiting cloak of parochialism and with humble hearts open our eyes to the rich and varied experiences of our neighbors. From such understanding comes appreciation, sharing, and growth.

American business has been eager to respond to the opportunities for cooperative enterprise offered by foreign countries. In Tulsa alone there are an increasing number of companies who are becoming engaged in ventures around the globe, including Eastern Europe, the Middle East and South America. This expansion into foreign markets has focused attention on the need for more information about the cultural, the social and, most importantly, the legal contexts in which these companies operate. The legal community and our law school have responded to this need.

Foreign and international law have become hot topics in expanding areas of legal practice. Law firms in Tulsa have demonstrated a growing interest in specializing and promoting education in these areas. The University of Tulsa College of Law for its part has developed a whole new focus. In the last three years, the comparative and international law faculty has expanded from two to five professors and has created The Comparative and International Law Center. The school's first summer institute in a foreign country was completed with tremendous success in Bratislava, Slovakia. The International Law Society with a rapidly expanding membership has become a leading student organization. And now we are very proud to present the very first issue of our new *Tulsa Journal of Comparative and International Law*.

This new journal offers a wonderful opportunity to expand the audience of our faculty, students and visiting lecturers beyond the classroom and the lecture hall. It provides a forum for conferences on comparative

and international law such as the symposium held last Spring, "Doing Business Within the European Community and the Commonwealth of Independent States" which provided articles for this issue. It gives students a chance to publish notes on breaking issues. It also gives scholars and practitioners a forum to share their ideas and experiences and to develop the wealth of knowledge and understanding about legal systems that are still relatively unknown to us today.

I would like to extend a special note of thanks to the first board of the *Tulsa Journal of Comparative and International Law*. Without the vision, enthusiasm, and hard work of these students, this Journal would not be a reality today. They have devoted countless hours to its creation, fundraising, and the quality of its product. It has truly been a labor of love, for these students have worked on their new *Journal* without academic credit this first year in order to get it up and running. The result is a real tribute to their efforts.

With the publication of this first issue The University of Tulsa College of Law announces that it has taken up the challenge to contribute to the understanding of comparative and international law in such a way as to promote appreciation, sharing, and growth among nations. We hope to provide an eclectic set of articles and student notes that will generate knowledge, encourage legal reform, break language barriers, facilitate transplantation of legal norms where desirable, and develop respect for the diverse ways in which different legal cultures operate.