

# Changing Europe: Its Global Role in the 21st Century?

Monday, September 16, 2013, 8.00–8.50, Žofín Palace, Restaurant  
In cooperation with the Embassy of France

**Introduction:** Lucie Pilipová

**Moderator:** Pierre Lévy

**Panel Discussion:** Franz Fischler, Suat Kınıklioğlu

## Talk focused on EU's declining economic power and the reluctance of the US to be the world's policeman

Europe is facing a crisis of confidence. It has borne the brunt of the worldwide economic recession, while large countries elsewhere, such as China, Brazil and India, continue to develop into economic and political powers, former European Commissioner for Agriculture **Franz Fischler** told the panel. *"We have a lack of leadership and if we do not change that we will face a lot of difficulty in the future,"* he said.

Relative decline in political and economic power seems inevitable. The EU has come under pressure as it tries to manage the economic crisis and threat to the eurozone. At the same time, Brussels continues to grapple with basic questions about where in key policy areas the role of EU institutions begins and that of national governments ends.

*"Very crucial issues, like foreign and security policy, are almost purely national, and in some areas of European policy, it would be better to give these back to nation states and let them decide on development and other 'nitty gritty' issues we are now deciding in Brussels,"* Fischler said.

Disjointed decision-making over defense and security policy will be highlighted even more by crises as the unrest across the Middle East spreads to Africa and beyond. *"Europe in the past has got used to having security without paying for it,"* panel member and Turkish MP **Suat Kınıklioğlu** commented, adding the U.S. was no longer willing to provide such cover and always take a lead in security matters.

The failure to forge a common European energy policy will also be exposed more and more as the U.S. benefits from the cheap energy from shale gas and China continues to burn vast quantities of coal to fuel its power needs, Fischler said.

# Democratic Transitions: The Way Forward and the Role of the Visegrad Countries

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 16.30–18.30, Hotel Maximilian, Gallery Room  
In cooperation with the International Visegrad Fund

**Opening Remarks:** Karla Wursterová, Khadija Ismayilova, Sabina Dvořáková

**Moderator:** Jiří Schneider

## **Discussion centered on whether the Visegrad countries were doing enough, and if aid was effective**

The Visegrad Four countries (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary) have stepped up their joint help for countries in transition channeled through the International Visegrad Fund. One of the benefits is that the V4 can make sure their aid does not overlap and is not wasted – they also benefit from higher exposure in Brussels and other international fora.

Many aspects of the transitional aid process were covered. A real concern expressed was that the environment for aiding democratic transition has taken a turn for the worse with the support of human rights increasingly coming under attack from the business community, with warnings that outspoken declarations or aid projects will threaten orders and local jobs.

Some companies simply enjoyed doing business with dictatorships, warned First Deputy Minister at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs **Jiří Schneider**. *“We have here companies and business people who enjoy this Byzantine way of doing business in this country. This is fantastic for them, there is no competition. I just need to know the right member of the clan. It is better than the European Union because there is no competition,”* he said. *“If there is no counter strategy [against business moves to sacrifice human rights], we will fail and lose support.”*

Journalist **Khadija Ismayilova** bluntly summed up the situation in her country, frequently referred to as being a family-run dictatorship, now headed by current president Ilham Aliyev. *“The good news is that Belarus is no more the worst dictatorship in Europe. The bad news is that Azerbaijan is,”* she said, adding that there are now around 100 political prisoners in her homeland. She worried that the Czech Republic might not be as willing now to speak up against the Azerbaijani regime as under former foreign minister **Karel Schwarzenberg**.

# Framing the Transitions

Sunday, September 15, 2013, 16.00–18.00, Hotel InterContinental

In cooperation with the International Visegrad Fund

**Opening Remarks:** Barbara Haig, Michael Žantovský, Tarek Osman

**Moderator:** Christopher Walker

## **Talk focused on whether a liberal democracy is a main goal for societies now in transition**

Demands for change manifested in “The Arab Spring” have taken many forms but share a common factor – a demand for greater representation and accountability from those in power. *“This is a consensus expectation,”* said Egyptian-born analyst **Tarek Osman**, author of *Egypt on the Brink*, published on the eve of the revolution in his homeland. This demand often fails to embrace the classic form of Western liberal democracy, he said.

A national consensus on what changes should take place is often absent in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. In Egypt, there is no real agreement about to what extent the military should give up its past power, or, in Morocco, to what extent “the Palace” should give up its political role, Osman said. The

region's reformers have shunned the painful economic reforms and dumping of price supports that were a feature of the new democracies in post-1989 Central and Eastern Europe, said **Michael Žantovský**, Czech ambassador to the U.K.

Demographic change is one of the biggest factors fuelling demands for change across the Arab world, he said. *"When I was born, the population of the Arab world was 180 million, it is now 340 million. And about two thirds are in their teens,"* Osman said. *"[Their ambitions] are the dominant factor and existing institutions are vastly disconnected from these guys."*

Former Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs **Gareth Evans** warned there were no quick fixes for many of the countries facing change. The single most important factor for those seeking to help the transition was to contribute to building the institutions in place, he said. In much of the Arab world, Osman said, the economic formulas being pushed by institutions such as the World Bank and IMF represented an attack on food subsidies that benefit the poor.

## Power of Powerless Revisited

Wednesday, September 18, 2013, 14.00–15.30, Villa Decius, Krakow

In cooperation with the Villa Decius Association and the International Visegrad Fund

**Moderator:** Wojciech Przybylski

**Panel Discussion:** Danuta Glondys, Surendra Munshi, Jan Piekło, Tamara Sujú

### **Talk centered on what role civil society has and should play in transitions, new democracies**

The roundtable – the title of which refers to a political essay from 1978 by the late Czech President Václav Havel, penned when he was a dissident and leading voice of the Charter 77 movement – discussed the ways power is held and exercised in post-Communist Europe and in other transitioning societies. *"This debate is about the power of us, about the power of citizens,"* said **Danuta Glondys**, the Polish director of the Villa Decius Association, opening discussion.

The appropriate role of civil society and how it should function are a matter of debate around the world, and the panelists differed in their opinions about how the state and civil society should coexist. **Surenda Munshi**, a distinguished sociologist from the Indian Institute of Management of Calcutta, said the form of democracy is determined by the people's approach – that it's in their hands. *"People have to decide to live in truth,"* he said.

Human rights activist **Tamara Sujú**, President of New National Awareness Foundation from Venezuela, said that a free media can be seen as a platform of power – and for civil society. *"Countries have to develop in technological ways, too,"* she said.

**Jan Piekło**, journalist and director of the Polish-Ukrainian Cooperation Foundation, said the transition process to democracy is much more complicated than we remember and can take a long time. *"People forget that the transition in Central Europe was not easy. After 'Solidarity' was born, it took more than 10 years for the revolution to be born,"* he said.

The debate then turned to the question of how the economic crisis had affected civil society; panelists agreed that it is harder in times of financial crisis to move forward, apart from Ms. Glondys. “*It is not question of crisis; it is question of a choice,*” she said, adding that if there is money to build stronger armies, there must be money to build civil society.

## Risks of Transitions

Monday, September 16, 2013, 11.00–12.30, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

In cooperation with the International Herald Tribune

**Moderator:** Michael Žantovský

**Panel Discussion:** Karel Schwarzenberg, Shlomo Avineri, Igor Blaževič, Tarek Osman, Grigory Yavlinsky

### **Transitions to democracy are unstable and unpredictable; no agreement on how fast changes should come**

Large-scale social transitions are by definition unstable, can bring about conflict and economic chaos, and threaten the process itself. Should there be a consensus before action is taken, or should visionary leaders drive the process? And what should be the role of external actors? These were the basic questions addressed.

Setting the stage for a lively debate, Czech Ambassador to the U.S. **Michael Žantovský** said “*There is no such thing*” as peaceful transitions. **Karel Schwarzenberg**, a former Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs, argued that no one can know what will come from revolution, only a theoretical idea or a model. The people of the former Czechoslovakia, for example, knew they wanted democracy, but didn’t know how to bring it about. “The main risk is that we should be more realistic,” he said.

**Shlomo Avineri**, Professor of Political Science, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, agreed but went a step further, suggesting that one must look at a country’s history to understand how realistic a transition could be. Russian economist and politician **Grigory Yavlinsky**, also opined that transitions don’t usually have a clear direction. Citing some reforms in Russia, he said the speed is less important than its depth and irreversibility. “*To be a reformer means to be an artist,*” he said.

**Igor Blaževič**, Head Teacher of Burma Educational Initiatives, argued that once a transition or reform is made, there is a tendency to forget the inherent risks. The world should stand by transitional states and support them, even if they seem defeated, he said. Lastly, Egyptian author and analyst **Tarek Osman** spoke about identity, viability and religion and their influence in the political reforms of the Arab world.

In the later discussion, Ambassador Žantovský concluded that the panelists mainly were in disagreement as to the role of the pace of a transition and the risks and benefits of foreign involvement.

# Societies in Transition: Do We Have Universal Aspirations?

Monday, September 16, 2013, 9.25–10.45, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

**Moderator:** Jacques Rupnik

**Panel Discussion:** Nada Dhaif, Jay Naidoo, Dominik Duka, Vytautas Landsbergis, Steven Gan, Ahmed Maher

## Support of youth in the transition process is essential, panelists agree at Opening Panel

*“Be careful what you wish for, as you may get it,”* French political scientist **Jacques Rupnik** said, summarizing the consensus of speakers that new models bring unforeseen challenges to societies transitioning from one system to another.

**Dr. Nada Dhaif**, Chairman, Bahrain Rehabilitation and Anti-Violence Organization, emphasized the value of education in the process, with panelists agreeing it was high time for the youth in transitioning societies to find their inner voice. That said, it is crucial that the older generations share their experiences, said **Jay Naidoo**, a South African trade union activist and Chairperson of the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN).

*“There is an elephant in the room – the youth,”* he said, but they are largely excluded from the current debate, in his view. Although media, shared experience, as well as the idea of liberal democracy play important role in the transition processes, self-determination of the youth is key for a positive outcome, the panelists agreed.

Former President of Lithuania **Vytautas Landsbergis** introduced the topic of consumerism. He also questioned the general idea of never-ending growth of global economies as realistic. Both **Ahmed Maher**, a blogger and activist from Egypt, and **Steven Gan**, editor of Malaysiakini.com, steered the discussion back to the long-term struggle in transitional process of their respective countries.

Mr. Gan stressed that the military should not be the arbiters of democracy, highlighting the importance of respect and the chance for a new democratic system arising in the Middle East that would not repeat the mistakes made by former communist countries. On a positive note, **Cardinal Dominik Duka**, the Archbishop of Prague, said that the 20<sup>th</sup> century was also a time when people showed real humanity. If a person loses the feeling of his own value, he warned, he may become but a *“carcass,”* referring to French philosopher and author Jean-Paul Sartre’s work.

## The Values We Share

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 10.00–11.30, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

**Moderator:** Gareth Evans

**Panel Discussion:** His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Frederik Willem de Klerk, Yoani Sánchez, Karel Schwarzenberg

## Talk focused on widely accepted views from the Conference on best models for societies in transition

Panelists discussed which values of particular importance (or, as Václav Havel put it in his *Power of Powerless*, the moral minimum) were widely agreed upon at the Conference, including the importance of the rule of law, institution-building, education, inclusion, and sustainability for a successful transition to democracy (not necessarily a Western model one).

**Gareth Evans**, Chancellor of the Australian National University, summarized the major Conference themes: of the importance of Václav Havel and Forum 2000; of ideas and strong leaders to implement them; and of a measured pace of action and patience, with a lasting (not just immediate) change as the goal.

*“There was quite a lot of discussion about what action strategies work best, both inside authoritarian countries, and applied by external actors,”* Mr. Evans, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, said. *“Every case has its own different dynamic, but a common theme was how hard it all was. Our Chinese dissident colleague Yang Jianli put it nicely ... that the three hardest things to achieve in this world were a peace settlement in the Middle East, the democratization of China – and losing weight!”*

**His Holiness the Dalai Lama** said education and coordinated efforts between ordinary people, governments and organizations are crucial. *“We should feel a sense of cooperative responsibility, which comes from the heart, but also can be taught,”* he said. **Yoani Sánchez**, blogger and activist from Cuba, agreed, adding that new technologies to disseminate information could be a viable road to freedom.

**Frederik Willem de Klerk**, the former South African president, called for an active civil society engaged by governments. *“Without pressure on the government while in opposition, a transition cannot be reached,”* he posited. **Karel Schwarzenberg**, Former Czech Foreign Affairs Minister, agreed; touching on the value of patience, he said the will to persevere is key.

# Speech by Gareth Evans to the Closing Panel

*Adapted from the speech to the Closing Panel of the 17<sup>th</sup> Forum 2000 Conference.*

September 17, 2013, Žofin Palace, Forum Hall

**Gareth Evans**, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chancellor, Australian National University, Member of the Forum 2000 Program Council, Australia

To try to draw together and summarize, as succinctly as possible, the major themes to have emerged from the Conference is an extraordinarily difficult task given the richness and variety of the discussions. Two general points for a start: the importance of Václav Havel and of Forum 2000.

### ***The Importance of Václav Havel***

Václav Havel was surrounded and supported by brave, passionate and inspirational civil society leaders, but he was the bravest, most passionate and most inspirational of them all, both during the course of the Velvet Revolution and in the transition period which followed.

What not only Czechs but the whole world remembers about the 14 years of his presidency – as described in moving testimony from **His Holiness the Dalai Lama** and **Daw Aung San Suu Kyi** among many others at the Conference – was the enduring moral seriousness and commitment he brought to the role, above all in his support for those trying to bring human rights and democracy to authoritarian regimes. We benefited immensely from his ideas and inspiration all those years when he was a living presence among us at these Forums, and now that he is no longer with us we benefit immensely still from his towering intellectual and moral legacy.

### ***The Importance of Forum 2000***

We have been reminded again this week of just how wonderful a vehicle this has been over the years for giving shape and direction to the Havel legacy.

- There is the extraordinary cast of senior figures it brings together – from the worlds of politics and diplomacy, government and civil society, arts and culture, journalism and literature, religion and business.
- There is the extraordinary array of issues we have addressed, all variations on the theme of our common commitment to human rights, democracy and the achievement of sustainable peace.
- And there is the process, not designed to produce negotiated outcomes or decisions, but simply to bring together people together from different continents, cultures and disciplines, to wrestle with big problems and ideas, in an atmosphere of calm and constructive discussion, and to come away with new ideas and perspectives which will hopefully lead to better solutions.

Every annual Forum 2000 Conference has a particular theme, and this year's – *Societies in Transition* – could hardly be better in playing to this Forum's traditions and strengths. It enables us to analyze, compare and contrast the transition from authoritarianism and democracy, here in the Czech Republic and in the

former Soviet world, with the transitions that are occurring – or struggling to occur – in the Arab World, elsewhere in Africa, in Latin America and in Asia.

So what have we learned, or been reminded of, about this great theme of *Societies in Transition*, in our discussions. I think six big things, about each of which I will say just a few words – the importance of history and culture; of patience; of action; of institutions; of leadership; and of ideas.

### ***The Importance of History and Culture***

A constantly recurring theme in our discussions has been the extent to which a country's, or group of countries', distinctive history and culture impacts on what can be done and how quickly it can be done when it comes to both initiating and sustaining transitions from authoritarianism to democracy, and in particular whether revolutions are likely to consolidate or collapse.

**Shlomo Avineri** put it very clearly when he said in one panel session that countries which had "*democratic memories*" or "*past democratic traditions*," such as the Czech Republic and the other Visegrad Four countries, were likely to find the transition to democracy relatively smooth – certainly as compared, for example, with the countries of the Middle East and North Africa – because so many of the building blocks for it are already in place. It's not a matter of effective transitions being impossible for countries without any real tradition or memory of democracy, but it will certainly make the task harder, and longer.

### ***The Importance of Patience***

There are really no quick fixes available in managing fundamental governance transitions. Ralph Dahrendorf was quoted many times for his observation that political systems can be fixed in 6 months, but economic systems will take 6 years or more, while fixing societal mindsets sufficiently to make democracy sustainable may take several generations.

But even Mr. Dahrendorf may have been too ambitious, or optimistic, when it comes to fixing broken or utterly undeveloped political systems. The point was made on many Conference panel that in a post-revolutionary situation, you may well be able to hold elections within 6 months, and maybe rather sooner, that may not produce genuinely sustainable democratic results, because you may well – in the absence of an existing civil society mindset, or the time to develop genuine new civil society-based alternatives – simply be entrenching existing strong forces in place, giving democratic legitimacy to existing inherently undemocratic power structures.



The classic recent example has been Egypt, where the only real choice presented to the electors were two manifestly non-democratic and non diversity-respecting alternatives – the army and the Muslim Brotherhood – and the results, so far anyway, have been tragic.

### ***The Importance of Action***

Being patient is not the same thing as being inactive, and it is crucial that a high level of effective practical real-world engagement is maintained by those wanting and needing change. **His Holiness the Dalai Lama** perhaps said it best (though I think some of his clerical friends found it a little disconcerting, and maybe against trade union rules) when he observed that while prayer and meditation is wonderfully restorative for individuals, when it comes to real-world impact, *“action is more important than prayer.”*

There was quite a lot of discussion about what action strategies work best, both inside authoritarian countries, and applied by **external actors**. Every case has its own different dynamic, but a common theme was how hard it all was. Our Chinese dissident colleague **Yang Jianli** put it nicely in one session when he said that the three hardest things to achieve in this world were a peace settlement in the Middle East, the democratization of China – and losing weight!

But our sustaining inspiration here, as a number of speakers pointed out, must continue to be Václav Havel himself, who in his classic 1978 essay, *The Powerful of the Powerless*, argued that whatever the odds that seem to be stacked against those unhappily living under totalitarian regimes, the refusal of just some individuals to go on living the lie – a willingness by them to break the rule of silence – can have an extraordinary impact in cracking open the fragile facades of these systems, and ultimately bringing them down.

### ***The Importance of Institutions***

In terms of strategies for both accelerating transitions, and giving them firm, sustainable foundations, it was noted many times at the Conference that the critical ingredient is effective institutions – especially those designed to advance the rule of law, with the most common theme here being the absolute necessity, of a powerful, independent judiciary.

Building institutions is not a matter of cookie-cutter designs, and well-meaning outsiders can sometimes make very bad judgment calls – parliamentary systems will make more sense in some contexts, presidential

ones in others; similarly with federal systems as compared with unitary ones. And when it comes to managing very sensitive transition issues like transitional justice, again it's not the case that one size fits all – some societies will want full-scale punitive action, others truth-telling and apologies, others just to draw a line under the past and move on.

What matters is simply that there be the right solution for the country in question, and ultimately only the people themselves can make that cutter. But what also matters – as **Grigory Yavlinsky** reminded us in the context of the Russian Constitution – is that the institutional structures and processes not just look good on paper, but actually mean something real in practice.

### ***The Importance of Leadership***

Another recurring theme in Conference discussions was the crucial importance of leadership, both in accomplishing the necessary change in governance system with a minimum of violence, and in sustaining that transition through what might be a quite protracted period. The world knows, and has honored accordingly, how totally crucial was the quality of leadership provided here by Václav Havel; in South Africa by Nelson Mandela and **F.W. de Klerk**; and is the leadership now being provided in Burma (Myanmar) by **Daw Aung San Suu Kyi** and President U Thein Sein; and how important it has been, and will continue to be, in meeting the aspirations of the people of Tibet to have both the inspiration and wisdom of **His Holiness the Dalai Lama**.

The problem that the Conference did not quite get around to answering, and will need to spend more time discussing, is what do we do when that leadership is missing from the start, or goes missing? Is it just the luck of the draw that some countries find themselves at the critical time with a de Klerk and Mandela, and others with a Milošević, or Mugabe? Are good leaders just born, or can they be made? Can we at least put in place more effective structures and processes to get rid of bad leaders, when they look like undermining rather than reinforcing a democratic transition process? All this is work in progress.

### ***The Importance of Ideas***

The remaining big theme is the importance – the power – of ideas and values in stimulating and consolidating transitions from authoritarianism to democracy. **Grigory Yavlinsky** may have put it best when he said here that “*With common values we can find common language; and with common language we can push any problem in the world in the right direction.*”

It is of critical importance to find a common language to articulate, promote and implement the values we share. This, for example, has profoundly influenced the work that I and others have done in the context of genocide and other mass atrocity crimes: finding new language – that of “the responsibility to protect” rather than “the right of humanitarian intervention” to try to build a new international consensus out of the ashes of non-consensus and tragic inaction in those horrible 1990s cases of Rwanda, Srebrenica and Kosovo.

How well that particular idea is doing – after the triumphs of Kenya and Cote d’Ivoire and at least initially Libya, but the disastrous paralysis in Syria – is a debate for another day. The debate for *today* is **The Values We Share** – the ideas that matter – in the context of managing transitions from authoritarianism to democracy, in stimulating and sustaining them.

What *are* the crucial ideas? Our common humanity? Accommodating diversity? Freedom and dignity? Some of those particularly associated with Václav Havel himself and mentioned in the Opening Session, including by His Holiness the Dalai Lama – compassion, altruism, generosity? What are the ideas and values that matter most in this context? What the ones that can find most resonance as a new common language? What are the ones that most readily translate into actionable, operational language? What are the ones that can produce action?

## The Burdens of History

Monday, September 16, 2013, 15.15–16.45, European House

In cooperation with Respekt

**Moderator:** William Cook

**Panel Discussion:** Shlomo Avineri, Mykola Riabchuk, Petre Roman, Rudrangshu Mukherjee, Jacques Rupnik

**Talk focuses on the need for nations to understand their history in context**

Moderator **William Cook**, Professor of History and Religion, State University of New York, framed the question of the “burden” of history in an ideological sense, leading into a very broad conversation of history.

**Shlomo Avineri**, Professor of Political Science at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, began by asking why post-Soviet countries developed in various fashions after 1989. Mr. Avineri asserted that countries

with “*democratic memories*” or “*past democratic traditions*,” such as the Czech Republic, were able to make the transition to democracy relatively smoothly due to the building blocks that were readily available.

**Petre Roman**, Member of the Romanian Parliament, presented the idea that democracy in Eastern Europe after 1989 was a “*democracy of profit*.” This played off Mr. Avineri’s idea that history in this region post-1989 was deterministic and that people believed that democratic capitalism was inevitable, leading to the pitfall expressed by Václav Havel: “*We still don’t know how to put morality ahead of political and economic [goals].*”

**Jacques Rupnik**, Director of Research at the Centre for International Studies and Research at Sciences-Po Paris, completed the panel by framing the Eastern European burden as “*a bird with eyes in the back of its head*,” symbolizing the movement towards western ideology and democracy, while still having eyes on the past wounds of history. Mr. Rupnik concluded by asking how long it takes to confront history. In his eyes, Eastern Europe is just beginning to confront its communist roots, he said, which has finally allowed the process of overcoming the burden of history to begin.

## Dealing with the Past

Monday, September 16, 2013, 17.00–18.30, Goethe-Institut

In cooperation with Political Prisoners.eu, Goethe-Institut, Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union, and European Affairs Information Department of the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic

**Opening Remarks:** Heinrich Blömeke, Tomáš Bouška, Pavel Tychtl

**Moderator:** Sean Cleary

**Panel Discussion:** Matej Medvedský, Krzysztof Persak, Lutz Rathenow, Mária Schmidt

**Talk centered on the need for nations to understand troubled times in their histories**

The Panel was introduced by **Pavel Tychtl**, European Commission, DG COMM – Active European Remembrance, according to whom, “*Memory is very selective [and] we cannot understand memory and remembrance until we are starting to ask questions.*”

Moderator **Sean Cleary**, Founder and Executive Vice-Chair, Future World Foundation, South Africa, opened the talk with a statement that defined the general idea of the whole discussion: *“Only if we can learn from the past, then we can deal with the past.”*

**Matej Medvedský**, Researcher at the Slovak Nation’s Memory Institute, talked about the importance of historical research with relations to its educative role for the younger generation: *“If we are successful they will take our experience.”*

Attracting young people to examine their nation’s history is in focus of the House of Terror in Budapest. Its Director, **Mária Schmidt** said: *“If you cannot reach the heart of somebody you cannot reach the brain of them.”* **Lutz Rathenow**, Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the Former GDR, pointed to the significance of schools, movies, and media in educating about history.

When dealing with the past, **Krzysztof Persak**, Director of Office of the President, Polish Institute of National Remembrance, emphasized two principles *“the principle of truth and the principle of justice.”* Some panelists agreed on the specific tasks conducted by national institutes for memory such as administering of archives, carrying out lustrations, and rehabilitation of victims.

## Political Parties in Transitional Processes

Monday, September 16, 2013, 18.45–20.15, Goethe-Institut

**Moderator:** Shlomo Avineri

**Panel Discussion:** Alexandr Vondra, Karel Janeček, Leopoldo López, Jay Naidoo

**Talk focused on the need for transparency in funding parties, alternative voting systems**

Transition is not a moment, it is a process and the transition to democracy needs mediation – mediation like civil societies and political parties. Political parties are significant – without them there would not be functioning democracy. They should have a vision, a democratic leadership and the ability to deliver. These were among the points made on the panel.

The problem stands with the election of the democratic leaders which is the reason **Karel Janeček**, Czech businessman, philanthropist, and anti-corruption activist, proposed a change in voting system, first by

offering equal voting opportunity and second by ensuring that voting decisions are made by responsible persons (an informed voter). Each voter must have more votes, he said.

For example, in a hypothetical situation, two candidates are to run per political party, and the voters vote for four of them. An informed voter will choose the candidates based on intellectual basis, whereas the non-informed voter will choose two candidates out of manipulation and the other two randomly. Due to this, Mr. Janeček said, the informed voters have a higher impact on the results. The design is made in such a way that it cannot be manipulated. However, Czech politician and diplomat **Alexandr Vondra** said, *“The more complicated the system is, the more manipulation can occur.”*

There is rising corruption in the system because the way parties are funded is not transparent – and what they are promising in return for financial backing, Mr. Janeček said. Political parties should listen to the citizens and vice versa, said **Leopoldo López** of the Voluntad Popular Party. *“We want to build a country where all of the rights are for all of the people [and] build collective dreams with the collective compromise for those dreams to become reality,”* he said.

## The Road to Good Governance

Monday, September 16, 2013, 15.15–16.45, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

**Keynote Speech:** Aung San Suu Kyi

**Moderator:** Surendra Munshi

**Panel Discussion:** Frederik Willem de Klerk, Grigory Yavlinsky, Jan Švejnar

**Panel notes good governance cannot be taken for granted, checks and balances must be enforced**

Burmese opposition leader **Aung San Suu Kyi** said good governance is about what the government is willing to give to people and what the people are prepared to give the government. Good governance *“is like a ship – the direction of the vessel in the end is not given just by the steersman but also by the crew who is sailing it,”* she said, stressing that the greatest leaders are those who can let go of power, and the worst who stay on at any cost.

Good governance is the amount of confidence people have in their country, society and the path it is taking, and it should maintain a healthy balance between security and freedom. A *“good government is one which people do not even know exists,”* Suu Kyi said. She then cited an Eastern saying and named three kinds of governments – the loathed, the feared, and the praised – and claimed that Burma is a mix of these three.

Entrenched interests don't want a transition, noted Indian sociologist **Surendra Munshi**, saying, "*bad governance may be good business for those who stand to gain by it.*"

**Frederik Willem de Klerk**, the former South African president who helped end Apartheid, said most important is a constitution with checks and balances (on the power of the executive, legislature and judicial branches). However, Russian analyst **Grigory Yavlinsky** said that Russia has a great constitution – with all the checks and balances – but the reality is different. Good governance cannot be taken for granted; all must fight for it, he said. Czech economist **Jan Švejnar** added that strong leadership is also necessary, lamenting a lack of visionary leaders.

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## The Road to Good Governance

September 16, 2013, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Keynote Speech:

**Aung San Suu Kyi**, Political Leader, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Member of the Forum 2000 International Advisory Board, Burma

Moderator:

**Surendra Munshi**, Sociologist, Member of the Forum 2000 Program Council, India

Panel Discussion:

**Frederik Willem de Klerk**, Former President, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Member of the Forum 2000 International Advisory Board, South Africa

**Grigory Yavlinsky**, Economist, Politician, Russia

**Jan Švejnar**, Director, Center on Global Economic Governance, Columbia University, Member of the Forum 2000 Program Council, USA/Czech Republic

**Surendra Munshi**: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to this session on The Road to Good Governance. We are discussing this theme in the context of the overall thrust of this conference: "Societies in Transition." I think we must realize that democracy is not just about elections although they are important. Democratic institutions matter and are meant for the common good, as well as for the democracies concerned. These stable, responsible institutions which get created then promise that the democratic agenda is fulfilled. It is not just random elections, or a sporadic election, but the follow-up by way of democratic institutions, as we have seen with respect to newer democracies or the frustration of democracy after it has been introduced. We are interested in hearing our panelists talk in terms of what is meant by good governance, how to

measure it, what are its key elements, the risks attached, and what is the Road to Good Governance – is it possible to have good governance without democracy.

Good governance is a normative concept, in the sense that when I say some is a “good” player or a “good” singer I am making a normative statement. The reason I am mentioning this: the World Bank and other international agencies have tried to define good governance as if it were a descriptive term, and I have had a lot of trouble in thinking of good governance as a descriptive term. I think there is a very clear normative issue involved; good means good in its domain.

The second point that I would like to make is that good governance is not just a modern concept; it has been there in pre-modern, pre-democratic societies as well, and I am sure all of us have from our own respective histories governance under kings, governance under different forms of social society where good governance, or standards of it, were tried. From Indian history, I can give multiple examples, but I will not do that.

I would make my third point quickly: the good governance we discuss these days is necessarily within a democratic context. I do not think we talk these days of good governance in terms of kingship; we talk in terms of a democratic context, and once we do that I think then the problem starts in this literature because we behave like the proverbial seven blind men in Indian folklore who went to see an elephant – one touched the trunk, one the stomach, one the leg, one the tail and each came up with different descriptions of an elephant. But I think good governance – we have to keep in mind – includes multiple dimensions, like principles, purpose, a manner of functioning, and so on.

I have myself written on this subject and offered the following definition, which is slightly longer, but incorporates these multiple dimensions in some ways: good governance signifies a participated manner of governing that functions in a responsible, accountable and transparent manner, based on the principles of efficiency, legitimacy and consensus, for the purpose of promoting the rights of individual citizens and the public interest that indicates the existence of political will for ensuring the material welfare of society and sustainable development with social justice.

I have tried to incorporate these multiple dimensions which go into defining good governance. Now, absence of good governance does not necessarily mean inefficiency – and that is the last point I wish to make. I think we often make the mistake of thinking that if there is no good governance, there is inefficiency. I have tried to work in this area for quite some time now. Actually, the absence of good governance may be a sign of tremendous efficiency.

The reason why I say it: Governance, bad governance, may be good business for those who stand to gain by it. There are agencies in the world, as we all know, who would try to impose bad governance, in terms of accountability, transparency and so on, because it is to their benefit. We also need to keep in mind that vested interests operate not necessarily with inefficiency; actually very often vested interests operate with tremendous efficiency in suppressing good governance, and we need to take that into account.

With these brief comments it is my tremendous privilege to talk about our panel. We are very privileged to have an exceptionally distinguished panel with us. We have Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who does not need any introduction at all, the leader of the National League for Democracy in Burma (Myanmar), Nobel Peace Laureate in 1991 (though in her particular case, because of biographical factors with which we are familiar, her acceptance speech was only delivered in 2012). She is the winner of multiple other rewards and a member of the International Advisory Board of Forum 2000, a friend of Václav Havel – as was very clearly



borne out by what she said yesterday [at Sunday's Opening Ceremony] – and more than anything else, if I may say, a symbol of democratic struggle all over the world. As an Indian, I have absolutely no hesitation to say that, like Gandhi in his time, she is a symbol of standing for justice for our time. I cannot think of any living Indian today who has a greater claim on Gandhi's legacy than you, Madam [to Ms. Suu Kyi].

Then, of course, we have Frederik Willem de Klerk, former President of South Africa and then a very close associate of Nelson Mandela, and a Peace Prize Nobel Laureate in 1993. Fortunately, you [to Mr. de Klerk] delivered an acceptance speech the year you were awarded; there was no time-gap. At the moment founder of the F.W. de Klerk Foundation and also a member of International Advisory Board Forum 2000. Please welcome him. The third person in terms of the sequence – Professor Grigory Yavlinsky, (have I pronounced the name right?) Professor of Economics State University of Moscow, co-founder and former Chairman of the Russian Democratic Party – Yabloko (1993–2008) and the Yabloko's official candidate for the Russian Presidency. Please welcome him! Last but not least – Professor Jan Švejnar, Director of the Center on Global Economic Governance at Columbia University, Professor of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University, economic advisor to President Havel, Founding Director of the Economics Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, and a member of the Forum 2000 Program Council.

We have decided to invite Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to speak on challenges in perspectives of good governance in Burma. After she has spoken, other moderators will come in with comments on her presentation or their own comments. After this round, I propose to invite other panelists to interact on particular issues I highlight or that they bring up. Then, I would greatly hope there would be time for interaction between you [to Ms. Suu Kyi] and the panel because I am sure they would enjoy it and believe me so would I. Now I invite Daw Suu Kyi to give her presentation to us. Please, Madam.

**Aung San Suu Kyi:** When I was told that the subject of this discussion would be good governance, the first thing I wondered was why “good governance” rather than “good government”? Is that because good government is a contradiction in terms? Or is it because it is something that we cannot really define? But why good governance? How is it different from government? So I looked up the word “govern” in the dictionary and the etymology is “to steer” – to steer, to direct – and that gave me an idea of what I would like to see as good governance. Good governance would then mean good steering, good steersmen and steerswomen at the helm of the country. To steer is not the same as to direct or control: to steer is to carry your country, your society with you, and good governance would mean to steer it in the best direction possible.

In my country, we may not know what good governance is, but we certainly have known for many years what bad governance means: the people in general are not stepping together, not moving forward together with those who are in control of their political destiny. Bad governance would mean a government that is apart from the people. A government that cannot fulfill the aspirations of the people and that does not perhaps even realize that people do have aspirations and have the right to have aspirations. So good governance for me is good steering, good steersmen and steerswomen at the helm.

How do we achieve that? And why did we not achieve that in my country? When Burma became independent in 1948, we had great hopes. We had been through the scourge of the Second World War and much of the country was in ruins, but, in spite of that, within a few years we established ourselves as the most progressive country in South-East Asia, the country most likely to succeed. We had an excellent education system, a very good health system, a democratically elected government. I will not claim that our democracy was perfect, but then I think very few countries can claim that these days – to enjoy a perfect

democracy – but our people had rights. We felt free. We felt secure. We felt proud.

I was lucky to grow up at a time when I thought that our country was one of the best in the world. In fact, I grew up thinking that everybody spoke English and Burmese because these were two most important languages in the world. I thought that the whole history of the world was the struggle between the English and the Burmese, and we won in the end. That was how I saw it. But this feeling of confidence was shared by many other people, and I think that is one of the ways in which you can recognize good governance: how much confidence the people have in their country; how much confidence people have that their country is going along the right path; how much pride they have in their society, in what they have been able to achieve and what they think they are capable of achieving. I think that constitutes good governance.

Good steersmen and steerswomen with whom the people feel secure, with whom the people feel secure and safe enough to speak out against these very steering parties if they wish to, have the ability to criticize because they know that they have the right to think for themselves and that those who are steering them must listen to their voice. So for me that is the most essential part of good governance – that the people feel they are in safe hands. Not strong hands, not the kind of hands that will never let go of their grip, but the kind of safe hands that will take them to where they would wish to go to and that will be prepared to let go once they want to be let go.

The most effective leaders are those who are prepared to let go and who know how to let go gracefully. Nothing becomes a leader as well as the way in which he or she leaves his position; that will decide how good a steersman, or steerswoman, he or she, was. So when we look at a country like Burma, we have seen that bad governance means leaders who do not wish to let go, who have no confidence in the people, who do not respect the people.

For years and years, we were told that our people were not fit for democracy. Yet we had become independent as a democratic nation. We became independent under a democratic constitution and our people chose our own government. In spite of the experience of those early years, it was very usual for the military regime, under which Burma lived for half a century, to say that our people were not fit for democracy. If the leaders say that a people are not fit to decide for themselves what their destiny should be, that means very simply that we are not enjoying good governance. We are not led by those who believe in us and those who do not believe in the people cannot be good steersmen, good steerswomen.

That cannot constitute good governance. Good governance is mutual. It means that the people have to be involved, that there is a mutual acceptance of the need to cooperate. It is not just those at the top imposing their views, values, and ideas on those “under” them. A steersman one thinks of as somebody in a boat, a ship. He may be there in the position to direct the vessel, but he is not above everybody else. He cannot be removed from the rest, because in the end the direction in which the vessel goes will depend very much on how willing the others in the vessel are to follow in the same boat, to stay in the same boat. If the time comes when the people of a country feel that they cannot be safe in the same boat as those who are leading them, then we can be sure that good governance does not exist. So mutual confidence for me is what is most important: the confidence of leaders in the people and of people in their leaders; each learning from and giving to one another.

Here we come to the second part of good governance: how much giving there is by those governing and how much taking. As Munshi mentioned, bad governance could mean very, very great efficiency because some people are getting a lot. So it is not about getting, it is about giving. What is good governance capable of giving the people? And what are the people prepared to give for good governance, to give towards good

governance? I am a great believer in a sense of duty, which may not seem very fashionable these days, but even in my country where we are just starting out trying to democratize. I always say that just as important as democratic rights are democratic responsibilities. Unless we are prepared to show there are responsibilities we cannot call ourselves democrats. If we think we have no responsibilities, that means the government alone has a right to all the responsibility and so therefore to all the decisions; that is not democratic.

How much the people are prepared to give – that will decide how good the governance of a country is just as much as how much the government is prepared to give, how much freedom it is prepared to give, how much security it is capable of giving. For me that is what democracy is about – a healthy balance between security and freedom – because we [in Burma] have suffered for decades under authoritarian rule, where the leaders have insisted that we have to give up certain liberties in the name of security, and that I cannot accept. Security and freedom can exist in the right healthy balance provided there is mutual confidence between those leading and those who have to be or are prepared to be led; they must agree to be led by those who are at the helm.

Many of you may think we are already along the road to democratization in Burma, but I would not agree with that. We are just starting out, and it is going to be a difficult road – I hope not a very long one, but certainly not an easy one. We have had half a century of military rule and the same people who were part of the military regime constitute the great majority of the present government. I think that alone is enough to tell us that we still have much to do.

We want to establish good governance in our country, but before I came here I spoke to just very ordinary people I met on the street. “What do you understand by good governance?” By the way, you cannot actually translate good governance in a way that is different from government in Burmese. So I simply said: “What would you call a good government? For you, what is a good government?” And the answers were very simple. They said we want a government that would care for us, and for us that is what good government is. A government that cares for us, that understands our needs.

Somebody else reminded me that I had often described what a government was, and this I believe comes from an old Eastern saying. Some say it is Chinese, some say it is not, but I have used it in my political speeches and people have remembered it. Apparently, there are four kinds of government. So we will start with the worst kind, the one right at the bottom: a kind of government that the people despise and detest. That is the lowest of the low. A step above that is the kind of government that people fear. Higher up is the kind of government that people praise but that is not the best form. Right at the top is the kind of government that people do not even know exists.

I spoke about this in my political speeches and said this is what we want to have in this country: a government that is self-effacing but so aware of its duties and so able to discharge them fully that the people do not even know that it is there, that it has been done for them. I compared it to a good mother. You wake up in the morning and sit down to breakfast and never think of how it got onto the table. It is just there for you to have. You do not have to think of the fact that your mother probably got up two hours before you did and had to light the kitchen fire and then had to get the pots and pans together and cook this and cook that and lay the table. All you know is that when it is time for you to have breakfast before you go to work or to school, there it is, ready on the table. You are not aware, hardly aware of how this was done.

I suppose this is what is meant when you say that the best government is the kind that you never notice. I think that is what most of us would like. This was what one person I asked just before I came here – what

she understood by good government – reminded me of. She said: “Well, you told us that there are four kinds of governments and that the best is the kind that you never have to notice, and that is what we want. We are sick and tired of always being aware of the fact that the government exists; exists to control us, to make our lives a little bit more difficult, to make it impossible for us to achieve what we want to achieve.” That is to say a government that seems to many people an adversary – an enemy rather than a friend, rather than family, rather than a really good steersman/steerswoman, who would help them along the way without their being aware of it all the time.

In conclusion, good governance requires the ability to refrain from asking for a return. I do not think that those who ask for what they have done to be recognized can constitute good governance. This is one reason I am always embarrassed when people talk about sacrifices made by my party, me or my colleagues, because when you say that you have sacrificed something there always is the implication that you want this recognized and perhaps you want something back in return. I always say that we make our own choices and because we follow a path of our own choice, we should ask for nothing back. I think this should be part of good governance. If you want to steer your country along a certain path, along a certain road that you believe is good for all of you, you should not ask for something in return. It is not a bargain, it is not a trade-off; it is something that you must do out of conviction, out of the feeling that you who are steering a country are part of that same country, that we are all in the same boat together. Wherever we go, we go together. What we achieve, we achieve together.

Good governance means that there is no real difference between those who are governing and those who are governed – the change will be there all the time. That is why it is so right that you cannot have good governance without democracy because it is only in a democracy that there is a constant change between those who are governing and those who are governed. The head of state can in one day become just an ordinary citizen, if he decides to retire or if the citizens decide they no longer want to support him in the elections. Good governance and democracy go together because good governance basically requires absolute equality, ultimately, between the governing and the governed. The steersman has to be part of the rest of the passengers in the boat. He or she cannot go on forever. There has to be a change-over and always when it takes place those who have let go must let go willingly, let go generously, let go with the desire to support whoever comes next. This is essential to good governance: that there should be generosity of spirit as well as confidence in one another, respect for one another. We cannot have good governance unless those who are governing respect those who are governed and vice versa.

For me good governance is very simple. It is in the end based not so much perhaps on politics as on human relations, and if you can establish the right kind of human relations in your society then I think you are on the way to good governance. But if your society is such that there is no culture of mutual respect and confidence, I think we will have to work very hard towards good governance. Good governments I will leave to others to define, but I find it very difficult to think of what a good government might be. I think the less government the better, in the sense that the less obvious the government makes its presence felt the better. My people seem to agree with this because they very readily support the idea of the best government as one which they need never notice. Thank you.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you. I picked up one thing Daw Suu Kyi said: We make our own choices. Earlier, she defined good governance in terms of people feeling they are in safe hands. That brings to my mind when in the near future the people of Myanmar make their own choice, and the right choice – we know very well they will be in the safest possible hands. Now with this I would request F.W. de Klerk to kindly come in with his comments.

**Frederik Willem de Klerk:** Thank you very much, Mr. Moderator. I have the highest appreciation for the contribution of Aung San Suu Kyi. To define what good governance is I agree with her whole approach and I do not want to add to it or try to qualify it in any way whatsoever. As I listened to her ... I thought of our title, which also says The Road to Good Governance. We all live in an imperfect world: tested against the guidelines set out by Aung San Suu Kyi, in how many countries do we have good governance? I will approach it from a totally different angle and ask what factors can help in a country, what factors can help to ensure that this ideal of good governance is realized? I do not want to criticize you, Mr. Moderator, but you left out that I am also the Founder Member of another foundation – the Global Leadership Foundation [laughs]. I mention it because the mission of this foundation is to promote good governance throughout the world. We are 34 former Presidents, Prime Ministers, Cabinet Ministers, Senior Diplomats – all of them with good experience of governance, all having learnt lessons from burning their fingers, making their own mistakes; and fortunately all with good reputations. What we do is to give quiet discreet advice to governments on how they can improve their quality of governance. So for me it is an issue very near to the heart.

I think that to ensure good governance one has to have institutions and rules in place, taking account of human nature. A leader might be a good person, reaching out to the people, having the right approach when he or she becomes leader – but they can become corrupted, they often can become overly ambitious, they can, as you have said [to Ms. Suu Kyi], not know when it is the time to go, when it is time to let go. So to ensure good governance, I believe, in democracies we need to have measures in place – rules, constitutions – which can assure that the misuse of power can be prevented.

When we negotiated our [post-Apartheid] Constitution, we were afraid of the tyranny of the majority, because there is a tyranny of the majority in many countries throughout this world. Fortunately, on the other side of the table was Nelson Mandela, who understood our position as we tried to understand their position. I am not saying it is the only model which provides for checks and balances. Firstly, it does not give absolute power of an elected party and government. It has values, basic values, which may not be changed in any way by normal legislation. The Constitution is the highest law in the land. There is a Constitutional Court. If Government in its executive decisions or if Parliament in its legislative procedures does anything unconstitutional, anybody can take that to the Constitutional Court, which has the power to even scrap legislation and say this is not allowed. Why? In order to uphold the basic values, which form part of the accord we reached when we drew up that Constitution. One of the factors needed to help ensure good governance is to have proper separation of powers between the executive, legislature and judiciary. Independent courts, an independent prosecuting authority, which will not hesitate to prosecute a President or a Minister guilty of corruption. We have negotiated that into our Constitution.

Inclusivity, I think, is very important. More and more countries are becoming more and more diverse and multicultural and multi-ethnic. In about 200 of the countries of the world there are important minorities consisting of 10 percent or more of the population. The rules should make a provision that those minorities who may never gain power will be accommodated in a way that they feel their legitimate concerns are being listened to; where they will feel that, although a minority, not part of the majority, they are accepted and cherished as important building blocks of the greater whole because the management of diversity is one of the greatest challenges of our time.

I would say that threat of majoritarianism, the threat of suppression of minorities, and that one third of the world's population lives in absolute poverty, go hand-in-hand, constitute the three biggest challenges for this century. Good governance, I fully agree, demands inclusivity. It demands a form of constant consultation and interaction. Governments should not lock themselves up in ivory towers; they should have their fingers

on the pulse of the people, understand the needs of the people and quite correctly they should serve the people. They are not elected to govern – they are elected to serve. Then, if they do that, there will be that support from the electorate, this confidence which Aung San Suu Kyi so importantly raised as a crucial factor.

Good governance, in the end, can only be achieved if there are controls and checks and balances and if not too much power is centered into any one person or any one party's hands. Therefore, yes, it goes hand-in-hand with democracy. There are good examples, as you have said, of good governance in undemocratic states, but then good governance depends on whether the ruler is a benevolent ruler. But even benevolent rulers can become corrupted and sometimes have become corrupt and there was no mechanism to remove and replace them with another leader. I believe that bad governance is responsible for much pain, much of the suffering, experienced in so many parts of the world, and therefore the promotion of good governance lies at the heart of curing the ills and the stresses and strains of the present international community. Thank you.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you. An extremely complimentary presentation, highlighting – music to a sociologist's ears – the need for institutions for protecting and promoting good governance. Thank you indeed. I would now invite Professor Yavlinsky to make his presentation please.

**Grigory Yavlinsky:** Thank you very much. It is a great privilege to be on the panel with such speakers. That is why I want simply to follow and to develop what was said just before. I want to tell you that I think that good governance depends on all of us, very much. Without us good governance is simply not possible. We are responsible for good governance in our countries. You cannot have good government simply taken for granted. What are the preconditions of good governance? From my point of view, the main precondition is strong public control, which would lead that government and governance to real transparency. Under good governance, what does implementing decisions mean – decision implementing? I have no doubt that it does not mean, so much, leaders – even if you have wonderful leaders – but institutions, and ones that also rely and depends on us, if we, as the people, are creating real procedures and institutions. In politics, in economics, this is the task for the nation, if it really wants to have good governance.

Decision-making very much depends on the leaders that we have, but from my point of view we can have very clear criteria what is meant by a leader for good governance; besides all the other qualities it must be a person who has vision. I am afraid that very often, in the modern world, we forget about that. We forget that the main quality for good governance is vision – based on truth, which is not very often something that you can find.

Certainly, in every century, you can find the criteria – what does good governance mean in different centuries. There were periods in history when good governance was an enlightened monarchy ... but I think in the 21st Century any kind of debate or discussion about good governance without real genuine democracy is simply senseless. That is why I want to underline that the criteria for the 21st Century of good governance are human dignity and human freedom – more freedom, better governance. The 21st Century is the century of creativity; that means that this century is the century of free people, and respect to people and of their dignity is maybe the main feature in the 21st Century of good governance. And once again, it very much depends on how we are taking part in elections, what kind of choice we are making, how politically active we are, how active we are in creating in our countries good governance. Thank you.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you indeed. You have turned the focus the other way round now, not just the leaders but what we are doing – a very welcome focus because we are often blaming or praising our

leaders, forgetting our own responsibilities for good or for bad. With these words, Professor Švejnár, if I may request you please carry on.

**Jan Švejnár:** Thank you, thank you very much! So much has been said. I agree with a lot of it. I think Aung San Suu Kyi has given us an optimistic view and I think that is really what is needed. For achieving good governance, you really need the kind of positive approach that you are stressing. I agree that the “steering” is really the right way to look at it – and the lighter it can be the better, provided that the circumstances permit. I agree with Willem de Klerk that the legal framework, the institutional system, is really crucial. If you look at what has been happening in the societies in transition in the former Soviet bloc, I would say there is one Achilles heel within the inadequate attention paid to establishing a well-functioning legal-system from which everything then goes.

I would add that leadership – which has been mentioned a few times – is a necessary ingredient and we do suffer from a lack of leadership. There is more leadership among the panelists here on my left actually than from many leaders in countries right now. So I think that is a necessary condition which has to be there and which, very often, is not. The world has become much more complex, so the external factors are playing a part that could be, to a large extent, ignored by many countries in the past and cannot be now. In a sense, an essential ingredient of good governance is having leaders, having government that is light-footed, as you said, but at the same time has the skills, has the knowledge, has the global understanding because countries, especially small countries, but also large ones, can be exposed to huge external shocks – we have seen it with the financial crisis and the subsequent recession and so-on and so-forth – so in that sense there is a duty of the leaders and good governance to protect people, to protect people who are vulnerable and we have a system that in fact lends itself to these kinds of shocks.

The other thing amidst all the positive approach – and I share the enthusiasm and optimism – I think one has to realize that things sometimes work and sometimes they do not. It was very interesting when you mentioned how, after 1948, Burma was indeed a very promising country. I remember in [university] courses on economic development, we looked at where countries were and where they ended-up. And indeed, in the early 1950s countries like Burma, Yugoslavia, Israel, the Republic of Korea and Tanzania were seen as countries which several decades later would be among the most developed in many respects, not just economic, and some have made it and others have been, for a variety of reasons, taken astray. So I think that as we are charting, of course, the road to good governance, these factors have to be taken into account.

Internal factors you have mentioned [to Aung San Suu Kyi] and the political gridlock often prevents even leaders who have the skills, have the good intentions in enacting the system of governance that would take the country there. I recall, shortly after the fall of the Milosevic regime, I was invited by the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the Economy in Serbia to visit and discuss the situation, and it was very enthusiastic as a situation because they said, look we can learn from the ten years of transition in the other countries. We have a terrific advantage; we have people who studied in the West who are coming back, right, and it was an internal political gridlock really which prevented Serbia from realizing the high aspirations that there were.

So I think it is important to be enthusiastic, important to be positive, but at the same time I think that cautious optimism is important there as well. The transition to good governance, democracy and a well-functioning economy – which is what people, in the end, expect in terms of improvement of their welfare – is something not like a weed that spreads and really takes over easily. It is more like a fragile flower that you have to handle with care and really pay attention to all the time. The art of government is, to a large extent,

investing in that as well. Thank you.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you indeed. Yet another dimension, if you like – the focus on transition. We are not just talking about good governance in a vacuum but also transition, let us say, from bad to good. The noblest possible ideas have been expressed by our panelists, and I would like to provoke them in order to stimulate a discussion... Please bear with me, if I bring down the discussion from lofty ideals to a bit of grounded reality and see how we can relate these ideals that our panelists have projected. I think all of them agree, by-and-large, with the kind of definition of good governance that Daw Suu Kyi initially presented. I think the definition of good governance is not for discussion, so to speak, but what to my mind is up for a good deal of discussion is the issue of leadership and people.

I think that is a very major issue at stake and I would formulate the problem in the following manner, namely: If the leaders are like Daw Suu Kyi, the people are in safe hands. But, unfortunately, political leaders, also in exalted democracies, are more and more taking and less giving; there is more perversion of the political party apparatus and more populism, which makes in a sense a mockery of democracy.

Now the question is, how do we make sure that, within democratic societies, leaders are the leaders who deserve to be leaders who come into the forefront and, if they do not, how do we help prevent the abuse of power in the hands of power-brokers? We already have got Mr. de Klerk saying “create institutions, create checks and balances,” but we also know that with checks and balances what happens, in the expression of an Indian who was asked which of the two parties he was going to vote he said, “both are worse.” What happens when we are faced with a situation that both are worse, and I still have to exercise my voting right? I would turn this question to Daw Suu Kyi and say, what happens when politicians are giving less and taking more? Within the democratic apparatus, how do you visualize the kind of the leadership which would be best? How do we ensure that?

**Aung San Suu Kyi:** I think it depends a great deal on the people in the democracy, if they are free to choose their leaders. Why would they choose those who are more intent on taking than on giving? Of course it could be because they are taken in by a veneer of generosity, by a veneer of caring. But I think what we need is just more information, more transparency.

I agree absolutely with Mr. de Klerk, on the need for good institutions, and I have to mention something that is very crucial to our country – a good Constitution. We need good constitutional safeguards against bad leaders. I would like to put it that simply because when my party decided to re-enter – if you like – legal politics last year and contested the by-elections, the three main planks of our platform were rule of law, an end to ethnic conflict, and amendments to the Constitution.

Now rule of law means that we control bad leaders through the establishment of just laws and through an independent judiciary, and the reason why we put emphasis on rule of law is linked to amendments to the Constitution. The Constitution is such that the judiciary is totally under the domination of the executive. How can we control bad leaders if the judiciary is not independent of the executive? So that was one of the reasons why we linked our first plank to the second two.

The second was an end to ethnic conflict. If we are to have peace in our country, we must be sure that our people feel that they have access to justice. Without the conviction that they will be dealt with justly, we will not be able to bring about peace between our ethnic communities and again that comes back to amendments to the Constitution. We do not have a democratic Constitution. Let me say this very clearly; this is why I was a little surprised when you said – you implied – that I was optimistic. I have always advocated cautious optimism, much to the annoyance of many who want to believe that Burma is safe on



the way to democratic transition and I keep saying no – let us be cautiously optimistic. With a Constitution as we have, there is no guarantee of a safe way to genuine democracy. This Constitution is not democratic. It does not provide for an independent judiciary; it does not provide us with enough control over what Mr. Munshi would define as “bad leaders,” and it does not ensure that the people have the right to choose the kind of government they want. There are many things wrong with this Constitution – I will not go into this in detail because I might never come to a stop...

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you. I would turn this around to Professor Yavlinsky: What if we, the people, do not rise to the occasion. You are familiar with the expression, “You will get what you deserve”?

**Grigory Yavlinsky:** I want to make one observation. In my country we have a wonderful Constitution! [Applause] We have an absolutely wonderful Constitution with divisions of powers, with human rights, with whatever. And we have nothing of that in reality – simply zero. We have a disgusting government with a wonderful Constitution. [Interjection by Aung San Suu Kyi: Do you have a wonderful judiciary?] In the Constitution – yes – but in reality we have business and power together with the judiciary; judiciary power, business and authorities we have all together, with the executives, all this we have together with the Parliament [i.e. none is independent]. We have everything in one package. That means that we have no normal life; we have a kind of Soviet system with a new face. You know the name of the face [alluding to Vladimir Putin].

So I want simply to underline that the Constitution is very important, but I know very democratic countries without a Constitution, like Great Britain, for example, and just they have more or less democracy, and we have a Constitution but we have no democracy. That is why I am saying if people are not prepared to fight for control and transparency of the government, if people are not fighting for implementing their own laws and constitutions, no good governance is possible. No! So this is a task for us. The governments themselves do not want to have good governance. Only through pressure and control from the public through different ways, through media, through elections, through trade unions, through political parties, through demonstrations from youth organizations, women’s organizations – dogs’ organizations, whatever organizations – if all of them are pressing on the government, then you have a chance to have a good government finally. In my country, one person controls 200 people in the government. Only one person.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you. It is time to turn now to Mr. de Klerk. Is a good Constitution enough?

**F.W. de Klerk:** Yes. A good Constitution, which you ensure is a living document, is good enough. If a good Constitution remains words on paper, then it does not offer any guarantee whatsoever. So the question is why in Russia and other countries with good constitutions are their constitutions allowed to be mere words on paper. Which brings me to institutions: we cannot leave politics only to the politicians. I want to bring into our discussion the need for a vibrant and a dynamic civil society, who – when the politicians fail, or the opposition is too weak, or there is too big a majority – steps into the bridge, stands up for principles, stands up for values, finds ways and means to create pressure and to make an impact, even to draw international pressure. In the end that is a democracy – a constitutional democracy or a non-constitutional one, like Great Britain. It is in the hands of the voters to use the system.

We have discovered in our work in the Global Leadership Foundation that electoral systems need to be watched very carefully. It quite often happens that elections are stolen by people in government. It happened twice in Zimbabwe, and I have just had a discussion with a leading person from an opposition party in a Latin American country where it is alleged the election was stolen. So good electoral systems, as independent as the courts should be, is fundamentally important to give assurance to the electors that their

will be done after each and every election.

You also asked about good leaders. I think a part of the 21st Century's problem is – with all the technological developments we have had – that we are falling into the trap of reactive leadership. Leaders tend, with all the polls now so easily taken, to look at the polls, to try and give the people what they want, as heard in the polls, instead of having and showing vision, as you said. The task of a leader is to have a vision, to develop action plans to achieve that vision, and to convince the majority of the population – even if for the moment they want something else – to say no, to support this; this will improve the situation. And there is a culture of reactivism in too many of our political systems instead of creative leadership. I think the world needs more creative, forward-thinking leadership.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you. Did I see a slight shift in your emphasis from constitution to quality of leadership, or was I imagining it?

**F.W. de Klerk:** No. There is not a shift. It goes hand-in-hand. If you get a bad leader or a bad government, constitutional safeguards are fundamentally important – working mechanisms, not mechanisms on paper, but mechanisms which are used. Aung San Suu Kyi said: people should feel that they have access to justice. That is fundamentally important. Therefore, how courts are appointed is very important in such a Constitution, to prevent from the beginning in a good Constitution manipulation of the judiciary by those in political power – separation of power.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you indeed for this clarification. And I would like to now turn to [Mr. Švejnár], with your emphasis on transition... How do we make the transition from one form of society to the other? From one type of governance – bad – to good governance? And how do we make the transition from bad leadership to good leadership? From a passive audience or public to a more active public. These are the common points. How do we handle this complex transition?

**Jan Švejnár:** If we knew the answer, I think many countries would be better off. But let me try. I think that what is often underestimated is how important the first generation of leaders is. Because you start with the revolution, be it here in the Czech Republic or somewhere else, you have people on your side, O.K. You really have enthusiasm, people are willing to sacrifice, willing to give, as you said, leaders are there and so on. If you have a few successful years, months, whatever, you define as the period that is relevant, it is like an upward spiral. It is mutual reinforcing, and if the international community responds – as it usually does in the first phase – with assistance, be it technical, financial and so on, you actually have a shot at making or at least achieving the first stage.

If you miss that, if you really lose the faith, the belief, the loyalty of people, and they start feeling that you are not there to provide service, as you say, but rather to enrich yourself as a leader, I think you start losing people's allegiance and it is a downward spiral and it is very difficult to go from the downward to the upward. In technical terms you have two equilibria, two outcomes – a good outcome or a bad outcome, right? And it is very hard to go from the bad one to the new one without another kind of cataclysmic, non-continuous, disjointed thing. That is where I think Burma and other countries have their challenge. It is a challenge for the second phase for countries like the Czech Republic and others in the region, especially when they are going through the shock of an international crisis, which is making everybody poor. It is very hard to do good governance, good policies, when you are distributing a shrinking pie than if you are dividing things out of the growing pie, right? So that were the real art is, at that point.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you, indeed. Now, I would like to post to the panel just one more question... It

was said that the less governance, the better – that posed in itself a problem, namely, if the state is going to wither away, what happens to a country like Myanmar, to a country like India, where the state needs to do a lot of cleaning and a lot of improving. In this context, how do we visualize the role of the state?

**Grigory Yavlinsky:** If this is to be a very brief comment to a very small question, then my answer would be very simple: if you have a really good government, then the question is if more governance or less governance is reasonable. You can ask the government to do this and that, or you can say that we would have a very liberal government; it would not interfere at all. But what if you have corrupted government, a government not qualified enough, and a very corrupted elite, which is not interested in any problem in your country and is only interested in how to make money and just to disappear? If you have that kind of situation, then less government is better. They are making their own business and let the people do their own business. If you have nothing to give to the people, give them freedom. This is the formula for bad governance.

**Surendra Munshi:** That sounds like a sound principle: less of bad, and more of good. Mr. de Klerk?

**F.W. de Klerk:** I think the answer lies in striking the balance between the need for good governance and the need for governance per se, and the need for freedom of the individual's choice and freedom of communities to decide for themselves. When you have too much centralization of power – as you have had under the communist system and under other systems – then the individual's freedom or community's freedom are taken away. We have reached the stage where even in very democratic, successful states they are telling you what to eat and what not to eat – nanny states, who try to fix the diet of the whole nation. [Surendra Munshi: "And even more."] And even more. Somehow or other our individual freedom, the freedom of choice, should be not taken away. My definition of less government is not that the government should not do the typical duties which the elector entrusted to them, but that they should not encroach into areas where really they make a mess of it.

**Aung San Suu Kyi:** When I said that good government is one which should not be noticed, I was not thinking about the withering away of the State. I do not think that is going to happen. There will always be a State. But I do agree that really good government does not need to make itself felt. It should be there to serve and not to assert itself. So if we want good governance, then we want, as you have already said, a stronger civil society which will keep it in healthy balance, without having to wither away the state.

**Jan Švejnar:** I would perhaps add to the discussion just two other aspects that I think are important. One is that governance at the level of individual institutions and firms, companies, etc., is important because good governance from this level then has an effect on the governance at the national level. The other is that what is more and more important is the global governance – that a lot of issues now transcend national boundaries, and the world is, in a way, a little bit backward because we still rely on nation states, international agreements of various sorts. Many phenomena go beyond that, and so really, at this stage, the global governance, the ability to act beyond national boundaries is very important.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you, indeed. Thank you. With this we have completed two rounds. I would like to open now this to the audience. I already see a hand on the right. You, please, yes sir.

**Martin Palouš – first question from the audience:** My name is Martin Palouš. I am now President of the Václav Havel Library Foundation. Actually, I want to follow-up on what Jan Švejnar said at the very end because I was surprised that throughout your debate I have not heard any reference to global governance, because the word "governance" is mostly used in this particular context. So the question is: Do you see any

strong, weak or non-existent relationship between good governance, as you have discussed it, and global governance as to follow up your beautiful metaphor of steering a ship or boat? Obviously, a good leader, ruler, helmsperson is very much dependent not only on his relationships with his crew, but on his knowledge of the sea. The sea can sometimes be very stormy; sometimes it can be easy to steer your boat on it, so can you a little bit elaborate the relationship between the global governance and good governance, let us say on a national level.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thanks indeed. Who would like to respond to this?

**Jan Švejnar:** I would be glad to start, but go ahead. I should mention, just for the sake of full disclosure, that I do work as Director of the Center on Global Economic Governance at Columbia University, and in fact we are co-sponsoring this panel together with Forum 2000, because we think this is very important. There are about twenty faculty members, including some who were at the Forum here, like Joe Stiglitz and Jeff Sachs, who are working on this, and it is a big issue because what you have is you have national governments, institutions created many years ago, decades ago – the Bretton Woods institutions, like the World Bank, IMF – that have to quickly adjust to the reality, right? You have global players, like the multinational firms that are often determining many of the outcomes, and you have totally new players that are very important, totally out of control, like the ratings and ranking agencies that will downgrade not only firms but countries. So you have actually a totally new world in which you have a lot of young professionals, many of whom are here, who are going to be the future leaders and who have to really think of how they operate within this global world and how do we make that governance.

We have the desirable feature that you have mentioned, namely at this point social welfare is global not just at the level of individual states or regions, and what you have is a situation where the interdependencies are causing a lot of side-effects, spill-over effects, and public goods that are of greater and greater importance. And this is where I was perhaps too briefly referring to the fact that there is a lack of leadership. Frankly, I think it is the greatest challenge that we are facing over the next several years.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you. I can take one more hand. Yes, Madam.

**Second question from the audience:** I am a student and I wonder what can political leaders do to regain people's trust if the people have such a bad experience and long experience with bad government that people probably do not even want to know about government in democracy? What can be done to ensure that the trust of the people is there? And more specifically, in Burma, what can the NLD do to regain the trust of ethnic minorities that were suppressed by the military for decades? Thank you.

**Aung San Suu Kyi:** I think that when people no longer trust government it is because the government has done too much to them that they have reason to distrust them. But if you are talking about the specific issue of the ethnic nationalities and the NLD, the predominantly Burmese party, then it is to do with relationships between our different communities. We have had a very, very sad history of distrust, and this has been aggravated by years and years of military dictatorship. So now many of our ethnic nationalities identify the military government with the Burmese ethnic group, and what we have to make all of our people understand is that the Burmese ethnic group suffered as much as the other ethnic nationalities under military dictatorship. So we have to work together to try to establish a situation where all of us can have access to justice; were all of us can enjoy the fruits of good governance.

Just because the NLD is predominantly Burmese does not mean we do not have the trust and support of the ethnic nationalities. In the 1990 elections, when we were able to run in all the ethnic nationality areas,

we made a very, very good showing. We were very strongly supported by the ethnic nationalities, and at this very moment the NLD is working with a number of ethnic nationality parties to produce a joint statement on how we would wish the present Constitution to be amended. So we are working together, cooperating together, and it is through action that we have to gain trust not just through words.

**Martin Bursík – third question from the audience:** My name is Martin Bursík and I am an environmentalist and [Czech] politician. Looking at the countries you are coming from, I have a very theoretical question with respect to global governance. Imagine that you [the panelists] are the leader of Russia, you are the leader of Africa, you represent India, you represent wider Asia together with China and you represent the United States. How would you handle ... You are the leaders and you are open for cooperation. You are behind the national interests of countries, areas that you represent. How would you handle the issue of climate change? – I am asking because the International Panel on Climate Change will release a new report within one week – how would you make an agreement on this level?

**Grigory Yavlinsky:** My answer would be that if such a task would be necessary to solve in this group we would start by looking for common values and I think that we would... In this group, we can easily find them, and if we would have common values we would have a common language. Having a common language we can push almost every problem in the world in the right direction. Thank you.

**F.W. de Klerk:** I think one must approach this very important subject, which might become the most important problem of our new century, in the framework of reality, affordability, and do it step-by-step. I do not think one should allow this serious problem to also interfere with – let me name one other big challenge: one third of the world's population is now living in absolute poverty. One should not allow this to attract attention away from the need to find ways and means of giving those people a decent life or of job creation, etc. The answer lies in balance. There is no absolute truth in life, and there is not just one big problem in life. The answer lies in addressing the big major issues, of which this is one, in balance with each other.

**Fourth question from the audience:** My name is Natalie [incomprehensible]. I have a problem which I very often think about. You were talking about maintenance or about the building of proper citizens unafraid to raise their hand; who not only take responsibility for their rights but are able to formulate what they want to achieve. And I have the feeling at schools we teach many details in many sciences but the overall awareness of our lives is not made clear to the kids. That is what makes me sad sometimes. I see it with my grandchildren. It is not easy to lead the kids to them being independent personalities. How can it be helped, on a global scale? Thank you.

**Jan Švejnar:** I will take it, maybe together with Martin Bursík. I think that you are absolutely right that the world is changing in the sense that it is moving faster, requiring very quick decisions, a lot of expertise, and people cannot be that kind of individual personalities who they used to be, when you could be a renaissance person and still get away with it in the sense because there are just too many very good people running right by you, etc. I think Martin's point is important because it is pointing to a long-term serious problem, or potentially serious problem. Your problem is one where the risk is an unknown, uncertain type of thing. How do we act globally when we have that and I think that, you know, to the extent that I can persuade Congress, which I cannot, I think that you want to take measures which protect you against the most extreme negative outcomes, should they occur, and hopefully some of it is not going to be so expensive, some of it may be relatively expensive, but you cannot obviously allocate all the resources since you do not have them.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you, indeed. It is beyond my competence and indeed also beyond the time

allotted to me to attempt any kind of summary. I would just pick up a few keywords that have come up very, very briefly and hurriedly. We have heard about the leadership issues, that leadership that is caring, giving, responsive, and responsible. We have heard also about the role people have to play – it is not just leaders, the people have to play – the role that, on the other hand, institutions have to play in terms of insuring good governance, and along with that the management, if you like, of transition, of different kinds. I think with these words, please join me in thanking our distinguished panel for having discussed this matter as well and as totally as time allowed.

# Tahrir, Taksim, Sao Paulo: A New Generation of Politics?

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 15.00–16.30, Era World

In cooperation with the Vodafone Czech Republic Foundation

**Moderator:** Ivan Gabal

**Panel Discussion:** Michael Anti, Nada Dhaif, Ahmed Maher, Frédéric Michel, William Echikson

**Talk focuses on uses and limitations of social media in bringing about change through communication**

The millennial generations of Latin America, the Middle East and Africa believe they can make a global difference, whereas European youngsters keep a rather pessimistic attitude about making change, according to the Global Millennial Survey conducted by Telefónica in partnership with the *Financial Times*, introduced by **Frédéric Michel**, Global Director of Public Engagement for Telefónica.

Talking about the new generation, the panelists agreed that the world is entering a new phase characterized by a big boom in technologies, with social media at the forefront. Even though tools like Facebook and Twitter bring along faster and more effective ways of communication, they might in other ways jeopardize society. Chinese blogger and activist **Michael Anti** has argued that social media opened a big window of opportunity, but has a dark side to it. *“Take the Snowden and NSA case,”* Mr. Anti continued, *“governments, being in charge of controlling servers, do spy on their citizens.”*

**Nada Dhaif**, Chairwoman of Bahrain Rehabilitation and Anti-Violence Organization, agreed, saying that Twitter, for instance, can be both the cure and the disease. In Bahrain, she recalled, online activists are easily tracked and subsequently persecuted. That said, social media is merely a tool, Egyptian blogger and activist **Ahmed Maher** said. Behind every revolution or upheaval are real problems – hunger, social inequality, pervasive corruption, and so on. *“Fundamental change can only be reached by old-school methods like face-to-face communication with people. This cannot be done online,”* he said.

# The Asian Drama Today

Monday, September 16, 2013, 17.00–18.30, Žofín Palace, Knights' Hall

**Moderator:** Gareth Evans

**Panel Discussion:** Surendra Munshi, Steven Gan, Viphandh Roengpithya, Yang Jianli

**Asia is diverse, with democracies alongside military rulers, unequal, and expanding, panelists say**

**Gareth Evans**, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia, began the discussion by describing the Asian drama as being played in three “arenas”: economic growth, geopolitics and the internal arena (including government, democracy and human security).

Indian sociologist **Surendra Munshi** said the situation in Asia is extremely diverse and unequal. In the region there are many different establishments, from democratic to military and authoritarian rule, which is why the transition, on a regional basis, is very hard to achieve. He concluded by noting that *“People are going out on streets for democracy, but they are not going out against democracy.”*

From the point of view of **Steven Gan**, Editor of the news website Malaysiakini, the key problem facing Asia is how societies treat minority groups. *“Still – when we work on it, great things will happen,”* he said.

**Viphandh Roengpithya** Founder and President, Asian University, Thailand, sees the biggest issue in the rapidly increasing population in much of Asia (apart from China and Japan.) In India, Bangladesh and Pakistan, officials are not dealing with the problem because the main concern is economic growth. *“Forget about understanding of the West: growth, growth, growth. Nothing is growing exponentially forever. And the West says, we’re growing forever,”* he said. Sustainability comes not from growth.

**Yang Jianli**, Chinese dissident, stated that the Asian drama is a clash of dreams between nations, not a clash of civilizations. In Asia, there are many ideas of establishment.

## Civil Society: Still a Force for Positive Change?

Monday, September 16, 2013, 17.00–18.30, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

**Moderator:** Martin Bútorá

**Panel Discussion:** Joan Baez, Leopoldo López, Martin Palouš, Danuta Glondys, Michael Anti

**Talk focused on the role of civil society in digital age to foment change, prevent democratic setbacks**

**Martin Palouš**, President of Václav Havel Library Foundation, argued that civil society is still a positive force, as well as a force to prevent negative developments. *“Civil society is not only an accelerator, but also a brake,”* he said. In practice, emerging dissent associated with Václav Havel/the Charter 77 movement was an engine of change before the Velvet Revolution, and post-1989 state-building was a “brake” to stop the country from plunging into chaos, he said.

**Leopoldo López**, a member of Venezuela’s opposition, asked: *“How do we bring about a change if the civil society itself is fragmented?”* For opposition activists in his country, he said, this unifying idea gathering all these scattered pieces together is presented as *“All the rights for all the people.”* Regardless of the diversity of civic spectra, *“all parts have one in common – fighting for certain rights,”* Mr. López said.

*“Without civil society, without citizens, there is no democracy,”* said **Danuta Glondys**, Director of Villa Decius Association. *“The role of civil society, our role, is to act as a watchdog on politicians and those who have power and money, although we are usually resented by them.”*

The internet is spurring change in China, which has 600 million internet users, half of whom use social media, Chinese blogger **Michael Anti** said. *“Thanks to the internet, young people can live a different way of life than their parents, who had none (of today’s networking technology),”* he said.

U.S. folk singer and social activist **Joan Baez** stressed the importance of *“fighting at the bottom”* – grassroots movements – and pessimism about top politicians making real change. *“With all the gifts [U.S. President Barack] Obama has, he could do much more than as a president in the office,”* she concluded.

## Corruption as an Anti-Transformation Force

Monday, September 16, 2013, 11.00–12.30, Goethe-Institut

**Moderator:** Viphandh Roengpithya



**Panel Discussion:** Steven Gan, Amanda Schnetzer, Michaela Suchardová, Jasim Husain, Tomáš Sedláček

### **Talk focused on how education and social media can help reduce corruption**

Democracy and division of power among economic, political and cultural systems are the best tools to fight corruption, members of the panel agreed. Although some level of corruption is inevitable, good education about its negative impact on society can help build moral values incompatible with corruption – and in this regard, social media can be an anti-corruption force, they said.

Moderator **Dr. Viphandh Roengpithya**, Founder and President of Asian University, Thailand, compared countries in transition to a human body and corruption to a kind of sickness that needs to be cured: “*You diagnose it and give it medicine,*” he said.

**Jasim Husain**, a former Member of Parliament from Bahrain, mentioned that Qatar, despite having among the highest incomes in the world, has an absence of democratic institutions to fight corruption: “*The way forward is to have democracy – to have active civil society and certainly free media,*” he said. **Steven Gan**, Editor and Co-Founder of the political news website Malaysiakini, said a lack of transparency is a major obstacle for journalists trying to expose corruption.

A functional society must have free competition, effective laws and regulations, and morality, said **Tomáš Sedláček**, Chief of Macroeconomic Strategies at ČSOB Bank and a former advisor Václav Havel.

## **Do Environmental Causes Transform Civic Engagement?**

Monday, September 16, 2013, 13.30–15.00, Žofín Palace, Knights' Hall

**Moderator:** Bedřich Moldan

**Panel Discussion:** Franz Fischler, Martin Bursík, Yang Jianli, Susanna Hla Hla Soe

## Talk focused on how environmental concerns have become rallying points for greater political change

Environmental issues are a part of the process of transition – but in what ways? **Bedřich Moldan**, Director of the Environment Center at Charles University, opened the discussion by recalling the term “Anthropocene” to characterize the ongoing unsustainable exploitation of natural resources.

Chinese Dissident and Founder of Initiatives for China **Yang Jianli** said civil society actors in his country face severe restrictions, but it is relatively safe to address environmental issues. Most Chinese have started to place health and the environment over economic growth, he said. *“Defending cultural values contributes to environmental activism; this activism is a unifying force on the local level; however, it is being undermined by the government.”*

Former Czech Environment Minister **Martin Bursík** noted environmental issues had served as a driving force for civil society, citing protests against highway construction through Russia’s Chimki forest, the demolition of Gezi Park in Istanbul to make way for a shopping mall, and protests in 1989 at the “Black Triangle” on the Czech-Polish border, then the most polluted area in Europe, as having spurred civil society and resulted in political demands.

*“If the beginning of the Velvet Revolution had not happened on Narodní třída [Prague’s main avenue], it would certainly happen a week after in the Black Triangle,”* Mr. Bursík said. *“Protecting the environment has become an indispensable pillar of liberal democracy.”*

**Franz Fischler**, Former European Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries, posited that we should think about our children and what they will inherit in terms of the environment. *“This will make the debate more emotional and, therefore, help to promote awareness on the issue,”* he said, noting climate change and the dependency on fossil fuels as major issues.

# Education and Democracy

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 8.00–9.30, Embassy of Germany

In cooperation with the Embassy of Germany

**Welcome:** Detlef Lingemann, Jakub Klepal

**Moderator:** Petre Roman

**Panel Discussion:** Igor Blažević, Barbara Haig, Viphandh Roengpithya, Libor Rouček

## Talk focused on the value of education in preparing for a transition to democracy

Panel moderator **Petre Roman**, member of Romanian Parliament, asserted that without the accumulation of educated human capital, a society cannot advance. The German Ambassador, **Detlef Lingemann**, noted the bilateral cooperation of Germany and transitioning democracies in regards to educational growth.

**Igor Blažević**, Head Teacher at the Burma Educational Initiatives, a Czech NGO, outlined how education can be used by societies under authoritarian rule to prepare for democracy. Authoritarian rule suppresses the dissemination of information and thought, he said, through “*the tools of manipulation*” and “*we need to become a liberal Taliban*” to counter it. Mr. Blažević said grassroots community projects must be the foundation for formal education, so democracy can flourish when implemented.

**Barbara Haig**, Deputy President for Policy and Strategy, National Endowment for Democracy, continued in this vein, saying there must be a shift in educational ideology from an authoritarian society to a democratic one. She focused on the importance of history that society must embrace, especially after previous state powers have long been in place, saying “*there is also propaganda in educational content.*”

**Libor Rouček**, a Czech Member of European Parliament, commented on the role of public media and the power it has to use civil society as an educational tool. **Viphandh Roengpithya**, Founder and President of Asian University, Thailand, ended by presenting a model of how students can be motivated to study by increasing financial compensation.

# How Has a Media in Transition Impacted the Transition of the Media in Post-Communist Countries?

September 16, 2013, 17.00–18.30, European House

In cooperation with Transitions Online

**Moderator:** Jeremy Druker

**Panel Discussion:** Marius Dragomir, Amer Dzihana, Mykola Riabchuk, Alisher Sidikov, Christopher Walker

## **Panelists say ownership of the media is a concern in the CEE region, civil society not always heard**

Discussion was opened by Romanian journalist **Marius Dragomir**, who described the media situation in Central and Eastern Europe over the past two decades. At the beginning, regulation was necessary in order to give licenses. In journalism, he now sees an incremental improvement thanks to digitization and the Internet.

**Amer Dzihana**, Bosnian Media Researcher, said of the media transition in his country that it was given a huge amount of assistance, “*total media intervention*” – international experts, advice in the field of law, media institutions, and training for journalists.

Political and Cultural Analyst from Ukraine, **Mykola Riabchuk**, talked about neither democratic nor authoritarian countries. Usually, ownership of the media there is not a real business, but only a tool to deal with the government. In addition, the Internet in Ukraine is not important, as the information spread there is considered unreliable.

However, this media is the most important in Uzbekistan, according to **Alisher Sidikov**, Director of Radio Ozodlik (Uzbek service of RFE/RL). To share the news, videos or audios, they use “*smart media*” and experiment with the technology and smartphones with applications like Skype and WhatsApp. “*This is our strategy*,” he said.

The discussion was concluded by **Christopher Walker**, Executive Director, International Forum for Democratic Studies, National Endowment for Democracy, who said that civil society relies on the media to get a message out, but it is also troubling how powerful groups try to gain control of the major media infrastructure.

# Philosophy Underground and Overground

Monday, September 16, 2013, 18.00–20.00, Václav Havel Library

In cooperation with the Václav Havel Library

**Moderator:** Markéta Bendová

**Participants:** Roger Scruton, Jiří Suk

## Former teachers and students in secret universities in Czechoslovakia under Communism reminisce

Totalitarian regimes often face the paradox that the more they restrict the supply of something, the more attractive it becomes. That was the case of certain types of knowledge and learning in the former Communist regimes of Central Europe. What came from the West was often branded as having no place in the new state and suppressed, as was Czech literature or philosophy believed to represent a subversive strain of thought. Universities were barred to people like former Czech president and Forum 2000 founder Václav Havel, due to their “bourgeois” backgrounds.

The thirst for banned knowledge was in part met in 1980s Czechoslovakia with the help of British, and later French, academics, who helped create underground universities. That world was revisited at a panel featuring ex-underground teacher, British philosopher and academic **Roger Scruton**, former students, and the authors of the new book *Philosophy Underground and Overground*.

*“It would be great to have a book of literary nappies one day,”* Mr. Scruton, said referring to the secret messages then hidden in baby diapers or in coat linings, a main form of communication for the underground universities. He said he had entered a *“sometimes exciting, sometimes frightening world”* by giving secret lectures in flats, mainly in Prague and Brno, to Czechs and Slovaks *“whose determination to get to the very essence of a book was very powerful.”*

Faced with demands from some students for far-reaching structured courses with proper curriculum, the informal seminars developed fast. Theology colleges at Cambridge even allowed Czechoslovak students to sit their exams with the completed papers smuggled out by messenger or through diplomatic bags. The courses eventually covered everything from architecture to music.

Czech historian **Jiří Suk** recounted his very different world in the official universities and the blocks of lectures devoted to Marxism and Leninism, the vast tracts of forbidden knowledge, and attitude of teachers *“who for example held that Franz Kafka was not worth studying because he was ill for most of the time.”*

The imported knowledge was precious to those receiving it. *“For us it was something like a breakthrough,”* said former underground student Alena Hromádková, who also translated and typed copies of Mr. Scruton’s *Salisbury Review* for secret circulation. *“It was the experience of a lifetime... It was like finding the teacher you had always been searching for,”* said another ex-student, Jan Schneider.

# Radio: Inspiring Democratic Change

Monday, September 16, 2013, 15.15–16.45, Era World

In cooperation with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and Radio Prague

**Keynote Speech:** Kevin Klose

**Moderator:** Miroslav Krupička

**Panel Discussion:** Manuel Silvestre Cuesta Morua, Carlos García Pérez, Yang Jianli, Daniel A. Mica

## Talk focused on importance of access to uncensored news in spurring on democratic movements

Opening the discussion of the relationship between radio and democracy, **Kevin Klose**, President and CEO of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, said in his keynote speech, “*Any medium that seeks to foster democracy has to be uncensored and accurate with verifiable information and news because these elements are crucial to building a self-governing society.*” This initiated the discussion, with all panelists emphasizing the importance of international radio in promoting democracy.

As discussed by Mr. Klose, RFE/RL’s mission is to provide unrestricted information in countries where free press is not entirely accessible. In this regard, Radio Martí was established to apply this mission to Cuba. Director of Radio and TV Martí, **Carlos García Pérez**, said the Martí network allows the free flow of news to Cubans through new technologies, such as flash drives and DVDs. This promotes accessibility to news despite the Cuban government’s attempts to prevent the spread of such information.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with new technologies emerging and providing instantaneous access to information, panelists said democracy is more promising than ever before in countries where, in the past, reluctant governments could block access to information.

All panelists expressed a necessity for the free flow of information via all forms of radio, as well as television, the Internet, and social media, in order to successfully promote and develop democracy. As stated by **Daniel Mica**, a former U.S. Congressman and member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, “*We must stop the stifling.*”

## Trust, the State, and the Rule of Law

Monday, September 16, 2013, 13.30–15.00, Langhans, People in Need Center

In cooperation with the DOX Centre for Contemporary Art

**Moderator:** Jiří Přibáň

**Panel Discussion:** Norman L. Eisen, Roger Scruton, Markéta Sedláčková

### **Talk centered on how institutions can foster trust in the rule of law to increase citizens' participation**

Noting that trust is the hallmark of social solidarity enabling democratic institutions to function properly, the panel focused on the definition of trust itself – a critical component of the rule of law – and its realization in the context of the state. For **Norman L. Eisen**, the U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic, trust is a precious commodity. British philosopher **Roger Scruton** made a link with responsibility for our actions claiming that civic trust is strongly present in his country, which could be an example for other states.

Sociologist **Markéta Sedláčková** from the Czech Academy of Sciences agreed with Mr. Scruton that “*trust is natural to human beings,*” and paraphrased her colleague Ivo Možný’s classification of different kinds of trust – trust in the system (legitimacy), trust in institutions, and trust in other people (in condition of cooperation). She warned, however, against blind trust in authorities and institutions that might not act in accordance with democratic principles.

Panelists discussed the need for a public spirit in society, positive affirmation of belonging, and empathy. People stop trusting if they do not themselves feel trusted; they have to decide to trust strangers, not only their own family (social trust). Societies that are able to trust can achieve benefits and developments. If there is too much control from above, there is no room to trust, and citizens cannot prove responsibility.

## **Volunteering as the Base of Civil Society**

Monday, September 16, 2013, 15.15–16.45, Langhans, People in Need Center

In cooperation with The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award Czech Republic Foundation

**Moderator:** Tomáš Lindner

**Panel Discussion:** Doraja Eberle, Ondřej Lochman, Ondřej Matějka, Robin Ujfaluši

## **The term “volunteering” itself was the subject of some debate, all agreed it needs greater integration in societies**

Discussion began with panelists sharing their personal experiences with volunteering, but quickly turned to a more basic issue: the term itself. “*In our day, we called it helping each other; today we call it volunteering,*” said the Austrian politician and Chairwoman of the Board of the ERSTE Foundation, **Doraja Eberle**. The Executive Director of the Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award, **Ondřej Lochman**, cautioned against confusing volunteering with helping: “*Volunteering is a source of education. It is a partnership thing,*” he said.

**Ondřej Matějka**, the Director of Antikomplex, shared his impression that the idea of volunteer work is catching on well in the Czech Republic but that campaigns such as the *European Year of Volunteering* did not succeed in reaching the people here. Mr. Lochman chipped in: “*I once said ‘it’s amazing that we have so many volunteers in our village.’ And the people there said, ‘Who?’*”

Mrs. Eberle told a story of how volunteering can be made a win-win situation. In the area of Salzburg, youngsters receive a “social skills passport” (*Sozialkompetenzausweis*) in exchange for doing community work. This “passport” is well looked upon by the local companies as it provides young people with the social skills the enterprises are looking for in their prospective employees.

Mr. Matějka and Mr. Lochman further agreed that the society needs to find ways for volunteers to become politicians. To that, Mrs. Eberle countered: “*The last thing I wanted was to become a politician!*”

# Democratic Capitalism: Still a Model to Follow?

Monday, September 16, 2013, 13.30–15.00, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

In cooperation with the Center of Global Governance, Columbia University

**Keynote Speech:** Michael Novak

**Moderator:** Jørgen Ejbøl

**Panel Discussion:** Khadija Ismayilova, Jan Švejnar, Liu Chao-shiuan



## Talk focused on need for equality, morality in adopting democratic capitalism

Moderator **Jørgen Ejbøl**, Chairman, JP/Politikens Newspapers of Denmark, presented democratic capitalism as a model known from the Western world to which countries with different systems aspire to implement. The discussion opened with a keynote speech by American theologian and political scientist **Michael Novak**, focusing on different kinds of capitalism and democracy.

Principles like prosperity and equality are necessary, but not sufficient, for establishing democracy. *“The pattern seems to be capitalism first, then democracy,”* Novak said. Necessary for survival is moral ecology.

**Jan Švejnar**, Director, Center on Global Economic Governance, agreed the moral aspect should not be forgotten. According to the former Czech presidential candidate, economic and political liberties are both important, because *“democratic capitalism is not a weed that grows itself, but more like tropical fragile plant that needs a lot of attention.”*

Former prime minister of Taiwan **Liu Chao-shiuan**, an advisor to the current president, talked about the experience of his country. No other model than democratic capitalism possesses such a tool to stimulate the growth, but we must be careful and put all to consideration, he said.

**Khadija Ismayilova**, an investigative journalist from Azerbaijan, said that in her country the free market economy became a horror: the largest country in the Caucasus region of Eurasia, rich in oil and gas, has failed to become a democracy and is struggling with monopolies and corruption.

# Economy, Culture and Free Enterprise: Case Study of the Visegrad Group

Monday, September 16, 2013, 13.30–15.00, Goethe-Institut

In cooperation with the Legatum Institute and the International Visegrad Fund

**Moderator:** Jeffrey Gedmin

**Panel Discussion:** Marek Dabrowski, Mária Schmidt, Ivan Mikloš, Miroslav Singer

## Talk focused on implementation of painful reforms, expectations, reconciliation, populism in transitioning societies

Democratic transitions swept through Europe with the collapse of communism. All things considered, the Visegrad Group (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) can be counted among the success stories. The panelists, all from the region, were posed questions about their countries' respective reforms and transitions by the moderator, former RFE/RL President **Jeffrey Gedmin**.

**Mária Schmidt**, Director of the House of Terror, Hungary, discussing problems her country had to solve to reach a higher level of economic development, singled out unemployment and high household debt. *"We did not only lose our jobs; we lost respect,"* she said of the social instability in post-1989 Hungary.

Answering the same question, **Marek Dabrowski**, a Center for Social and Economic Research fellow, stressed the negative impact of irrational expectations of the transforming nations, and long and sophisticated approval processes by the Polish government. *"If politicians are not prepared to make fast changes, they usually fail,"* he said. Both former Slovak Finance Minister **Ivan Mikloš** and current Governor of the Czech National Bank **Miroslav Singer** agreed with Mr. Dabrowski on this point, and elaborated on the differences in the paths their countries took (after the split of Czechoslovakia.)

Discussing the persisting problems, the panelists noted the main problem of transitional economies: how to implement often painful reforms and gain political support for them. In that regard, Mr. Mikloš and Mr. Dabrowski turned to the presence of populist influences in politics and the risk of emerging of the so-called "illiberal democracy," i.e. a lack of democracy after legitimate elections.

# Gift Economy: Are Traditional Economic Relations Changing?

Monday, September 16, 2013, 11.00–12.30, European House

In cooperation with [Hearth.net](http://Hearth.net)

**Moderator:** Hana Lešnarová

**Panel Discussion:** Charles Eisenstein, Libor Malý, Tomáš Kostecký

Talk focused on how giving back to the community makes life better for all

The panel opened with American writer **Charles Eisenstein** introducing the concept of a gift economy: *“It isn’t a market economy and it isn’t barter either. In a gift economy, if you have more than you need, you don’t keep it: you pass it on. In a gift economy, wealth is how generous you are. It comes from how much you give, not from what you control or what you have.”* Mr. Eisenstein mentioned open-source software and internet blogging as instances of a gift economy that we experience in our everyday lives.

**Tomáš Kostecký**, Director of the Institute of Sociology at the Academy of Sciences, gave another example: the self-production of food in private gardens. Over 40 percent of Czech households grow some food for themselves, he said, yet 60 percent of them produce more than what they can actually consume. What do they do with the rest? They don’t engage in apples-for-cherries barter with their neighbors: they give it away. When asked why, the most common answer goes along the lines of *“because it would be a waste if we didn’t,”* he said.

A gift economy may sound nice, but how do we turn the idea into reality? Czech philanthropist **Libor Malý**, founder of theJobs.cz and Práce.cz websites, advised the audience to ask themselves what they would do for work if they were not paid for it. In the same breath, he cautioned that it is not easy to find something one enjoys and others appreciate. But for him, that is what a gift economy is all about: *“You do not work for money. You work because you like it.”*

# The Role of Multinational Companies in Transitional Societies

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 8.00–9.30, Langhans, People in Need Center

In cooperation with the Business Leaders Forum

**Moderator:** Ivana Štefková

**Panel Discussion:** Jeffrey Gedmin, Jitka Schmieďová, Leoš Vrzalík, Biljana Weber

**Talk focused on the models, role, and effectiveness – and future – of CSR in business strategies**

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is becoming an integral part of core business strategies, and today’s consumers represent value-sensitive purchasing power. To stay successful, companies must understand the demand for ethical, environmental and social consciousness. **Ivana Štefková**, Member, Board of

Directors, Forum 2000 Foundation, moderated a discussion among business leaders touching on these points and the role of CSR in transitional societies.

**Biljana Weber**, CEO of Microsoft, Czech Republic, noted the many CSR projects her company is involved in, including helping more than 500 startup companies and donating more than 80 million CZK in IT equipment. Other panelists also discussed their company's different CSR projects.

The panelists discussed entrepreneurship and the business models their companies follow. **Jitka Schmiedová**, Vice-President for People and Property, Vodafone, spoke about the quickly changing markets and strategies: "*What was successful yesterday isn't successful today*," she said.

The main question that was left unanswered at the end of the discussion was that of future education. Panelists discussed the barriers to successful business now and what they can be expected to be in the future. For example, **Jeffrey Gedmin**, CEO and President, Legatum Institute, noted that most politicians in the United States don't have experience in working in the private sector.

## Unemployment and Inequality: True Reasons for Middle East's Revolutions?

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 8.00–9.30, American Center of the U.S. Embassy

In cooperation with the U.S. Embassy

**Welcome:** Norman L. Eisen

**Moderator:** Marek Dabrowski

**Panel Discussion:** Munib Masri, Shlomo Avineri, Jasim Husain

**Panelists say large proportion of unemployed youth is a factor in the Arab Spring, for future unrest**

U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic **Norman L. Eisen** opened the working breakfast by stating we should pay attention to the social content of the Arab spring. Unemployment among the youth in the Middle East remains a critical issue and has a potential to bring about further dramatic changes. "*Nothing is more dangerous for the government than to ignore the wellbeing of their citizens*," he said.

In this regard, **Jasim Husain**, former Member of the Bahraini Parliament, mentioned the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, where the problem of unemployment is especially a problem among people under 20, who represent more than 40 percent of the local population.

Revolutions in general are always started by the frustration of middle class society, according to **Shlomo Avineri**, Professor of Political Science. He said it was the first time the authoritarian regimes in the region had to face massive public demonstrations. However, that has not happened in the Arabic monarchies, since they have certain legitimacy: *“To demonstrate against a king is to demonstrate against a prophet,”* the former Mossad director said.

Fellow of the Center for Social and Economic Research **Marek Dabrowski** put forward that the Arab countries have the highest trade barriers and suffer from a lot of bureaucracy. That’s why entrepreneurs close to the government have an advantage.

## World in Transition: A Business for Business?

Monday, September 16, 2013, 13.30–15.00, Era World

In cooperation with the UN Information Centre Prague and the Czech Business Council for Sustainable Development

**Moderator:** Erik Best

**Panel Discussion:** Jan Mühlfeit, Jan Rafaj, Jonathan Wootliff, Miroslav Zámečník

### Talks focused on possible cooperation with civil society to boost CSR, and the cost of it

While corporate social responsibility (CSR) is often flaunted as a concept that all upstanding firms should respect, what real role do companies have in being on the forefront of social, environmental, and political change? That was the topic tackled by managers at two prominent worldwide companies and a former Greenpeace director, who now heads a business body seeking to boost sustainable development by firms.

Companies must be guided by three principles: people, planet, and profit – otherwise, they will not survive, said former Greenpeace director **Jonathan Wootliff**, now with the Czech Business Council for Sustainable

Development. “Governments come and go but companies have good management systems and look to the long term,” he said.

For Wootliff, it is critical for companies create links with civil society so both can work to address environmental and social issues. But he was not so optimistic that this could happen, especially in a strong Czech context of mutual distrust. “Many companies are reluctant to talk with NGOs. They feel they are poking sleeping dogs,” he said. Still, he said the Czech Republic could help cast off its reputation for corruption and become a CSR leader: The progressive social ideals of the legendary inter-war Czechoslovak company Baťa demonstrated Czech companies had been in the vanguard and could be again.

The current threat of mine and steel closures making nearly 10,000 people jobless in the eastern Czech region of Moravia Silesia overshadowed much of the debate. **Miroslav Zámečník**, a board member at logger Lesy ČR, doubted Czech firms would team with the civic sector, citing cases of big mining and heavy energy using companies – and his own state-owned firm. “Natural forest would be big help [to prevent flooding] but would not be profitable,” he said. “Would you agree to pay for this positive externality? I am not sure.”

# Democracy, Human Rights and Religious Freedom in East Asia

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 13.00–14.30, Faculty of Arts, Charles University

In cooperation with the Faculty of Arts, Charles University

**Moderator:** Jan Urban

**Panel Discussion:** His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Tomáš Halík, Chen Guangcheng, Steven Gan

**Talk focused on the need for East-West and interfaith dialogue to cool religious tensions in the region**

Discussion was launched by **Tomáš Halík**, President of the Czech Christian Academy, as he set the framework: “Freedom of religion is key to other rights,” he said, stressing the need for dialogue between the East and the West. “If we believe in unity of mankind and equality of all people and races, we must seek the analogy between ideas in our culture and other cultures,” Halík stated.

**Steven Gan**, editor of Malaysiakini, said that there is not only *“the need for dialogue between the East and the West but also between religions.”* In this regard he used examples of religious tensions in India, Burma, Syria, and his country of Malaysia.

In the context of the biggest problems the world faces, **Chen Guangcheng**, a civil rights activist from China known as “the blind” lawyer, said, *“Personal hedonism taken by the power of rulers is very harmful ... to the whole humanity.”* According to **His Holiness the Dalai Lama**, *“We need a sense of global responsibility...We really need the promotion of secular ethics, which can be universal.”*

*“China is the last hard backbone where we need to promote democracy. It is not only on the shoulders of the Chinese but on the shoulders of all human beings,”* said Chen Guangcheng. Concerning the future of China, the Dalai Lama predicted that its transition to democracy is just *“a question of time”* as the trend in the world is in favour of democratic values.

transcript

# Speech by Chen Guangcheng to the Roundtable: Democracy, Human Rights and Religious Freedom in East Asia

September 17, 2013, Faculty of Arts, Charles University

**Chen Guangcheng**, Lawyer, Civil Rights Activist, China

**Chen Guangcheng:** I am very glad to have this opportunity to discuss the issue of human rights in China with you all.

In the previous speeches of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the problem of being self-centered was often mentioned. In fact, this is the source of all evil. If a person is self-centered, the potential harm is not so great; but once a group of people form a political party under this ideology, it can harm the country rather seriously. If the party gets political power under this concept and establishes a system just for its own self-interest, it may threaten not only a country but the entire human civilization.

Actually, the Chinese Communist Party authorities have clearly described the concept "Must Adhere to Our Leadership" into the Preamble of the Constitution of People's Republic of China. I think that is the best example of being self-centered. Under the guidance of this concept, all people who do not accept the idea will be regarded as heretics, attacked and controlled. This is why the Cultural Revolution occurred.

This is not a simple black-and-white issue, a special exclusivity. With the development of the Internet and

the increasing of information exchange, Chinese citizens are rapidly awakening, faster and faster. In this situation, particularly with the occurrence of Arab Spring, the authorities are panicked about losing power; therefore, the pressure on the people is increasing day by day.

In recent years, under the Stabilization System, a large number of petitioners – religious believers such as Falun Gong, Christians, as well as human rights activists and lawyers – were arrested, put into the jail, or have even gone missing, all over China. The number of group events with more than 100 people participating was about 60,000 in 2006; now the number has risen to more than 200,000 in a year.

At the beginning, the measures to preserve stability were taken only in the big cities; now the party is asking to do so in villages. Every government official is required to carry out these measures in the assigned village. Therefore, now the budget used to maintain the stability of the autocratic system has reached more than 700 billion RMB, much higher than for defense spending. There is no other country using more money to fight against its own people than defense spending, but in China that is the reality.

In this case, it is not hard to discover that there is a big difference between the government system in China and those in other countries. We consider the government as a representative of state power; however, in China the government is just a tool of party members, and there is a party member controlling each level of government.

Although the pressure from the government has constantly grown, the awareness of civic rights is rising as well. This is a historical trend; no matter how much pressure the authorities apply, we can see more and more people daring to fight for their rights and take action to defend their interests in the society.

In recent months, especially since Xi Jinping took office, everyone had great expectations of a new era. However, Mr. Xi has issued a warning against seven ideas that are considered “anathema.” In school, people are not allowed to discuss universal values, media freedom, civil rights, civil society, the Party’s historic mistakes, capitalism, judicial independence, etc. In addition, "Document No.9" issued recently also contains with similar ideas.

Except for controlling all traditional media through the publicity department, the authorities in recent years have also expanded control over the Internet. On September 9, both the Supreme People’s Procuratorate and the Supreme People’s Court made a judicial interpretation: if you publish some information on the Internet that has been either clicked on more than 5,000 times or reposted more than 500 times, it can be regarded as an offense. From this we can see the authorities’ fear of the Internet and the awakening of civic consciousness.

When it comes to social communication, we will keep self-centered people isolated. Similarly, I think that everyone of us should be vigilant against such a regime, as we can see how great the risks it poses to the free world are. It not only has great influences on the military and economy of the world, more importantly it may destroy the human values, civilization and culture – which all of us should be aware of.

The government on the one hand emphasizes that international disputes should be solved via dialogue; on the other hand, however, it uses violence against the Chinese people.

In recent months, more than 100 people have been arrested by the government, according to some statistics. On the day I left for Prague, a businessman called Wang Gong-Quan was taken away by police; overall, already a huge number of people are being arrested, such as Guo Fei-Xiong. Most are taken into



custody due to the public comments they made; some are charged with a public order offense merely because they have demanded that officials disclose their private property.

Desire for freedom is part of human nature, and democracy is a protective system. Why the authorities label “Democracy” as “Western” is nothing more than an excuse to create a xenophobic mentality. In fact, democracy is one of the best systems and belongs to all mankind; it just had been implemented first in the West.

The authorities also use some differences among the systems to discredit democracy, and continuously make such pronouncements. In my opinion, democracy is very simple, but we should not expect it to be able to solve all social problems. Compared with centralization, democracy is like garlic; autocracy is like a bulb of garlic, and democracy is a peel of its skin, making it divided into several cloves. Each clove of garlic can be considered as an interest group, and with it the power of government becomes weaker. However, it does not mean that all social problems can be solved after this.

I think, even when the society becomes democratic and exercises a multiparty ruling system, the participation of citizens is still required to maintain good rules; otherwise, it may turn out to be a political struggle or dispute between the two parties. Two (or more) parties may partly or fully cooperate; sometimes they may be against each other. And it does not mean everything is finished when China becomes a democratic country. As a citizen, everyone should be fully involved, and then we can decide the way of tasting the garlic: smashed ones, flakes, etc.

In the end, I want to clarify one thing: what we oppose is not a particular party but the dictatorial system; what we want is a government which does what it is supposed to do, and exercises political power based on the public good. But if they only work for their own self-interests rather than interests of the people and the country, then we will have to overthrow the government.

When China becomes a democratic country, all mankind will be truly led toward democracy. This is the last “hard bone,” and I hope all of us can work on it together. It is not only one person’s duty, nor the Chinese people’s; instead, it is all human beings’ responsibility. Thank you for listening.

## The Role of Religion in Transitional Processes

Monday, September 16, 2013, 17.00–18.30, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

**Moderator:** Doris Donnelly

**Panel Discussion:** Michael Novak, Rudrangshu Mukherjee, Tomáš Halík, Anba Damian

**The talk centered on religion as a force in democratic movements, and not always for good**

**Doris Donnelly**, Director, The Cardinal Suenens Center, moderated the panel that featured four people representing different faiths. The question that all panelists debated was whether religion played a positive or a negative role in transitioning societies.

**Tomáš Halík**, a philosopher, sociologist and President of the Czech Christian Academy, gave the example of the Solidarity movement in Poland under Communism and the role of Pope John Paul II in combating authoritarian regimes, while Indian historian and journalist Rudrangshu Mukherjee spoke of how democracy in his country had been hindered, and was mixed with populism and religious-political agendas; he called religion a *“political aphrodisiac.”*

Another theme in the discussion was the link between democracy and religion. *“Religion is a dynamic force in the world,”* said U.S. theologian and political scientist **Michael Novak**, connecting this idea with the history of liberty and its roots or influences from Christian ideologies, adding, *“Religion cannot survive and prosper without reason.”*

**Bishop Anba Damian** of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Germany spoke of Muslim and Christian communities coming together to protest against the religiously intolerant leaders. His current wish is to *“look for life in peace and not in pieces.”*

# Building Democracy in Transitional Countries: Assistance of the Czech Republic

Monday, September 16, 2013, 11.00–12.30, Era World

In cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

**Moderator:** Pavel Fischer

**Panel Discussion:** Šimon Pánek, Susanna Hla Hla Soe, Helena Štohanzlová, Christopher Walker

**Talk notes others can learn much from mistakes during the Czech transition to democracy**

When Communism collapsed in CEE, democracy seemed the inevitable model for transitioning societies, but *“there are people who find the China model attractive and we cannot dismiss it,”* said **Christopher**

**Walker**, executive director of the International Forum for Democratic Studies at the NED, speaking of China's Communist Party rule allowing for free market principles. He added that the EU and U.S. are now less inclined to help aid the transition to democracy due to the economic downturn. *"In the Middle East region, the demographic changes are so fundamental that change is coming. .... Sitting out is not the best answer. Many other players with money are not sitting it out,"* he said, citing Saudi Arabia as an example.

The Czech Republic wants to promote democracy, but support has weakened, said **Šimon Pánek**, Director of People In Need. Helping dissidents in places like Cuba and Belarus and in countries transitioning to democracy, like Burma, is part of the Czech NGO's core tasks. Others can learn from this country's mistakes, and can provide answers to problems like deciding what to do with the former secret police linked to an authoritarian regime, how to fund political parties, etc. (Libyans are here studying constitutional change, and some Cubans are guests of the NGO, preparing for the eventual end of the Castro regime.)

**Helena Štohanzlová**, who heads the Czech Foreign Affairs Ministry section promoting human rights and transition, said 90 percent of all its help is channeled through Czech NGOs, via calls for projects. As an aid recipient, Karen Women Empowerment Group NGO activist **Susanna Hla Hla Soe** said Václav Havel and Czech dissidents had been an inspiration, and that her NGO benefits from a partnership with People In Need and help from the Ministry.

## Burma's Transition: The Need for New Approaches by the International Community

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 13.00–14.30, European House

In cooperation with Zaostřeno and People in Need

**Moderator:** Šimon Pánek

**Panel Discussion:** Khon Ja, Susanna Hla Hla Soe, Robert Templer, Igor Blažević

**Talk focused on how to react and adapt policies to Burma's move from dictatorship toward democracy**

Burma is at a crucial crossroads with the military's concessions opening up prospects of a peaceful transition towards democracy. But as opposition leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi warned in her Forum 2000

opening speech, opportunities now being offered might disappear. A nationwide ceasefire is expected in October, but civil conflict continues in many areas and elements of the army appear to be disobeying ceasefire agreements.

*“Three years ago it [Burma’s transition to democracy] seemed a question of decades. Now something is changing; the process is complicated and the future is unsecure,”* said People in Need director **Šimon Pánek**. First, the international community should solidify the ceasefire, he said.

But outsiders are misguidedly helping political and economic elites consolidate their role for the future – and probably doing more harm than good, said **Igor Blažević**, who is working in-country for the Brno-based Burma Educational Initiative. *“We, as Western players, are supporting the strong side...rather than engaging the government to level the playing field,”* he said. *“We’re making a profound mistake politically.”*

Burmese activists say local politicians are disconnected from the suffering. Karen Women Empowerment Group director **Susanna Hla Hla Soe** said there are many human rights issues, partly due to land-grabbing, with peasants in affected areas often imprisoned for protesting the process. *“Our country [also] suffers from natural resources abuse [and deforestation], so help from environmental groups is a help,”* she said.

CEU Professor **Robert Templer** said Burma suffers from high levels of inequality, conflict over rich primary resources, a large number of jobless youths, and violence against the Muslim minority by Buddhists and against the Karen minority. Kachin Peace Network founder **Khon Ja** said civil conflict is worst in areas with rich natural resources, like Kachin state, which has many refugees and IDPs. The inclusion of civil society in the peace movement is just at the start, she said.

## Democracy Assistance in the External Relations of Visegrad Countries

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 8.00–9.30, Žofín Palace, Restaurant

In cooperation with the International Visegrad Fund

**Moderator:** Wojciech Przybylski

**Panel Discussion:** Jiří Schneider, Kinga Gönz, Vladimír Bartovic, Yevhen Hlibovytsky

**Panelists agree V4 has lessons for countries in transition, but disagree on role**

All speakers, each from the Visegrad Four countries (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary), agreed that their countries' transitional experiences are one of the main benefits they can pass on to countries in transition. **Jiří Schneider**, First Deputy Minister, Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stated: "*We have accumulated experience that is a specific one*" and there is a need to "*turn transition experience into advantage.*"

But Visegrad funding is not without its shortcomings, said **Yevhen Hlibovytsky**, Founder, pro.mova, Ukraine, said it was difficult to find partners with competences. Visegrad assistance is lacking a unique offer and it is "*of utmost importance to plan the aid.*" Eastern countries must overcome insecurity because "*one thing the insecurity does...it shuts your dreams for the future.*" But the Visegrad countries can help with the situation that comes after, but not with the insecurity itself, Mr. Hlibovytsky said.

In response, **Vladimír Bartovic**, Deputy Director, EUROPEUM, Former Director, Strategic Planning and Analysis Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Slovakia, spoke of "*the ability to cooperate with each other.*" However, he admitted funding still lags behind the standard of the ODA (Official Development Aid) and the window of opportunity for the Visegrad countries is to focus on "*more targeted and smaller sum of funding.*"

Panelists further talked about their mediating and advocating role in providing assistance. Mr. Hlibovytsky said the V4 had valuable experience in translating the language of Brussels, and not only in the linguistic sense.

## The Role of External Actors in Transforming Countries

Monday, September 16, 2013, 11.00–12.30, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

**Moderator:** Alexandr Vondra

**Panel Discussion:** Barbara Haig, Jerzy Pomianowski, Ken Wollack, Suat Kınıklıoğlu

**Talk centered on the represented organizations' work, efficiency of grants, resistance to external actors**

**Barbara Haig**, Deputy President for Policy and Strategy for the National Endowment for Democracy, and **Jerzy Pomianowski**, Executive Director of the European Endowment for Democracy, both spoke on

the roles of grant-making organizations. **Ken Wollack**, President, National Democratic Institute, discussed the importance of providing on-ground technical support.

All panelists, including **Suat Kınıkloğlu**, Executive Director of the Center for Strategic Communication think tank, agreed that while some indigenous groups seek assistance from abroad to help in the drive to achieve democracy, others, unfortunately, do so for personal gain.

There was also consensus among panelists that the environment of a specific country can be a major factor in the resistance to democratization, particularly in what was defined as an authoritarian reluctance. The panelists disagreed, however, on the efficiency of grant-making, which provides assistance from outside of the country, as opposed to the efficiency of actions from within.

*“Perhaps we were overly optimistic about the linearity of democracy,”* Mr. Wollack said. In response, Mr. Kınıkloğlu noted that differing values can create an environment of resistance to external actors. Organizations should explain this in a domestic context, as openness is necessary for achieving stable and successful transition to democracy. *“We are in for a long struggle on this globe for the values all of us uphold,”* he said.

## The Role of Human Rights in Czech Foreign Policy

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 13.00–14.30, Era World

In cooperation with DEMAS – Association for Democracy Assistance and Human Rights

**Moderator:** David Král

**Panel Discussion:** Pavel Bělobrádek, Jan Hamáček, Hynek Kmoníček, Ondřej Liška, Karel Schwarzenberg

**Talk focussed on the need for Czech foreign policy to be consistent in promoting human rights**

Moderator **David Král**, Director, EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy, and all the panelists agreed on the importance of human rights in Czech foreign policy, but differed as to how it functions, or should function. Universal values exist, but the interpretation usually differs, as KDU-ČSL party chairman **Pavel Bělobrádek** said, arguing we shouldn't export our system to different cultural environments.

**Jan Hamáček**, Deputy Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, argued that the human rights agenda should be more specified and connected to other fields of politics, and perhaps the EU could be persuaded to give the Czech Republic more support in that regard.

Human rights is among the policies defining the Czech Republic, said **Hynek Kmoníček**, career diplomat, and one of the country's brands. International business helps human rights, and gives us power to promote those rights, he said.

However, Green Party chairman **Ondřej Liška** said the country also is a major exporter of weapons. *"Let's not have illusions how effective the control by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is,"* he said.

Former Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs **Karel Schwarzenberg** said several times that it is necessary to be consistent in foreign policy, and to be strong even against a big country. As for exporters' complaints about the cost of promoting human rights, he said *"only unsuccessful companies... claim that if we had better foreign relations, we would succeed."*

# Transitions in the Post-Soviet Space: The Russia Factor

Monday, September 16, 2013, 9.15–10.45, Goethe-Institut

**Moderator:** Rostislav Valvoda

**Panel Discussion:** Irina Lagunina, Yevhen Hlibovytsky, Salome Asatiani, Natalia Churikova, Emin Milli

**Russia relies on intimidation instead of "soft" power, stunting ex-Soviet states' democratic gains, panelists said**

The role of the Russian Federation – characterized by **Rostislav Valvoda**, Head of East European Program, People in Need, as a "bully" – is seen as paradoxical in the transition to liberal democratic economies of the former Soviet Union, as deep historical roots bind many of these republics to their former "boss," which would not hesitate to use force. The region's future is far from clear and according to **Yevhen Hlibovytsky**, Founder of the pro.mova think tank in Ukraine, *"predicting it is not a good thing to do."*

To keep the former Soviet space in her grip, Russia has employed tactics ranging from an economic embargo against Ukraine (costing it some €13 billion) to outright intervention, as in the 2008 conflict with Georgia in South Ossetia. The Russian mind-set is far from “positive,” according to **Irina Lagunina**, Editor-in-Chief, Russian Service, RFE/RL, with the Eurasian Union (a proposed political and economic union of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and others) bound to fail, as it was not founded on genuine desire for an economic community, but rather as a method of retaliation to the “bitter” reality of Moscow’s waning power in the region.

Rather than a collective union for cooperation, Russia wants an “*area of freedom for itself*” to exert her former power, as can be seen from the Kremlin’s offer of division in the gas industry with 95 percent of the gas market going to Russia’s state-owned gas giant Gazprom and only 5 percent to be shared to Ukraine’s counterpart, Naftogaz, according to panelist **Natalia Churikova**, journalist, RFE/RL.

Russia’s attempts to exert greater political and economic influence demonstrate a sense of desperation arising from the harsh fact that her new post-Soviet generation would otherwise have to redefine their identity in the face of this unfolding reality. Nonetheless, the panel agreed that if Russia now relies more on “soft” power with shared cultural roots being her main leverage in the region, there might be a steadier progression and positive growth in the region.

## Azerbaijan: Forever Young... Democracy?

Monday, September 16, 2013, 17.00–18.30, Era Wold

In cooperation with People in Need

**Moderator:** Kenan Aliyev

**Panel Discussion:** Khadija Ismayilova, Emin Milli, Petr Mareš

### **Panelists say Azerbaijan is “authoritarian,” corrupt, and militaristic – major obstacles to transition**

*“The idea of Azerbaijan being a young democratic nation is not new, as it is a way of the government justifying its position and authoritarian actions,”* according to Azeri journalist **Khadija Ismayilova**. While the country promised Europe that it would promote and uphold democracy, liberty, and respect for human rights at the Prague Summit seven years ago, it has failed to honor all its promises and is now functioning largely as an oligarchy ruled by the president’s family, as agreed upon by all panelists present.

Azerbaijan was portrayed by all the panelists in a largely pessimistic fashion, with corruption and militarism (against Armenia) noted as the two obstacles the country faces in its path to obtaining a full and fledgling



democracy. In fact, **Emin Milli**, writer and dissident from Azerbaijan, turned the panel's title around to "*Azerbaijan: A Forever Young... Dictatorship?*" showing how certain he is of "change" that is to come to his country. He in fact states that he is "*so optimistic of Azerbaijan's future, because it will not come.*"

The panel experienced a surprise note from the floor when a member of the Azeri government claimed the panel was trying to attack the image of Azerbaijan and deter potential investors and tourists. Such a scenario illustrates the potential change that could take place in Azerbaijan with both the government and opposition coming together discussing ideas, a positive note that **Kenan Aliyev**, the moderator from RFE, Azerbaijan Service, tried to end on.

## China: Totalitarianism or Transformation?

Wednesday, September 18, 2013, 18.00–19.30, Antiquarian Bookshop Fiducia, Ostrava

In cooperation with Antiquarian Bookshop Fiducia

**Moderator:** Libor Magdoň

**Panel Discussion:** Martin Kříž, Zuzana Li, Yang Jianli

### **China is changing slowly from within, but trade trumps rights and freedoms, panel agrees**

Moderator **Libor Magdoň**, a Czech public radio program host, opened the panel by postulating that a common belief in the West is that, as the cradle of democracy, it should oversee and manage democratization processes all over the world. Many feel Chinese society and political culture cannot be driven to change from the outside. Should the West be involved in the country's democratization process at all?

*"We don't have to change China as a whole to make an impact; sometimes supporting individuals or individual communities in China is enough,"* Czech sinologist **Martin Kříž**, Senior Partner, China Consulting, said. *"Also countries such as the Czech Republic can be important role models for China's political and social transition,"* he hastened to add.

Since China opened its economy more to the world in the 1970s, hundreds of millions of its citizens have been lifted out of poverty. Although its human rights record, including basic freedoms, lags behind, sinologist and translator **Zuzana Li** cautioned that the Chinese striving for change is less dramatic than is often portrayed. *"For the common Chinese man, democracy and freedom of speech are abstract concepts.*

*His main concern is to materially provide for his family,” she said. Furthermore, the Chinese think some rights and freedoms must be sacrificed for economic development, Ms. Li said.*

Many democracies are reluctant to pressure China on human rights for fear of harming bilateral trade, but dissident **Yang Jianli** said this is a “*myth*” – an unfounded fear; the government’s legitimacy is in the export-driven economy’s prosperity they cannot afford to jeopardize trade relations. Mr. Yang said the biggest problem is there are *two* Chinas – a “China Inc.” of the business elite and another of normal people, whom the government neglects. This gap needs to close, he said, expressing hopes for “*having a Velvet Revolution in China one day.*”

## Civil Society in Middle Eastern Transitions

Monday, September 16, 2013, 15.15–16.45, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

**Moderator:** Irena Kalhousová

**Panel Discussion:** Nada Dhaif, Klára Bednářová, Ahmed Maher, Fatma Hawas

### Talk focused on different forms, roles civil society played in the Arab Spring and today

Civil society is a necessary base for democracy, panelists agreed, and only the effective participation of citizens leads to an open, democratic society, with good relations between the government and the people. However, as the Middle East is an unstable region with many authoritarian regimes that tend to repress discussion, civil society does not have as much of a voice as it should, they said.

**Irena Kalhousová**, Chief Analyst, Prague Security Studies Institute, had begun discussion by asking the panelists if revolutions are generating new leaders from the civil society sphere. **Fatma Hawas**, a lawyer and member of the National Council and representing the Libyan Women Forum, said, “*Civil society means freedom to talk, to produce their activities,*” but suggested that in Libya people do not want a leader from among the many civil society groups.

**Ahmed Maher**, an activist a blogger from Egypt who experienced Mubarak’s regime and the military coups, said, “*There are different types of civil society, even in every country it has a different role.*” In Egypt and other countries, people often hesitate to enter politics, he said, stressing that civil society is not just about NGOs or political parties – everyone has to participate.

**Dr. Nada Dhaif**, Chairman, Bahrain Rehabilitation and Anti-Violence Organization, talked about a lack of activists in the Middle East and warned international NGOs that they must be careful to choose the right local people to work with and for, as it is difficult to know who is telling the truth.

**Klára Bednářová** of the Czech NGO People in Need recounted her Libyan experience as a positive one, noting that the NGOs working there are much more specialized than in other countries.

## EaP Countries: Transition in Progress or Decay?

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 13.00–14.30, Goethe-Institut

In cooperation with Freedom House

**Moderator:** Petr Mareš

**Panel Discussion:** Vytis Jurkonis, Ludmila Vacková, Libor Rouček, Yevhen Hlibovytsky, Stanislav Shushkevich

### **Panelists assess progress in the six EaP countries, hopes for a successful Vilnius Summit**

The main theme in the discussion was the situations of the different countries in the Eastern Partnership (EaP), a European Union initiative launched in Prague in 2009 that aims to tighten the relationship between the EU and the Eastern partners by deepening their political cooperation and economic integration.

The EaP offers deeper integration with the EU structures to six states (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) by encouraging and supporting them in their political, institutional and economic reforms based on EU standards, facilitating trade, and increasing mobility between the EU and the partner states.

Czech Member of European Parliament **Libor Rouček** said Belarus had made no progress whatsoever, while Ukraine and Georgia were slowly reforming. As **Yevhen Hlibovytsky**, Founder, pro.mova, said, *“The death of the Orange Revolution was the birth of the Orange Revolution,”* i.e. that much remained to be done. He further advocated the creation of predictions to democracy, in the form of a market economy, saying, *“Democracy is a derivative of middle class.”* **Ludmila Vacková**, Program

Officer, Freedom House, lamented that the *“human rights situation is not good in any of them [the EaP countries].”*

The panelists agreed that in order for the EaP countries to be fully integrated, the EU has to offer better conditions than in Russia, which is trying to keep them in its sphere of influence. The discussion ended with the speakers expressing their hopes for a successful third Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius November 28–29, 2013.

## From Oppressors to Guardians? Role of the Security Apparatus in Countries Affected by the Arab Spring

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 17.00–18.30, Goethe-Institut

In cooperation with the Prague Security Studies Institute

**Moderator:** Jan Fingerland

**Panel Discussion:** Noman Benotman, Efraim Halevy

### **Panel agrees outside help is needed to reform “Arab Spring” countries’ security services**

The panel was opened by the Czech Radio analyst **Jan Fingerland**. Both delegates, one from Israel and the other from Libya, agreed the intelligence services have played a major role in the Middle East.

*“They are considered to be essential to prevent undesirable acts, to promote policies which cannot be done in public, to bring about better system,”* stated Former Director of Mossad, the Israeli service, **Efraim Halevy**.

Mr. Halevy briefly talked about the possible fate of a head of intelligence today in the region today: either he will become a head of state, spend time in jail, or end up beheaded. There are two essential things for all the regimes in the Middle East to survive in the given environment: security inside and stability in the region. *“The intelligence is the strongest arm of the government,”* he concluded.

President of Quilliam Foundation, **Noman Benotman**, described the situation after the Arab Spring. Stability could not come without help from the outside, he said, noting the importance of UN missions in bringing the know-how to the security and military sector.

The Arab Spring was very successful, he said, since it brought a democratic control to security institutions and decreased the use of direct force, which was being used against the opposition. Transition will take a lot of time, but *“now we have a chance to make a real change,”* said Mr. Benotman, former head of the Libyan militant organization known as the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group.

# International Development Aid in Context of Democracy Assistance

Monday, September 16, 2013, 13.30–15.00, European House

In cooperation with FoRS – Czech Forum for Development Cooperation

**Moderator:** Jiří Schneider

**Panel Discussion:** Zuzana Hlavičková, Yevhen Hlibovytsky, Šimon Pánek, Krzysztof Stanowski

**Talk focused on institutional and cultural impact of aid on the recipient transitional democracy**

*“We don’t believe in development without democracy,”* said Poland’s **Krzysztof Stanowski**, Executive Director of Solidarity Fund, setting the stage for discussion, which focused on the role of aid in transitional democracies – especially its institutional and cultural impact on the recipient country. Reflecting on Poland’s historic example on its inclusion of the population and local citizenry at large in its democratic transition, Mr. Stanowski said modern countries entering the process could learn from his country’s example.

Mr. Stanowski’s thought on democracy promotion and development assistance was shared by all panelists but contrasted by Ukraine’s **Yevhen Hlibovytsky**, Founder of pro.mova movement, who said that aid has not always led to a positive outcome, especially in the former Soviet Union, unless the cultural sides and impacts are also factored in during the preparation, adding *“corruption is a tax on efficiency.”*

Both **Šimon Pánek**, Head of People in Need and **Zuzana Hlavičková**, Director of Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stressed the need for rigorous studies before any aid is given. This was in response to a point raised by the floor regarding Burma (Myanmar), where the flooding of aid had a negative impact on the country i.e. internal displacement, political corruption and ethnic conflicts. Mr. Stanowski, quoting Aung San Suu Kyi, said *“Why are you so concentrated on progress, without paying attention to our constitution?”*

# “Slovak Path”: Lessons for Democrats (and Autocrats)

Wednesday, September 18, 2013, 15.00–17.00, Hotel Devín, Bratislava

In cooperation with the Institute for Public Affairs and the International Visegrad Fund

**Moderator:** Miroslav Kollár

**Panel Discussion:** Martin Bútora, Marián Leško, Tom Nicholson, Viktor Nižňanský, Mykola Riabchuk, Vladimír Vaňo

## Associated conference event examines Slovakia’s transition, likely future democratic development

**Martin Bútora**, member of the Program Council of the Forum 2000 Foundation, listed six points he said had shaped the Slovak transition to democracy and its complicated path through the government of Vladimír Mečiar: memory of the political history in Slovakia, character of the parties, character of the modernization, economy during the communist era, delayed development of the civil society and multi-ethnic composition of the society.

**Miroslav Kollár**, an analyst from the Institute for Public Affairs in Slovakia, opened the discussion, questioning why this “Slovak path” was so long and complicated and why it is probably going to perplex again. **Marián Leško**, a Slovak journalist, emphasized the traditional polarization within the country. **Tom Nicholson**, a Slovakia-based investigative journalist, saw the reason for the complicated transition as stemming from nepotism in government, with various extended families and interest groups actually seeming to rule the country.

**Vladimír Vaňo**, Chief Analyst at Sberbank Europe AG, highlighted the importance of economic developments that tended to determine the political ones. **Viktor Nižňanský**, a Slovak economist, stressed the significance of the non-governmental sector and so-called “*critic mass of the people*” that drives reforms within the society. **Mykola Riabchuk**, a Ukrainian political and cultural analyst, said Slovakia was expected to be the first Central European country to successfully reform and it was rather surprising that the process lasted longer than in the others.

Mr. Bútora lamented that “*today the political and social doctrines of those with authoritarian tendencies seem to be working better.*” Vladimír Vaňo stressed the influence and impact of unemployment, saying

Slovakia should offer a stable corporate environment in order to create new jobs. Mr. Nicholson suggested more emphasis be put on the NGOs so as to foster democracy and civil rights.

# Transition in a Multiethnic Society: A South African Experience

Monday, September 16, 2013, 8.00–8.50, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

In cooperation with the Embassy of South Africa

**Introduction:** Franki Verwey

**Remarks:** Frederik Willem de Klerk

**Moderator:** Tomáš Vrba

## **Ex-president F.W. de Klerk spoke of the need for true inclusion of minorities in society**

Former President of South Africa **Frederik Willem (F.W.) de Klerk**, who in 1993 shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Nelson Mandela for negotiating a peaceful end to the racist Apartheid system of white rule, shared some of his country's trials, tribulations, and successes in striving to achieve – and preserve – a just and “*unified, though diverse*,” multiethnic society.

There are 6,000 cultural communities in the world's 200 countries and the greatest threat is “*the growing threat of conflict within*” them and their governments’ “*inability to manage diversity*” when tensions erupt along religious, ethnic, racial, cultural or linguistic lines. He cited the cases of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, Mali and Nigeria, Chechnya and Dagestan, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines as examples.

“*The reality is that in our shrinking and increasingly interdependent world, the challenge is how minorities...can coexist with majorities in a spirit of harmony and mutual respect. This is what we, I think, achieved in South Africa*,” he said, cautioning that the process in his homeland was imperfect and incomplete. “*Transition never stops...and South Africa is diverting from those principles in many ways, sometimes blatantly, sometimes more subtly*,” he said, as people are still judged “*not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character*,” evoking Martin Luther King Jr.'s “I Have a Dream” speech.

South Africa's post-Apartheid Constitution has enshrined racial equality and respect for freedom of religion, but also the right to be educated in one's own language, which Mr. de Klerk said is a crucial part of respecting “*cultural liberty*,” as defined by the UNDP a decade ago. In response to a question from the

audience about Europe's disenfranchised and marginalized minority Roma population, he stressed that minorities "should have their special concerns listened to in a caring way."

# Travails of the Current Transitions in the Middle East

Monday, September 16, 2013, 13.30–15.00, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

**Moderator:** Karel Kovanda

**Panel Discussion:** Munib Masri, Efraim Halevy, Nada Dhaif, Suat Kınıklıoğlu, Hynek Kmoníček

## Talk of the Israeli-Palestinian issue dominates, panelists discuss different outcomes of the "Arab Spring"

Hundreds of thousands took to the streets during the "Arab Spring" of 2011, with calls for greater freedom, prosperity, and dignity. Two dictators fell within weeks while a third fought and hung on to the bitter end. Today, Tunisia and Libya are still in crisis, Egypt has seen widespread violence with the ouster of its president in a military coup, and Syria remains a slaughterhouse.

Against this backdrop, most members of the panel, while agreeing that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is no longer the central issue in the region, spent the most time discussing it. **Hynek Kmoníček**, Director, Foreign Affairs Department, Office of the President, Czech Republic, said that this was a good thing, as the conflict has long been "hostage of the media attention."

The Arab Spring, less discussed in detail, was described as having "many colors in the spring that is now engulfing the Middle East," by **Efraim Halevy**, former director of the Mossad, Israel's national intelligence agency. Then, **Suat Kınıklıoğlu**, Executive Director of the Center for Strategic Communication think tank, focused on the differences between the situations in Syria and Egypt, attributing the failure in Syria to a lack of military support for the opposition.

As the discussion drew to a close, the question of what tomorrow will bring was raised. Mr. **Karel Kovanda**, Former Deputy Director-General, DG External Relations, European Commission, addressed this with a light-hearted quote by Yogi Berra: "Forecasting is difficult, especially when it concerns the future."



# Yugoslavia: How a Transition Can Go Terribly Wrong

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 15.00–16.30, Goethe-Institut

**Moderator:** Karel Kovanda

**Panel Discussion:** Filip Tesař, Jan Urban, Nedim Dervisbegovic, Vesna Batistić Kos

## Talk turns from Yugoslavia's breakup to aim of EU membership, the way forward for Kosovo

The panel covered the root causes of the breakup of Yugoslavia – internal divisions along ethnic, political, cultural, linguistic, and religious lines – and the current situation, with the new independent countries trying to gain closer ties to the EU. All agreed that with a Communist elite and the artificial foundation of the Federation of Yugoslavia, it was bound disintegrate.

*"We are still discussing the root causes after 20 years, but the not the successes,"* noted **Vesna Batistić Kos**, Assistant Manager of the Foreign Affairs for Croatia, steering the panel towards a more contemporary outlook for the region. The problems of Bosnia's internal divisions were discussed by **Nedim Dervisbegovic**, RFE, Balkan Service, in addition to the fragile situation in Kosovo.

Key for democratic transition is to install checks and balances of power (executive, legislative and judicial), and for free elections held in this framework, panelists agreed, noting that Kosovo has a good concept but poor implementation and needs an independent judicial system unafraid to persecute the crimes made shortly after the war.

Transition and integration are slow, but still encouraging, said Czech journalist **Jan Urban**. *"Peace is more profitable than war,"* he said, noting recent cooperation between Bosnia, Serbia and Montenegro on policing. *"No one in the region wants to return to war."* The panel ended with cautious optimism as Ms. Batistić Kos suggested that, despite the *"region being considered a secure and safe environment, it will not be stable unless the countries are brought into the regional alliances ... until everybody is in the EU tent,"* like Slovenia and, most recently, Croatia.

# Business and Water: New Channels for Breaking the Impasse in the Middle East?

Monday, September 16, 2013, 11.00–12.30, Žofín Palace, Knights' Hall

In cooperation with The Coca-Cola Company

**Moderator:** Irena Kalhousová

**Panel Discussion:** Munib Masri, Efraim Halevy, Cem Duna

## **Talk focused on the need for peace treaties and civil society cooperation to address water scarcity**

More than one billion people lack food security and access to safe drinking water, and climate change and population growth are making things worse; this panel discussed possible non-political channels of communication in the Middle East to address these problems.

Moderator **Irena Kalhousová**, Chief Analysts at the Prague Security Studies Institute, noted that the panel consisted of speakers from different countries and backgrounds, who aim to cooperate on issues affecting the Middle East.

**Munib Masri**, chairman of the Munib R. Masri Development Foundation, talked about the Palestinian initiative called Breaking the Impasse: *"We would have enough water, if we had peace,"* he said. The discussion then turned to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict itself. He asked **Efraim Halevy**, former director of the Mossad, Israel's national intelligence agency, to help him bring peace to the region.

For his part, Mr. Halevy said the scarcity of water created the absolute necessity for peace agreements, saying, *"If we don't act together, we are facing chaos in the whole Middle East."* He added that there is a joint responsibility on both sides, and much is being done already.

Former Turkish diplomat **Cem Duna**, Chairman of AB Consultancy and Investment Services, added that the obstacle for his country lies in the fact that, while predominately Muslim, it is not an Arab country and is therefore not viewed as a part of the region by other countries.

# Challenges for Democracy in Latin America

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 8.00–9.30, Hotel InterContinental

**Moderator:** Carlos García Pérez

**Panel Discussion:** Yoani Sánchez, Leopoldo López, Hernán Alberro, Dagoberto Valdés Hernández

**The panel discussed and evaluated the state of democracy and its processes in Latin America**

**Leopoldo López**, the National Coordinator of Venezuelan opposition political party Voluntad Popular, opened the discussion by expressing his conviction that the apparent democratic constitutional order in his country was in fact a *“fiction”* with *“dead people casting ballots during elections,”* among other failings.

**Hernán Alberro**, Argentinian Programs Director of Centre for Opening and Development of Latin America, said the concept of political parties was under threat, an inevitable consequence of the populism throughout the region.

Cuban blogger and activist **Yoani Sánchez** described her country’s political system as consisting of an unelected and rather hereditary dynasty, with the educational system in the hands of the Communist party, which makes the diffusion of opinions impossible through the *“terror of the word.”* Still, she was optimistic for her country’s future: *“The civil society is finding its space and people are losing their fear,”* Ms. Sánchez said. *“Just the fact that we can all be here [in Prague] is already a victory.”*

Finally, **Dagoberto Valdés Hernández**, Founder and Editor of the Cuban magazine *Vitral*, said Latin America is the region most suitable for international regionalism. *“There is no region looking so much alike as Latin America,”* he said. *“We have everything for the integration of the 21<sup>st</sup> century; however, we have to grow as citizens, countries and democracies.”*

# The Perspectives of the Cross Straits Relations

Monday, September 16, 2013, 7.45–8.50, Goethe-Institut

In cooperation with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office

**Introduction:** Ivo Šilhavý

**Remarks:** Liu Chao-shiuan

**Moderator:** Daniel A. Mica

**Talks focused on how PRC-Taiwan relations are better thanks to greater trust, cultural ties; much unresolved**

Relations between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Taiwan have improved significantly since 2008, with channels of communication as well as commerce and cultural links firmly established; however, to move forward significantly, both countries must agree on solutions to unresolved issues, drawing on their common cultural and historical roots – these were the main points agreed on Monday during the Forum 2000 Conference working breakfast “The Perspectives of the Cross Straits Relations.”

**Ivo Šilhavý**, a member of the Forum 2000 Board of Directors, launched the discussion, moderated by former U.S. Congressman **Daniel A. Mica**, who served on the Foreign Affairs Committee. The main speaker **Liu Chao-shiuan**, Senior Advisor to the President of Taiwan, and a former prime minister, emphasized that, among other aspects, “*no unification, no independence and no use of force*” must be considered in the cross straits relations.

“*We have to trust people at both sides [to achieve] more mutual understanding,*” he said, adding that in the process of deepening mutual ties, “Civil society should take a lead.” Dr. Liu stressed that the common Confucian cultural heritage between mainland China and Taiwan acted as a basis for finding a new development model to tackle difficult issues facing them both, such as social injustice and overconcentration of wealth.

## Transforming Cities: Towards Smart Forms of Governance?

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 10.30–12.00, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

In cooperation with the Aspen Institute Prague

**Moderator:** Roger Scruton

**Panel Discussion:** Tomáš Hudeček, Eva Jiříčná, Pablo Otaola, Jiří Devát

**Talk focused on who should decide on what to build and where, and the importance of residents' input**

British philosopher and political scientist **Roger Scruton** began by asking why, exactly, is “transforming cities” an important topic at all? Cities are among the biggest human achievements and worthy of preservation and improvement, he said. In the U.S., cities are becoming large suburbs via urban sprawl, with not much life in the center – Europe must avoid this, he said.

Spanish urban planner **Pablo Otaola** concentrated on ways a city should be planned, built and governed, arguing a balance between the roles of politicians, technician, civil societies and citizens is key. As for governing big cities, the greatest role should be given to the districts and locals, he said, giving Bilbao as an example of a transformed modern city. “*Cities are not the problem but the solution,*” he said, quoting a Brazilian architect.

**Tomáš Hudeček**, Lord Mayor of Prague, enumerated the main problems the Czech capital faces – a tight budget, bureaucracy, transport, and safety issues. Audience members asked the mayor what steps would be taken towards homeless people, and on the Střelecký ostrov project, which was draining the city budget.

**Jiří Devát**, General Director, Cisco ČR, talked more about smart *communities* than smart *cities*, and stressed how important it is for city government to connect with citizens and hear their needs and suggestions to improve the cities they live in. Architect **Eva Jiříčná** talked about her experience with the rapid transformation of different cities in Europe and Latin America. She said it is of great importance that conservation and reconstruction take place before any destruction – tearing down of existing structures. Sometimes preservation can be better than innovation, she said.

The discussion had many diverse aspects, touching on who should decide on what to build and where, how technology can be used to improve the quality of life, and questions concerning city governance. As Mr. Scruton put it in conclusion, “*It left us with more questions than answers.*”

## Transnistria: From the Inside

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 17.00–18.30, European House

In cooperation with People in Need

**Moderator:** Ivana Skálová

**Panel Discussion:** Aliona Marchkova, Denis Matveev

### **Panelists give a bleak portrait of basic freedoms in the unrecognized Republic of Transnistria**

**Aliona Marchkova**, Director of the Centre for Legal and Information Support to NGOs, Tiraspol, Moldova began by outlining the current situation today in the Republic of Transnistria. Though it has a parliament, president, and constitution, the sliver of land between Ukraine and Moldova is not recognized as a legitimate country anywhere else in the world. This being said, Transnistria had that same president for 20 years following their break with the Soviet Union in 1990.

Russian media largely dominates Transnistria and many of the legal codes are remnants of the old Soviet system. The exchange of knowledge and international movement of citizens are not common, and the formal education system again mirrors that of the Soviet Union, where differing opinions were suppressed, Ms. Marchkova said.

**Denis Matveev**, CMI Martti Ahtisaari Centre, Finland, began by analyzing the work that his organization Crisis Management Initiative can do to help, including building bridges between civil society and the Transnistrian government. *“The European Union should make sure no additional struggles are added,”* he said.

To this, Ms. Marchkova responded by comparing the situation of NGOs such as hers in Transnistria to a *“burning bridge”*; they can’t go back because the government ignores NGOs that take foreign aid and they can’t go forward because the EU refuses to do anything else other than give moral support. This was an important conference for her, she said, because the international community generally disallows NGOs from Transnistria from participating in international forums to speak of their struggles.

## **Under (Press)ure**

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 17.00–18.30, Era World

In cooperation with the DOX Centre for Contemporary Art

**Moderator:** Daniela Retková

**Panel Discussion:** Erik Best, Nedim Dervisbegovic, Natalia Churikova, Jan Urban

**Talk focused on socioeconomic and political issues, EU relations with Ukraine and Bosnia**

Discussion started with **Natalia Churikova**, senior editor of the Ukrainian Service, RFE/RL, talking about the prospects of Ukraine joining the EU, obstacles in this process and the current situation in her country. *“If Ukraine does not join the EU, it will not become another Switzerland, it will become Belarus,”* she said, noting association with the EU alone will benefit Ukraine.

Czech journalist **Jan Urban** shared his experience with transition in the Czech Republic, comparing the problems at its initial stages to those in Ukraine today. He urged transformation in young democracies. *“Change is always bringing opportunity. It is time to take responsibility and do things,”* Mr. Urban said.

**Nedim Dervisbegovic**, a multimedia producer at the Balkan Service, RFE/RL, described the current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He talked about possible entrance to the EU and expressed his doubts stemming from the bad experiences from the past.

*“We heard too many promises from the West... perhaps we should go elsewhere and find out where we can gain support for us,”* he said, citing Turkish and Qatari model of relations with the West as a possible example for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The panel also touched on the loss of trust in the rule of law plaguing both long-established liberal democracies and newly emerged democracies, and the causes of the current deficit in public trust (institutional corruption, organized crime, social marginalization, etc.).

## Amazing Azerbaijan!

Wednesday, September 18, 2013, 20.00–22.00, Pod Lampou Theater, Pilsen

In cooperation with Pilsen – European Capital of Culture 2015 and One World International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival, People in Need, Pilsen

**Moderator:** Rostislav Valvoda

**Participant:** Khadija Ismayilova

## Azerbaijani investigative journalist says family of President Aliyev has its fingers in many pies

Journalist **Khadija Ismayilova** was on hand to answer questions about the film “Amazing Azerbaijan!” and the country itself. The first posed question was how President Ilham Aliyev’s family (especially his daughters) are perceived by most Azerbaijanis. *“For a long time, people believed that President Aliyev does not know about the wrongdoings in Azerbaijan,”* she answered. *“For this reason it was important to investigate.”*

Ms. Ismayilova said it is crucial in Azerbaijan that investigative journalists reveal the presidential family’s investment schemes, plans, and involvement in various construction, development, and financial entities. *“The president’s family owns 50 percent of the banking business in Azerbaijan,”* she said, and as *“no public tender procedures are followed during government investment projects in Azerbaijan,”* his extended family has easy access to investment opportunities.

She praised Karel Schwarzenberg, the former Czech Foreign Affairs Minister, for describing Azerbaijan as a *“dictatorship of one family”* but lamented that other EU leaders are reluctant to address human rights abuses and would rather pursue a diplomacy that does not harm trade relations (especially oil imports) with Azerbaijan.

Still, *“it is more important for Azerbaijan to export oil to Europe, than for Europe to import it,”* she said. Turning to the audience Ms. Ismayilova added, *“It is not your [the EU’s] problem, but it is sad to see Europe applaud that.”* She also mentioned that she would *“expect the Czech Republic and other countries which came through what we [Azerbaijan] came through, to have more respect to human rights and dignity.”*

Ms. Ismayilova also touched upon the harassment of investigative journalists in her country and secret police practices, such as putting videos of journalists in intimate moments, shot in secret, online or broadcasting them on television. She bid farewell saying, *“We [Azerbaijan] are losers. We lost the war, the road to market economy, the road to democracy. We lost every opportunity since we became independent. We lost everything, but we won Eurovision. It boosts our ego.”*

# Compassion and Respect in Today’s Society

Saturday, September 14, 2013, 13.30–15.30, Tipsport Arena



**Remarks:** His Holiness the Dalai Lama

### **Exiled Tibetan spiritual leader calls for communal/global cooperation, patience, “moral teaching”**

**His Holiness the Dalai Lama** was welcomed with a standing ovation by thousands who had come to hear him give a public talk. Greeting the audience as his “dear brothers and sisters,” the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader recalled being first invited to Prague by the late Czech president Václav Havel – whose legacy inspired the 17<sup>th</sup> Forum 2000 Conference theme: understanding of what’s necessary to move from authoritarianism to democracy, and the causes of the cessation or reversal of these processes.

He alluded to Czechoslovakia’s own struggle, under Havel’s leadership as a dissident, when telling the Cuban people (in response to a question from the audience), *“You must keep your spirit, hope, determination and in some cases, maybe a little more patience.”* But the Dalai Lama spoke mainly about looking beyond one’s own needs for the greater good of humanity, cautioning that a *“self-centered attitude is just the opposite of compassion,”* robs one of inner peace, and ultimately leads to divisions in society, violence against others and war between nations.

*“We are social animals – this nobody can deny – one nation.... And the individual’s survival depends on the others,”* the Dalai Lama said, and we must work together to tackle global warming and rising poverty across the globe. *“So now we must think of the entire humanity as one. We need a sense of oneness. Man ... needs a sense of community, a sense of belonging.”*

Recognized as a moral and religious authority throughout the world, the Tibetan spiritual leader also spoke of his desire for modern secular education to include *“moral teaching”* with respect for all religions as being equal. *“If the next generation goes through such an education, then I think there is more hope for a more compassionate society,”* the Dalai Lama said.

## Conference Opening

Monday, September 16, 2013, 9.00–9.25, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

**Keynote Speech:** His Holiness the Dalai Lama

**Moderator:** Jacques Rupnik

## **The exiled Tibetan spiritual leader spoke of his hope for the future and Václav Havel's "spirit"**

**His Holiness the Dalai Lama** spoke of his belief that a happier and more peaceful generation could come into being in the globalized society of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As a long-time friend of the late Czech President Václav Havel, a co-founder of the Forum 2000 Conference, it was fitting that Tibet's exiled spiritual leader would initiate the dialogues of this 17<sup>th</sup> annual Conference, the theme of which was inspired by Havel's legacy.

The panels and workshops under the "Societies in Transition" banner aim to foster an exchange of ideas for peaceful transitions. Recalling his visit earlier on Monday morning to Havel's old private office, the Dalai Lama said that the former dissident's spirit is "*still with us*" and spoke of his hope that he was carrying Havel's wishes and blessings to the Conference, the second held since Havel, a champion of human rights, died in December 2011.

Expressing hope for greater compassion in the world, His Holiness said that human beings are all mentally, emotionally, and physically the same – despite our secondary differences. The 20<sup>th</sup> century had been one of bloodshed, corruption, and competition, he lamented, calling upon the generations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to find a new path for change. To achieve this, one must see humanity as one and spread happiness through compassion, he said.

The Dalai Lama, a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, is also a member of the Forum 2000 International Advisory Board. Across all faiths, he has stood as a champion for human rights and respect for all faiths. Pointing to his heart, the Dalai Lama concluded his speech saying, "*Real change must come from the heart.*"

# Speech by His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the Conference Opening

September 16, 2013, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

**His Holiness the Dalai Lama**, Spiritual Leader, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Member of the Forum 2000 International Advisory Board, India/Tibet

**His Holiness the Dalai Lama:** Brothers and Sisters, indeed it is a great honor to participate once more in a meeting that President Havel personally started. I would like first to say I have just come from President Havel's office, where our last meeting took place. After he passed away, I went to his old home in Patna, to pay my respects, and also to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's official residence.

I remember one small Buddhist text that President Havel always kept there beside his bed and his Rolex watch was also there [chuckles]. I remember very clearly [laughs heartily] – I noticed that Rolex since '56 when we first met. Anyway, this time I expressed my desire, if possible, to visit the late President Havel's place. I found it very sad that such an honest, humble, truthful person is no longer with us – very sad.

One day I had an opportunity to visit his old office – quite untidy! I felt very moved. I put my head on his chair and I reflected on his spirit. I was always an admirer of him. As a person, a human body, he was no longer, but his spirit was still there. It is our responsibility to carry his wish, his dream, his vision and his spirit. Perhaps, from this chair, I may carry some of his blessings – out here [chuckles energetically].

Now [to Prague-born French academic Jacques Rupnik] you mentioned having a meeting – not a formal sort of thing but something free – to express and bring new ideas, new concepts, new visions. Here we are quite free [placing his hand on the arm of Mr. Rupnik and chuckling] – our nose can go everywhere [pointing to Mr. Rupnik's nose from close up].

I always say I am one of 7 billion human beings, nothing special. Naturally, all sentient beings, human beings, we live on this small planet. As human beings, you see, mentally, emotionally, physically – we are the same human being. The most important thing: everyone wants a happy life, to avoid suffering. Many problems that we are facing are actually our own creation, are they not?

If we keep basic human nature, affection, friendship and a clear sort of awareness of the oneness of humanity, then no problem! Solve our problems – we can manage that through a usual solution. These days, wherever I give a talk, I always stress we need a sense of the oneness of 7 billion human beings. That, I think, is very, very important. Firstly, we must look at the human level, and then the 7 billion are the same. There are different nationalities, different races, different faiths, different languages, different cultures – that is the secondary level. Without knowing a different language, we can still show our smile; we can show our generous and warm feelings. Even to animals – we cannot communicate with language, but we can show them our affection; they appreciate that.

Today's global reality – the East, West, North, South, every continent is heavily interdependent on economic and environmental issues, so the world really has become heavily interdependent. According to that new reality, the strong concept of "We and They" – on the level of secondary differences, there is too much emphasis on that. Once we develop a strong sort of concept of "Us and Them" that is the basis of violence; that is the basis of war. Eliminate your enemy, the other – that is the supposed victory of yourself. That is totally unrealistic, totally absurd, totally outdated.

My generation, belongs to the 20th Century, I think you too [gesturing to Mr. Rupnik]. Also these, gentle, dignified people, most of you, belong to the 20th Century and it is gone. Now, these young people, you truly belong to the 21st Century. My century, in spite of many hectic things and many achievements in the 20th Century, I think the century as a whole we can discount as the Century of Bloodshed, the Century of Violence. Different forms of violence – not only killing, but cheating poor people, weaker people, bullying weaker people, exploitation.

Also you see the immense corruption now in many different parts of the world. I do not know how much corruption there is in this country, your country [turns to Jacques Rupnik, who says: "A fair amount"]. So, in many cases, when I give a talk I ask the audience: the corruption – is it so-so or big? And often they respond [showing "big" with his arms] that way. Also we have the gap between rich and poor – small or big? In both cases, the gap between rich and poor is getting huge.

So these are all related to some kind of mental attitude, not believing firmly in a world of non-violence. These unhealthy or unhappy situations – we human beings deliberately create these things – it is a form of violence. The past century became that way; if you carry that old sort of way of thinking continuously, I think this killing, endless violence and corrupted society – this moral crisis will continue.

So now we have to think. This Century is not the 20th Century generation's responsibility. No, they say "bye-bye." Now these young people, the generation of the 21st Century, you must think in a wider way, holistic way, with a long vision. Emphasis on our common interests is the most important. Small interests on the basis of nationality or religious faith or some other, these are, I think, secondary.

Now the time comes when we must think, act, on the basis of a fundamental level. We are same human being. The 21st Century generation now has an opportunity to create a new world, a better century, a peaceful century. My generation now may not see that, but either in Heaven or Hell, we will watch you – whether you seriously take care of humanity or not. According to religion, if I am in Heaven then I can easily watch, and if I am in Hell, I think I can get a few days to visit to our world with the permission of the authority of Hell – "Sir, permission" – and will visit for few days and watch.

The past is past. We cannot change it. The future depends on the present and is a concept still possible to change. But real change must come from here [pointing to his heart]. In order to change our minds, firstly we must see humanity as a one. Then, it is important, how to achieve a happy humanity. Technology? Technology alone will not bring happy humanity! Money? It also will not bring happy humanity – more money, more greed, more anxiety, more jealousy. Is it not so?

Therefore, you see that real happy humanity is very much related with mental capacity, human value. That is compassion: a sense of concern about others' wellbeing. That sense of compassion or sense of concern for others' well-being is not necessarily a religious matter. Whether a believer or a non-believer, as long as we are human beings, we very much appreciate human affection. You could be a non-believer, even an anti-religious person – O.K. – but you should be a sensible, warm-hearted person. So they themselves then become better human beings, more sensible human beings, more compassionate human beings.

This 21st Century should be a Century of Peace. In order to develop peace – do not release a few pigeons. No! Or make a few nice sorts of statements. No! Through inner peace, a genuine lasting world peace can develop. Peace is very much related to our minds and our emotions. A more compassionate mind creates inner peace. Through inner peace all our verbal action, physical action – all become then non-violent action. In order to create a peaceful century, peaceful world, ultimately we must pay more attention how to develop a human sense of concern for others' wellbeing.

Our common experience – we, everybody, young and old, everybody – comes from our mothers. We have grown up with a mother's affection, a mother's care, and the father's also, as well. Sometimes quite aggressive fathers are also there. My own case: my mother was a very, very warm-hearted person; my father short-tempered. As a young boy, two, three, four years old – a few cases [slapping his own face] were something like that, from my father's blessing – like that [slapping his own face again, chuckling]. I think I cannot just blame my father, I think I myself was too much naughty at that time.

We all, you see, have grown up with mother's affection, parents' affection. I really believe that those gentlemen who received maximum affection at a young age, I think that deep inside they are much happier. Those that at an early age lacked a mother's affection somewhere deep inside have some kind of sense of

fear, distrust. So that is all common experience, common sense. The magical scientist and also brain specialists, those great scientists, through their own experiments, now they convincingly are telling us that warm-heartedness here brings a healthy mind, healthy emotion.

A healthy mind is immensely important for a healthy body – healthy mind, healthy body, they have a very close link. So now, why not, in the field of education, have hygiene of emotion! I think it should be included. Through education, secular education, some sort of education about warm-heartedness. Not talking about God, Heaven, Buddha, but simply this very life, in order to build a happy world.

We need a sense of wonderful humanity, and we really need respect for others' lives, others' rights. These are related to human compassion, human affection. In the long run, please pay more attention, young people; think more how to build this century into a more happy and peaceful century. Ultimately, it is related to warm-heartedness or human compassion.

This century should be the Century of Compassion – through education, not through prayer. I am Buddhist and my daily practice is at least five hours of meditation, prayer. But in terms of the wellbeing of humanity, I think prayer has not much effect. Prayer for the individual is very effective, but for the society, for the world, I think action is more important than prayer. Do you agree? Wherever I have the opportunity to talk with the public, I am talking about these things. I felt that you are concerned about the world and how to overcome these sorts of conflicts, these sorts of differences. That, I think, is the key point. Thank You!

## Speech by Caroline Stoessinger to the Gala Dinner: A Tribute to Olda Černý

September 16, 2013, Rudolfinum

**Caroline Stoessinger**, Author, President, The Mozart Academy, Professor,  
The City University of NY, USA

**Caroline Stoessinger:** Oldřich Černý was my friend – my close friend and confidant for 22 years and three months. His expansive life was a testament to the humanism and power of boundless friendship. Olda and I first met by phone in late 1989 after Václav Havel had appointed him liaison to me for Havel's first state visit to America. "You must come to Prague for a meeting with the president," he said. "Can you bring fax paper? We have a machine at the Castle, but no paper." Olda met my flight and ushered me into a large, black limousine. "I commandeered this car from the former Communist President and Party Chief, Gustáv Husák," he said with his quixotic smile.

During a visit to Prague in the spring of 1990, I asked Olda if I could visit the Czech countryside. Always gracious, he offered to make the arrangements. Later the same day, he phoned my hotel to let me know that a taxi driver, Mr. Balcar, would pick me up at 7.30 the following morning to drive to Lidice for a stop on our way to Marienbad, where we would spend the night. On the return to Prague the driver would make a detour so that I might visit the composer Antonín Dvořák's country home. As the day progressed, I began to

question the sanity of such an excursion. I was about to cross an unfamiliar landscape of a country where I could not speak the language with a man I had never met. My thoughts turned to my only child waiting for me in New York City. By then it was late evening; I phoned Mr. Černý. "Is this safe, I mean to go off alone with this man Balcar?" Černý's voice turned stern. "Safe! You ask, is it safe? Vladimír Balcar is my friend."

Such was Olda's lifelong, unwavering character. Brilliantly educated and as politically astute as he was sensitive, Olda was modest, good humored and unselfish. Never once did I hear Olda say "I cannot. I am too tired. It is impossible." Turning his talent for listening and observing minute clues into high art, Olda was the Director of President Havel's International Security Service. He was the top spy armed for cloak and dagger work only with his unique gift for friendship. His legions of disparate and trusted friends could be found throughout the world. Olda walked equally with presidents, princes and the common man.

As a child I dreamed of becoming an actress. But not even Steven Spielberg could have offered a role to me as rewarding as the bit part Olda gave me to play in Havel's presidency of a free democratic Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic. Olda was the man who made things happen. He was always there in the background directing and producing every scene, including freeing the Czech Embassy staff in Yemen and the Czech Ambassador who was held hostage when the Embassy was captured by Al Qaeda.

From Olda's youth to the heady days in Prague Castle, he was incorruptible. The Communist functionaries tried several times to draft him for their secretive missions, but no amount of harassment, money or privileges could tempt Olda Černý. Until the fall of communism in 1989, he chose to eke out a living writing children's books and dubbing American and British films into Czech. From the vantage point of this elegant dinner, it is nearly impossible to imagine the reality of life for Olda during the communist era. In 1972, when I first visited Soviet-controlled Prague, palpable fear permeated the bleak, gray atmosphere. The shops were empty. The Castle's gardens and courtyards deserted. The jewel box Tyl's Theater, where Mozart premiered Don Giovanni and conducted The Marriage of Figaro, was locked and hidden behind rusty scaffolding. No one could be seen walking on the Charles Bridge; the microphones in my room in the Alcorn Hotel were visible. Returning to Vienna by train, the endless wait on the Czech side of the border is seared into my memory. Armed soldiers searched the compartments one by one as others walked across the top of the train. I watched helplessly as several terrified individuals were dragged off the train into the unknown. All was surreal.

In November 1989 Olda Černý drove alone after dark to Václav Havel's mountain cottage to alert his friend to the realization of the impossible dream. The revolution had begun. In New York a group of colleagues tearfully watched the protest of the Czech Actors Union on television in the living room of my apartment. Holding hands, hundreds sang the Czech anthem as they snaked single file slowly through the snow covered streets. Believing it was futile, someone said, "Those poor young people will all be arrested, jailed or worse." Instead, the Czechs rapidly ended 40 years of totalitarian rule. "Ours was dubbed a Velvet Revolution," Olda explained, "as no one was killed, no shots were fired and no one was even imprisoned."

Waiting for President Havel to arrive for our first meeting I was fascinated to watch men wearing house painter's white coveralls scurrying up and down the immense corridors on children's scooters. Laughing, Olda said those men were Ministers of State. I mentioned to Olda, "You Czechs must be replaying the early days of the American Revolution." Olda said, "Yes, but do not worry, bureaucrats are very patient people. They will be back and all too soon."

During Havel's first United States trip as president to address Congress and attend a New York tribute at

the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine, Olda was in charge of the live television broadcast to Prague. He had invited five state ministers to stay in my apartment during their two-day New York visit. Each had arrived equipped with fifteen one-dollar bills in the pockets of their jean jackets and happily slept on a sofa or the floor.

The cathedral was filled to capacity with 10,000 guests for the New York Salute to President Havel. Celebrities included Paul Newman, Maximilian Schell, Placido Domingo, Susan Sarandon, Paul Simon, James Taylor, Elie Wiesel, Arthur Miller, Henry Kissinger and Saul Bellow. Three orchestras conducted by Zubin Mehta and Lukas Foss entertained the new President for three hours. Norman Mailer, William Styron, Sigourney Weaver and members of the Actor's Studio were seated in the audience. Carly Simon and Harry Belafonte were discovered in the standing room section.

Not all of Olda's activities were directly related to his official intelligence work. He seemed to be standing ready to help whenever and wherever he was needed. In the summer of 1996 Olda even helped in a most unlikely situation to save the life of Gregory Peck. At 80 years of age, Peck, who had been presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Karlovy Vary Film Festival, was diagnosed with acute appendicitis by Czech doctors and needed an emergency operation in the small spa town of Carlsbad [Karlovy Vary]. Olda not only woke a surgeon on his vacation but he persuaded him to rush to the hospital where Peck was on the table. In his role as translator Olda was scrubbed and waiting for Dr. Kuban in the operating arena with Peck's frightened wife, Veronique. She insisted on a consultation with their doctor in Los Angeles before proceeding. Olda dialed the California doctor on his cell phone and explained the urgency. "Dr. Kuban says the appendix is about to burst. We cannot wait. He must operate now if you want to see him alive!" The American doctor asked, "Do you have real doctors in that place?" Ignoring the insult Olda calmly replied, "Yes, we have highly trained doctors and Dr. Kuban is one of the best." Gregory Peck returned twice more to Prague to thank Olda and the doctor.

Václav Havel and Olda's relationship was symbiotic. I remember once Havel, looking through his original correspondence, put a page in front of Olda. "I think you wrote this?" the president questioned. "No," Olda corrected him, "that is your writing." Glancing at another page Havel inquired, "Did I write this?" Olda explained, "That, I scribbled." And both enjoyed a hearty laugh. In appreciation Havel gave Olda one of his treasured possessions, a signed photograph of President Tomáš Masaryk with his son, Jan Masaryk. The framed memento hung on the wall of Olda's office opposite his desk. And Havel invited Olda to appear as an extra in "Leaving," the only film directed by Havel.

Although Olda had surgery for lung cancer followed by chemotherapy in the spring of 2011, he was concerned for Havel's life rather his own condition. Toward the end of the same year, Olda urged the Dalai Lama to fly to Prague to see his friend, Václav, before he died. The Dalai Lama heeded Olda's advice. The date was set for their meeting, December 10, 2011. Always thinking ahead, Olda prepared to fly His Holiness to Havel's mountain retreat by helicopter in the event Havel was unable to endure the drive to Prague. Grateful to His Holiness, Havel rallied briefly and made what would be his final trip to his Prague office. For an hour he sat close to the Dalai Lama, who continually massaged Havel's hand. "I need you to stay with us for at least another 10 years, my friend," he said on leaving. Outside the building the Dalai Lama told Olda, "I do not think he will be with us this time next week." Two days later Olda called to report that the Dalai Lama's visit had helped and briefly Havel seemed like himself again. When the nurse brought Havel a second helping of asparagus, he said, "Sister, you cannot turn me into a Tibetan overnight."

Even though Olda was devastated by Havel's death from lung cancer on December 18th, he spent most of his energy working for the future of their shared dreams. During what would become his last visit to my

home in New York, Olda was full of plans and ideas for the upcoming Forum 2000 Conference. Not once did he complain or hint of the gravity of his illness, nor of his pending death. He roamed the streets of New York as always; he even made an excursion to a shopping mall in New Jersey to find presents for his grandchildren.

After returning to Prague Olda continued to work and plan for Forum 2000 as if all were normal. He took fishing trips with Foreign Minister Karel Schwarzenberg and weeklong vacations with his two young grandchildren. Olda was never too busy or too rushed to experience a holiday or a friend's birthday. Always thinking of others, his last telephone conversations with me were immense gifts of concerned friendship.

Olda reminded us to remember Havel's observation. "The salvation of this human world lies nowhere else than in the human heart and in human responsibility." All in this room, all who were touched by Olda owe an immense debt of gratitude to him. Literally irreplaceable, he has left our world a far lonelier and more impoverished place. Oldřich Černý can best be described as a noble soul; the kind of man Thomas Jefferson called an "aristocrat of the spirit."

## Meet the Press with His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Tuesday, September 17, 2013, 9.15–10.00, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

**Remarks:** His Holiness the Dalai Lama

**Moderator:** Tomáš Vrba

**The exiled Tibetan spiritual leader calls for end to religious violence in Burma, sees hope in China**

**His Holiness the Dalai Lama** held an informal press conference on Tuesday, fielding questions from reporters on religion, philosophy, politics and racism. He asked journalists to report the truth as the people have the right to know and to work for transparency and accountability in government. Praising democracy as the best form of government, he reminded leaders that "*the people are the real rulers of the country and not just a particular person or a few parties.*"

The Dalai Lama, who fled his homeland for India in 1959 after a failed uprising against Chinese rule, also said there was "*too much emphasis on 'we' and 'they'*" in the world, and that "*this century should be a century of dialogue, not wars.*" The exiled Tibetan spiritual leader said he remained cautiously optimistic that more dialogue with the new Chinese government would be a possibility while praising the current Chinese Premier for his "*courage against corruption.*"



He had met privately on the margins of the conference with Burmese opposition leader and pro-democracy campaigner **Aung San Suu Kyi**, a fellow Nobel Peace Prize laureate, and urged Burmese monks to act according to their Buddhist principles.

In a plea to end the deadly violence against the country's Muslim minority, the Dalai Lama said, *"Those Burmese monks, please, when they develop some kind of anger towards Muslim brothers and sisters, please, remember the Buddhist faith."* He was alluding to sectarian clashes in the western state of Rakhine last year that left around 200 people dead, mostly Rohingya Muslims who are denied citizenship, and 140,000 others homeless.

His Holiness asked everyone to leave behind *"the syndrome of old-thinking"* that contributes to injustices and racism. To promote religious harmony, he said, *"We must respect all religions...Harmony is entirely based on mutual respect."* The session ended with him shaking hands with the reporters in the audience.

## Opening Ceremony

Sunday, September 15, 2013, 19.00–22.00, Prague Crossroads

**Remarks:** Jakub Klepal, Ivan M. Havel

**Keynote Speech:** Aung San Suu Kyi

**Moderator:** Jan Urban

**Burmese opposition leader and pro-democracy campaigner pays tribute and gives thanks to Václav Havel**

**Daw Aung San Suu Kyi**, Chair of the main opposition NLD in Burma, began her first visit to the Czech Republic with a tribute to late president **Václav Havel** – a guiding light during her own struggle against an authoritarian regime, whose writings and support were inspiration during her long detention.

*"I read [his books] avidly to find out how I too could survive the years of struggle as he survived. I understood the ultimate freedom was to Live in Truth,"* she said, referring to Havel's core message. *"[Havel was] a great man and true friend of the movement for democracy in Burma ... When I was under house arrest I knew that here was a man speaking for me. He made me feel free."*

Suu Kyi helped found the NLD in September 1988, entering politics to work for democratization in Burma. Refusing an offer of freedom from the military junta if she emigrated, she was put under house arrest in July 1989. Now 68, she spent nearly 15 of the following 21 years, until November 2010, restricted to her home.

Forum 2000 Executive Director **Jakub Klepal** noted earlier that she had been invited, symbolically, to the Conference every year since its 1996 founding. Havel nominated her for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, which he declined to be considered for. Suu Kyi won the prize, while under house arrest; for her non-violent struggle under a military dictatorship.

Had Havel “*not nominated me, he would have been the Nobel Peace prize winner [that year],*” Suu Kyi said.

Scientist **Dr. Ivan M. Havel**, younger sibling of the late president, said, “*This is the second time this meeting is being held in the absence of its leading spirit, my great brother, Václav Havel. ... He would be delighted that Forum 2000 is still going strong.*”

transcript

# Speech by Aung San Suu Kyi to the Opening Ceremony

September 15, 2013, Prague Crossroads

**Aung San Suu Kyi**, Political Leader, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Member of the Forum 2000 International Advisory Board, Burma

**Aung San Suu Kyi:** Thank you. It is indeed a signal honor to be able to speak some words of appreciation about the late President Václav Havel, a great man and a true friend of the movement for democracy in Burma. He kept the flame of hope alive for us during our most difficult times, and we will never forget him.

So much has been said about him and written about him that there is very little, I feel, that I can contribute towards his memory, but yet I would like to make an effort because what he did for Burma and for human rights and for democracy, all over the world, is so vast that I think there will never be a time when we can stop talking about it.

Of course, all of you know that it is thanks to him that I was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and I have never made a secret of the fact that if instead of nominating me he had accepted the nomination for himself, he would have been the Nobel Peace [Prize] Winner of 1991. I will always believe that because I think that was the truth – and he believed in truth, facing the truth.

I have tried to look at different aspects of his life and of his work for human rights and for democracy and

wondered how I would like him to be remembered in my country and in other countries where democracy and human rights are valued. I see him primarily as a man who loved freedom. That is so important for us – freedom – and when I say that he loved freedom, what I mean is that love entails cherishing, and cherishing entails enhancing. He loved freedom, he cherished freedom, and he enhanced freedom because he lived his ideas and his beliefs as few other people have lived.

When I was under house arrest for many years in Burma I knew that somewhere in the world there was a man who was speaking out for me and because of whom my freedom remained intact, in spite of physical detention. He made me feel free, because he was free and he believed in the right of every human being to freedom.

When I say that he cherished freedom I mean that he knew the value of freedom. He knew how to value freedom. He did nothing that would take away from the value of freedom. Many people have committed crimes in the name of freedom; this was not the kind of thing that Václav Havel ever did. Whatever he did enhanced the value of freedom, made us understand what freedom truly was.

The ultimate freedom was that of “living in truth,” the kind of freedom that can never be taken away from any of us. Because he believed in freedom, he believed in living in truth. If you cannot live in truth, if you cannot live as you believe you should live, you are not a free person, even if you are not physically detained in any way, even if you think you can do anything you like. But as long as you do not have courage to face the truth and live the truth, you cannot truly be a free person. And that is what he taught me, and I am sure he taught this to others as well: that to be completely free you have to be true to yourself and to your beliefs.

We in Burma have started out on the process of transition, which is why it is so appropriate that I should be able to come here today and thank the man who made it possible for us to keep alive our belief in our ability to effect transition from military dictatorship to democracy. We have not effected this transition yet. We are still in the process of trying. And if he were alive today and here with us, I am sure he would say to me – to all of you – it is not going to be easy but you persevere and you will get there. And this exactly what I believe. It is not going to be easy and we have just started out.

I have repeatedly spoken out against over-optimism because that could make us complacent. It could cause us to lose the way. It could cause us to stumble. We have to forge ahead with our eyes open, recognizing the difficulties that lie in our path and facing the truth as President Václav Havel would have wished us to do. I do not think he would have approved of blind optimism. He would have wished us to face our problems fairly and squarely and to cultivate the courage and the capacity to overcome these problems and meet our challenges successfully.

When I was under house arrest in Burma, I used to think of Czechoslovakia, as it was then, as a faraway friend on whom we could always rely in times of need. I knew that some of our dissidents were given sanctuary in your country, and I knew that all the time your leader was speaking out for us, for me, for our country, for democracy, for human rights. When I received his books – I was allowed to receive books from time to time – I read them avidly to try to find out how I too could survive the years of struggle as he survived, and that is when I understood that the ultimate freedom was to be able to live in truth. And that is what we are still trying to do in my country.

We want to live in truth. We want to live as we believe we should live as human beings, in harmony with one another, with courage, with hope and with the desire to share whatever goods may come our way with others – not just others in my country but with others all around the world. And now that I am here in

Prague, I would like to share with you our deep gratitude to President Václav Havel and all those people in your country who have stood by us and who, I know, are still standing by us in this time of immense challenge.

This is the most challenging time we have ever had to face. It was not those times when we were under house arrest. It was not those times when the prisons were full of our people struggling for democracy. But now is the most difficult, the most challenging time for us, because the opportunities that are available to us now may never come back again for a long, long time, if we do not make the best of what has been offered. To make the right choice, at the right time, that is the most important thing in times of transition.

As, I am not quite sure whether I say Professor Havel or Doctor Havel or Doctor Brother Havel, but as – should I say Professor Havel? – Professor Havel said, you are still in the process of transition and you started out in 1989. We started out just a couple of years ago, so we certainly have a long way yet to go. But with your help, by which I mean your awareness of our need and of the challenges that we will have to face, I think we will not be too far behind you in the future. I do not mean to say that you are too slow [laughs], but that we are going to proceed as quickly as possible. That is an absolute necessity.

Our country is rich in natural resources, but our people are poor. We want our people to be rich in hope. I want them to be rich in ability; I want them to be rich in generosity, rich in their love for freedom, as Václav Havel was rich. And I would like to appeal to all of you to help us to achieve this richness of spirit at this time when it is so easy for people to be led astray by [apparent] progress when there is not in fact genuine progress. So we need to be very down to earth; we need to be very practical. While always full of hope and always full of inspiration that was given to us by people like President Václav Havel, we want to be also extremely pragmatic and extremely hardworking.

I have always said that there is no hope without endeavor. There is much hope and there has to be much endeavor, and I hope that in this endeavor you will join us and stay with us as President Havel would have wished. And that together there will become a time when we can all say: We have made the transition – for which he must have longed – we have made the transition to true freedom, freedom of the spirit as well as the freedom that comes from removing fear and want from our societies. When that day come, I hope that I will be able to invite all of you to my country, to Burma, to celebrate the life of President Václav Havel and the generosity of the people of the Czech Republic. Thank You.