Acknowledgements

Since the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States of America, democratic nations around the world have faced a significant challenge – to respond to global terrorism within the confines of the rule of law and with regard to international human rights principles. In September 2005 we convened an international conference at Monash University’s Prato Centre to assess the extent to which that challenge had been met.

The international forum brought together a number of highly distinguished lawyers, academics, public commentators, journalists and policy makers to critically analyse issues which affect the health of a democracy. For two days we discussed whether, in the current security environment, the democratic state has been severely compromised and whether we are witnessing the development of a post-democratic era. This edited collection builds on the presentations given at the forum and reflects the passionate, engaging and significant nature of those contributions. Tariq Ali’s Key Note address and Professor John Keane’s closing address are based on transcripts from their actual presentations.

As editors, we greatly appreciate the professionalism and good humour of those who presented at the conference and contributed to this book. Working with them has been a pleasure. We are also indebted to several areas within Monash University for their considerable support and for their trust in our ability to take an idea and turn it into both an international forum and an edited collection. The Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements awarded us a competitive grant in order to proceed with the planning and organising of the international forum. The Faculty of Arts and the School of Humanities, Communications and Social Sciences contributed additional funding and the Monash University European Steering Committee provided a safety net by underwriting the international forum. The Director of Monash University’s Prato Centre, Dr Annamaria Pagliaro and Associate Director Dr Cecilia Hewlitt gave invaluable support in the lead up to and throughout the conference. We are very grateful to them for the many things they did to contribute to the success of the forum.

The then Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor of Monash University, Professor Stephen Parker opened the conference and gave a special tribute to Dr Marjorie ‘Mo’ Mowlam who sadly passed away a few weeks before she was
to give her Key Note address. In his tribute Professor Parker made note of Dr Mowlam's significant contribution to public life. We are very grateful to Dr Mowlam's husband Jon Norton for allowing us to reproduce her address in this collection.

Our task as forum convenors was made possible by the wonderful Sara Cousins. Sara constantly exhibited assiduous professionalism. From Melbourne, Australia she organised an international forum which involved bringing people from around the world together for two days in Prato, Italy. To say that she organised a highly successful conference does not begin to convey the depth or breadth of what Sara accomplished. We relied on her exceptional project management expertise and finely honed people skills in so many ways. Thank you Sara, we appreciate enormously all you have done. Our thanks also to Emma Rutherford-Lemon, Dr Natasha Campo and Toija Cinque for their work on the edited collection.

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