

Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

The Spring 2027 issue of the *Countries Studies* journal is a mirror of the interconnected, multi-layered world we live in– a world where "rule-following" and "inaction of international institutions", "soft power", "hard economic indicators", "national identity" and "virtual reality" are all intertwined.

We begin this issue with a bitter but necessary look at international humanitarian law. The first article speaks not of the rule, but of the violation of the rule. An analysis of "humanitarian inaction" toward Iran poses a riddle that challenges the boundary between law and political reality. When rules are written but not enforced, can we still believe in an "international community"? Drawing on the joint US-Israeli attacks during the Twelve-Day and Forty-Day Ramadan Wars (Spring 2027), the author of this brief yet profound article demonstrates that we can no longer speak of "marginal violations" of humanitarian law. Rather, we are facing an organized pattern of targeting civilian populations and vital infrastructure (hospitals, schools, historical markets, water and electricity networks); actions that, under Article 8 of the Rome Statute, clearly constitute war crimes. But the main question of the article goes beyond describing these attacks: Why, despite this evidence, has the international community– and the UN in particular– failed to take "immediate global action" to prevent this injustice? The author's answer points to a collective failure of will, not an inability to recognize the truth.

From the arena of rule violation, we move to the arena of power competition. In the analysis of the US approach to soft power in India, we see how Washington is attempting to redefine its influence on the subcontinent, not with missiles, but with ideas and culture. This article is a fascinating case study of "soft war" in the 21st century.

Undoubtedly, power and politics have no meaning in a vacuum; their foundation is a dynamic, resilient, and international economy. In today's world, no hegemony and no order can endure without strong economic foundations. For this reason, one of the technical and valuable articles in this issue attempts to examine, with a precise and quantitative lens, the dynamics between the stock markets of BRICS member countries and key global financial assets. Using advanced econometric methods such as the Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) model, this article pursues the fundamental question: Has the emerging BRIC bloc succeeded in making itself independent from the fluctuations and volatilities of traditional markets? In other words, have these developing economies shown independent and different behavior in the face of global financial shocks such as fluctuations in gold, Bitcoin, US Treasury bonds, and the VIX volatility index? The answer to this question– as you will see in the precise statistics and meticulous

analyses of this study– is clear and evident, based not on speculation but on credible empirical evidence. This article will be illuminating not only for investors and financial analysts, but also for policymakers seeking to understand the true position of emerging economies in the global financial order.

Two articles in the Spring 2027 issue focus on domestic politics and development. The first examines the role of agricultural support in the economic growth of OECD member countries, a crucial issue. This research shows how seemingly local decisions (such as wheat subsidies) can alter the equations of global power. The other article discusses the mass customization of national consumption. This article begins with a fundamental critique of the traditional "production-only" economy. The author demonstrates that an exclusive emphasis on the mass production of standard goods– a policy pursued for decades in developing countries– has not led to "sustainable growth" but has instead resulted in surplus inventory, market saturation, and the waste of national resources. In contrast, the article defends the theoretical framework of the National Economy Model (NEM), a model in which "consumption capacity"– not production alone– is recognized as the engine of economic growth. But the key question is: How can we increase the desire to consume without returning to Western consumerist patterns, while simultaneously optimizing the use of national resources?

The final two articles of this issue take us to the frontiers of knowledge and futures studies. "The Emergence and Evolution of the Metaverse as a Social and Technological Reality" is no longer a science-fiction prediction, but a report on a lifeworld in which the new generation breathes. Furthermore, "From Generational Trust and Education to Climate Action" shows what transformations in green policymaking can occur if we believe in a generation that has personally experienced the environmental crisis.

Finally, we conclude this issue of the journal with a realistic look at the Dubai real estate market. The analysis before shows how this city-state, relying on political stability, economic predictability, and the adoption of technologies such as artificial intelligence, has demonstrated remarkable resilience, even in the face of a shock as great as the COVID-19 pandemic. But what lessons does this city– a symbol of economic globalism– hold for emerging economies, especially Iran? Perhaps the most important lesson is that stable markets have no meaning without accountable institutions and a belief in the role of the private sector.

We hope this issue opens a new window toward a better understanding of "countries" and "their people" in a world full of ambiguity.

The Editor-in-Chief,
Journal of Countries Studies
Spring 2026