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Foreword

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SYMPOSIUM

INTERNATIONAL

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LANDSCAPE

FOREWORD

Joan G. Wexler

It is my great pleasure this morning to welcome you to Brooklyn Law School's International Telecommunications Conference. Our symposium is hosted by the law school's Center for the Study of International Business Law and the *Brooklyn Journal of International Law*.

In 1984, Ma Bell broke up. Judge Harold Green's Modified Final Judgment decision truly provided the critical "Big Bang" moment that marked the birth of a new telecommunications universe. And I can certainly offer my own perspective on some of these developments as a telephone consumer. Unlike many of our students, I can remember when there was only one telephone company. I can also remember when you could get telephones in any color you wanted — as long as that color was black. (I might also add that telephones tended to work.)

Now life is more interesting — but more complicated. Not only do we face a dazzling array of choices of telecommunications equipment and telephone providers, but in addition we also can decide among Internet service providers and wireless companies. We may even be working on setting up a broadband home network system.

As a law school dean, I also have another perspective. More and more of my job involves choosing telecommunications options for the administration, faculty and students. The law school faces hard choices in making sure that we can all communicate with each other in the most efficient fashion.

At today's conference, we will examine the relationship between the American revolution in telecommunications and international developments. In particular, we will hear about the impact of the Internet, which is now challenging legal models in existing telecom regulation.

The Internet is an international telecommunications medium by definition. Moreover, the internationalization of media companies is now threatening any regulatory scheme that is based at the national level. As an example, the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") regulates telecommunications in the United States alone, but companies such as AOL-Time Warner and Bertelsmann do business everywhere on the globe. How can a national system of regulation respond to the new international legal challenges?

Today's symposium seeks to explain how traditional areas of the telecommunications regulation are responding to this new international legal landscape. I am delighted to welcome the distinguished scholars who are joining us today. On a personal note, I want to mention that my law school classmate Reed Hundt, former Chairman of the FCC, will be providing today's keynote address. It will be wonderful to see Reed here at Brooklyn Law School.

I also want to thank Professor Paul Schwartz for organizing today's conference. Paul is a prodigious scholar in the telecommunications field and a valued member of our community. I also appreciate the work of Diane Nardone and Michelle Scotto to make sure that today's conference runs smoothly.

As a final note, I should mention that although I realize you may not have focused on the telecommunications choices of law school deans, I would appreciate any advice you could give me. Many thanks again for joining us here today.