

EDITORS' FOREWORD

In its sixty-five-year history, the *Journal of International Affairs* has explored some of the most important transformations of the postwar world: from the U.S. occupation of Germany and Japan to the collapse of the Soviet Union, from democratization and development to the explosion of global trade. The unprecedented—and accelerating—growth of cities today will prove to be no less important. Mass urbanization will have a transformative effect on the political, economic and social fabrics of societies around the world. The demographic shift from rural to urban areas promises to release untapped human potential—creative and productive energies that will emerge from the increased exchange of ideas and capital.

However, managing this transition will be difficult. The diverse backgrounds of our authors and contributors—who hail from academia, think tanks and the public and private sectors—highlight the range of issues that arise during periods of rapid change. Urban planners and city governments will face complex new challenges requiring just the right mix of solutions. Urban problems will become, almost by definition, national and international problems. In broad terms, our authors and contributors examine “The Future of the City” through political, economic, social-equity and environmental lenses, and propose solutions that make it more likely that this new urban project will be a success.

The issue opens with an article from **Andrés Cadena**, **Richard Dobbs** and **Jaana Remes**, experts from McKinsey & Company and the McKinsey Global Institute. They explore how cities in emerging markets will gain significant economic power over the next decade and a half, and how midsized cities—not just megacities—will soon play an outsized role in the global economy.

The next four articles discuss the sustainability of urban policies and address, respectively, the environment, religion and civic rights, political consent and housing. **Xuefei Ren** examines urban environmental policy in the world’s most populous nation—China—and finds that green initiatives are often self-conscious

ventures introduced to aggrandize cities and the officials who lead them. In light of the Arab Spring, **Nezar AlSayyad** and **Mejgan Massoumi** discuss the conflict between urbanization in the Arab world and the increasing influence of religion in the cities of democratizing nations.

Ester R. Fuchs uses her experience working in New York City government to argue that the political organization of cities plays a defining role in their ability to cope with economic challenges and earn legitimacy in the eyes of the public. She asserts that New York's governance model can be replicated in rapidly expanding cities around the world. **Marc Angélil** and **Cary Siress** argue that *banlieues*, the peripheral suburbs of Paris, are a persistent symbol of urban poverty and social exclusion. They highlight how inequitable development sparks social unrest, as it has in Paris, and that this will soon be a problem for other cities.

Joan C. Henderson writes about Singapore, one of the East Asian tigers that has captivated the attention of city planners since it achieved independence nearly fifty years ago. She discusses the city-state's efforts to implement sustainable growth and governance strategies with particular emphasis on the tourism industry.

The next two articles explore the increasingly popular "global city" concept and illustrate how cities are both sources of and solutions to major international problems. **Saskia Sassen** focuses on open cities and urban conflict and finds that the modern city is, on the one hand, uniquely capable of mitigating conflict, and on the other, increasingly prone to hosting it. **Richard C. Longworth** presents an engaging critique of the shortcomings and strengths of American cities in a globalized world. He argues that the place-based origins of most U.S. cities have become problematic in the new global economy, which rewards a set of urban features entirely different from those that were profitable in the industrial era.

The issue also explores the global challenges of the future through an array of feature interviews. **Rem Koolhaas**, an urban theorist and prolific architect, discusses his experience witnessing and participating in the often-intense transformation of cities in the developing world. As chief of staff to the president of Honduras, **Octavio Sánchez Barrientos** discusses his country's attempt to build a new, independently governed city from scratch to spur growth in Central America.

Economist **Jeffrey Sachs** explains the Earth Institute's Millennium Cities Initiative, and architect **Rahul Mehrotra** describes impediments to equitable development in India; both shed light on the state of urban planning in the Global South. Architect and urban planner **Ricky Burdett** also describes the challenges of equitable development, focusing instead on London as it plans for the 2012 Olympic Games and attempts to revive neglected parts of the city.

In a feature essay for the *Journal*, **Antanas Mockus**, the former mayor of

Bogotá, Colombia, discusses his creative approach to urban governance. The section concludes with an interview with **Guruduth Banavar** of IBM, who considers how smart-city technology will make the cities of the future more livable, sustainable and efficient.

This issue's Cordier Essay is written by **Zachary Craun**, a student at Columbia's Graduate School of Architecture, Preservation and Planning, and endorses the approaches of Madrid and Barcelona for repurposing buildings and space. Our Global Public Policy Network Essay takes the opposite approach and condemns the top-down planning efforts of officials in Cairo. The author is **Nada Tarbush**, a student at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs and Sciences Po Paris.

Our goal for the sixty-fifth anniversary issue of the *Journal* is to look forward and explore an emerging topic in international affairs; the issue should also be able to stand up to scrutiny when the *Journal* reaches its seventy-fifth and hundredth anniversaries. We hope that the combined efforts of our authors and contributors provide a glimpse of our collective urban future, and that their arguments, debates and recommendations make a bright future more likely.

—*The Editors*