Editorial

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When Barack Obama came into office in 2008 his primary goals were to end the US military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan, to reset relations with Russia and to reorient American foreign policy toward the Asia-Pacific region. The President's plans, however, were derailed by a flurry of geopolitical events that have kept his administration busy for the last seven years.

The President and his team managed to get US troops out of Iraq, but the situation in the Middle East has continued to deteriorate. Although the Administration secured a compromise deal with Iran regarding Tehran's nuclear program, Iraq is a quasi failed state, Syria is mired in civil war and a non-state group of Islamist fundamentalists has managed to hive off large parts of Syria and Iraq to create, of all things, a new quasi-state. Increasingly involved in this mix is Vladimir Putin, Russia's President who is bent on reclaiming Russia's former role as a great power. The Kremlin's plans have included the annexation of Crimea and the production of a civil war in Ukraine, both of which have challenged European stability. Now, Moscow is playing a new great game in the Middle East, supporting a Shiaite axis composed on Iran, Syria and elements in Iraq. The main emphasis of this support is focused on Syria, with the aim of supporting the Assad government in order to create stability. It remains to be seen how successful the Russians will be, however, over the last decade little to no emphasis has been put on the study of Russia in the US policy establishment. In this issue, Dmitry Schlepetok provides us with a study of a man that is often referred to as the Kremlin's in-house philosopher, Alexander Dugin. Dugin calls for a new Eurasian movement led by Russia and his political theory influences some of the more extreme forces in Russia, but he is also supposedly close to President Putin. In understanding Dugin's thinking there

may be an added element of clarity to understand Russian strategy.

The President's failure to make much progress in the Middle East is sadly matched by a collective failure of world leaders to do much about climate change. Despite continued scientific evidence about the impact of global climate change on international stability and security, the world's leading nations remain unwilling to sacrifice competitiveness for sustainability. In this issue Jennifer Hadden, University of Maryland professor and current Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellow in the State Department, looks at climate governance from the climate summit in Copenhagen through to Warsaw. Most interestingly in a world where the state is increasingly one among a number of players, Hadden develops a relational theory of how civil society actors make strategic choices.

And finally, we have a review forum on Barry Buzan and George Lawson's new book on the evolution of international relations in *The Great Transformation*. The Global Transformation examines the 'long' nineteenth century, 1776–1914 studying the impact of this period on the order of power between those that harnessed modernity and those that did not. Providing a sweeping history of evolution of IR as an academic subject, *The Great Transformation* is sure to be a set text for courses around the world.

The editorial team here at IPR hopes you find this issue enjoyable and as always we welcome comments and feedback. We are always looking for excellent submissions and we encourage graduate students also to submit their work to IPR for consideration.

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