

Emily Rae
Remarks to WFLS
Upon Nomination & Confirmation as 2010 WFLS President
Annual Meeting -- February 4, 2010, 6:00 pm

Thank you very much, Susan, for your kind introduction. Your leadership as WFLS President is an inspiration to me and to this new Board, and your annual report is a strong example of your legacy. We will all look to that legacy to guide us as we set forward this year. You have left the organization in excellent financial standing and set the bar for us as we launch ahead. Don't be surprised if we are in touch.

Thank you again to Ken Hansen for hosting our 2010 Annual Meeting in the Chadbourne & Parke LLP offices. Chadbourne & Parke LLP continues to be such a generous sponsor of our Society. We thank you, Ken, very much for your support.

A special thanks also to Charles Camp and Stuart Steingold, our 2010 Nominating Committee, for their excellent work in selecting an outstanding board that I am so flattered to lead this year, together with Charles serving as President-Elect and Donald Zarin as Vice President.

When Charles and Stuart approached me to serve as 2010 WFLS President, I was immediately humbled and greatly honored. As 54th President of such a respected society, founded in 1952, I realize the great responsibility and privilege placed upon us to uphold the Society's mission. For 54 years, WFLS has served the Washington, D.C. community as a distinguished professional, educational, non-profit organization to promote the knowledge and understanding of international legal matters, comparative legal issues, and foreign law. We host monthly luncheons, gala dinners, embassy roundtables, a diplomatic reception, and other events – all featuring interesting and distinguished guests. In its history, the Society has honored Supreme Court Justices, U.S. Senators, Presidents, and Ambassadors and luminaries of and to foreign countries. It is an honor to serve as your president and work with you to not only continue Susan's great legacy, but that of the Society.

The Washington Foreign Law Society is an organization that I love, and I promise you that I will work tirelessly this year, with your help, to ensure that it is successful and that it grows.

As some of you know, I began with the Society as a member and volunteer in 2006. I attended a luncheon featuring Dr. Rubens Medina, Former U.S. Law Librarian of Congress, and shared a table with several members – several of you. I found the group to be warm, intelligent, exciting and welcoming. And I found the Society itself to be focused on fascinating issues such as trade and business, rights, security, energy, environment, politics and development. I soon engaged myself in other events, assisting in putting on our Society's annual gala dinner. Due to my volunteer work, I was humbled to be invited to serve on the board as its Secretary in 2007. Through this role, as Kip Wainscott will soon learn, I gained a sense for the flow of events throughout the year, the way the officers must work together to promote and support the Society, and I saw the continued, positive impact the Society has on its members. I also gained a sense for the Society's needs and how it can improve. I was inspired and driven even more strongly to devote myself to our mission.

I want to thank our dedicated and long-standing board members, whom I have grown to care for as friends, who will serve the Society with me this year in meeting that mission.

I am very excited as well to work with our new board members, who bring fresh energy, ideas, networks, and enthusiasm.

We welcome to the board:

- **Samuel M. Witten**, Acting Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration at State. Sam provided the introduction to our 2007 Annual Gala Dinner honoring William Howard Taft, IV and The Memory of Julia Taft with the Harry Leroy Jones Award. Sam previously worked as State Deputy Legal Adviser and in other roles for the Department.
- **Debra K. Decker** is at the Harvard Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs in their International Security Program on Managing the Atom. Her paper on nuclear threat reduction was presented at the 2009 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, and she continues to focus on risk prevention and management in her work.
- **Dan E. Stigall**, a colleague from Oxford's international law program, is a published author of the new book, *Counterterrorism and the Comparative*

Law of Investigative Detention, and several other highly respected publications on comparative law. Dan is a trial attorney at the Department of Justice in their Office of International Affairs.

- **Kip F. Wainscott** is a litigator and public policy attorney at Bryan Cave LLP. He concentrates his practice in political law, legislative counseling, and dispute resolution and worked previously as a clerk for the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee.
- **Alex Khachaturian** of White & Case's Litigation and International Arbitration Groups, has also served as a consultant for the Legal Corporate Finance Group at The World Bank and as a judicial intern to Judge Delissa A. Ridgway at the United States Court of International Trade.

We are privileged to have you all here.

Through discussion with many of you over the last several years, I have developed several goals and priorities for the year ahead. I look forward to discussing and to realizing these with you, together with this strong, new board:

First, we must improve communications to our membership. Communications, particularly electronic communications, are the vehicle for promoting our events and key to delivering membership benefits. Our current databases housing our contact lists and the system hosting our email service are outdated and disconnected. We need to better track membership renewals, event attendees, sponsorships, and a list of interested members to target our outreach. At minimum, our communications must reach our members to deliver benefits and reflect the quality of the distinguished speakers we host.

Together with Susan, Charles and Stuart, I have already met with potential technology consultants to hear suggested solutions. I will be collecting proposals to bring to the board soon for consideration. With Kip's help as secretary, we will work to ensure communications are enhanced and ready the Society for the future.

Second, with the help of Nneoma Nwogu's leadership as Chair of Programs, I hope that the Society can better engage other prominent organizations in Washington to co-host events. We are surrounded by some of the world's top thinkers and associations. Many of these

organizations' activities align to our mission and their members share our values. Cooperating with these organizations strategically is a means to expand our network, connect with others, and share costs. In the past, we have co-hosted events with the American Society of International Law, the International Law Institute, The Boeing Company, the U.S. Law Library of Congress, and others. Other organizations and firms in DC, in fact many of yours, may be interested in joining with us to host and/or promote roundtable discussions, talks, awards ceremonies, social mixers, galas, or other events. I look forward to connecting our organization with others and would welcome your help in that endeavor.

Third, our members themselves are already diverse and leading a variety of international activities. Our members include respected practicing and aspiring attorneys, government officials, representatives of international organizations, legal scholars, law schools, NGOs, private law firms, and other internationally-minded individuals. Through improved communication, we can better engage our members to serve actively in the Society. Members should be encouraged to approach the board with ideas, and the board should be prepared to help them in promoting and developing activities that align to our mission.

Fourth, to promote activities throughout the year for its members, the Board once again needs to institute several committees to carry out its work. While these committees will run with the help of Nneoma's leadership, all board members will support these committees and contribute to the Society's successful functioning.

Fifth, in Washington we are surrounded by some of the nation's top law schools. Many are our alma maters. The Society can expand its outreach by engaging these schools and students in our programs. This arrangement could assist the Society in carrying out its activities as it grows, while also serving the mission of promoting international and foreign law through education.

Sixth, the Justice Robert H. Jackson Award for outstanding student writing on international or comparative law and the Ibrahim Shihata Prize for outstanding student writing on Islamic law and related legal developments in the Muslim World have traditionally been a means the Society has used to recognize such outstanding students in the legal field. Reinstating the Writing Awards and presenting them at this year's gala dinner will be a goal.

Seventh, we can think creatively about membership benefits that attract members – both individuals and institutions – to join our Society. In the past, we have considered such ideas as hosting debates, providing online web resources, and even organizing social events like golf tournaments during our summer months. I hope we can revisit the issue of membership benefits and expand the list of activities of which members can take advantage.

Finally, your ideas are needed to drive forward the Society and help to guide its new direction. We want to hear from you regarding the issues on which you would like to focus and what you would like the Society to accomplish.

It will take time to address some of the improvements that I have listed. But hearing your ideas has been something I have enjoyed for several years and something I look forward to continuing tonight and throughout my term as president. Please do not hesitate to be in contact with your thoughts, suggestions and voluntarism. Meantime, I will be in touch with the Board to discuss these priorities and others.

Being a member of the Washington Foreign Law Society means that you in a wonderful position. You are in position to connect with interesting and leading individuals in legal and non-legal fields, many of whom become friends. You are in a position to contribute in a meaningful way to dialogue on foreign and comparative legal matters. With the Society's distinguished awards, you are in a position to honor both some the world's top leaders and promising students in international and foreign legal fields. You are in a position to educate students and young professionals on legal issues and have a positive impact on their development. And, as we have seen tonight, we are in an excellent position to have fun with this great group of people.

I am so humbled by your faith in me. I look forward to the hard work -- and to a successful year ahead.

Thank you again for this tremendous honor!

-- February 4, 2010