

Fair Observer^o

Independence, Diversity, Debate

FO° ANNUAL UPDATE 2024:
CELEBRATING GROWTH AND IMPACT



Over a decade of independent nonprofit journalism	Unwavering commitment to high editorial standards
<div>12,000</div> <div>pieces by 3,000 authors from 90+ countries</div> <div>↗</div>	<div>89%</div> <div>increase in American users</div> <div>↗</div>
<div>25%</div> <div>increase in Indian users</div> <div>↗</div>	<div>47%</div> <div>increase in British users</div> <div>↗</div>
<div>147%</div> <div>increase in Nigerian users</div> <div>↗</div>	<div>33.8%</div> <div>of audience is aged 18–24</div> <div>↗</div>
<div>25%</div> <div>of audience is aged 25–34</div> <div>↗</div>	<div>42%</div> <div>of audience are women</div> <div>↗</div>

Dear FO° Supporter,

I am writing this two days after Christmas in New York City. I walked through the bustling crowds near the ice rink and Christmas tree in Rockefeller Center. I also explored the quiet streets of Tribeca and West Soho. Unlike London, this city does not feel like home, but it exerts a strong pull on me. While walking through Times Square, I ran into Moroccans who live in France, Muhajirs who have made Lahore their home, Bolivians from La Paz, Aussies from Sydney looking for a good pub for a night out, and devout Catholics from Abidjan in Côte d'Ivoire marveling at the flashing lights of the Big Apple.

A few days ago, one of our donors remarked that Francis Fukuyama was indeed right and that the populist revolt against globalization was a blip. As I walked through New York, I had to concede that he had a point. Yet I cannot entirely agree with him. As another dear friend, Olivier Lavinal, points out repeatedly, there has been an eternal tension between the universal and the particular. The Taliban in Afghanistan or the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) in Syria certainly do not want any of their cities to turn into New York.

Both Christianity and Islam are universalist, but both also have had too many schisms to recount. The United Nations General Assembly in Paris proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights over 75 years ago, but most nations fall far short of this creed, and many do not even pay lip service to it.

At Fair Observer, we experience that universal-particular tension all the time. On the one hand, we have editorial guidelines that apply to everyone who publishes with us. On the other hand, we accept that people's diverse contexts, experiences, personalities, values and cultures shape their perspectives. Sometimes, this creates challenges. What we publish often irritates some of our readers. At times, it offends them. Applying our guidelines to controversial topics is tricky and demands judgment, which even at its finest is imperfect. So yes, we sometimes fall short in applying the universal to the particular.

Yet that is the thin needle we thread in our contentious times. You might ask why we do what we do. I will give you a simple answer. Discussion and debate are the twin pillars of a functioning democracy where people learn to agree to disagree. In this era of algorithms feeding us exactly what we

like and driving us down rabbit holes, Fair Observer makes us see the world through many prisms.

Ours is a citizen-supported and citizen-driven new model of journalism. Billionaires do not own us. Governments do not control us. Venture capitalists maximizing returns for their investors do not back us. In the age of increasing inequality, we are that rare creature: an independent nonprofit. So, we inform and educate our readers with no other competing motives to cloud our actions.

Citizens power our content production. Our nearly 3,000 authors come from over 90 countries. Our editors, who do the valiant task of fact-checking and making our pieces readable, come from around the world. More often than not, they come through our Young Editors Program, which we have pioneered and which one alumna has called “a fast-track masters course in international relations.” Education defines our core team, which conducts Oxford-style tutorials every Saturday with young editors over a video call, poring over maps, encyclopedias and other sources to produce the finished products you enjoy on our website.

In 2024, we made great strides in creating what one of our young donors and authors called “a crucible of collaboration.” The FO° Community meets both online and offline to deepen this spirit. From the drawing board in Philadelphia in 2010, to our launch in Washington, DC, in 2011, to our near-death in 2013 and our reinvention thanks to a Kickstarter campaign that raised a mere \$35,001, we have come a long way.

As we enter our 15th year, we have big plans for 2025. We are more committed to our mission than ever, and we have learned from the school of hard knocks. We ask you to join us in a journey at a time when independent journalism that combines global coverage with local insights matters more than ever. We rely entirely on your support. So, kindly see below how you can help.

A thousand thanks, and Happy New Year!

Atul Singh, Claire Whitaker, Peter Isackson, Roberta Campani, Anton Schauble and the rest of the FO° Team



How can you support us?

- 1 Ask people in your circle to sign up for our [newsletters](#) and follow us on social media: [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [X](#), [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#).
- 2 Introduce us to those who might want to [publish](#) with us.
- 3 Encourage curious young people to **apply** for our FO° Young Editors Program by writing to rebecca.zhuo@fairobsERVER.com.
- 4 **Share** our newsletters, articles, podcasts and videos with your circle.
- 5 **Download** our [e-publications](#): monthly magazines, yearbooks and more. You can read them on your e-reader or print them out. (That will save your eyes from overexposure to [blue light](#).)
- 6 **Ask your friends to [support us](#)**. Remember, a free press is not free. The number of donors and their level of engagement makes a large difference. A \$11 annual donation costs less than \$1 a month but goes a long way. Keep in mind that companies like Visa and Google **match your donation** because we are a 501(c)(3) organization. Our EIN is 46-4070943.
- 7 **Volunteer** with us and help us with marketing, fundraising, creating timelines, or podcast and video production. Write to roberta.campani@fairobsERVER.com if you are interested.



FO° Content

In 2024, Fair Observer helped many young authors learn the ropes of both editing and writing through the FO° Young Editors Program.



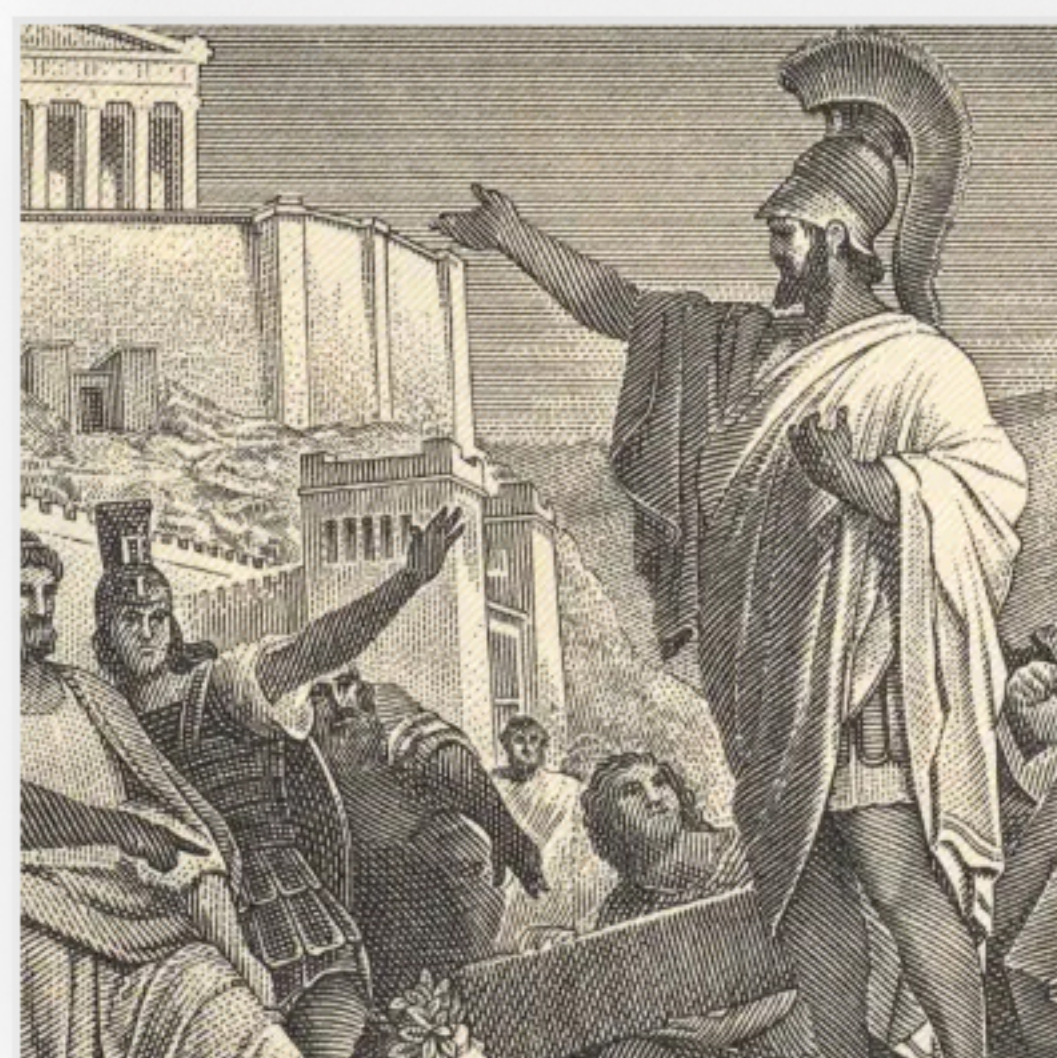
Anton Schauble
Chief of Staff

Editor-in-Chief Atul Singh's editorial chief-of-staff Anton Schauble, an alumnus of the program, now publishes regularly on *FO°*. In 2024, he published five *FO° Wednesday* newsletters, five interviews and three articles. The following pieces received an especially good reception from our readers:



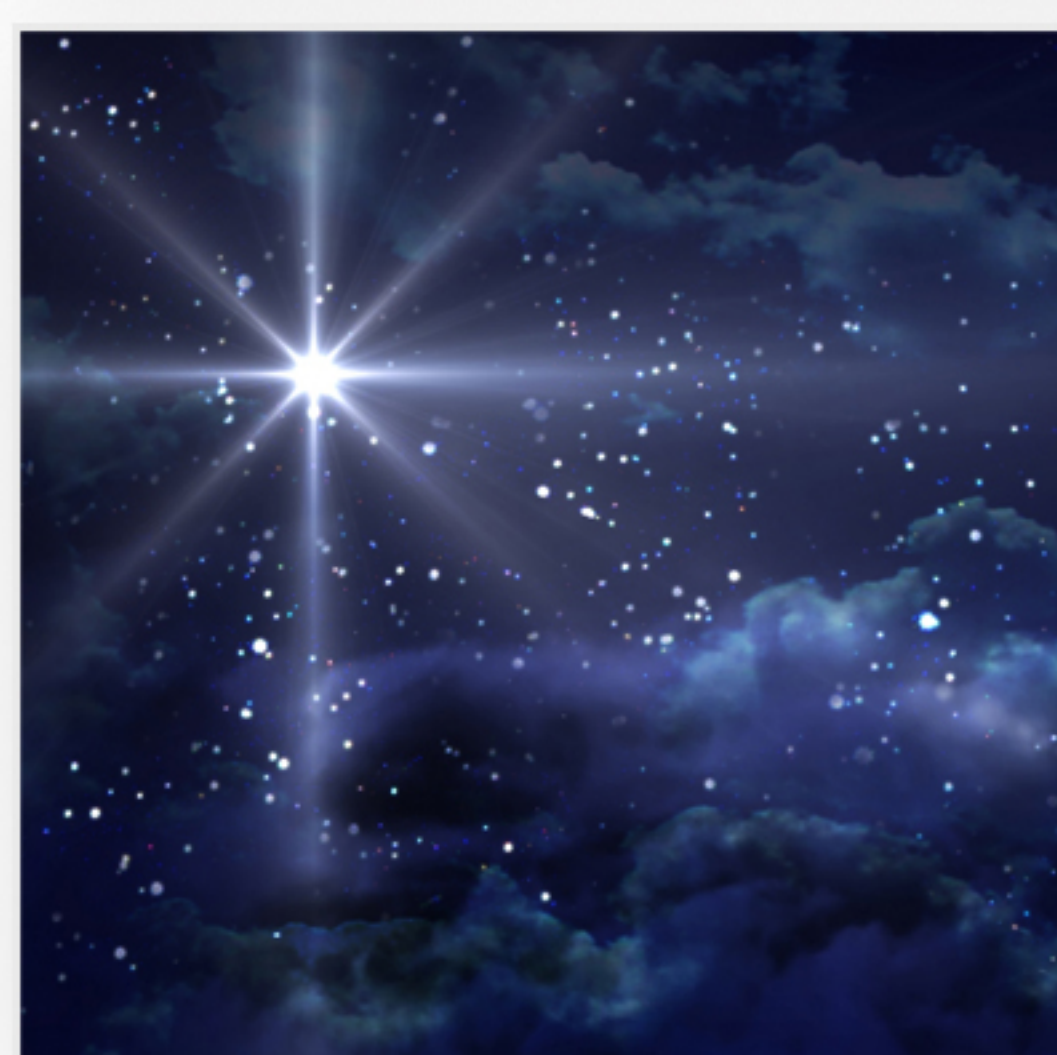
The Truth About Narendra Modi's Unexpected Electoral Flop

August 22, 2024



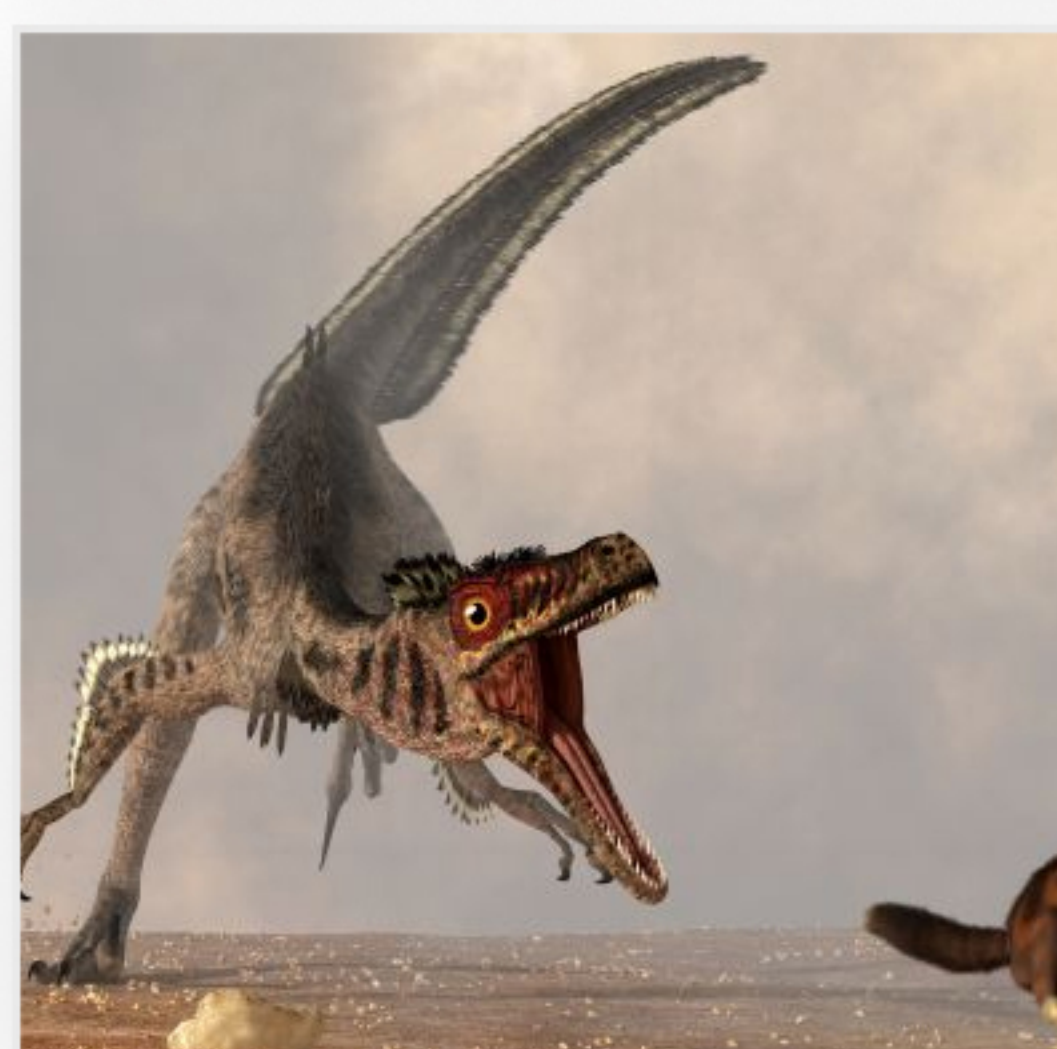
No, Trump Is Not the End of US Democracy. It Never Existed.

November 05, 2024



Finding Holiday Gratitude in a Chaotic World

December 25, 2024



A Sunburn Can Make You Realize How Weird History Is

June 26, 2024



India Nye Wenner
Editorial Intern and Author

India Nye Wenner, a high school student in New York, is currently doing our program. She is just 17 and she is turning out to be a most promising author. She penned seven articles this year and interviewed the Irish rockstar Bono.



Bono Goes to Las Vegas: Let There Be Light

April 13, 2024



Kaleidoscope Voting and Kamala: TikTok's Influence on the 2024 Election

August 13, 2024



How to Inspire Climate Action With Negative and Positive Activism

January 22, 2024



The Israel-Hamas War Triggers Startling Division Between Young Americans

February 03, 2024



Ali Omar Forozish
Commissioning Editor and Author

Ali Omar Forozish is another alumnus of FO° Young Editors Program. Originally from Afghanistan, he has already lived in many countries, has deep insights and has published five articles this year on a range of topics, along with an *FO° Wednesday* newsletter.



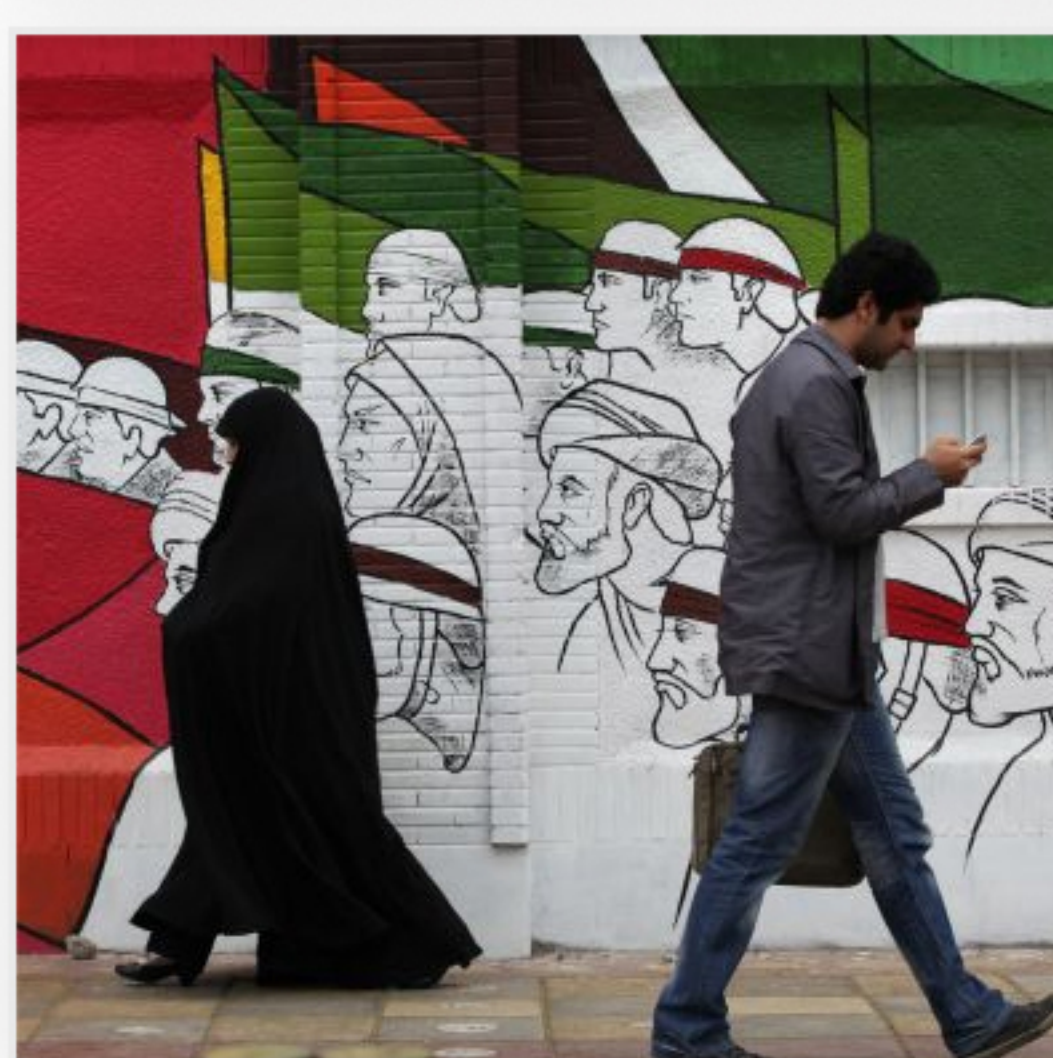
Assad's Fall Starts a New Era in the Middle East

December 23, 2024



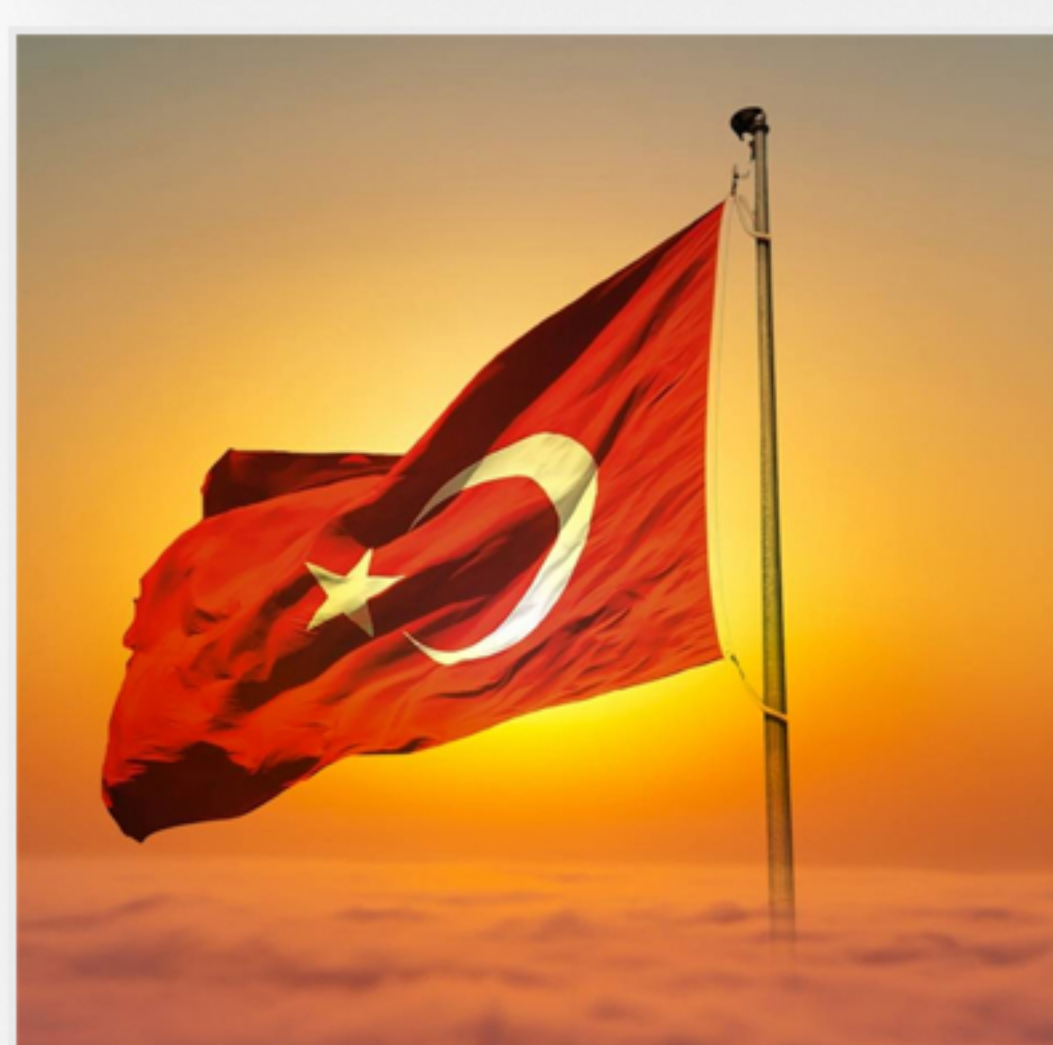
History, Heritage, Hegemony: The Truth About the Taliban Emirate

December 23, 2024



From Chaos to Fair Observer: The Unexpected Path to Becoming a Voice

March 20, 2024



A Sultan's Shadow: The Truth About Neo-Ottomanism

March 24, 2024



Antoine van Agtmael

As usual, Atul Singh had a host of interesting guests on FO° Podcasts. The podcast that attracted the most comments involved our longtime supporter Antoine van Agtmael. He came up with the term “emerging markets” in 1981, had an extraordinary career as an investor, wrote seminal books and has earned a high reputation as a philanthropist. You can listen to the podcast on both Apple and Spotify. It is well worth your time.



Donald Trump Is Back. Why, and What Happens Now?

December 17, 2024



John Elliott

We have been publishing pieces by more experienced authors as well. Retired US diplomat John Elliott published a fantastic long piece with photos he took himself of some of Donald Trump’s core supporters.



The Red Wrath of MAGA

March 25, 2024



Gary Grappo

Gary Grappo, our former chair who was a US ambassador, and [Glenn Carle](#), a retired CIA officer, teamed up with Atul Singh to make sense of the Israel–Iran clash in May.



[Make Sense of the New Israel–Iran Clash](#)

May 21, 2024

Gary also did a three-part interview on America's New Fast-Changing Role in the Middle East as well an analysis of Houthi assaults in the Red Sea.



[America's New Fast-Changing Role in the Middle East Part 1](#)

June 28, 2024



[America's New Fast-Changing Role in the Middle East Part 2](#)

June 30, 2024



[America's New Fast-Changing Role in the Middle East Part 3](#)

October 26 2024



Dr. Rod Berger
Editor-at-Large

This year, we launched a new podcast series by Dr. Rod Berger. He is a great interviewer and storyteller who produced some riveting podcasts in 2024.



Atul Singh: Journalism's Role in Addressing Democratic Decline and Propagating Diverse Perspectives

September 15, 2024



Understanding the Personal Conflicts of a CIA Operative With Glenn Carle

April 10, 2024



Karen Greenberg on Empowering the Next Generation of Security Experts

March 22, 2024



A Vietnam Veteran's Journey From Battle to Humanitarian Efforts

March 07, 2024



Fascism, Politics and Terrorism: Lessons From History With Matthew Feldman

July 01, 2024



Christopher Roper Schell
Contributing Editor

Contributing Editor Christopher Roper Schell appeared on FO° Podcasts to make sense of Trumponomics and published some insightful pieces.



Making Sense of the New Trumponomics Starting in 2025

December 15, 2024



If She Loses, Part 1: Kamala Wrong on the Issues

October 31, 2024



If She Loses, Part 2: Kamala's Campaign Didn't Resonate

November 05, 2024



How Much Longer Will Donald Trump and American Democracy Survive Political Violence?

October 03, 2024



Roberta Artemisia Campani
Partnership and Outreach

Roberta Campani, who manages partnership and outreach at Fair Observer, wrote a series of thoughtful *FO° Wednesday* newsletters that resonated with our audience.



How Can a Croissant Sustain a Hadron Collider?

January 10, 2024



Cinema, Politics, Roosters and Community Around a Warm Meal

July 31, 2024



The Beauty of Being Old in a Youth-Obsessed World

September 25, 2024



Do We Really Need Avocados and Kiwis at Christmas in the Alps?

December 11, 2024

New York, you inspire us.

It's your scale. Your energy and creativity. Your moxie and your hustle. It's your grit, your kindness to strangers, and your enduring optimism.

We may have been born in Seattle, but we grew up here, just like our founder. Shaped by successes and challenges, welcoming all in a city that does the same.

We have been part of this iconic building, this beacon of vision and for almost as long as we've been in New York. And to be part of this iconic building, this beacon of vision and for almost as long as we've been in New York. And to be part of this iconic building, this beacon of vision and for almost as long as we've been in New York.

This

who

We lo



The FO° Community in New York at the Starbucks Reserve Cafe in November.

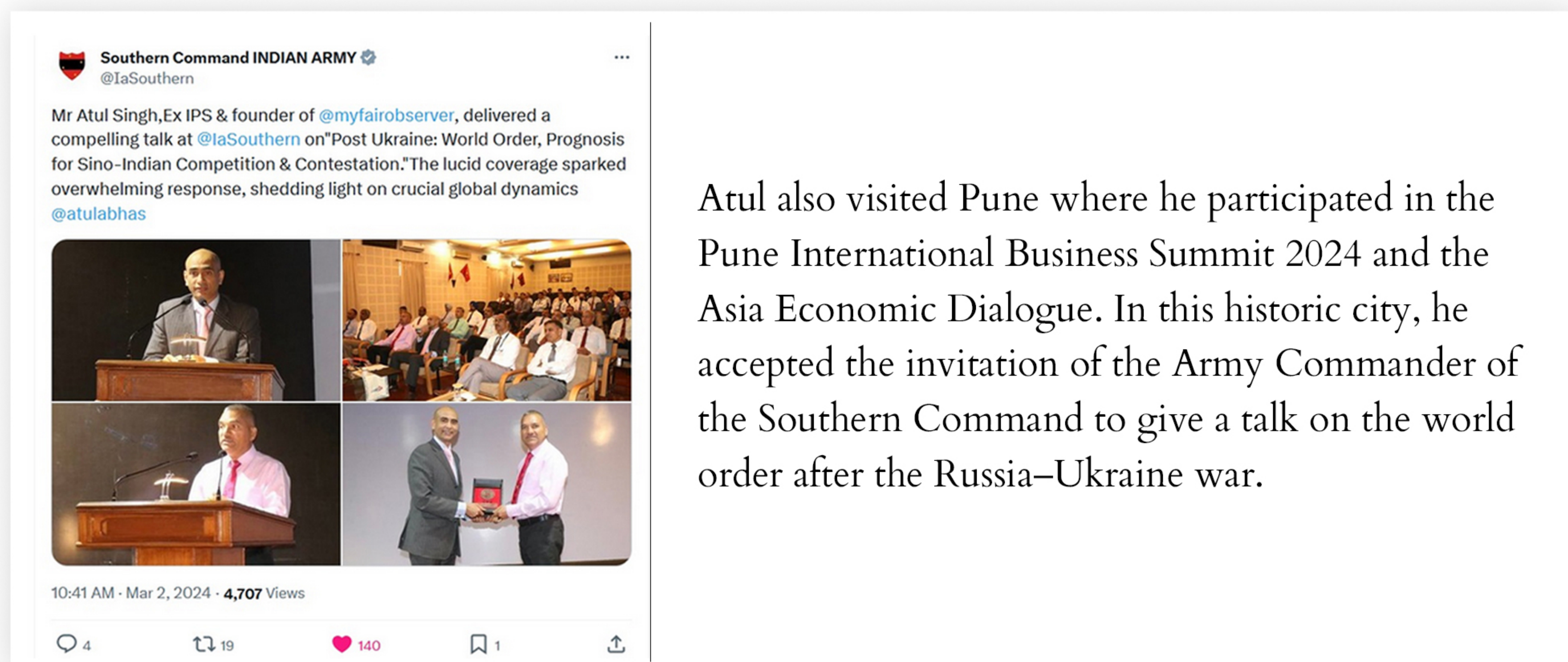
FO° Community

FO° Meetups in New York, London and Washington, DC, strengthened our FO° Community. These very interesting groups of people get together to discuss ideas on a regular basis.

In Mumbai, two donors hosted dinners for the local FO° Community. At the first of the dinners, we had Japanese and Turkish community members visiting from overseas. At the second dinner, our author and donor [Mudit Jain](#), a noted business leader in India, acted as the host in the Willingdon Sports Club. Atul wrote a piece on that evening, which you can read [here](#):



[From Mumbai Central to the Willingdon Sports Club of Bombay](#)



Atul also visited Pune where he participated in the Pune International Business Summit 2024 and the Asia Economic Dialogue. In this historic city, he accepted the invitation of the Army Commander of the Southern Command to give a talk on the world order after the Russia–Ukraine war.

We are not only organizing meetups but also engaging with our partners. In Vienna, Atul met The Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe (IDM) and had a great discussion with the IDM team. IDM’s [Malwina Talik](#), who has published many pieces with us, took this photograph after the interaction:



We are deepening our cooperation with existing partners like the Graduate School of Global and International Studies at the University of Salamanca and the United Service Institution in India. We are also negotiating partnerships with institutions in other parts of the world.

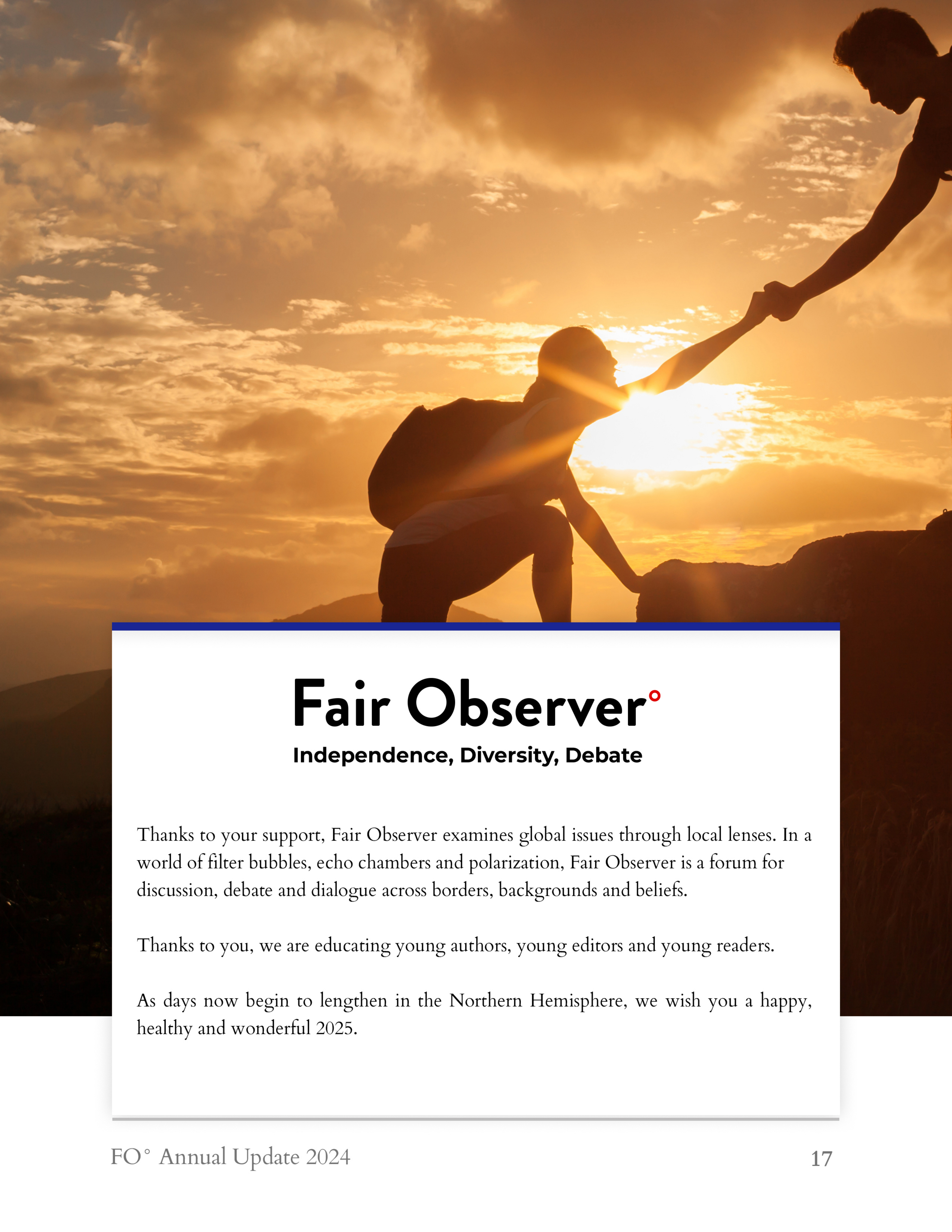


FO° Website Development and Improvement

Since October, we have a dedicated team of UI/UX interns who are working to make our website more navigable and user-friendly. This is the first time that we have had a team dedicated exclusively to this task.

This young team has already developed a design system for *Fair Observer*. Going forward, we will follow this system to ensure that our website looks clean and consistent. Now, our team is working on a new categorization system for all our content. This system will enable our users to find the content that most interests them more easily and quickly.

Thank you!



Fair Observer[°]

Independence, Diversity, Debate

Thanks to your support, Fair Observer examines global issues through local lenses. In a world of filter bubbles, echo chambers and polarization, Fair Observer is a forum for discussion, debate and dialogue across borders, backgrounds and beliefs.

Thanks to you, we are educating young authors, young editors and young readers.

As days now begin to lengthen in the Northern Hemisphere, we wish you a happy, healthy and wonderful 2025.