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Selection Committee, Law Fellow Program
Public Interest Law & Policy Group
1440 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Selection Committee at the Public Interest Law & Policy Group,

I am a third-year student at Harvard Law School, and I am keenly interested in working as a Law Fellow with the Public Interest Law & Policy Group starting in September 2018. Building on my demonstrated commitment to public service, my legal studies of international and comparative law, and my years of professional advocacy and research experience abroad, I am both well equipped and highly motivated to contribute to PILPG's work.

It was shortly after witnessing Egypt's "Arab Spring" and the fall of Hosni Mubarak firsthand that I joined the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, a leading Arab research and advocacy organization. Drawing upon my hard-won fluency in Arabic, I supported my Egyptian colleagues in proposing a "roadmap" to guide the transitional period, including by conducting research into the transitional justice mechanisms that have been used by other countries to address legacies of authoritarian oppression. As the political climate in much of the region steadily worsened, I partnered with activists across the Middle East to monitor emerging patterns of violations. I then utilized our findings to lead advocacy campaigns at the U.N. Human Rights Council and African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

My appreciation for my colleagues' legal expertise grew as we worked together to intervene in individual cases of abuse and to critique restrictive draft legislation on civil liberties, counterterrorism, and access to information. As I witnessed the crucial role played by a just legal framework for the proper functioning of democracy and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, I became determined to study law – not only to make a difference by litigating specific cases, but also to acquire the legal tools necessary to encourage systematic protection of rights and democratic principles.

My legal studies have reinforced this determination. Research examining the intersections of law, human and civil rights, equality, and democracy, as well as novel applications of transitional justice mechanisms, has honed my sensitivity to the challenges that face actors who are seeking to bring about democratic transformation in their countries. Collaborating on clinical projects to hold both government and private actors accountable in national and international fora for violations of human rights and humanitarian law has motivated me to continue supporting entities that seek to negotiate ends to conflicts and ensure accountability for grave violations of international humanitarian law.

As I launch my career as an international lawyer, I am strongly committed to PILPG's mission of providing *pro bono* legal assistance to states and governments that aim to transition out of conflict, hold war criminals to account, or strengthen the rule of law and accountable governance. Although I have not worked as a summer intern with PILPG, I have seen numerous PILPG projects unfold through my leadership roles with the Harvard Law and International Development Society and Harvard Advocates for Human Rights, and I have benefitted greatly from participating in two of PILPG's negotiation simulations in the last year. It would be a privilege to become a member of this law firm that stands out as one of the global leaders in terms of offering international *pro bono* legal services. In turn, I would bring the

concrete skillsets of a well-trained international lawyer and the steady dedication of a seasoned advocate to PILPG's team, including in the following ways:

International law expertise. PILPG's work emphasizes providing legal advice to clients regarding how to address highly complex legal challenges: Whom to hold accountable for war crimes, and how? What constitutional reforms will encourage desired systemic changes? How to balance the competing exigencies of accountability and peace? My extensive studies of international law – including courses on Public International Law, Global Law and Governance, Human Rights Advocacy, International Criminal Law, International Humanitarian Law, International Counter-Terrorism Law, and Comparative Constitutional Law – will provide a solid foundation from which to contribute to PILPG's work. In addition, I would draw upon years of professional experience gained in countries attempting to transition out of dictatorial rule, such as Egypt and Tunisia. My firsthand experience working on the Colombian peace process, including partnering with Dejusticia in Bogota to identify lessons learned from the international and hybrid criminal tribunals in order to strengthen the design of the Colombian Special Jurisdiction for Peace, as well as with the International Human Rights Clinic to submit a complaint to the ICC for alleged corporate complicity in crimes against humanity committed in Colombia, would similarly inform my contributions to PILPG's work on some of today's most pressing conflicts.

Experience working in critical situations around the world. PILPG works with clients who face not only complex legal problems but also incredibly difficult practical situations. My background in community development work and human rights advocacy – both conducted in close collaboration with local activists and impacted groups – will help me to engage effectively in the face of seemingly intransigent situations. In addition, my own work experiences in many countries in the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America will provide foundational understandings of conflicts affecting all of these regions. In contributing to PILPG's work, I would bring several years of experience collaborating with and training dozens of activists on the ground, managing partner expectations, and fostering supportive networks of local and regional actors. Crucially, my Arabic and Spanish language skills will allow me to engage effectively and efficiently with clients in many countries of focus.

Holistic use of legal and policy tools. I appreciate PILPG's expansive approach to supporting clients in dealing with the challenges that they face in times of conflict. My previous work has given me insight into many of the tools outside of law that are also often highly effective. For example, during my time with the Cairo Institute, my colleagues and I spearheaded an effort to block successive Egyptian governments from adopting draconian legislation aimed at crippling civil society. We collaborated with local and international partners to address such legislation, including by researching best practices in other countries and comparing such options with international standards; highlighting the problems with the proposed restrictions in local and international media; meeting directly with Egyptian legislators to emphasize concerns and propose alternative formulations; and identifying actors who could exert pressure on Egypt – including the U.N. and African human rights systems, powerful global actors such as the U.S. and E.U., and even organizations in other Arab states – and urging these entities to speak out. This effort succeeded for several years in holding restrictive legislation at bay. Through the process, I came to appreciate the value of strategically mobilizing the precise tools that will effectively meet clients' goals, even if those tools do not involve litigation or are otherwise thought of more as "policy" rather than traditionally "legal" tools.

Working as a member of PILPG will allow me to build upon my prior experience working abroad and to solidify my ability to advise clients on the legal matters that affect them. Experience gained working on PILPG's range of issue areas, from peace negotiations to post-conflict constitution drafting, will be foundational to my future career, whether I continue to work with civil society organizations to perform international public service work or go on to pursue similar work with the U.S. State Department. I seek

to become a thoughtful legal advisor and effective international lawyer, and it would be an honor to begin my legal career at PILPG.

I have included for your review a detailed resume that highlights my relevant professional and academic experience. If offered a position as a law fellow with PILPG, I would apply for fellowship funding through Harvard's Committee on General Scholarships, Harvard's Public Service Venture Fund, and Harvard's Human Rights Program. The deadlines to apply for these fellowships fall between early January and March 2018. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Sarah Dorman