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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

I am delighted to issue this message as our young Department of Law launches its inaugural issue of the Peradeniya Law Journal (PLJ). The Journal is a significant further step in the academic journey of the Peradeniya Department of Law, launched with the objective of making a unique contribution to academic scholarship and literature on the law within Sri Lanka and beyond. The unique contribution we aspire to is by way of encouraging legal literature with interdisciplinary perspectives. We believe that such perspectives are required to make the law a more effective social institution which is sensitive to social realities and challenges posed by a rapidly changing world.

When our Department commenced academic activities in October, 2009, it filled a major void in the disciplines taught at the University of Peradeniya, a venerable seat of higher education in the country. With the abrupt departure of the first Department of Law at Peradeniya to the University of Colombo in the 1960s, legal education at Peradeniya suffered a serious setback. The delayed setting up of a new Department of Law, however, provided us with the opportunity to design a modern legal curriculum with an interdisciplinary approach and a social justice orientation.

The Department's vision is grounded in the belief that law, as an institution emanating from society, must always be responsive to public needs if it is to be relevant to society and earn credibility. Our objective then is to train a new breed of young legal professionals who, while being well versed in cutting-edge developments in the law, would possess social sensitivity and the capacity to view legal developments through the lens of social justice. It is that approach to the law and legal scholarship that we aspire to promote through the Peradeniya Law Journal. We are very optimistic that our Journal would in due course be viewed as a major platform to disseminate such scholarship.

I wish to thank all colleagues of the Department who readily took on board the idea of publishing an academic journal even though overburdened with duties in a challenging human resource situation. My appreciation to the Co-Editors of the PLJ, Dr. Kalana Senaratne and Dr. Kaushalya Madugalle, for the work put into the first issue.

The first issue carries three invited contributions by eminent scholars/Jurist—Justice (Dr.) S. Muralidhar, Prof. Savitri Goonesekere and Prof. Tony Anghie—whose scholarship has added immense academic depth to this issue. The contributions include the text of the Sir Ivor Jennings Oration (2023) on the theme ‘Protection of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: Constitutional Choice or Democratic Imperative?’. On behalf of the Board of Editors I wish to extend our warmest appreciation to them for their generosity and ready assistance. Our appreciation is also due to all other contributors who placed their faith in a new Journal.

We are deeply honored by the positive responses received from distinguished academics, both from Sri Lanka and overseas, to serve on the Journal’s Advisory Panel. Enriched by their future advice and assistance, we look upon our future journey with optimism.

Prof. Deepika Udagama
Editor-in-Chief
September, 2025
