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SCHOOL OF LAW

DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF LAW

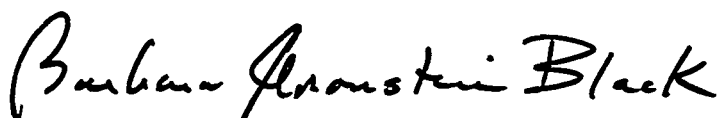
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It is with great pride and pleasure that I welcome the appearance of the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Chinese Law*.

China's present legal system and its historical antecedents well deserve thoughtful and sustained attention from foreign lawyers and legal scholars. As China has become increasingly active in world political affairs in recent years, Chinese law has taken on practical as well as academic significance for the foreign legal community. As the importance of Chinese law has increased, so has its volume and complexity. Numerous new codes, laws and procedures have created a rather sudden and substantial need for better communication between foreign and Chinese legal minds.

The *Journal of Chinese Law* represents a major positive step toward satisfying the need for more comprehensive information about Chinese legal development. Long a leader in promoting Chinese legal education exchange, Columbia's Center for Chinese Legal Studies now has a vehicle — the *Journal of Chinese Law* — dedicated to the promotion of a continuing cooperative dialogue between Chinese and American legal scholars, directed at illustrating and examining important aspects of PRC law and its historical sources. The number of professors at Columbia Law School interested in foreign and comparative law, and the large student body knowledgeable about Chinese culture, language and law constitute a unique critical mass capable of accomplishing this worthy aim. The *Journal of Chinese Law* represents an important addition to Columbia Law School's leading position in East Asian legal studies.

I extend hearty wishes for success to the editors and faculty who have generated the *Journal of Chinese Law* in their continuing efforts in what is clearly an outstanding publication.



Barbara Aronstein Black  
Dean of the Faculty of Law