Foreword

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Dr Elli Louka has written a courageously realistic yet hopeful book on one of the central problems of the twenty-first century. Louka offers an unflinching examination of the uses and potential abuses of the nuclear instrument currently and in projected futures of the interlocking international war system and global economy. Because nuclear power will continue to be relied upon for energy in an increasing number of states and some mix of nuclear weapons (or reliance on them) will continue to be incorporated in their defense systems, nuclear technology may leak and disseminate. States, including those with nuclear arsenals, will increasingly resort to some of the techniques of irregular warfare, while non-governmental entities will conspire to the use of various weaponized forms of nuclear power, which have, until now, been the prerogative of a small number of the most powerful states. The deterrent dynamic, which operated as between the members of the nuclear club during the Cold War and helped to spare the world from nuclear disaster, may prove less effective in many of these new contexts.

Dr Louka's book systemically analyzes and evaluates the efforts at the strategic and international legal and institutional levels to address the challenges posed to world order by these conflicting trends. She looks squarely at the practice and inevitability of pre-emptive action in many of the contexts she projects. This is an important and timely study for anyone practicing or trying to understand international law and politics.