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# Letter from the Editors

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This winter marked the tragic passing of a dynamic and accomplished young human rights attorney, WCL and *Human Rights Brief* alumnus Brian D. Tittmore. Since 1999, Brian had worked as a senior staff attorney at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, building an illustrative record as a dedicated international human rights scholar and practitioner. A tribute to Brian's memory, by his former colleague and WCL Professor Robert Goldman, introduces this issue of the *Human Rights Brief*.

Although recent U.S. elections offer the possibility of a shift in policy, the human rights abuses of the U.S.-led "War on Terror" continue. In this issue, Christian De Vos analyzes the problematic distinction between torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment in *Mind the Gap: Purpose, Pain, and the Difference between Torture and Inhuman Treatment*. Complementing this article, Cristián Correa offers a new perspective on U.S. administration interrogation practices by juxtaposing them with the tortured legacy of Chile's Pinochet regime. Together, these articles identify the abhorrent products of Bush administration policies and, with the resignation of former U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld at the close of 2006, offer potential steps for reform.

The Rwandan genocide of 1994 left nearly a million people dead, reminding the world in three short months of the grave consequences of international apathy and inaction. Since then, Rwanda, and the international human rights community, have grappled with how law can best serve the interests of peace and justice. Christopher Le Mon's article on the Gacaca courts highlights the successes and failures of one attempt to answer this question. Moreover, if we are to learn from our mistakes in Rwanda, we must, as argued in *Ensuring a Responsibility to Protect: Lessons from Darfur*, implement the UN's Responsibility to Protect and take affirmative steps to halt the ongoing violence in Darfur.

Finally, with the recent drafting of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, we offer two perspectives on the Convention's significance and why the United States, long a proponent of domestic disability rights, refuses to sign this international instrument. To continue this discussion, the *Human Rights Brief* will host a national conference on the Convention at American University, Washington College of Law on April 9, 2007. *HRB*

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Cite as 14 No. 2 Hum. Rts. Brief.

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