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## Editorial

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We are delighted to present this special issue of the *International Journal of Diplomacy and Economy*. Papers included in this special issue were presented at the International Law and International Relations track of the Third Emerging Research Paradigms in Business and Social Science (ERPSS) International Conference held in Dubai, UAE, in November 2015. This conference, hosted by Middlesex University Dubai, provided a platform for the sharing of research findings and knowledge that transcended traditional disciplinary and geographic boundaries and focused on the theme ‘What is next?’. This is a question of considerable importance for the seven papers included in the current issue, which cover interconnected topics, ranging from human rights law, diplomatic relations, soft diplomacy, governance, international dispute resolution and political economy. Law, international relations and tourism are the main disciplines represented here from various angles, different disciplinary perspectives and varying epistemological approaches. Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) or/and the wider Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region are the geographic focus of five papers, while the other two are focusing on Africa and the UK.

Kai S. Bruns explores the drivers and actors of Dubai’s international reach. He employs parts of Kuznetsov’s analytical framework to frame paradiplomacy discourse of Dubai’s international-orientated actions. His study examines the legal, social, and economic factors that form the basis of the nature of Dubai’s entrepreneurial city diplomacy approach. Gaining insights from local leadership styles and Dubai’s political organisation, Bruns concludes that although Dubai’s de jure competencies are extensive in the fields of economic and social development, at the multilateral city diplomacy level

the city has not caught up with its competitors. He subsequently recommends pathways to address existing gaps.

Perceiving tourism as a soft diplomatic power, Paris, Marochi and Rubin explore the challenges Kuwait faces to develop tourism due to the particularly unique political-economic system of popular rentierism. This study provides both a macro-level analysis of the political economic obstacles to tourism development in Kuwait and the more micro-level challenges that have resulted, particularly in relation to proposed mega-development projects. While insights from this study are useful for understanding the role of tourism in the rentier economies, this study also further theorises tourism within the field of international relations and political economy and shows how tourism development is of particular importance for public diplomacy in the current global arena.

Guéraiche considers diplomacy in its traditional meaning and application, studying the diplomatic relations between the UAE and Tunisia and exploring the impact of the Arab identity on them. He takes us through the development of the two countries' diplomatic ties, evolving from a historically rooted cordiality toward a relationship based on reciprocal economic and security benefits under the implicit paradigm of what he identifies as 'patronage'. The author examines the convergence of interests between the two countries under the administration of the Tunisian president Ben Ali, as well as the subsequent development of a hierarchical relationship that reinforced economic and political ties, but that also inevitably endured several setbacks on the path to revolution and the rise of the Islamist movements in Tunisia. Ultimately, he explores how the principle of brotherhood entrenched in the Middle East was tested during the financial crisis of 2008 and the global security crises that led to the rise of Daesh.

For Keane and Kyriazi, it is a state's engagement with the promotion of human rights that can strengthen its role in the international community. In this context, they explore the meaning and relevance of the right to education in the UAE, by studying its legal origins and interpretation and analysing the valuable observations that emerge from the UAE's engagement with international human rights law and the UN treaty bodies and special procedures. The authors highlight achievements, challenges and opportunities for the UAE in relation to the protection and fulfilment of the right to education. Moreover, they outline the significance of the dialogue undertaken by UN human rights bodies for the promotion of the role of the UAE in the international community and its relevance for advancing UAE education in a range of spheres. Finally, they make recommendations and suggest pathways towards increased dialogue and a rights-based approach to education in the UAE.

Education is also the research focus for Walsh. In her conceptual paper, she aims to identify the role of Arab civil societies in the process of bringing change within GCC higher education. She uses civilisation analysis as a theoretical framework to investigate the impact of 'culture' in the critical cultural political economy of education framework (CCPEE). The author analyses Arab modernity, culture and societies and accesses deeply entrenched sets of meanings and practices allowing for comparative interpretations of societal differences in education.

Kodabux widens the geographic focus, looking at Africa. She undertakes an examination of the theoretical underpinnings of the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), a structured mechanism measuring Africa's governance quality using 93 indicators, and their impact on governance. The author uses grounded theory's principles to explain the rationale for including those indicators in measuring governance

and she concludes that the reasoning for this selection should be theoretically defended because the relationship between indicators and governance is not self-explanatory.

Finally, Cullen and Kerin explore the issue of enforcement of foreign arbitral awards, in view of the significance of international arbitration for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. Taking into account the relevant provisions of the 1958 New York Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards and mindful of the UK's treaty obligations under the Convention, they explore the London perspective on the enforcement of foreign arbitral awards, recognising the city's long standing and hard won reputation as one of the truly global centres of international arbitration and as a bellwether for international finance. In this context, they examine the approach adopted by the English Judiciary to international arbitration awards and ultimately their enforcement or otherwise in the courts of England and Wales.

Consequently, the collection of papers in this special issue contributes diverse perspectives of the nexus of diplomacy and economy. This special issue team is indebted to those that helped the special edition come to fruition including the ERPBSS 2015 organisers and participants, the editorial team of the *International Journal of Diplomacy and Economy* and Inderscience, and the authors themselves. The team is also very grateful to the reviewers both of the conference papers and journal submissions who committed the time to provide constructive and relevant feedback to the authors.