Jeffrey Bleich presented his credentials to Governor General Quentin Bryce on 26 November 2009, as the 24th American ambassador to the Commonwealth of Australia.

On 11 September 2009, President Obama announced his intent to nominate Jeffrey Bleich to be the next US Ambassador to Australia. On 10 November 2009, he was confirmed by the United States Senate. Mr Bleich served as Special Counsel to the President at the White House. From 1995 to 2009, he was a litigation partner in the San Francisco office of Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP, where he was recognised as one of the nation’s top lawyers. Outside of his legal practice, Mr Bleich has a long-standing commitment to international law. After clerking for Judge Howard Holtzmann at the Iran-US Claims Tribunal and acting as Special Rapporteur to the International Court of Arbitration, he assisted the Special Prosecutor for the International Tribunal for the Former-Yugoslavia. He has taught international human rights at UC Berkeley's School of Law, and written and lectured extensively on the international criminal court.

More recently, Mr Bleich represented the ABA before the United States Supreme Court in several matters including the Medellin case concerning the Vienna Convention on Consular Rights. He recently chaired both the ABA’s Amicus Curiae Committee and the subcommittee on Corporate Social Responsibility. Mr Bleich served as an officer or member in numerous foreign policy organisations including the Council on Foreign Relations, the ABA Section on International Law, the Pacific Council on International Policy, the International Law Association, the American Society of International Law, and Human Rights Watch. In 2008, he served simultaneously as the Chair of the California State University Board of Trustees and as the President of the State Bar of California.

The Geoffrey Sawer Lecture is taking place as part of the 15th Public Law Weekend (http://law.anu.edu.au/CIPL). People attending the lecture are also welcome to attend the conference dinner on Friday 3 September, 7:15pm (after the Sawer Lecture) at Vanillabean Restaurant, John Curtin School of Medical Research, Garran Road, ANU. To register for the Conference Dinner please go to http://law.anu.edu.au/cipl/plw2010/web.htm

The views expressed in this seminar are those of the presenter and do not necessarily represent the views of The Australian National University.