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From 2001-2006, Ms. Brooks was an associate professor of law at the University of Virginia. She has also served as a foreign policy columnist for the Los Angeles Times, Special Counsel to the President of the Open Society Institute, Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, a consultant for Human Rights Watch, a lecturer at Yale Law School, a Term Member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and a fellow at the Carr Center at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Ms. Brooks has also served on numerous boards and advisory groups, including the Board of Directors of the National Security Network, the steering committee of the White Oak Foreign Policy Leaders' Project, the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on Fragile States, the board of directors of Amnesty International USA, and the Executive Council of the American Society of International Law.

Brooks has published numerous scholarly articles on international law, state failure, post-conflict reconstruction and the rule of law, terrorism and the law of armed conflict. With Jane Stromseth and David Wippman, she is the co-author of "Can Might Make Rights? The Rule of Law After Military Interventions" (Cambridge University Press, 2006). Brooks received her A.B. from Harvard, followed by a master's degree from Oxford (where she was a Marshall Scholar) and a law degree from Yale.