

**Statement of the President of the American Branch of the International Law Association
Regarding the United States and the International Rule of Law
February 25, 2025**

Founded more than one hundred years ago, the American Branch of the International Law Association (ABILA) is dedicated to the study, clarification and development of International Law and the advancement of peace, human rights, and justice worldwide. From time to time, ABILA Presidents have issued Statements on important matters of international concern that are related to our mandate.

Having consulted with the ABILA Board, I issue this Statement to express grave concern that over the past month, the Trump Administration has taken and threatened actions that will fundamentally alter the United States role in the international legal order and impair the international legal order itself. In doing so, I join the leaders of counterpart organizations such as the [American Society of International Law](#) and the [American Bar Association](#), who have issued similar Statements in recent days.

Among the Administration's actions of greatest concern are:

- issuing direct threats to the sovereignty and integrity of several countries in violation of the U.N. Charter;
- advocating the forcible transfer and deportation of millions of people from their homeland in violation of the Geneva Conventions;
- threatening withdrawal of support from the NATO alliance in violation of the treaty of Washington;
- breaching rules protecting asylum seekers and refugees in violation of the Refugee Convention;
- suspending enforcement of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act in contravention of the U.N. Convention Against Corruption;
- dismantling government institutions and dismissing government officials who are responsible for promoting the international rule of law and upholding the United States' international legal obligations;
- imposing sanctions on officials of an international criminal court created to impartially prosecute genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes; and
- withdrawing the United States from the World Health Organization, the U.N. Human Rights Council, and the Paris Climate Accord, and signaling the imminent withdrawal from more by launching a 180-day review of all international organizations and international conventions to which the United States is a party.

Out of the ashes of World War II, the United States took the lead in creating a world order that has successfully prevented another world war, promoted international peace and security, and achieved unprecedented advances in international development, health, public welfare, and human rights. Central to this success has been the development of international law and the international institutions that implement it. A retreat from this rules-based international legal order as represented by the actions listed above is inconsistent with the long-held principles of the United States, and threatens chaos, including to those economically advantaged countries like the United States that have most benefited from the system it so wisely promoted and helped to create.

While our organization is non-partisan in nature, we are committed to peace, justice and the rule of law -- values that are threatened by the actions of the current administration. The Branch's motto, emblazoned on our website, is: "We need international law and cooperation now more than ever." That has never been truer than today.

Michael P. Scharf

President of the American Branch of the
International Law Association