

# Media and Democracy

16<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum 2000 Conference

October 21–23, 2012, Prague

October 24, 2012, Ostrava, Pilsen, Bratislava

CONFERENCE REPORT



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2012



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*“Václav Havel, Yohei Sasakawa and Elie Wiesel founded Forum 2000 for a purpose: to move the world closer to a time when we can all exercise freedom and live without fear.”*

**Madeleine Albright**, Former U.S. Secretary of State



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The Vltava River just outside the main conference venue, Žofín Palace

## Editors' Note

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Changes in the transcripts were made in order to enhance readability. These included eliminating interjections, correcting misused phrases, and adapting spoken language to written language. We can assure that the original intent of the delegates was maintained and thus the edits were for the sole purpose of clarity. Any remaining errors are our own.

We hope that you will find this report as interesting as we did and would greatly appreciate any feedback via e-mail to [secretariat@forum2000.cz](mailto:secretariat@forum2000.cz).

Benjamin Cunningham, Zuzana Blahutová

*Original video recordings of all the transcribed presentations, as well as many others, can be found on the [Forum 2000 website](#).*



*“President Havel, you showed us that our task is not to look for clever, but superficial methods. It is not to deal with a disease merely by treating the symptoms. Rather, you said we must each think deeply about ourselves.”*

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**Yohei Sasakawa**, Chairman, The Nippon Foundation

# Introductory Messages

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Dear Friends,

This is the sixteenth year that we have held Forum 2000. However, this year is the first time that we are coming together without President Václav Havel: our steadfast leader in our quest to deepen what he referred to as our spiritual experience.

Throughout the past fifteen years, he taught us something very important. That is, in order to solve our global problems at their most basic level, it is not enough to simply implement new mechanisms, new regulations or new institutions. Each one of us must first turn our gaze again to our own fundamental spirit. Our own moral base. Our own conscience. Then, after deep reflection, we must make the necessary changes to these most central parts of ourselves. Only then should we begin to search for external solutions.

Over the past decade and a half, President Havel was our teacher. He was our exemplar. He guided us as we took up such vital issues as our sense of responsibility, faith and trust. He pushed us to delve into the complex issues surrounding spiritual, moral and cultural values.

It is meaningful that he did this here, in Prague. Prague lies at the center of Europe. It is a crossroads of thoughts and ideas. This city has experienced, more than many, the turbulent extremes of our age. Prague has witnessed humankind's worst lies and our deepest truths. It has seen our gravest threats and has come to embody some of our brightest hopes. It is the most suitable place imaginable for us to come together every year to further pursue these thoughts and ideas with the rigor that President Havel asked of us. And when we send our new ideas out into the world from Prague, they are not only filled with hope. They inspire hope.

The legacy of President Havel –his moral and intellectual leadership –is alive here today, watching over us and inspiring us all to personally take responsibility as we walk day by day toward the world we want to live in. Let us strive to live up to his example this year again and make our debate even more active, thought-provoking and world-changing than ever.



**Yohei Sasakawa**  
Chairman,  
The Nippon Foundation

*“When [Václav Havel] established Forum 2000, it was on the principle that it would be good if informed and concerned people, from different continents, different cultures, from different religious circles, but also from different disciplines of human knowledge could come together to talk calmly with each other. This, it seems to me, is the most appropriate way to promote democracy in non-democratic countries and to support respect for human rights and religious, culture and ethnic tolerance in young democracies. I have assured the Forum 2000 Foundation that I shall be very happy to do whatever I can to contribute to its work and keep alive the spirit of freedom that Václav Havel made such efforts to promote.”*

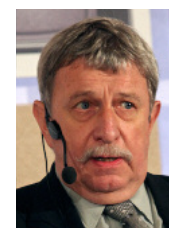
**His Holiness the Dalai Lama**, December 27, 2011

Dear Friends,

After Václav Havel passed away in December 2011, this message and others expressing similar support have helped us enormously in the decision to continue in the project that Václav Havel, Yohei Sasakawa and Elie Wiesel jointly started. The Forum 2000 Conference in 2012 focused on two main themes –first, on Václav Havel’s Legacy, and second, on Media and Democracy, a topic Václav Havel had suggested. In short, the conference is about Václav Havel.

But we do not want to mourn or start building a memorial. We intend to honor his work by carrying it forward. We are absolutely committed to it. With the determination of our amazing team, the Board of Directors, and ample circle of advisors and supporters, Václav Havel’s Forum 2000 will continue creating a unique space for open debates about freedom, human rights and democratic values.

We hope that you will enjoy the conference report, learn something new, and follow us again next year.



**Tomaš Vrba**  
Chairman of the  
Board of Directors,  
Forum 2000  
Foundation



**Jakub Klepal**  
Executive  
Director,  
Forum 2000  
Foundation





The public lines up to register on the conference's opening morning, Žofín Palace

## Forum 2000 Declaration

### Our Commitment to Furthering the Legacy of Václav Havel

Fresh from travelling around the globe as the new President of Czechoslovakia, Václav Havel came to realize that, although civilization had always faced challenges, those it faced today appeared more complex, more interconnected and more in flux than at any time in the past. He saw that such challenges could not be effectively met by a single individual, group, country, or region, nor could they be dealt with from the perspective of a single ideology, religion, or branch of knowledge. Instead, the search for solutions would require, he believed, a continuous, open-minded dialogue on a broad range of topics involving a wide variety of participants.

Václav Havel searched for a way to make this happen. That is why he, along with Elie Wiesel and Yohei Sasakawa, established Forum 2000 in 1997 providing it with their sponsorship, their ideas, and practical means to operate. Over the past decade and a half, Forum 2000 has made a unique contribution to facilitating a wide-ranging global dialogue on many different issues set in the symbolic environment of Prague.

The past year has been marked by two painful losses: the passing away of Václav Havel, and the death of Oldřich Černý, who from the beginning was Forum 2000's Executive Director and moving spirit. Their legacy, however, remains and the time has come to restate clearly where Forum 2000 stands and where it is heading. This year's conference, focusing on Media and Democracy, in itself a fundamentally Havelian topic, offers a perfect opportunity for such reflection.

## Our Inspiration

Forum 2000's founders have left us the indelible legacy of their ideas and approaches, whether it be Václav Havel's insistence that *"telling lies can never save us from further lies,"* or Elie Wiesel's profound observation that *"indifference is the epitome of evil,"* or Yohei Sasakawa's devotion to alleviating disease and human suffering. These are the principles that will continue to guide us as we move forward.

Since 1997, our discussions have also been shaped by the growing number of Forum 2000 participants, prominent personalities from all walks of life, who cherish the experience and often return to participate again, providing us with valuable feedback and inspiration for our further activities.

And the inspiring genius loci of Forum 2000's primary location: For centuries, Prague has been a crossroads of history. It represents a symbiosis of different cultures, in particular the Czech, German and Jewish cultures, until their relative harmony was destroyed by nationalist clashes and the horrors of Nazism. In both 1938 and 1948, Czechoslovakia paid dearly for the politics of appeasement and yielding to intimidation. Communism, which established a totalitarian state in post-war Czechoslovakia, managed to survive attempts at reform by crushing the Prague Spring in 1968 and went on to last a total of forty years. Democracy has not come easily to this region, and it has had to be struggled for throughout a troublesome transformation. The quest continues.

## Our Values

We believe that injustice and tyranny must be confronted with courage and perseverance. The very least we can do is to remember and remind. The late Cuban dissident Oswaldo Payá, as well as Burma's Aung San Suu Kyi, were regularly invited to Forum 2000 conferences, even though it was certain their authoritarian rulers would not allow them to attend. Forum 2000 also repeatedly drew attention to the plight of freedom-loving people in Belarus, Russia and Tibet. Václav Havel was the first head of state to invite His Holiness the Dalai Lama for an official visit, and support to Tibetans has been maintained via Forum 2000 till the present. Through Forum 2000's Shared Concern Initiative, Václav Havel began a successful campaign to award the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize to Liu Xiaobo, jailed in China for his human rights activities, and urged his and his wife's release

from prison. As symbolic as these actions were, we believe they bolster the power of these powerless and confirm the legitimacy of their uncompromising stances. The struggles of human rights activists are an acute reminder of the need to stand up for democracy and human rights, freedom and liberty, and the principles of citizenship, civility and responsibility, wherever they are under threat.

We believe that vibrant and engaged civil societies form the bedrock on which respect for human rights, functioning democracy, social justice and sustainable economic prosperity are based. These civil societies are equally vital for posing the key questions of public life, and often help find practical solutions.

We believe in genuine and open dialogue. Rather than pretend we have ready-made answers to the problems we face, Forum 2000 seeks to create a space for frank and profound reflection about the values that underlie human behavior and for exploring how they can be applied to real-world situations. It seeks to be a place where commonly accepted orthodoxies can be questioned with audacity, and directly.

We believe that real partnership can exist among those who speak openly and tell the truth. Such a relationship requires tolerance between nations, ethnic groups, cultures, religions and individuals at a basic human level. It requires a willingness to listen and, on occasion, an agreement to disagree. It is only by attempting to place oneself in the shoes of another that entrenched differences can be overcome and solutions to great challenges envisaged.

## Our Methods

Our flagship annual conferences gather dozens of participants of many different ethnic, cultural, religious and professional backgrounds, including prominent politicians, senior academics, religious leaders, but also little-known dissidents and young activists. The discussions are open to the public in Prague, and to a global audience via online broadcasting and the publication of contributions and outcomes. In addition, Forum 2000 conducts specific dialogues in other smaller-scale formats. We envisage bringing the dialogue to other locations in the world.

The Shared Concern Initiative is a vehicle for facilitating the joint expression of an opinion shared among groups of distinguished leaders and personalities. Wherever our shared values come under attack, the Shared Concern Initiative can give a voice to that concern,

one that can be heard around the world through a number of media outlets. Developments in Venezuela, Tibet and Ukraine are recent additions to the issues the Initiative has addressed since its establishment in 2005.

Forum 2000 provides intangible yet direct support to the evolution of civil society in the Czech Republic and Central Europe. The annual NGO Market in Prague helps civil society actors intensify their cooperation, find partners more easily and operate freely and effectively. Finally, an indispensable part of Forum 2000's mission is outreach to young people through a variety of educational activities.





Forum Hall filled to capacity as the conference is underway, Žofín Palace



## Five Big Ideas at the Forum 2000 Conference

The ideas represent some of the key focal points around which discussion took place at the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum 2000 Conference. They by no means encompass all the thinking and debate of the event, but were concepts that recurred again and again, often at discussions that may have had little else to do with one another. In this way, they shed light on the topics and ideas that emerged organically among the varied thinkers taking part.

### Václav Havel's Values

As this was the first Forum 2000 Conference without co-founder Václav Havel, it was fitting that discussions revolved around the late president's legacy. While truly a historically transformative figure, it is Havel's adherence to core values that may be his single biggest contribution to humanity.

Many of these values –respect for human rights, desire for a strong and engaged civil society, free and fair elections and principled stands against authoritarianism –seem almost self-evident. And yet, while most of the politically-engaged throughout the world pay lip service to these ideas, actions do not always follow. Havel lived his ideals, whether by going to prison in totalitarian Czechoslovakia, campaigning for Aung San Suu Kyi to win the Nobel Prize or building NGOs, think tanks and the like to strengthen the democratic foundation of the Czech Republic. As Aung San Suu Kyi said in a video message addressing the conference: *"Democracy is a system that enables us best to protect our human rights and that is why I believe very simply in the sanctity of human rights and democracy and in the friendship of people like Václav Havel, who stood up for human rights and democracy."*

Too often such values are sacrificed for political expediency or in deference to economic concerns. The examples are innumerable and know no geographic bounds. One need only to think of U.S. President Barack Obama's decision to avoid a meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama to placate Chinese concerns or, in Havel's native country, a 2012 speech that saw the prime minister indicate that supporting the jailed Russian punk group, Pussy Riot, was an extravagance that could harm Czech trade. Havel would likely have recognized such things as not only lacking in compassion and courage, but short-term in mindset and counterproductive. A willingness to compromise on similar principles would have been convenient for Havel during much of the 1970s and 1980s and he would have spent less time in communist prisons. Instead, his stubborn adherence to core beliefs provided a moral compass for his own country as the bankruptcy of authoritarianism became apparent and transition to democracy began.

Havel was, as Former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans surmised, a *"brave, passionate and powerful leader."* As was clear from multiple Forum 2000 discussions, his leadership lives on in uncompromising, humane values. The official declaration which closed the conference reaffirmed the signatories' commitment to such ideas and Forum 2000's role in promoting them in the years ahead.

As His Holiness the Dalai Lama said in a video message: *"We must carry his spirit and his wishes must be fulfilled by those people who still remain."*

### Illiberal Democracy

What might Egypt, Hungary, Gaza, Ukraine and parts of Southeast Asia have in common? If one was to sit in on any number of panels at the Forum 2000 Conference they would have heard the term *"illiberal democracy"* associated with these places. The features of this term –often attributed to the author Fareed Zakaria –point to a society that has free and fair elections, but sees voters electing parties or politicians that do not adhere to other key ideas associated with democracy as it has traditionally evolved in the West: free speech, assembly, religion and property rights.

Hungarian human rights activist Miklós Haraszti used the term to describe his country, where he said that though the government was legitimately elected, everything depends on the *"capricious, whimsical, supreme will"* of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. Others have applied the term to the situation in Gaza, where elections saw the radical

group Hamas come to power. Clearly, governance in Hungary and Gaza differs greatly, but the similarity for those advocating the illiberal democracy argument would be that democratically elected governments use their democratic mandate to implement policies out of step with liberal principles.

Ukrainian political analyst Mykola Riabchuk used a similar term to describe the government in his native country, calling it a *“hybrid regime.”* He argued that it is a democracy without the rule of law, where democratic procedures are imitated but corrupted at each stage of implementation. Venezuelan Human Rights Lawyer Tamara Sujú, while acknowledging the semi-democratic character of a recent election victory by incumbent Hugo Chávez, pointed to the indirect methods used to influence media coverage that ultimately proved decisive in the vote. In other words, elections in both countries, while resembling what occurs in liberal democracies, are used as a means of implementing illiberal policies.

There was hardly consensus on which countries would fall into an illiberal democracy category, but the term itself was pervasive. Hungarian journalist András Stumpf took issue with criticism of his country’s democratic credentials, noting that the term democracy does not mean a perfect society and that if it did, one could not name a single true democracy in the world. Whether Hungary is a true democracy or not, it seems clear that real democracy as most understand it requires much more than just the holding of elections.

### Media Models In Flux

Media generally, and the distribution of news specifically, are undergoing tremendous transformation not only in form, but also in content and quality. It seemed clear to most at the Forum 2000 Conference that media plays an indispensable role both in pushing authoritarian societies towards democracy and in safeguarding political and social freedoms in more-established democracies. However, there were few answers as to how this will continue under current business models as much of the public has grown accustomed to consuming news for free –thus making the laborious work of researching, fact-gathering and investigating essential to the press’ watchdog role prohibitively costly. The challenges are obvious, the solutions less so.

As The Economist’s Vendeline von Bredow indicated, the media industry is undergoing *“absolutely tectonic changes.”* This creates a high degree of uncertainty among those working in the profession. Czech

journalist Jan Macháček compared today’s print newspapers to pay-phone booths in the 1990s, arguing they likely only have a decade of relevance left in their current form. But he had little in way of suggestion for the way forward. It seems that suggestions or guesses are all that anybody has at the moment with tremendous amounts of experimentation underway.

David Brauchli of Piano Media outlined his company’s experience organizing regional online news sites behind paywalls in Slovakia and elsewhere. *“Paywalls are a reaction to giving away free news. You are asking people to pay for something they think is valuable. If you convince all of the media in a market to go behind a paywall, then the readers have no choice,”* he said.

Still, there are doubts that such a model can be applied to media in larger markets and media executives seem equally divided over what to do next. European Broadcasting Union Director General, Ingrid Deltenre, pointed to the success of tech companies like Google as distributors of information as a possible model, while also arguing that publicly financed media needs to be protected.

Media and the business models needed to support it are changing. What is not is that citizens need to be informed about the workings of government to make educated decisions at the voting booth. It is seemingly less a question of if media and entrepreneurs will adapt, but how they will do so.

### Media as a Distraction in Existing Democracies

While an underdeveloped media may be among the biggest problems in authoritarian societies, a hyper-developed and profit-driven media is among the major challenges for citizens in more-established democracies. Choice over which media to consume is greater than ever before and it is left to consumers to separate out important information from noise. This seems a constant battle as there is the potential that citizens increasingly disengage from politics by opting for entertainment over actionable information.

Ivo Mathé, a former director of Czech Television, noted that the sheer volume of information available today makes it almost impossible to *“distinguish between facts and fiction.”* Indeed there seems to be a trend toward the idea that there is not one truth, but multiple narratives to every story. In some cases this may be true, but such thinking has also provided channels for harmful conspiracy theorists and others to perpetuate their ideas. Social media may compound this

problem as people tend to consume information recommended to them by their existing circle of acquaintances. There is a risk that an echo chamber of misinformation results.

Journalist Ellen Hume noted: *"It is [the media's] job to say what they want to say, but it is your job to educate yourself by using media properly."* But there remains a question about whether most citizens are educated enough on how to consume media. Some speakers advocated teaching young people about media in the same way they learn math, science or foreign languages.

Amid the uncertainty about future business models for media, additional concerns arise, as was noted by Filipina journalist Marites Vitug, who pointed to the phenomenon of low cost *"churnalism"* or *"assembly-line"* news that is now pervasive on the Internet. News website business models are based on attracting traffic and thus there is an incentive to emphasize *"the popular stuff at the expense of boring but important news,"* she said. This risks further distracting consumers from information essential to democratic decision making.

Much as a lack of information can be a problem for an informed citizenry, too much information coupled with the inability to separate essential items from the more mundane presents a significant challenge. The latter problem seems to prevail in countries largely considered to be established democracies, but overcoming this potential problem appears essential in making sure these places remain fair, functioning and pluralist political systems.

### Social Networks and Surveillance

Much excitement followed the Arab Spring of 2011, with optimists pointing to the potential of new technologies to bypass traditional communication channels and avoid censorship that is a common characteristic of authoritarian regimes. But more recent times have seen this initial optimism rolled back and it is clear that Internet technologies and political freedom, while perhaps related, are not the same thing. Technological shortfalls in some parts of the world –including Egypt, Russia and Sub-Saharan Africa –greatly limit the impact of Internet-based media. Perhaps the most serious challenge, however, is the surveillance potential that Internet technology offers to authoritarian regimes.

As information and data can be distributed more efficiently than ever before, information can also be collected much more easily, and in some cases used for undemocratic purposes. *"Applications like Face-*

*book and Twitter were not designed for activists, and it would be foolish to think they can be used like that safely,"* warned Jaroslav Valûch, of the Czech NGO People In Need.

Indeed it is becoming clear that authoritarian regimes are adapting to technology at least as fast as those who hope to bring them down. *"Those seeking to dominate others will move quickly to define what is true according to their own ambitions,"* said former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. Meanwhile, Belarusian dissident Franak Viachorka described social media in Belarus as *"a battlefield,"* with a fight underway to assemble as many followers for the anti-regime cause as possible, even as the government seeks to infiltrate communication channels. Common authoritarian tactics include blocking access to specific web sites, planting pro-government propaganda within blogs or comment streams and outsourcing the policing of the Internet to others in ways similar to how the East German Stasi operated in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In cases like this *"surveillance equals censorship,"* said Dan Meredith, director of the Internet Freedom Program at Radio Free Asia.

Even amid such concerns, all hope is not lost, according to Chinese blogger Michael Anti. While social media may not be the miracle cure for developing democracy in authoritarian environments, it still offers opportunities. As Anti said: *"Censorship is about [computer] server control. Where the server stands really matters."* He went on to note that because Chinese government censorship and surveillance is centralized and the country is so large, it is fairly easy to freely criticize local governments. While this may help to liberalize people's minds, in and of itself it will not make China a democracy, he said.

New media and social networks are changing the way people living in authoritarian societies can challenge government narratives, but also give those repressive governments the ability to target dissidents. The battle between those two forces is hardly complete.



American folk singer Joan Baez and former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans

## Selected Transcripts

### Conference Opening and Václav Havel: The Powerful Powerless

October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants:

**Gareth Evans, Karel Schwarzenberg, Yoani Sánchez** (video message), **Ko Ko Gyi, Alyaksandar Milinkevich, Roger Scruton, His Holiness the Dalai Lama** (video message)





**Gareth Evans:** Ladies and gentlemen, let me introduce myself, first of all, as the moderator of this panel. My name is Gareth Evans, I was Foreign Minister of Australia for a number of years, then was President of the Brussels-based International Crisis Group and am now Chancellor of the Australian National University. But I have been coming to Forum 2000, fairly regularly, for the entire time since its creation in 1997 and it is in that context, I guess, that I have been asked to be moderator this morning.

This session is about Václav Havel's legacy, what he meant for the world when he was alive and what his spirit will continue to mean, if we can sustain it, for human rights and democracy in the world in the future. While we will necessarily spend some time this morning looking backwards at the extent of his achievements during his lifetime, not least in the three countries that are represented on the panel this morning –Cuba, Belarus and Burma –but I hope we can also spend a little bit of time looking forward, focusing, in particular, on how this Forum can be a continuing force for decency in the world. I, like everybody else following events from near and far in Central and Eastern Europe during the last years of the Cold War was, of course, aware of Václav Havel's existence –as a playwright, as one of the founders of Charter 77, author of the extraordinarily moving "Letters to Olga" from prison and the writer in 1978 of that classic essay which is the title of this session, "The Powerful Powerless." The basic argument of that essay, as most of you here will know better than me, is 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, the willingness by them to break the rule of silence, can have an extraordinary impact in cracking open the fragile facades of these regimes and ultimately bringing them down. But knowing, as I did, of the work of Václav Havel in the abstract was one thing, seeing for myself the moral impact, the moral authority, the ideas at work on the ground, was something else again and I did have the extraordinary privilege of experiencing just that when in December 1989, when the Velvet Revolution was at its height, I visited, here in Prague, those who were leading the Revolution.

I did not meet Václav himself then because he had briefly gone out of town and in fact I did not get to know him personally until the first Forum 2000, in 1997, but I did meet all his key colleagues in the leadership of the movement and I met them in the headquarters of the just established Civic Forum, in the basement of the shop,

some of you will remember, just around the corner from Wenceslas Square, where those massive people-power demonstrations which captivated the world, which changed the course of history, were going on. I remember sitting down with Ivan Havel, who addressed us last night, with Dáša Havlová, his wife, also there last night, and with Tomáš Vrba, now the President of this Foundation, with three or four others, including Father Václav Malý and Petr Pithart are having a long and intense discussion with them about the political future of this country.

That meeting, at that time, in that place, with so much going on around us, was one of the most memorable of my life. What an outstanding group of people these were and are, the Havel "powerless" –brave, passionate and inspirational leaders who, because they believed in the power of the powerless, had, for the most part, been forced for years into doing jobs way below their intellectual and professional capacity constantly risking, constantly experiencing long prison terms, refusing to collaborate with the regime, refusing to emigrate, accepting the consequences of their actions. Then in December 1989, of course, those actions bore spectacularly successful fruit with the peaceful emergence of a completely new government and the election, by a unanimous vote of the Federal Assembly, of Václav Havel as President of the Republic. And what an extraordinary president Václav Havel was. Bringing, for a start, a wonderful injection of laid-back counter-culture into the high office of state, blasting out around Prague Castle not only the dulcet tones of Joan Baez, which we heard tonight, but Lou Reed, Frank Zappa gleefully careening around its corridors on a kid's scooter –something I cannot quite imagine this being done by any of the communist *apparatchiks* that preceded him –or by Václav Klaus. Of course, what the world remembers most about the 14 years of Václav Havel's presidency was the enduring moral seriousness and moral commitment he brought to the role. Above all, in his support for those trying to bring human rights and democracy to authoritarian regimes.

*"President Havel is no longer physically with us. So, we should feel more sense of responsibility, as he is physically no longer with us. So his wish, his spirit we must carry and his wish must be fulfilled by those people who still remain."*

---

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

We remember him for many things. We remember him for the way in which he blasted former President Pinochet for his bloody coup against Allende when he came to Prague to negotiate an arms deal in 1994. Remember him for the way in which he refused to put political and economic advantage of relations with China ahead of his own deep personal attachment to the Dalai Lama and the cause of human rights in Tibet or his support for a Nobel Prize for the still imprisoned dissident Liu Xiaobo. We remember him for his strong and continuing support for Aung San Suu Kyi and the democracy movement in Burma, the human rights activists in Cuba and Belarus and elsewhere, about which we will hear more from our panel in a moment. I do not personally agree with every position that Václav Havel took, including, in particular, his support for the Iraq War in 2003. But it is impossible not to totally respect the fierce and uncompromising stand throughout his life against tyranny in every form.

Forum 2000, of which as I have said, I have attended probably a third of its meetings since it started, has been a wonderful vehicle over the years for giving shape and direction to the Havel legacy, with its extraordinary cast of senior figures that come here from the worlds of politics and diplomacy, of government and civil society, of arts and culture and journalism and literature, of religion and academia and business –and for the extraordinary array of issues that have been addressed here. The common role of Forum 2000 –binding everything together, being, of course, a passionate commitment to human rights, to democracy and the achievement of sustainable peace –and the process binding everything together here bringing people together from different contexts, continents, different cultures, different disciplines, in an atmosphere of calm and collective discussion. This is not a forum designed to produce negotiated outcomes, negotiated decisions. What it does do is give us some opportunity to wrestle with big problems and big ideas, sitting down with those from other countries and cultures and disciplines, often outside our normal comfort-zone. The Forum gives us an opportunity to talk through and to think through great issues, like the theme of this year's Forum: the power of the media for good and ill. Until this year, Václav Havel, wonderfully supported by our late and dear friend Oldřich Černý, has been the constantly guiding visionary presence in our deliberations. Not in any overt or obtrusive way because that is not Václav Havel's style, but simply because of everything he stood for and what his own life was about. We meet now for the first time in his absence. We hope, and we expect, that his spirit will live on

now in the contributions that we are about to hear from our distinguished panel: Karel Schwarzenberg, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Yoani Sánchez from Cuba, Ko Ko Gyi from Burma, Alyaksandar Milinkevich from Belarus and Roger Scruton from the UK. But before I introduce any of our panelists further we have a message from someone who was very near and very dear to Václav Havel. Let us now hear from the Dalai Lama.

**H.H. the Dalai Lama:** Brothers and sisters, you gathered now for the Forum 2000 in Prague. Although I personally –physically –cannot participate, my spirit, my mind will always be there particularly as our respected, very close, admired friend, President Havel is no longer physically with us. So, we should feel more sense of responsibility, as he is physically no longer with us. We must carry his wish, his spirit and his wish must be fulfilled by those people who still remain, including myself. I myself am totally dedicated to the fulfillment of his wish, of his dream. So those of you, who are there, please, now think more seriously; and we should develop new ideas. And then, what is important is implementation. Just a few nice words of resolution have not much effect, but we must implement them. So that is what I want to share with you.

I am sure your meeting will be successful and can be a small way to the appreciation of our late great friend's wish. So thank you very much. I am always used to telling people, when we talk about changing the world, trying to improve humanity, making it more peaceful, happier; ultimately, these things must start from the individual –ourselves. Unless we ourselves change to being better, more peaceful, more sensible, then we can express from one single person to 10 persons, 1,000 persons, 10,000, 1,000,000 persons, and like that. So ultimately, the important thing is to change one's self. Good things must start from one individual. So sometimes I think –including myself –sometimes there is some expectation that change will come from outside. Without your own change, that is unrealistic. Thank you!

**Gareth Evans:** We will turn now to the panel and the first speaker is His Excellency Karel Schwarzenberg, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic and Chairman of the Top 09 party. He has been Foreign Minister this time since July 2010, but previously he was Foreign Minister from 2007 to 2009, during the end of which period he was serving as President of Council of

the European Union. He was a member of the Senate of the Czech Parliament from 2004 to 2010, but the main reason, I guess, that we are delighted to have Karel on the platform this morning is that he was a very active campaigner against the Communist system during the dark years, a very close friend and colleague of Václav Havel. He was President of the International Helsinki Committee for Human Rights between 1984 and 1991 and in that context was awarded, together with Lech Walesa, the Council of Europe's Human Rights Award in 1991. Ladies and Gentlemen, I am glad to welcome Karel Schwarzenberg.

**Karel Schwarzenberg:** Thank you so much. Well I do think you did wonderful introductory work remembering Václav Havel, much better than I could do and especially showing the importance of his work. While we are always sad that neither him nor Dáša is present today, it would not be sensible if he would just stay as sentimental

*"We should start to listen to each other, the other side, the other opinion... If this could be achieved by Forum 2000 in the future years, it would be part of Václav Havel's legacy in the present world."*

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Karel Schwarzenberg

memories. What is to be considered is how does the "ower of the Powerless" work today? What is the effect of this wonderful booklet and can we still use his recipes? And indeed, as you think that the events of last year showed that he was right and that it is up to us that we show solidarity to the powerless in the world, as was shown to Václav Havel and the dissidents in his time by some people in

the West –for instance, Jess Coultner, who is sitting here. But also things have of course changed.

The book was written 30 years ago and, of course, in the meantime the world has very much changed. And in some respects it has changed for the better for the powerless, because some unexpected developments helped them. If you look back in the history of the last decades we should realize that one of the great revolutions of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Iranian Revolution, was only possible because of a small gadget through which the speeches of Ayatollah Khomeini could be brought throughout Iran. Of course, that was only working in one direction. In the meantime, with the mention of the Internet and all

these new possibilities we have a worldwide network of information which, properly used, gives incredible chances.

When our Václav Havel was sitting in jail, he could send one short letter at a time to his wife. And even when he was allowed out, he more or less had to look to contact a journal from the West, so his messages could spread in the world. Today you have, in a township in Central Asia, in the midst of Africa, the ability with a small gadget to contact the whole world. We have a new generation which is impossible to isolate from information from the outside world. I can remember when the regime toppled here and I came back home in 1989, when I was astonished at how little some people knew about the outside world. When I went further east it was even much worse. This has changed and this gives a chance. Already, the Arab Spring, so-called, could not have been imagined without the Internet, without the mobile telephone for mobilizing, contacting one another, collecting the information from the world. Of course, there are dangers in this too. People do not get more intelligent or wiser from technical gadgets. That is an illusion. We are the same, more-or-less stupid, aggressive and egoistic race as we were before. But still, the chances are bigger. We should use them. And it was indeed touching for me when I went to the countries of the Arab Spring to meet students, young people there and already saw that effect –they are in contact with the whole world. At the same time, I have the impression that the very rich Western world got more deaf and blind.

I remember 22 years ago, when the Iron Curtain fell, the engagement of all the politicians in the world to help. To help the countries where the dictatorship fell, to push them and to give them every assistance. We should concentrate similarly now on countries where this is necessary. There are people who are now fighting for freedom, because democracy lies in power for the powerless; the numberless people in China, the numberless people in the Russian Federation, in Iran, in other places who are contacting their friends and so-on and so-on. Indeed, I was very touched when I went, before the summer, to Burma and saw the effect again of the powerless. Aung San Suu Kyi and her friends were powerless. It was for me touching that the president, with all the power, who had all the army, listened carefully to a freed lady who had been imprisoned until half-a-year ago. It was really impressive how, suddenly, the country started to move. In China, many young people ask this, students, and suddenly they are awakening and calling for their rights, basic human rights. Freedom will always be in danger. We should realize this, be aware of it

and therefore it is our duty to assist those who use the power of the powerless. It works. Believe me. It worked here, it worked in Burma, it worked in all the Arab dictatorships. Maybe the regime that is coming will not be better than the one that was there before, but that is the danger in all revolutions. I am sure that in two decades those countries will look very different than they look today. The thing that I would like to ask you all is not to be negligent, not to look away, but if you hear the call for help, if you can assist, be present. I remember how much we needed it here and be sure to do what you can to help those who need it now. Thank you very much!

**Gareth Evans:** Thank you very much, Minister Schwarzenberg. Our next panel speaker is a very dangerous person indeed. So dangerous that she was not allowed by her government to leave the country and come to this Forum 2000 as she was invited and agreed to do. She is the Cuban human rights activist Yoani Sánchez from whom we are now about to hear a video message. A blogger, an activist, her work is available in more than 20 languages around the world. She has achieved, Yoani Sánchez, much international recognition for her work, including the Ortega y Gasset Prize, which is Spain's highest award for digital journalism, she has received the World Press Freedom Hero Award from the International Press Institute. In 2008, Time Magazine listed her as one of the world's 100 most influential people. Foreign Policy Magazine named her one of the ten most influential Latin-American intellectuals and one of the world's top 20 dissidents in 2010. Ladies and gentlemen, let us hear from Yoani Sánchez.

**Yoani Sánchez:** My name is Yoani Sánchez, I am a blogger, a journalist, but most of all I am a citizen. I try to be a citizen. And I send you greetings from Havana, on behalf of myself and many other people, independent journalists, alternative bloggers, ordinary citizens, non-conformist people in Cuba, who would feel flattered to be able to attend and to be represented at the 16th Forum 2000.

I regret that this year's event will be held in the absence of a man who meant so much, not only for you but also for Cuba. With his passing away, Václav Havel left us many things to reflect on and to think about, but also a great emptiness. I regret very much that he could not come to Cuba. Not only because his life came to an end without his being able to visit this Caribbean island to converse, to present his books, to share his ideas, but also because we had been

unable to achieve a state of democracy. We were not able to arrive at a political and civic transformation that would permit people like him to come and visit us. So in the midst of a little happiness in being able to participate with you there is the pain of not having Václav Havel among us. I truly love his works and hope someday to find them all, in all the Cuban libraries, and that no Cuban will have to be at risk for or get into trouble for being in the middle of a bus reading a book such as "the Power of the Powerless." Thank you very much!

**Gareth Evans:** Well from Cuba now to Burma, Myanmar, to another very dangerous person who would not have been allowed to be with us until very recently, but thankfully now is. Ko Ko Gyi was, in 1988, a final-year student at the University of Rangoon and he led peaceful rallies on the university campus, was very actively involved in the "8888 Uprising," was appointed Vice-Chairman of the all-Burma Federation of Student Unions. In December 1991, he was arrested for participating in another student gathering celebrating Aung San Suu Kyi's winning of the Nobel Peace Prize, which resulted in him being sentenced to jail for 20 years of hard labor, of which he served 14, being released in March 2005. Then he was arrested and imprisoned again in 2008. This time he was sentenced to 65 years, but was released in January 2012 and is again active in politics in a very different and a very new environment about which he will now tell us. Ko Ko Gyi.

**Ko Ko Gyi:** First of all, I would like to thank, for giving me this wonderful opportunity, the event organizers and to all the participants who attend this 16th Forum 2000. It is my great honor to be invited to talk about this notion of the powerful powerless in the context of Burma, Myanmar, and its democratic struggle. Since our moral connection to President Havel is so profound, I would like to convey our deepest condolence to late President Havel, his family and to people of the Czech Republic. Actually Mr. Havel has been familiar to our people since Aung San Suu Kyi, in her speeches, repeatedly elaborated Mr. Havel's teachings of "The Power of the Powerless." Also a plan for the United Nations Security Council to act in Burma brought by Havel and Bishop Desmond Tutu, which, I believe, he brought on moral grounds. The report brought the highest international attention by putting Burma on the Security Council agenda and also provided a powerful new direction in the international effort



to bring democracy to our country. President Havel's contribution to Myanmar was not merely in the policy area but perhaps more importantly in moral and political inspiration. So when I was in the prison I had heard about Havel's famous essay "The Power of the Powerless." To the newcomers, much younger than me I had a chance to read it in Burmese. When I was first released, in March 2005, I had a strong wish to meet him in person. I was arrested again in 2007 and sentenced to 65 years and six months. Unfortunately, only when I was going to be released, President Havel passed away quietly. On that same day, I lonely celebrated the golden anniversary of my birthday in a small cell by myself. It was a sad coincidence. He gave me a flashlight to look back at the life of a greengrocer.

I was born and raised in a hard-working and poor family. My father was a typewriter clerk, my mother opened a grocery shop in my hometown market. I had to get up early in the morning to help my father, to help my mother to prepare her shop, before I reviewed my homework and headed to school. It was before 1988, 8.8.1988, the four 8 democracy uprising for democracy in our country. We lived in a closed society where the military-backed parties ran the country under the banner of "*The Burmese Way to Socialism*". Mostly the ruling parties grabbed people by propaganda. There was no social or political organization that I could join. My routine was my family work, my school and sitting in a tea-shop in my neighborhood. I simply could not comprehend why we were poor even though we worked very hard. Our factories nearby stopped running, the state-owned broadcasting station kept broadcasting the highest productivity rate and growth year after year. Why did some of my older friends who took part in student protests in the 1970s disappear from their houses? In short, why poverty, why lying and why repression? I was not able to figure out clearly. Then there was a crucial event that hit us with a big blow.

The government de-monetized the country's high-currency notes in 1987, in September. All of a sudden all the hard-earned money in our family's hands became totally worthless paper. There was disruption in our hand-to-mouth living. This social injustice grew on my mind. We students protested the de-monetization. After a sequence of intermittent unrest some students were killed in early 1988. I myself made a narrow escape, while literally riot police squeezed from both sides and cracked down on unarmed protesters on March 16, 1988. To me that was a turning point. The blood-taking triggered moral outrage, together with a sense of injustice and moral

outrage. I said to myself, "*Enough is enough!*" I vowed to fight against it and to redress the wrongdoing in our society. From poverty to repression – this is the struggle for dignity.

As President Havel clearly articulated in his essay, Havel said that "*since the main pillar of post-totalitarianism is living a lie the fundamental threat to it is living the truth.*" I decided to break the line of self-complacency. We students organized student unions in university campuses. In fact, the union was illegal. We circulated anti-dictatorship pamphlets. We called for a nationwide popular uprising on August 8, 1988, the historic Four Eight Movement. People took to the streets, calling for the restoration of democracy and rights in our country. We called for dissent and a dignified life. This was the largest popular revolt in our history. My faith in the human being as a moral agent who is capable of making choices for himself or herself began to solidify after being part of that historic wave of a mass movement. I often hear the cynicism of some scholars, think-tank groups, diplomats and journalists, who say that normal dissidents are no longer relevant, that they no longer represent the people's voice – "*We have to work with the people in power rather than the people in need.*" I would say that this is blatantly wrong. They should read Havel's writing before they make any out-of-touch comments. President Havel once taught us that society is a very mysterious animal with many faces and hidden potentialities. It is extremely short-sighted to believe that the face that a society happens to be presenting to you at a given moment is its only true face. In this world none of us knows all the potentialities that slumber in the sub-group of the population. Sure, people often fake their fear and people often play dumb in order to avoid or to minimize their risk. It is clear that those who underestimate the people and the dissident movement count tangible and visible power as the only strength in society. The failure to appreciate intangible power and how it becomes a formidable force when people choose to live with truth look at the 1990 elections and the recent 2012 bi-election in Myanmar; how people were brave enough to show their hidden face whenever they have the chance. Whenever I meet elites who tend to underestimate the people's courage and the capacity of making a moral choice, I remember an Ethiopian proverb that says: "*When the Great Lord passes, the wise person bows deep and silent thoughts.*"

I spent 18 of the past 24 years in prison. Whenever the feeling of frustration and the mood of depression crept into my mind, I always tried to reconnect with the faith that I have the moral capacity

of a human being, particularly of our people of Myanmar. This empowered my inner strength. I not only lived, but also matured in prison with my political conviction. So with a sense of humor and a Buddhist outlook on life, I never regret what I have done politically. I always maintain a positive attitude with my sense of humor and I always try to see the larger context. As a Buddhist, I view life as a process of constancy and permanence, from womb to tomb. Why I should be so stuck with fear as fear in itself is a part of impermanence. Now our country is in the process of political transition, therefore to make national reconciliation, we need to convince the people in power and, at the same time, we need to encourage people in need to value their rights. I strongly believe that this notion of human preciousness will bring forward our energy and power for national reconciliation and nation-building. Thank you all.

**Gareth Evans:** Thank you Ko Ko Gyi for this presentation that I think was both moving and inspirational. Our next panelist is Alyaksandar Milinkevich who is a major opposition leader in Belarus, which is not a comfortable position to be in. He is Chairman of the Movement of Freedom; he was a Presidential Candidate in 2006. Doctor Milinkevich, who has a PhD in physics and mathematics, has authored more than 60 academic works dealing with laser equipment and technology, but also the history of culture, science, architecture of Belarus. He has been someone who has travelled the world, speaking and writing about the human rights situation in Belarus. Among the long list of accolades he has received for that activism was the Sakharov Prize of the European Parliament in 2006. Doctor Milinkevich.

**Alyaksandar Milinkevich:** The great citizen: Václav Havel. I was thinking about the strength of this citizen because I have met such a great number of major politicians and artists, but Havel holds a very special place. That is why I cannot now just define his strength, but I know that when I met him, I felt a stronger and a better person and I had much more strength after talking to this small man. He was very perceptive. Václav Havel had a huge talent when he met with people. He was very open to everybody and he never pretended anything. He always understood what countries were people coming from, like me, for example. When I came from the Belarusian dictatorship and he gave us excellent advice. When we met the last time, I was telling him that very soon it would be 20 years that a country in the middle of Europe lives in freedom, but Belarus does not, be-

cause people are still oppressed and persecuted. People who disagree with the system, and especially older people, already are losing faith. They do not believe they will live long enough to experience freedom. And Havel said: *"If you are fighting for your dignity or the freedom of your country, you must think of the result, but the result can come unexpectedly, all-of-a-sudden. So you should do your job. You should do what you believe in. You should be useful, useful to Belarus, so that Belarus can again become one of the free countries of Europe and it will be much easier."*

People were thinking how long this will last, because we have been fighting, thousands of Belarusian people. Young people have been really fighting. They wished to live in a European civilization where laws are put into force and Václav Havel asked me:

*"Do you believe in Marxism-Leninism?" And I said: "No!" He said: "It is easier for communists. They believe that everything can be predicted. You can make plans and forecast which class will win, but this cannot be predicted, because world is too complicated and we must believe that victory will come one day. It will. In Czechoslovakia we were also fighting and our neighbours in Poland were fighting as well and they did not know when the victory would come. And many did not believe that their grandsons will live in freedom. But they kept on fighting."*

*"I was thinking about the strength of this citizen because I have met such a great number of major politicians and artists, but Havel holds a very special place. That is why I cannot now just define his strength, but I know that when I met him, I felt a stronger and a better person and I had much more strength after talking to this small man."*

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Alyaksandar Milinkevich

Václav Havel was an outstanding example for our country. He was a messenger for Belarus and for Europe. We wanted him to bring this message. We are a closed country and we kept telling him, you are a great man, everyone respects you, you can represent us and he took this mission upon himself, although he was so busy, but he never forgot about Belarus and we remember. Often we had discussions with Václav Havel, these discussions influenced me very much. The most important discussion with President Václav Havel was about the forms of struggle against dictatorship. If you live in a dictatorship, sometimes you want to respond to violence with violence, but Václav Havel was certain that we cannot fight for freedom with

blood, because if there is bloodshed, this provokes more bloodshed. Violence will always be followed by more violence. To eliminate a dictatorship is the first step and a new society must be built, but it must not be built on blood. And he demonstrated this by pointing out examples from history. He said: *"It is not just Lukashenko. Of course, the evil is in Lukashenko, but evil is very often a legacy because we started with the Soviet Union, but evil is not in one single person, although this person may be accountable. But what is in the heads of people that is what matters. Their thinking may be deformed and you should try to help them, so that they can abandon all the dogmas and past understanding of the world."*

Václav Havel believed that you could change the thoughts of people through discussion, by fighting their fear. *"If the dictator is not in your head then he will not be in your country either,"* he said. These words were very important for me. I believed this, he was right. We could say that we had a kind of a pseudo-election campaign. It was a fictitious parliament that was elected, which does not really mean anything. I was not registered for elections but I attended many meetings. I went to people's homes. People asked me and said, *"Do not do it in a radical way, do it in a peaceful way."*

When Václav Havel spoke about the necessity to act in a non-violent way, he demonstrated his humanism and also a great wisdom, because he knew that, for every nation, it is important to undergo all these reforms and changes without bloodshed. And let me just end that Václav Havel, as no one else, understood that in Belarus we are fighting not only for freedom and democracy, but we keep fighting for the independence of our country. In Belarus, we have big problems with independence. Our system managed to get us into a situation when we are dependent on our Eastern neighbor economically and politically, but Belarus has chosen a way towards Europe. Havel in all his messages for Europeans said: *"You have a European culture. You are, Belarus, a country of educated people. So your way to Europe and your European standards must be established once forever."* He said the same about Ukraine. Now often in Europe it is said that Belarus is lost and will stay under the influence of Russia. There will be this Eurasian Union, but for me it would be like a new empire. I do not want to live in an empire. I want to live freely and Václav Havel's encouragement and urging us to turn to Europe, to European politicians, was very important. So I would like to bow my head before the memory of this great man on behalf of all the Belarus people who wish to live in a free country, who wish to live dignified lives. I would like to thank him, I would like to thank him for being with us and

even today he his fighting for our freedom. Thank you!

**Gareth Evans:** Well, thank you Dr. Milinkevich for an incredibly impressive and focused presentation, which has moved us all. The final presentation is from Dr. Roger Scruton from the UK –a formidably distinguished philosopher and political scientist who has written and published more than 40 books, mainly on political philosophy and aesthetics. He is currently a visiting scholar at the America Enterprise Institute. He taught for many years at the University of London and Boston University before becoming a full time writer and consultant. I suppose most relevantly and immediately for today's purpose, he was during the 1980s someone who played an absolutely central part in founding and supporting underground universities here in Prague, in Brno and in Bratislava. Dr. Roger Scruton.

**Roger Scruton:** Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, to the organizers of the Forum 2000 for inviting me, and of course thank you to President Havel for having created this institution and also filled not just this institution but this country with his spirit. I would like to speak Czech but my Czech is powerless. My Czech is powerless so for that reason I will continue in English and I have to point out I am the last Englishman and I am here, I suppose, as an exception to everybody on the platform in that I come from a country which has not for 300 years suffered the kind of totalitarian control and dictatorship that people have suffered in this part of the world. I am a beneficiary of what George Orwell called the eccentric English habit of not killing each other. And it is true that we do look from the point of view of the international order extremely eccentric.

I came here first in 1979 as an eccentric Englishman to talk to a private seminar in Prague where people had assembled to discuss philosophy. And I believed, because I taught philosophy in a university, I believed that philosophy was an easy going open-minded way of discussing difficult questions with a free mind. And then, of course, I arrived here in the seminar to discover that doing that thing was dangerous. All the people who had assembled to hear what I had to say ran a risk, precisely because they were pursuing the question of what is true and what is not true about some issue of the day. And when I came home I was advised to read this great essay by Václav Havel, *"Moc bezmocných"* ("The Power of the Powerless"), and consider just what it meant. As I came here regularly after that to meet people who were involved in attempting to maintain some kind of ed-



ucational structure underground, I came to see that this essay has very important messages not just for people living under totalitarian regimes but also for us who lived in the free world as it was then known and who had the ability and the freedom to discuss things openly among ourselves. And the way I read this essay, I drew from it three conclusions.

First, that there is a power that grows from below. As well as the power that is imposed from above by armies and governments and so on. There is another power that grows from below, which is much more important to the human spirit, though much more feeble from the point of view of the physical world. And that is the power of trust. Trust between people is a frail commodity, easily destroyed, but also constantly re-growing. And that trust is what I found in the private seminars of people, many of whom were known to Václav Havel, in the Prague of the 1980s.

Another lesson I learned from this essay is that even when people do not trust each other, they can still learn to live in another way. And that was the way that Havel called living within the lie and his famous example of the greengrocer. We have a greengrocer next to us here, I think brought this home to us all, that it is possible, of course, to live within the lie, live comfortably, but yet deeply inside oneself not to be at ease with oneself, not to be really deeply spiritually comfortable with oneself. And I think that was a very important message.

Finally, this essay conveyed to me the thought that the written word, the word written down on a piece of paper is an extremely powerful weapon and it has an important role in creating the space in which people can, once again, live within the truth. Through passing the written word around from one person to another we learned indeed words have a weight beyond their sound, a weight which makes them in some sense immortal. The people that I met in the 1980s in Prague were people who have been inspired by that idea, inspired by the thought that there is a truth contained in books, in poetry, in words that have been written at a great personal cost to the person who wrote them, words which as it were, perpetuated the human spirit of the person who produced them and those words are worth more than anything else that we can give to each other. That thought was extremely inspiring to somebody like me, coming from the free world, who had no familiarity with this particular totalitarian regime and it gave rise to the thought that indeed the totalitarian regime has something very positive to be said for it. Namely, that it makes truthfulness into some-

thing dangerous. There is a cost attached to it and therefore you are able to see for the first time clearly the absolute value of truth. It is not a nice way to be persuaded of the value of truth, but we in the West were very easily tempted to lose sight of the value of truth completely.

Academic discourse, as I had learned it in my university, did not focus on this question of the importance of truth as the aim of human thinking. It was quite indifferent as to whether someone was speaking truth or speaking ideology. This was another lesson that I drew from Havel's life and from his writings, that our words can be directed in two quite conflicting directions: towards the truth about ourselves and the world we live in, or towards power. And when words are directed towards power they become ideology. And the most important form of ideology in our experience, in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century, has been Marxism, which was dominant in this part of the world and also dominant in my university in England in the 1980s. So, it was the first time when I came here that I saw clearly that I had been living also amid people who preferred lies to the truth. But I could only see it because here the truth had this extraordinary cost attached to it and it was a cost that Havel was prepared to pay. So, there are some lessons that I would like to draw from that essay which are still relevant in the world in which we live. As I say, I cannot talk of an experience such as that of Burma or Cuba or Belarus or the old Czech experience under communism. I have come from a country which has always been free, has always valued free discussion and has always valued political order built from below instead of from above. But nevertheless, now that there is another kind of political order here, it is still necessary to draw lessons from what Havel was telling us.

First of all, we should remember that there is a constant temptation to aim our thinking towards power instead of truth –to say things, to read things, to write things in order to obtain influence or social position, rather than simply to say how things are. To aim at truth we need intellectual humility. Not to think of ourselves as having some ability, once again, to create a total order for the world, a complete system under which everything can be governed, but to recognize that words are finite things which only reach so far. One thing that Havel showed us in his life is that in a real crisis it is the person who has that still small voice of humanity, who speaks truth, even though quietly and to the few people whom he can trust, it is that person who really matters. It is he who will emerge in a crisis as the one person to whom we can entrust the power and the destiny of our nation. Which is what you Czechs wonderfully did in that crucial moment when you might

have gone completely wrong and imitated all your neighbors. Instead you actually appointed as your first president, a genuinely educated, morally decent and truth-following person. For that reason we ought to constantly remind ourselves of the example that Havel has given us, which is an example from which, all of the world and especially Europe can learn. Thank you!

**Gareth Evans:** Well thank you Roger for those extremely thoughtful messages, which we are going to long be pondering. I would like there to be a little bit of focus, if possible, on the future of this Forum and the future of the Havel legacy, how best to shape and channel the ideas and the themes that we have been talking about. But we will see what happens in the discussion. Do any of the panelists want to say anything at this stage in response to anything that has been said or anyone else or shall we go straight to the floor. Do you want to speak? Karel Schwarzenberg.

**Karel Schwarzenberg:** Well I just would like to shortly come back to Roger's message. Of course the fight for truth was key for Václav Havel and it was a key word in everything he wrote. Nevertheless, we should always realize that we are in danger of seeing only our own truth. We need to discover the full truth and on many occasions I know people who are fanatical about their own truth and that is one of the dangers –people who are telling me there is only one common truth, there is only one way towards democracy, there is always one solution. It was the founding father of Czechoslovakia, President Masaryk, who once said that “*democracy is discussion*” and one thing I am really scared about in the present time is that we are losing the ability to discuss. If you look at the United States where the two camps are engaged, as they should be, but losing the capability to understand each other and to discuss.

The present generation is not interested in listening to the other side, and sees only their own thoughts. This is one of the dangers we have and one thing which Václav Havel perfectly understood, because he himself tried always to listen. Many people he met in the world and in politics here and abroad and during the time of Charter '77 –which united people from the former Communists, or even still Communists, but who were against the totalitarian regime; Trotskyists; Catholic priests; Social Democrats, liberals of all kinds –he listened carefully to each of them and tried to bring them together. He established a discussion and out of this then came what we call the

Velvet Revolution. We are losing this capability. We should start to listen to each other, the other side, the other opinion, which is a great thing about Forum 2000, that there are many different views present here and I would ask that you really listen, especially to those who have an opposite view. If this could be achieved by Forum 2000 in the future years, it would be part of Václav Havel's legacy in the present world. Thank you.



*“Civil society in this country was totally destroyed. One of the most radical things to do was to bring people back together again.”*

**Paul Wilson**, Writer and Translator

## Changing Role of the Media

October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants:

**Vendeline von Bredow, Jeffrey Gedmin, Ingrid Deltenre, Marites Vitug, Valeriu Nicolae**



**Vendeline von Bredow:** Good morning, my name is Vendeline von Bredow. I am the Deputy Europe Editor of The Economist and I also look after Eastern and Central Europe for The Economist. I am very happy to be moderating this panel. We will talk about the changing role of the media and I would almost rephrase it to ask: *“Is the role of the media changing with all the advanced technology and everything else that is happening?”*

I have got a wonderful panel with me. To my left there is Ingrid Deltenre, if I pronounce it correctly, who is the head of the European Broadcasting Union and has been involved in media all her life. To my right I have Marites Vitug from the Philippines. She is a journalist and Editor of Rappler, an online news site. Then one further down is Valeriu Nicolae, who is based in Bucharest and is involved with a foundation in the ghetto of Bucharest. Last but certainly not least there is Jeffrey Gedmin who used to run Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty and is now in London heading the Legatum Institute, a think tank. So, without further ado, I would like to give the floor to my panelists and I think each one will speak for up to 10 minutes with a few introductory remarks. Then I think we should proceed to questions and answers and hopefully a lively discussion with all of you. So maybe, Ingrid, you may want to start?

**Ingrid Deltenre:** Thank you very much. Good morning everybody, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much for having me here, for being here in this fantastic room. It is very impressive I must say, and I am looking forward to an interesting discussion and I hope I will sometimes surprise you a little bit. First of all, I am also grateful to Vendeline, who has already rephrased the topic of today’s meeting; the changing role of media or *“Is the role really changing?”* I am not going to state the obvious, I hope, but journalistic institutions play a crucial role in a working and functioning democracy, you all know that. That was the case in the past, that is the case for today and I am sure it will be in the future. The more information is available, the easier it is to get it disseminated and the more crucial the role of media becomes. So the need for analysis, for context, for in-depth information, for gathering what is really relevant and prioritizing is something that is not going to change. It will remain a crucial role of the media in the future, as it is today.

But it is not the only thing. In times when the market is on the rise, in times when affluent people and people with modest means live increasingly different lives, in times where they stay in their social net-

works and communities on the Internet –and I say these developments are not good for democracy –media matters. Media provide a public space –a public space where people are sharing emotions, participating in debates, participating in big sporting events like the Olympic Games, where a lot of reflections, emotion and ideas are spread; where people are confronted with other people they would not meet; where people are confronted with ideas they would not see if they stayed in their social networks. That is the place where people meet other people with different backgrounds. When I say this role is staying the same, I am not saying that everything remains as it is today. No doubt technology has formed and changed this public space, and no doubt commercialization has an impact as well.

Let us start with technology first: digitization, Internet. The Internet now is 20 years old, 2.2 billion people have Internet access. They are increasingly connected through mobile devices. Two billion, that means one-third of the world’s population. Two-thirds of the world’s population still needs to get there. Technology has changed the way we produce news. Technology has changed what is offered in the daily news bulletins, it has changed how we access the news. But technology has not changed what our needs are and why we use media. If you look at what people are doing online, on the Internet, on TV or on the radio, you see they listen to music, they watch videos, they communicate with their friends, they share what they want to see, they are being informed, they are entertained and they want to be surprised. These basic needs do not change but the way they are served is going to change, and has already changed.

So, the Internet has an impact on how we get to information and it has changed the availability of information. However, it is still a classic media that makes news relevant and makes news trusted, but I will come to this a little bit later. The Internet has also, and this is the second part of technology, has another impact. That is the impact on business models. I really want to focus on the business models a little bit as well. You are all aware that Newsweek is going to stop its printed edition, and I am very happy that it is not going to happen to The Economist, but what you see with Newsweek is just one symptom and I am sure you have examples in your countries. Why is this happening?

If you look at the companies that are active in the Internet world –the Apples, the Googles, the Facebooks, the Amazons –you see companies that are worth three times more than the existing old media companies. If you look at the advertising money spent, the main con-



tributor to the content, it is still TV that is number one and online content is second with 20%, then comes print. If you look at Google, you see that it probably has some 50% of the ad revenue that is available for the online world today. That is why Google is so successful, but also so attractive. That is also why Google could basically do much more than they do today since they have full boxes of money. If you look what happens to the newspaper industry, if you look at their revenues, you see that their ad revenues today are at the same levels of the 1950s. The 1950s! It is going down at tremendous speed. Today, it is the newspapers but tomorrow it could be the television stations.

So that is why the Internet not only has the positive impact of increasing the availability of information –of news, blogs, websites of course, Tweets we can follow –it also has influences how we deal with

*“In times when the market is on the rise; in times when affluent people and people with modest means live increasingly different lives –media matters.”*

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Ingrid Deltenre

the availability of the information. Even bigger, is the media’s impact on business models. If you are not strongly financed, if you do not have a sustainable business model, then you will simply not be able to continue the role that you have played in the past. That is why technology is changing and having an impact on the

media industries. This can sometimes be worrying. When you look at what travels fast, what is exploited at the international level and what will work in the future as well – music, fiction and documentaries – they are things that work more and more on a globalized level. If you look at the news, at culture, sometimes entertainment and even sports, these are still national goods. To provide a distinctive, relevant program in this area you need to be sustainably financed. So the business models to actually provide what we want to provide, they play a crucial role and this is going to change. This is why I think that public service media matters today and will matter even more tomorrow.

I am almost to the end. Why do I think that this kind of media also needs protection by, for example, a special financing model like license fees? Information and culture are goods that are not comparable with apples and pears. This is the basic reason why we should think about what kind of democracy we want to live in, what kind of

media we need. This is the basic foundation for having special regulations with regard to the media and I also think this comes with a special responsibility for media. There is something which is even more important and that is trust, being trusted and having a reliable medium that plays a critical and crucial role in democracies. You need to have a business model that also works in the future. If that is not possible, you need a special framework and special protection. Thank you very much.

**Vendeline von Bredow:** Thank you very much. Thank you, Ingrid, for very interesting introductory remarks. And I think we will move to my right, to Marites.

**Marites Vitug:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, I will be repeating some of the points already raised. So, for all the exciting technological changes sweeping media today, I take the view that the role of the media remains constant: to keep the public informed, to make them aware of issues and the context in which these happen and to illuminate the national conversation. Looking at Václav Havel’s example, journalists should continue to speak without fear or favor, shake lazy assumptions, question convenient labels and puncture the hype. Our goal is to provide deeper understanding in as fair a manner as possible and we should be perceived to be trustworthy.

What is changing is the way we perform our role. There are new demands, new pressures that affect the way we do journalism. I have been a journalist for more than 30 years and it feels like 100 years, especially when I see the young reporters doing their work today. I do not envy them, what they do requires a lot of energy. For example, some of the young reporters covering today’s events do multiple tasks. Every minute is a deadline. First, they Tweet highlights of this panel, in between they do video interviews using their iPhones, then they write short reports to break the news and file these reports, later, they update the reports to include more details and context and file it with the video interviews. This is because a news website is a hungry beast. It needs to upload fresh reports, both written and video, several times a day. If not, it will be a vast and empty space. Sometimes, in the rush to beat the competition, we get it wrong. As one opinion writer said, the slogan today is, “*never wrong for long*.” This is because the story is corrected as soon as the mistake is discovered.

Work never stops as these reports are shared on social media, particularly Twitter and Facebook. Feedback is monitored and if these

responses are worthy of attention they are also made into stories and uploaded. The cycle continues. Some of my colleagues call this *turnalism*, because journalists keep turning out stuff like an assembly line product. For my part, I can now tell stories and share my opinions in various ways. Today, I write blogs and I do video blogs as well for our website. I share these on Facebook and others share them on Twitter. This is so far from what I did in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, when I would simply write the news reports and analysis for my newspaper. Deadlines were fixed every afternoon of every single day and I enjoyed the luxury of time.

There is a down side to this technological revolution. Undoubtedly, the Internet is useful. It provides us access to an infinite amount of information. But as one author, Nicholas Carr, wrote in his book "The Shallows" *"Once I was a scuba diver in a sea of words. Now I zip along the surface like a guy on a jet ski."* He argues that we are now consigned to the intellectual shallows, but these shallows are as wide as a vast

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Marites Vitug

ocean. Attention span tends to be short, people rush to comment without thoroughly reading the posts and sometimes this leads to mob-think. Given the fragmentation of news on the Internet and cable TV, we tend to choose to listen to only our side of the conversation, or our side of the argument. We believe only our side of the story. We do not like to leave our com-

fort zones. Today, there is pressure on news websites to attract traffic. So sometimes the number of hits and page views makes editors go for the news that sells, the popular stuff, at the expense of boring but important news. One American editor said that while these numbers tell them what the public likes to read, they always remember one thing: they are not "American Idol." They are a news organization.

So I still believe in old media since they complement new media. We live in the age of the hybrid, for professional and amateur journalists coexist to bring the news especially in times of emergencies, disasters and authoritarian regimes. What gives journalists value is our sense of civic duty that we sort the daily garbage, ferret out the lies and the half-truths and tell a story straight and varnished.

Media organizations today face several challenges. For the new media, foremost is finding a business model that will make online newsrooms sustainable so that they are able to do good journalism, to report breaking news as well as in-depth stories. Can advertising alone pay for the costs? Should online newsrooms charge for some of their content? Should they partner with universities so that the latter subsidize the cost –this is starting to happen in parts of the United States –or should foundations come in and help? For newspapers, the challenge is to keep their readers, many of whom are shifting to online news that they get for free. Today, newspaper reporting should go beyond what is reported on websites. Speed is what the online newsrooms have, depth and context is what newspapers should offer. That is their value. That means that a reporter should be mature and highly skilled. To conclude, media continue to perform their longstanding role of informing the public and shedding light on issues of public interest. It is the way the media fulfill this role that is changing, faced with new technology and new demands. Thank you for listening.

**Vendeline von Bredow:** Thank you very much, Marites. I think we will continue with Valeriu, yes?

**Valeriu Nicolae:** Yes. So, I have to start with a confession. My views are influenced by the fact I am a Roma, or a Gypsy, and by the fact that for the last four years I spent most of my time in a ghetto in Bucharest that is full of problems; full of crime, drugs, prostitution and so on. My views are also irreverent because I think we need it. So we need to call on Ministers who sleep in the meeting and we need call on media which is racist and so on and so forth. At this moment I will talk practically about media in Romania because that is my expertise. I do not know much about media anywhere else. Maybe I know about media in United States and Canada, but my point is about media in Romania. The main role of media at this moment in Romania is creating a collective paranoia. The symptoms of collective paranoia are: suspicions towards the others, development of different conspiracy theories to justify an imaginary construct of identity, increased tendency towards aggression and lack of forgiveness, a very elemental lack of critical introspection and almost no sense of humor. What I see is exactly that and I will give you a number of examples.

The first example I will give you is about suspicion towards the others. *"The Gypsies are coming like the wolf. They are multiplying like sheep. The first to leave will be international companies. There will not be anyone to*

*sell the new shit to and they will move away to somewhere with fewer Gypsies and more money. Who is going to buy soap for soft and tender white skin? Dirty gypos? The difference between Gypsies and cows is that cows are subject to veterinary control. Livestock cannot behave like Gypsies but the reverse is allowed.*" I have an example, which comes from a very respectable journal in Romania: *"Gypsies, those disgusting beings with filthy women dragging their boots that shit on themselves are living proof we come from monkeys; hysterical cunning creatures or societal abortion. Those Gypsies multiplying like rabbits – my apology to rabbits – only to get their stinky, dirty toes on the welfare of some poor children. The gypsies steal. They are rapists."* And so forth.

I can give you tens of examples like this from media all around Europe including the Czech Republic, but this is not my main point. My main point is that I think somehow media needs to help us get out of this collective paranoia. It has to become something else than it is now. I agree that the Internet has a huge impact, a huge positive impact on European media and mass media in general. At the same time it has a huge impact on spreading racism. The amount of racism on the Internet is absolutely incredible. I think every opinion is to be heard but, at the same time, we need consider that the Internet does not bring only good things, it brings lots of bad things too and we need to deal with those. The media's incentive, at least in Romania, is profit. It is cheap to buy journalists. Corruption is a major issue and it is almost impossible to address. I will give you an example: European funds are, most of the time, corrupted because powerful politicians use those funds. There is no incentive to write about European funds because they pay for most of the advertising in the Romanian newspapers. If you write against it, you do not have your job anymore. It is the same with lots of other things that I hope we will discuss. I am also quite appalled by the fact that I see lots of journalists on lots of mass media in Romania who are very keen to judge other people, to give moral lessons, to say that they are incorruptible and so on, while they are paid by people who are profoundly corrupt. Their media promote prostitution; they promote immorality. So there is a huge imbalance here that just accentuates this paranoia.

I will end with something that I very much liked from Havel. Havel was saying that intellectuals have a very important role. Intellectuals should to talk about horrors and threats to our democracies, to our societies, and politicians need to listen and act. Well, at this moment, I see more and more mass media being preoccupied with the opinions of politicians about the horrors and the threats to come,

and fewer and fewer people care about acting. Hopefully, we will be able to change that. Thank you.

**Vendeline von Bredow:** Thank you very much, Valeriu, for a perspective from Romania. Now, Jeffrey, over to you.

**Jeffrey Gedmin:** Well thank you, my pleasure. Good afternoon. It is bad being last with the first so good. I am mostly going to echo the comments made and maybe say some of the same things in a little bit of a different way. As you have heard, I was the President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty from 2007 to 2011. It is great to be back in Prague and it is wonderful to see colleagues from RFE/RL. One of the services we operated, and the company still operates, is broadcast from Uzbekistan, arguably the most severe of the Central Asian dictatorships. I recall once travelling with colleagues to visit our associates in Tashkent and having a kind of offline meeting with some young Uzbeks. They told me that they listened to us, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, in Uzbekistan. I just wanted to hear and learn what we were doing well, what we were doing less well, how we could improve, and these young students were snickering and giggling a little bit. I did not know what was so funny. So as the conversation proceeded with our interpreter, I just wanted to know what was so amusing to them. In due course I learned that they thought the RFE/RL Uzbek service was really CIA radio. I thought that was pretty exciting too because my job suddenly became more interesting and more intriguing. As we pushed the conversation forward, I said to them: *"Now you tell me you listen, and you tell me your friends listen, and you are faithful followers, but if you think it is CIA radio, why? What is the appeal? What is the attraction?"* In unison, they all said, *"Well, when you follow the news, it turns out time and again to be accurate, reliable and trustworthy. So why do we care if it comes from CIA as long as it is truthful and it bears itself out as honest and reliable."*

I guess I tell you the story for two reasons and you have heard this from my co-panelists this afternoon. First of all, in any kind of respectable, legitimate, effective media enterprise to talk about journalism, credibility is central. I think it is the beginning and end of everything, if I may put it as someone said once, *"It is a little bit like virginity: once you lose it, it is gone forever."* Credibility is absolutely central. Second of all, the very topic of the conference, which is so much in keeping with the spirit of the great Václav Havel: "Media and Democracy." How integral are those two parts? We – I now run an in-

stitute in London called the Legatum Institute –publish something called the Prosperity Index, which is an inquiry into what we call wealth and well-being in 140 countries around the world. It is not just economic growth but also social capital and education, that we think about to measure development in civil society. It is not an engineering problem, the path to prosperity; it is not deterministically concluded or formula guided. There are certain truths though, and I cannot think of any country in today's world or historically, where without a free competitive press you had decent accountable government; where without free media, you had a healthy, prospering and flourishing civil society.

In that vein, I have three very brief observations about the subject at hand today. The first is, and you have heard this before so I echo the sentiments of my colleagues here, we do live in an era of truly unprecedented freedom, opportunity and inclusion as a result of globalization and technological advances over the last 20 years. It is amaz-

*"We have become incredibly demanding and discriminating about everything that we use to feed our bodies, when it comes to what we use to nurture our mind, we do not ask as many questions."*

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Jeffrey Gedmin

ing. It brings remarkable opportunities but I would like to point out that it brings remarkable challenges and burdens too. We heard Karel Schwarzenberg say this morning that technology is not intelligence and wisdom, and it is surely not. We realize that the good news is that there is more competition, there is more choice than ever before. The old monopolies,

not The Economist, are being challenged and, in some instances, rightfully closed. Opportunity brings with it responsibility.

I was taken by the remarks from His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the screen this morning but also in the printed material for the conference. His Holiness the Dalai Lama says: *"Before we start talking about mechanisms and regulations and institution, the first thing we have to talk about is individual responsibility."* I think that is quite in line with the life and work of Václav Havel and it is certainly in line with the life and work of the Dalai Lama. In fact, so much so, if I may say, that I have to apologize to conference organizers that I cannot stay for the rest of the conference today. Tomorrow we are hosting the Dalai Lama at the Legatum Institute in London to talk, not about media and re-

sponsibility, but economics and the future of capitalism and the role of the individual and responsibility. So I think the first point is, globalization, interdependence, inclusion, democratization, more voices than ever before, more access and opportunity, but responsibility has to come with it. I fear that in too many instances we now have a surplus of opportunity and a deficit of responsibility.

The second point: You know this, and I suppose it is stating the obvious, but with the advent of new technologies freedom fighters have the means at their disposal to communicate like never before, to connect and advance democratic ideals. What a revolutionary change. What a considerable, positive effect. I remind you that while it is a tool for freedom fighters, we have seen more and more in recent years, that it is a weapon for others as well. I recommend the work of Chris Walker who is somewhere here today. He was formerly Freedom House and is now at the National Endowment for Democracy and he has done a lot of intelligent work about how dictatorships love new technology and social media. You have leaders in countries like Iran, Russia and China, authoritarian regimes, who are becoming terribly sophisticated. I always use to say, and our colleagues from Radio Free Europe/Radio Farda –the Persian service –will know what I am talking about, that the Green Movement in Iran loves Facebook. So does the regime, and they use in the most clever, shrewd and ruthless fashion.

The last point I want to make has something to do with journalism itself, with communication, with networks, with the exchange of information, with all we love and applaud –the free flow of information and ideas. We are apt to forget, at times, that friends, fans, followers and even citizen journalism is not really journalism. There is an article in the new issue of the "Journal of Democracy" by Mark Platner on this very important issue. Mark says there is still demand, there is still a need for news gathering, news reporting, news analysis and intelligent and responsible commentary, but how do you get that? Well I do not know how you get it without good old-fashioned things like training, standards, supervision and accountability. The anonymity and the freedom that is provided by social media and new technology sometimes discourages restraint and responsibility.

I will leave you with this thought on that note: I was in Starbucks this morning grabbing something before coming over here and I was looking for something to eat. Anything in Starbucks, like any grocery store, any market, any place in a shop, anywhere you buy any kind of food, if you grab it, even a croissant, has a label right? On



that label you can find out who produced it, where it was produced, when it was produced and then all the ingredients, right? You never knew so much went into a croissant. There is a telephone number if you want to learn more and there is an e-mail address if you want to learn more. It strikes me that in this era where opportunity requires more responsibility, it is not just the responsibility of those of us who provide the journalism or deliver the content, it is also the responsibility of the consumer. We are consumers too and it comes to mind that we are in an era where we have become incredibly demanding and discriminating about everything that we use to feed our bodies. We want to know every last detail reliably. As consumers, when it comes to what we use to nurture our mind, we do not ask as many questions about where it comes from, who produced it, what their motive or bias is, or any conflict of interest. That is the other side of the responsibility coin. Thank you.

**Vendeline von Bredow:** Thank you very much to all of you for your very interesting remarks. I thought we could maybe pick up on four specific points now. One point Ingrid raised was the fact that the availability of news has changed but not the role of the media. I think that is a very interesting thought that in all those tectonic changes that we are going through, the fundamental role of the media has not actually changed. Then Marites talked about superficiality, in a way, and how today we zip along the surface of the ocean of information rather than scuba diving. I think there is a danger here just because there is so much out there. I thought Valeriu was very interesting in what he said about the dangers of the Internet and, you know, the social need for some kind of censorship. Should we restrain and should we protect our children and other citizens when it comes to racism? How should we deal with that? Finally, and in a way related to this point, is Jeffrey's comment about opportunity but also responsibility, that to some extent what we consume and how we consume the masses of information available to us these days is our responsibility.



*"We are shaping media while being shaped by it. The old distinction between subject and object does not apply."*

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**Zygmunt Bauman, Sociologist**

## Do We (Still) Trust Media?

October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants:

**Ivo Mathé, Iveta Radičová, Franak Viachorka, Adrian Sarbu, Vendeline von Bredow**



**Ivo Mathé:** Good morning. Do we still trust the media? This is the question I wake up with every day and I have no answer yet. We will probably try to offer you some answers, some thoughts about it. This is the very distinguished panel. On my left, is sitting Mrs. Iveta Radičová. She was the keynote speaker on the first evening. Professor Radičová studied sociology at the Comenius University in Bratislava, and later at Oxford. After the revolution in 1992 she founded the Social Policy Analysis Centre in Bratislava. Later, in 2006, she was appointed as Director of the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Slovak Republic. In the same year, she entered politics and became a Deputy of the Slovak Parliament, and I think in the same year she became Minister of Labor, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic. She then became the Prime Minister of Slovakia.

The lady on my right is Mrs. Vendeline von Bredow. She is a journalist and wrote for the Wall Street Journal Europe. Now she is the editor of the European edition of The Economist and she is writing mostly about Central and Eastern Europe.

And on my left, the man is Adrian Sarbu, born in Braşov, as I know now. He lives in Prague, in London, in the Bahamas and Braşov, and Bucharest as well. He studied film at the National Academy of Theatrical and Cinematographic Art in Bucharest. During the revolution in Romania he was a member of the Silesian Front and in the first government of Romania he was State Secretary for Mass Media. Thanks to him, Romania had very good audiovisual and cinematographic laws and these laws allowed private television and radio and, in my opinion, the very nice development of Romanian cinematography. Later on, he became the president of PROD TV, a Romanian TV station, and now he is president CEO of Central European Media Enterprises. This is probably the biggest private company in Central and Eastern Europe. You are probably familiar with Nova or Markíza in Slovakia, they are all stations of the CME.

On my left the last gentleman is from Belarus. He is the youngest of us, as you can probably see. He studied at Belarus State University and was a founder and former chairmen of the Belarusian Popular Front Youth Section. He is a Václav Havel Fellow, if I am well informed. He was in prison four times and now he works for the Belarusian section of RFE/RL, in Prague.

Well, every day we receive plenty of information from a variety of media channels: TV, Internet, radio, newspapers or other printed media. We are so overwhelmed by this large amount of information that we cannot distinguish fact from fiction. What can we do Professor Radičová?

**Iveta Radičová:** Hi, good morning everybody. It is a pleasure for me to be before such an audience. I have decided to give my introduction in Slovak, as I love it and it is my mother tongue, and then the discussion will be in English, so we can talk directly. So it is not because of the knowledge, it is because of my pride to be Slovak. So once again ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for the invitation. I am honored to have the opportunity to discuss, in the spirit of Mr. Havel, democracy and its relation towards media.

Do we trust media? That is the crucial question. Let me give you three comments. First, the crisis of trust, second, the overlapping of this crisis of trust with our relation to media, third, how we handle facts. Then we will open our discussion. So very briefly, people talk a lot about the cause of the major crisis we have been living through since 2009. Let me summarize that it is a crisis of confidence, crisis of trust in our economic system, crisis of trust in financial institutions, trust in institutions of democracy, both at the national and supra-national levels, and a crisis of trust in the solutions being supplied. Recently research was conducted in 12 European countries and I am going to summarize the viewpoints of citizens in these 12 countries in one sentence: *"The economists do not know, mass media does not know, politicians do not know what to do, so what should we do?"* People are in doubt and the moment a solution is proposed it is attacked immediately and made doubtful.

The overall crisis of trust is being reflected in the very basis of democracy. I am speaking about information. Without any access to information, there will not be any civil participation, there will not be any democracy. We are living in a time of globalization, for two days we are discussing the amount of information we are getting. So the first step is to decide how we choose from among all the facts and information, what angle we should adopt, what is of substance and what is not? In choosing the facts, I am actually creating public opinion. Let me give an example from yesterday. So in Slovakia at the moment, there are two pieces of information about Forum 2000. Number one could be found in the Pravda daily and it has been adopted from the Czech Press Agency as a whole, just substantial information. Pravda prints a very low number of copies, it is number four among dailies in Slovakia. Then there is the second piece of information, let me quote the Klaus Advisor: *"Havel was in the service of Satan."* This is the article in the most read daily in Slovakia. So my question is who made the choice of information? My question is what was behind this choice of information? I claim that if the most widely

read daily in Slovakia brought at least one sentence about how this conference is being carried out, there might be an article expressing the opposite view. There might be these two streams of information created. However, there was a single article only.

I look at media from this angle, there are three new principles. Number one: speed. Today it is necessary to process tremendous amounts of information from the morning until the very last minutes of the day. It is also necessary to write an article or perhaps to go to the field with the intention of getting feedback for an interview, so the investigative journalist had disappeared. Principle number two: a form. What the headline is, what picture is accompanying the article, these are much more important than the content. Today, it is not that important what we are saying in terms of content, but who is giving you the content and how.

So we are speaking more about form and personification, these are more important than the content and the gist of the information. And principle number three: commercialization of the public sphere. If we do not like the TV channel, we simply switch. Values are goods as well, because we can swap them if someone is offering us news on a different carrier.

Mass media are processing this information using the angle, *"Is this news successful with the reader or not, is it easy to sell?"*

Public and private media are competing commercially. Even if they are funded from public resources, they are funded from public resources with the aim of not having to compete, with the aim of creating an alternative space.

The principles of commercial usage leads to programs having absolutely similar structures. Reality shows are the same everywhere in the world. Other types of shows and TV commercials are the same everywhere so there is no escape, there is no choice. The only escape is a decent public media. The same division goes for printed media where weeklies are maintaining the status of independent mass media. The Economist, Financial Times, Wall Street and other journals that

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Iveta Radičová

maintain the quality of the content versus the tabloids and tabloidization of dailies that formerly brought valuable content. Mass media has tremendous power, they are offering one topic after another and the citizen is confused and no longer secure. There is one more consequence of the lack of security. Politics and solutions are getting farther and farther apart from the citizen. Let me give you yet another example, because I have my colleague here [turns to Andrej Sarbu] so I am going to use the example of TV Markíza from the Slovak Republic. You in the Czech Republic will enter a presidential election campaign, for the first time in history there will be a direct election of the president. I have already gained this experience and I am not so self-conscious to be able to compare those duels on the screen like Obama and his opponents, but the citizen has a right to make a decision based on what he sees on the screen and I believe that during the direct election of the president, the last decisive sort of duel in Slovakia was *“President Gasparovič versus the citizen Iveta Radičová,”* that was on TV Markíza.

At the beginning, there was a clip from one interview with me, totally manipulated and false. My friends, for several seconds I just froze and did not know how to respond. I was defensive for the rest of the interview because I was forced to explain what was in that clip. My partner was smiling nicely, but I was not that content. However, I had to cope with the whole interview with a smiling face. I would have preferred to get up and leave, but after the election the Council for Broadcasting and Transmission whose task it is to monitor interviews reprimanded TV Markíza. They said, *“I am sorry,”* but my friends it was long after the election. What Markíza did was manipulation and I asked: *“Who provided you with that edited interview?”* They told me: *“Well we will spare you this fact, why would you like to know?”* What counts is that it was broadcast, this edited interview with me. So mass media has a tremendous influence and tremendous power. They decide about election results. They decide about citizens and their capability of managing public affairs. Their main responsibility is in the choice of information and systemization of facts. If they are not able to cope with that, then we live in an artificially created reality that will be coming further apart from the real world. Thank you for the attention.

**Ivo Mathé:** Professor Radičová began this with the crisis of confidence; who can we trust? About a year ago I read a not very old study about the situation in the United States. This research concerned the form of the media and just a bit of content. There are some figures I will not comment on, but by percentage the confidence is highest in stock and the industry analysis reports, 49%; articles in business magazines, 44%; news coverage on the radio, 38%; news coverage on television, 36%; newspaper articles, 34%; corporate communication, 32%; social networks, 19%; and corporate or product advertising, just 17%. Adrian, what do you make of this 36% for TV news coverage? Is there a similar situation in Europe? Why so low? Why so high?

**Adrian Sarbu:** I can tell you that in our countries the confidence in news exceeds 50% in television. There are studies, but I will come back to this. Mrs. Radičová spoke about the crisis in which we feel we are. Financial gurus do not know what a receipt is, politicians do not have a solution and neither does mass media. We have a saying in my country: *“Only God knows.”* The small problem is that if we do a poll now, we may discover that fewer people believe in God than believe in television and the mass media. So we are dealing with people, individuals and communities that, we have to accept, believe more in media, especially television, than in God. I am sure that in the Czech Republic this has happened, because I know the statistics. This is a fact so my answer to your question, which is the headline, is: Yes, we should trust media because we have no choice. But media today is not what we were accustomed to seeing years ago. When I had the chance to start free media after 1990 in Romania, we started a thousand newspapers and no commercial television. Now we have probably 10 newspapers, 10 magazines, 50 TV channels and 5 million Romanians –especially young people –navigating the Internet looking for information every single day. So today media is mostly Internet. It is a combination of Internet mobile with television and fixed Internet. At the end of the day it will be a simple mobile media.

I am trying to answer to the frustration you felt when you saw just one article in that newspaper in Slovakia. Probably the best people are not writing for newspapers now and probably even those ones who write for newspapers are more and more accustomed to a new way of writing on the Internet that is mostly headlines. I am not trying to defend that article, obviously, all right? They probably feel responsible for the viewers or readers or users and they know that today what you call tabloids, we call entertainment. Today, media content is



mostly entertainment and very little information. I do not think we are here to discuss entertainment but we have to accept that what we see. The role of media is mostly communicating true information by honest professionals. Generally, media is mostly an environment of entertainment where even information becomes entertainment. Mr. Mathé was speaking about America. In America, the most powerful news channels are purely entertainment channels. Fox News, a news channel covering the whole country, is more powerful than any news program in any American network. So coming back, my invitation is let's be relaxed. Let's trust media and if we do not trust media and we do not trust God, then let's think of one of our real gods, John Lennon who said: *"Let's believe in ourselves."* If we can start believing in ourselves, we can start believing in our capacity to communicate through the most democratic and the broadest medium that exists, which is Internet.

Today is different to 10 years ago. It is different to five years ago and I see that it is forever different. What is different is that any individual can express herself or himself and the big media companies, the evil media companies, the gatekeepers of information in the world, are less and less powerful and we individuals are more and more powerful. That is my main thought to answer you. If the question was: *"How influential is the television news in our countries?"* I can tell you public television news has very little influence. Why? Exactly because of the reason Mrs. Radičová stated. Public television does not do public service. Public television suffers from an inferiority complex and it is trying to compete, using public money, with our money, commercial television. Commercial television is not aiming to deal with information, but entertainment. The least credible are the public news programs. You can see the measurement. The most credible are the television news programs of the bigger networks, the bigger TV stations.

Now we can go here and talk about what Mrs. Radičová said happened with Markíza. For me it was a surprise, as it was for you when you found that story. In the mean time, you probably know the general director of Markíza in those days now is General Director of public television in Slovakia. So I do not know how that happened. I can tell you why he is not the General Director of Markíza. News programs especially in commercial stations, driven by the huge power of entertainment, are very trustful. I do not say the information which is communicated through these channels is always pure. It is generally mixed with entertainment. Then we have to accept we live in this

world where everything needs to be entertainment in order to be attractive. That is my answer.

**Ivo Mathé:** I do not know. You are allowed to answer my question, of course. Concerning the ratings you are absolutely right. Do you plan any research on the credibility of the news coverage by your stations?

**Adrian Sarbu:** We do it monthly and I tell you we like or we do not like the commercial stations. The main commercial stations in all our countries are the most credible media in these countries and the news programs are the most credible, even if they are a little bit too tabloid.

**Ivo Mathé:** Thanks, because I would like to mention other research by the very respectable organization Gallup, again concerning the United States. The majority of Americans do not have confidence in the mass media to report the news fully, accurately and thoroughly. Gallup found 55% of Americans have little or no trust in the media while 44% of Americans have a great deal or fair amount of trust. Do you mean the situation in Central or Eastern Europe is similar?

**Vendeline von Bredow:** I do not know enough yet about Central and Eastern Europe, because I am just starting to cover the region, so I think I will wait before I decide and make a blanket statement about the media in this region. I wanted to maybe start talking about why it is so important to trust the media. We talked a lot about the traditional role of the media yesterday and we said, *"You know, it is holding authority accountable."* We journalists like to think of ourselves as the fourth estate, and as the prevailing truth, and the standard bearer of public ethics. But we are also in the business of grabbing your attention and we are in the business of grabbing your attention in an increasingly competitive world. It seems more difficult and increasingly difficult to do both and it is a very fine line that most media outlets have to find and have to tread. Sometimes I try to be a bit of a devil's advocate and say, *"Well, actually, I think we should not really trust the media anymore."* As I just started to cover Eastern and Central Europe, I know Western Europe a little bit better, so I will talk a bit more about Western Europe.

First of all, the commercial constraints of the media have increased. You can see in nearly all Western European countries the ownership of the media is increasingly concentrated. You have mostly corporations controlling the media; newspapers but also television.

A particularly blatant example is Italy where when Silvio Berlusconi was Prime Minister. He controlled state TV, obviously. He controlled private TV. He controlled the major newspaper and he controlled a major publishing house. Italy is a Western democracy and you would think it should be one of the most advanced in terms of a free and fair media. In France, it is not that different now, you have a defense company controlling Le Figaro, you have a luxury goods tycoon controlling the biggest business news daily, and again you have very few truly independent newspapers in France. Then, and we have talked a lot about this, there is so much stuff out there, I think as a media consumer I do not blame anybody for being utterly confused and not to

*"We journalists like to think of ourselves as the fourth estate, and as the prevailing truth, and the standard bearer of public ethics. But we are also in the business of grabbing your attention and we are in the business of grabbing your attention in an increasingly competitive world."*

Vendeline von Bredow

You know they are like everybody else. But trust is important and we can see how very venerable news organizations react very defensively and very anxiously when their reputation is damaged.

So you can see at the moment there is a big scandal in Britain with the BBC and Jimmy Savile. I mean it used to be a small investigation, now it has become a criminal inquiry and it seems to grow by the day. A few years ago, I do not know whether you remember, there was a big scandal at The New York Times with journalist called Jayson Blair who seemed to be plagiarizing most of his copy. That really upsets people because The New York Times has this fantastic reputation of not only accuracy but also very high journalistic standards. So now there are lots of reasons why we should not trust or should be very careful is trusting the media. But then on the other hand, in this new era –and I think we really see a shifting of tectonic plates in

really knowing where to go any more. There is such an availability of information. Then, of course, journalists are selective by nature. We all know that. They are partisan, nearly all news organization have a certain political bent. Many people here seem to be following Fox News for some reason. Over the last two days I have heard a lot about Fox News and what people think about it, which is often not very much. And, of course, journalists make mistakes.

the media landscape –here are lots of reasons, in some ways, to be optimistic. We live in an era of unprecedented democracy in the media. We increasingly see the phenomenon of citizen journalists, of people doing their blogs and putting up their videos. And for us, as a media organization, we see that people, not only young people but people of any age, are increasingly media savvy. They want control over the media rather than to be controlled by media and they increasingly have the means and the tools to do so. I can maybe speak about ourselves, about The Economist. We do make a huge effort, we pay almost obsessive attention to accuracy and we have a whole team of fact-checkers. They persecute you on press nights to really show all your sources and they double-check the reports, because if you say: "Well, I have it from this report," of course you could have misread things. So we try our best, but obviously it is never perfect.

So to conclude, I would say we should never blindly trust the media and we should use this opportunity to be in charge. And that is an opportunity for all of us. Yesterday somebody asked me: "Can there be a true democracy without free media?" It was a gentleman from Iran and I think the answer is obvious. The answer is obviously not. So however imperfect and however confusing the media is today, the media play an essential part in democracy.

**Ivo Mathé:** Yes, thank you very much. I am full of questions concerning the BBC because really the BBC is for many of us the fortress of confidence. What about the last scandal, do you mean it is the end of some era?

**Vendeline von Bredow:** No, I do not think so. I think this is a very serious story and a very serious incident. There were rumors and they have been ignored or covered up and that is not a good thing. Eventually, maybe some people will have to go as a consequence, but I do not think there will be any lasting damage to the BBC. The BBC will survive and hopefully go from strength to strength, but it shows that in that era –in the 1970s, 80s, 90s –it was actually easier to just sweep things under the carpet, because you did not have the citizen journalism and you did not have the transparency you have today. I really think today that scandal would not, whatever he did, have been possible. So, in that, it actually shows you how our current era is an opportunity and an advantage.

**Ivo Mathé:** Yes, thank you. Both of the last speakers said to you that we could trust media. Another opinion says that over the last three years trust in the media has fallen from 48% to 45% among the informed public. What do you think Franak? You have a view from a different part of Europe. You lived, if I am well informed, in exile in Vilnius?

**Franak Viachorka:** No, I live in Belarus, of course. I live in Belarus and I would like to change the geography of our discussion a little bit, because we are always speaking about Western, free societies. But Václav Havel, for example, was aware of non-free societies, about transition in those countries. As Professor Radičová said during the first opening session, one of the sources of the current democratic deficit is the *media-zation* of politics. It is absolutely right and I will add that it is politicization of media at the same time. I would like to speak about a very important problem not just for free society but also for non-free countries: advocacy, political advocacy and journalists. Where is the border, what is the difference, how and when can journalists be lobbyists for politicians? And I would like to separate countries into three groups. There are free societies that we were discussing before, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Great Britain, the USA. Of course there are media closer to this political force or to that one, but there are also partly-free societies and there are non-free countries. I would like to speak about the second and third groups.

Belarus is my country. It is not far away from here. You can just fly there, be there in one and a half hours. Belarus is a partly free country, in the media sense. Why partly free? Because media is formally independent from the government, formally independent of politics. I am a student, I was a student in the faculty of journalism. I was writing articles, I was not a symbol but a journalist, and it does not help, it does not save me from arrests. So four times I was arrested for organizing actions, or participating in these actions. My colleagues and participants of this discussion remember the time of the Soviet empire and in every country there was a newspaper –one newspaper. Rudé právo in Czechoslovakia, Pravda in Slovakia, Tribuna luda in Poland and others. Now in Belarus we see the process that I call neo-Sovietization –or better to say re-Sovietization. It is not specific to Belarus. It is the same in all countries to the east of Poland, to the east of the European Union. You also see the processes in Ukraine, in Caucasus states.

In Belarus, on the first of October, the dictator Lukashenko –I

would not like to call him president –unified all the newspapers into one. The same is going on with state TV channels. Finances for these state TV channels, for these newspapers, are coming from the state budget. Of course independent media –media created by Belarusian citizens or broadcasting from abroad like Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty or Bel-Sat TV from Poland –are not able to compete. State TV, Belarusian TV, is getting \$53 million in state finances every year plus income from advertising. Bel-Sat TV, which broadcasts from Poland, has only \$6 million dollars for the whole year and no advertising income. What this means is that independent TV channels, like independent newspapers, are not able to compete with state media.

I would also like to talk about the government's attitude toward media. Lukashenko, the dictator of Belarus who has spoken positively of Adolf Hitler, can now use this slogan: "One people, one nation, one leader and one newspaper." When the Belarusian government engages with the media it rudely uses the language of war. Speaking at the Belarusian State University, where I was studying and was expelled for

my political and journalistic activities, he said: "Media holds a weapon of the most destructive power; they must be controlled by the state." Lukashenko said this to a group of journalism students at the university. Here you see another problem of these non-free societies: where is the border between propaganda and real journalism? And the harshest thing is the harassment of journalists. Just one example: a few days before the elections, one month ago, the Associated Press photo journalist Sergei Grits was harshly, harshly beaten by police when he was taking a photo of opposition protests. He was arrested and was bleeding afterward. Anton Surapin, a 20-year old photographer, had just published photos on his own personal blog, photos of a teddy bear air dropped by Swedish human rights defenders into Belarus, and he was detained by Lukashenko's security services. He spent more than one month in prison just because he published photos on a blog.

*"It is only one way in Belarus, it is a media and information battlefield now for democracy. We trust a lot in the development of media and our main target is to reach people, to make them interested in political activities and politics."*

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Franak Viachorka

How can we talk about media independence in this situation? The majority of my colleagues and the majority of you remember Soviet times –1968 you know –the same processes are going on now in Belarus. I am now working for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. Maybe the majority of you remember that it was foreign free media that helped, that brought democracy to your countries. Now in Belarus, Radio Liberty is still needed. It plays the same role it was playing during the Cold War –in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. The government treatment of journalists from independent media –from Bel-Sat, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Radio Racja –is more seriously repressing than how they treat the opposition. In this case, I see a solution. I see a solution to avoid these problems, to resolve these problems. First of all, use new media. Of course how to use social media and social networks is a topic for another discussion. Citizen journalists, in the case of non-free or partly free societies for example, are a solution for avoiding this discrimination, these repressions by authoritarian governments like Belarus.

**Ivo Mathé:** Thank you, Franak. It could be interesting to know more about the access to foreign media in Belarus. You mentioned you are working for RFE/RL and you mentioned the TV station broadcasting from Poland. How is the access really? What about the access to Internet, is it absolutely free?

**Franak Viachorka:** Yes, there was a discussion during Forum 2000 about social media. In Belarus, we decided that social media is like panacea, you know for Belarus and civil society. Half of Belarusians have access to Internet, but as you mentioned they are using Internet for entertainment. It is very difficult to engage people, to make them interested to politics, in what is going on in their countries and abroad. They have access to the state newspaper that is everywhere, but they do not have access to foreign media at all; only by websites but they do not know how to find them. They do not usually know foreign languages, This all creates a barrier in building contacts with foreign countries.

**Ivo Mathé:** Yes, Professor Radičová, of course.

**Iveta Radičová:** Only a short comment. Yes, you are absolutely right that we did not distinguish between different situations in countries concerning democracy. Looking around in Europe, we have five dif-

ferent groups of countries. The first group of countries, so-called consolidated democracies, includes the Baltic states and Hungary. The second group of the countries, so-called quasi-democratic or pseudo-democratic, are Albania, Macedonia and Moldova; Slovakia was in this group from 1993 to 1998 –the well known era of *Mečiarism*. The third group are so-called hybrid regimes. Also called competitive autocracies, they include Ukraine, Georgia and Armenia. The fourth group are countries with consolidated autocracy, not democracy, like Belarus, Russia, Azerbaijan and Tajikistan. The fifth group are countries where they use democratic words and rhetoric but they have never started to do anything with democracy like Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.

Another part, we have to say, of the democratization process are Arab states –the so-called Arab Spring. In Egypt, they also call these changes “*the Facebook Revolution*” because the elite were communicating through Facebook networking. One parent decided to name his daughter Facebook. Paradoxically, there were 32,000 people connected on Facebook. If you compare that with the fact that Egypt officially has, if I remember correctly, 82 million people, this small but well-organized group started the change. The second point is that belief and truth are not the same. So if there is confidence, trust in the media, it does not mean that this is confidence in the truth. Be very careful and keep in the mind this very important distinction between confidence in somebody or something and the truth about somebody or something. I would like to stress this and if you see the figures, they do not show that the people really believe in the truth. That is the problem.

**Ivo Mathé:** Yes, thank you very much. I have to ask Franak for a reaction, is the Internet or Facebook in Belarus used to organized or just in the entertaining sense you mentioned?

**Franak Viachorka:** Actually I absolutely agree. “Kontakte” is a Russian speaking social network, the same as Facebook. Really they can substitute, or partly substitute, for normal, classic media. But anyway, at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, for example, we now have a problem. More and more people, people up to 35 years-old, do not use classic media. And in Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty we sometimes work more often with new media, with Facebook, than just with classic on air, broadcasting. So it means that it is only one way in Belarus, it is a media and information battlefield now for democracy. We trust a lot



in the development of media and our main target is to reach people, to make them interested in political activities and politics. As you mentioned, to be interested in the truth, in what is going on in the country.

**Ivo Mathé:** Thank you, Franak. What do you mean, about the Internet, about the influence on the media?

**Franak Viachorka:** Ah, it is strongly limited. There is a list, a blacklist of the sites formally forbidden in Belarus. It is a list of 80 websites from the President's administration, 80 websites with pornographic materials, 80 of them are political information. Charter '97, independent media, as well as Radio Svoboda are very often blocked during big campaigns and street manifestations but we are trying to go around this blocking.

**Ivo Mathé:** Adrian, the CME is involved in new media, of course. What do you think about the role of the Internet, about the new media? Is it just entertaining or does it have some informational role?

**Adrian Sarbu:** I should not say it here, but all media, including television, is melting into the Internet. I see only benefits. I see enlargement, I see broader opportunities for everybody to express himself or herself. We have to accept, and I am coming back to your data, that the more democratic the media, the less trust in one medium unfortunately. We have to accept that trust in one medium is reversed by the development or the enlargement of access to information. Coming back to information, we used new media initially for information, for news channels. We have news channels, linear channels and news sites because we noticed something which you may like hearing now: that entertainment is not enough to keep people confident in your message. We noticed that what was seen initially by the mainstream audience, a quite compact audience, becomes more and more fragmented. In fact, today when we speak about media we speak about various media. News is mostly driven through new media and through new mobile media. The newspapers are dead. The only newspapers that survive as brands are those ones that have a strong new media presence. Television in terms of news gathering and news distribution will scale down and will move more and more into internet. One day we will have 1 billion bloggers, which may mean 1 billion newspapers and 1 billion news sites. Nobody will believe anyone other than in himself. That is the beauty of what we want, that is the beauty of democratization. I was feeling extremely

emotional when I heard my colleague talk about his life in Belarus. I think we should not forget that there are people around us, near us, who suffer as we did. We now have the luxury of talking about democratization, media, commercial media and public media but there are people who cannot even express themselves in a country that is a thousand kilometers from here.



*“Censorship is not only happening inside China, but even outside. How would you feel when you open your e-mail everyday to know that someone else is reading? That is the world I live in.”*

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**Lobsang Sangay,**  
Sikyong for the Central Tibetan Administration

## Media as a Religion

October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

Participants:

**Doris Donnelly, Tomáš Halík, Roger Scruton, Surendra Munshi, Nico Carpentier, Tomáš Sedláček**



**Doris Donnelly:** Good morning everyone and welcome to this very special session on the media as a religion. We have heard several times during this conference, that one of the legacies of Václav Havel has been words. Words are, in the hands of a poet, a playwright and an author, not merely letters scrambled together. They are a precious, a very precious, commodity. They are not scattered helter-skelter but rather they are treated with respect and even with consummate veneration. They are planted carefully, precisely, because there is always the possibility that words are pregnant with meaning that expresses more than the simple word could say. Once they do that, they take on a life of their own and the legacy of Havel is that his words have done precisely that.

We have four words that we are discussing today: media as a religion. And I am asking these five very distinguished, but also exciting and intriguing panelists to explore media as a religion and to discuss precisely that. We are beginning with a mini keynote, and the mini keynote is being delivered by Professor Tomáš Halík. So let me introduce him to you, and I will introduce each of the panelists in turn so that you can sort of keep them straight because they have very lengthy and very intriguing biographies.

Tomáš Halík, to my right, is someone many of you know. In 1978, he was secretly ordained a Roman Catholic priest in Erfurt, Germany. He was investigated and officially registered as an enemy of the Communist regime, which is in a way a badge of honor. He is superbly credentialed with a lengthy list of degrees and post-graduate studies but there is one that deserves special mention. In the year 2002, he participated in an Antarctic expedition to research survival in conditions of extreme mental and physical stress. Tomáš Halík lectures globally, there is not a continent he has not visited in the last two years. His home base is Charles University where his competences in philosophy, psychology, sociology of religion, relationship of religion and culture and the role of religion in modern culture are just part of his teaching repertoire. In his spare time he is also Rector of the Church of The Savior, the church at the Charles Bridge. I was talking about this earlier in the car as we were driving over and my assistant said that his fiancé was there for the Eucharistic liturgy a few weeks ago and the place was packed to the rafters with students. That was precisely my experience when I was present with Tomáš Halík presiding at the Church of The Savior. He has 200 publications to his credit, with two books published by Doubleday in New York City; they are prominently displayed in bookstores all over the United

States and I dare say they are also prominently read. Of particular note, given our commemoration of the presence and absence of Václav Havel, is that in 1998 the Czech media indicated that Tomáš Halík would be an able and excellent successor to Havel as Czech President. Dr. Halík obviously declined and remains active in the priesthood, an active academic, a very active writer and is with us today to present a mini keynote addressing the theme of the session: media as a religion. I ask you to welcome Professor Halík.

**Tomáš Halík:** Thank you, Doris. Media as a religion; it is really not easy to speak about religion. There are few phenomena that have so many different forms and so many dimensions. Even fewer, whose paradigm has changed so radically in the course of history and in different cultural and political contexts. Let me speak of religion. Do we mean an institution or a doctrine, spirituality or morality, or private piety, a system of law or the practice of charity? The concept that religion can be considered as a general category, one that includes a variety of spiritual cultures ranging from western Christianity to Buddhism and Hinduism, to the religions of African tribes and Australian aborigines is relatively modern one. It originated amongst Cambridge scholars in the 17th century; so-called Cambridge Platonics, the Anglican enlightenment theologians. I can think of many arguments against this concept. I would like, therefore, to return to the origins of the word *religio*, from which, in most western languages, the word for religion is derived. The Czech language is one exception. In non-western cultures and languages, there is no precise equivalent for this term, *religio*.

The word *religio* was first used in ancient Rome. The ancient concept of *religio* as a collection of state-sanctioned symbols and rituals has much in common with the modern concept of civil religion. Essentially, it is a matter of ritual contact with the sacred foundations of society, the symbolic expression of a common identity, of what holds society together. One of the important roles of religion, defined in the sense of *religio*, is its integrative role. We can say that what integrates a society and holds it together is its religion. I am not saying that religion is what integrates the society but what integrates a society is its religion in this sense. Of course, I am speaking now about one of the social roles of religion, I am not talking about faith, piety, spirituality, ethics, etc.

It took several centuries before Christianity, which originally acquired a different form, assumed the form of a religion in the ancient

sense and played a political role, not only in Rome after Constantine but practically throughout the Middle Ages. I am often asked whether contemporary Europe is un-Christian or non-religious. My answer is: Europe is not simply un-Christian or non-religious but nor is it religious in a Christian way. Christianity is not the religion of present-day Europe and European Christianity is no longer a religion. In my opinion, the main power of religion in the sense of *religio* resides in its ability to be the common language of a given civilization. On the threshold of the Modern Age, traditional Christianity, Christian theology and Christian doctrine began to lose that role and, in a certain sense, science was to become the *religio* of the West. Christianity was assigned the status of a philosophy of life, that un-shown, and came to be regarded as another ideology. However, in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, modern science became so complex that it lost the ability to be the common language of western civilization. It is my feeling that in modern western society, the social role of religion as *religio* is most likely played by the mass media. They increasingly influence ways of thinking and behavior, mediating symbols and stories and creating a network among people. For many, they are the arbiters of truth. What is real and of importance is what can be seen on the television news and in prime time. The mass media offer interpretations of the world and put different sectors of life together. What we know about politics, cultural events, sport, progress and science, etc., we know mainly through the media.

We can also say that what plays a major integrative role in today's western society is the capitalist economy, a market that adapts western monotheism into *money-theism*. However, the media are an important part of this system. They represent the market with very important goods, with information. After September 11, Richard Dawkins accused religion of being a primary tool, if not the primary cause, of terrorism. It is possible to argue that a much more dangerous tool of terrorism is the media. The main concern of terrorists is not the actual killing of people. The main concern is to get the images of this killing onto television screens across the globe. The main concern of the September 11 terrorists was not to destroy the Twin Towers, nor the conquest of the Pentagon, but the conquest of the screen. The strength of terrorism is in its media acknowledgement. That is what creates terror, horror. Without media images, terrorists would be unarmed, hopeless. Media, if it is to fulfill its role as an information resource, cannot admit the intention of the terrorists. In this respect they are powerless.

However, the media is not simply a passive mirror of reality. They are also its interpreters and its co-creators. The real is what works. "*Wirklichkeit ist das was wirkt*," Carl Gustav Jung wrote. He wrote it concerning religious images, but it also applies to the media image of the world.

My generation still has strong memories of state television and radio as instruments of political propaganda for the Communist regime when Communist ideology had the absolute monopoly of the media. In the underground and cultural dissent, including underground church, we tried to disrupt this monopoly of information and ideological manipulation and offer alternatives. Today, we are certainly grateful for the freedom and pluralism of the media. However, it is not possible to fail to notice the fact that, even in a society without any ideology dictated by state power and controlled by censors, the proverbial free hand of the market is not an automatic guarantee of quality. Some commentators have suggested that the so-called Muslim terrorists were more inspired by the thriller, horror and action films produced by western television than by the Koran.

*"Today, we are certainly grateful for the freedom and pluralism of the media. However, it is not possible to fail to notice the fact that, even in a society without any ideology dictated by state power and controlled by censors, the proverbial free hand of the market is not an automatic guarantee of quality."*

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Tomáš Halík

I have talked about how media has, in many aspects, taken over the integrative and interpretative role played by traditional religions. Perhaps this fact presents a challenge for other traditional religions to adopt more the role of an ethical and moral resource. There is also one more task that remains. The media constitutes one aspect of the technical world. "*Technology*," Martin Heidegger wrote, "*has surpassed all distances, but has not created any proximity*." Maybe people of faith and the community of faith should feel an even greater responsibility for creating a culture of proximity.

**Doris Donnelly:** Well, I think we are off to a good start. Thank you so much for providing a challenge to conventional, traditional religions and we will see what our panelists have to say about this. Let me tell



you what our agenda is. We are going to ask each of the panelists to respond for three to five minutes and then to engage in a conversation among themselves, before we turn it over to you to ask the questions that you have.

Our first respondent is Roger Scruton, to my left here. When I learned that I would be introducing Roger Scruton on this panel, my first thought was that I would take the opportunity to catch up on his writing. I was aware that he was a prolific writer; I was not quite aware that he has 40 books to his credit. Unfortunately I did not have the five years necessary to read them all but this was my strategy: I began with articles and posts in various publications, but in particular in *The Guardian*. These were some of my favorites, so I will give you their titles and you will get an idea of this man's range: "Made in Heaven," "Curiouser and Curiouser," "Translating the World," "Politics as a Profession," "On Defending Beauty," "Gratitude and Grace," "Music and Morality," "Facing Torture," "Art, Beauty and Judgment" and "The Decline of Laughter."

Then, my next strategy was to load the Gifford Lecture titled "The Face of God" on my Kindle for the trip over to Forum 2000. It was interesting last night that Paul Wilson mentioned that the first magazine that Václav Havel published, was called "Tvář," or "Face." So we have the face of God as the theme of the Gifford Lectures with Roger Scruton. I was dazzled especially by the index of names. You know when you get a book that you want to read, you look in the back and you see who is being quoted in the book? So I will give you just a mini list from the names under the letter B. Once again, to indicate the range of what has to be a renaissance mind: Karl Barth, Ludwig van Beethoven, Max Bennett, Nicolai Berdyaev, Sir Isaiah Berlin, John Lorenzo Bernini, Alain Besançon, Ernst Bloch, Sandro Boticelli, Benjamin Britten, Martin Buber, Joseph Buckley. Is that not enticing? Do you not want to read the book? Then I peeked over at the Ts: Quentin Tarantino, a violent filmmaker, maybe not only that but that, followed by Theresa of Ávila, followed by Theresa Lizzio, followed under the T's by Henry David Thoreau.

Roger Scruton has written a book –this book –that takes account of the need for both poetry and prose to expose us to the sacred, where, if our sensibilities will allow, we glimpse the oneness of the cosmos, which may open for us the possibility of God. All of this, by-the-by, is not available to the one doomed by the language of objectivity for there is no comprehension, no beholding of the other to that person. This is a rich theology combined with rich human expe-

rience from one who has traveled the path to secrets that only one who loves the world knows. It is my pleasure to present to you Professor Roger Scruton.

**Roger Scruton:** Thank you, Doris, that is the kindest introduction I have ever achieved. I do not know what I did to deserve it. I suppose that fact that you do not know me. Anyway, my role here is just to respond in three minutes to a very rich presentation from Tomáš Halík, with the outlines of which I agree.

In the sense of religion, in terms of what the Romans called *religio*, the media have become our religion. That is to say they are the principal integrating force in a modern society. Tomáš has made a very powerful case for thinking that, but as he says, religion is more than just that. It is more that the Romans called *religio* and it is worth remembering that in Roman religion, the state, although requiring religious observance, was more or less completely indifferent as to what people worshipped. There were a whole variety of gods available on the Roman supermarket shelf and you picked one that looked pretty to you and you went your way and worshipped it. As long as you did this with what the Romans called *pietas*, that is to say, due submission, due sense that you are weak and created and a useless being, that was fine because that meant that you were also a submissive citizen. In a way, that is what the modern state attitude or critical attitude to religion has become. It does not really matter what you worship as long as it makes you into an obedient citizen. And if the thing that makes you an obedient citizen is sitting at home watching pornography for 10 hours a day, fine. At least you are no trouble to anyone else.

Real religion as we have known it in civilization, let us just say Christian civilization largely and its Judaic origins, has also had another meaning that has been very important in this part of the world. It is the meaning that was summarized by Plato in the phrase "*the care of the soul*." That spiritual need is not summarized simply by *religio* in the Roman sense. It is also a need to be at one with your own soul and through that to be at one with God; that is to say with the higher perspective of things which are God'. I think this need is very much there. It was something which Václav Havel also, in his way, represented although he was a typically skeptical modern person as I think most people in this room probably are and as, indeed, the Czech tradition in a way requires. He also made that space at the heart of things for something other than this manipulative sentiment that goes on

around us all the time.

So one last thought then is that perhaps, if we see things from this perspective, we will see the media not as a religion in the full sense that we know, but as a formative idolatry; that is to say creating images, objects of intention, which are manifestly human products but pretending nevertheless to be divine. This has always been recognized as a danger to the human soul, and it is. I think we should be alert to this danger and recognize that we need something else. Thank you.

**Doris Donnelly:** Well we need to come back to some of this, do we not? We need to come back to the care of the soul, we need to come back to the spirituality and we need to reinvestigate the idolatry issue do we no? Would you say?

Our next respondent I am pleased to introduce is Professor Surendra Munshi. He is two seats to my right, in the middle over here, and he is currently a retired professor of sociology from the Indian Institute of Management in Calcutta, abbreviated IIMC. He has researched and taught in India and abroad and has served as a Faculty Member at the IIMC for more than 30 years prior to his retirement in 2006. He has been the academic leader of an international project on good governance. Many of his writings in the area of good governance were supported by the European Commission and included several European institutions of higher education, including the London School of Economics. The book on good governance was followed by another book on the same theme called "The Intelligent Person's Guide to Good Governance," published in 2009. So, we have a different angle, I suppose, to hear from Professor Munshi in his three to five minute response.

**Surendra Munshi:** Thank you indeed for this very kind introduction and I would say with Professor Scruton, you do not know me much. Now, coming to Professor Halík's presentation, I must say I agree with a lot of what he has said. I would like to introduce Durkheim, the French sociologist, into the picture in support of the argument that you have given. For Durkheim, religion is to be contrasted with private belief. It is something, as he said, eminently social; beliefs and practices related to the sacred belong to this domain but, for Durkheim, sacred is not limited to gods or spirits. A sacred thing can be a rock, a tree, a spring, a pebble, a piece of wood, a house, anything can be sacred that the community sets apart and respects as sacred. Now, if this is the definition that a leading sociologist provides

of religion, then one can see that it is basically a connecting force, a binding force, which is also true in the western sense to the etymological root of the world religion.

If one thinks of other elements of religion apart from binding, one finds reverence for a higher power and the general mental and moral attitude resulting from it. In this context, it is usually forgotten that charisma, the word itself, goes back to a religious origin. So if you consider religion in this sense, then it becomes possible to assert that media is becoming an important actor, at least in the western world, in new religion. It connects, it creates a reverence and devotion, it creates charismatic persons. It is therefore not surprising that it is important for people to

receive widespread media coverage. Screen time becomes very vital and it is very important to become a media star. If Durkheim said that a rock could become sacred we see that rock stars are sacred, set aside as sacred, made sacred by the media. One can see this with respect to mass communication. In today's world, it has become mass communion with its own ceremonies, modes of sharing or exchanging thoughts and feelings and ways of living and creating common beliefs. In this respect, I think we must also introduce different forms of mass media: newspapers, magazines, radio, television, Internet and mobile phones, social media and so on. They create their own technological possibilities that were not available say to newspapers but are available now to mass media. I could go on and on about this but time does not permit me. Maybe in the discussion we could come to the newer forms of mass media and the kinds of possibilities or perversions they offer.

*"It is usually forgotten that charisma, the word itself, goes back to a religious origin. So if you consider religion in this sense, then it becomes possible to assert that media is becoming an important actor, at least in the western world, in new religion."*

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Surendra Munshi

I must now turn the argument around and say that if this is so, that religion in the western world in many ways has become mass media, then I must ask myself what is happening in a country like India. The answer to that will be, in many ways, something similar to what is currently happening with the difference that mass media, in many ways, becomes the vehicle of religion. We have the religious

channels in the country running 24 hours a day with religious themes and some of these people, the gurus of the Indian scene, are not some of the people that I particularly respect. But there is also another side to it. Hinduism is not based on one text like the Bible or the Koran. Hinduism is based on mythology, on texts like Ramayana and Mahabharata. These major epics are part of the living reality of many Hindus. In a very strange way these two texts were brought to younger generations through the media, on television. The entire country would more or less stop functioning when these two epics were serialized on TV. So mass media becoming a form of religion is true in a sense, but mass media as a vehicle of religious texts is also true.

I would like to draw, and this is my concluding comment, your attention to the following: religion does not only bind, it also blinds, as we know. In that respect mass media, I think, performs the role of binding and blinding. We need to be cautious about the extent to which we are being blinded by the surface of images in front of us. Seeing is believing but believe me, what is seen should not be believed. We need to exercise our critical faculty and ask ourselves to what extent the images that are projected before us are reality. I would like to go, in this respect, to William James, an American philosopher and psychologist who talked about varieties of religious experiences; that religion is about the feelings, acts and experiences of individual men in their solitude, in relation to what they consider the divine. Divine, for him, means anything that is God-like. I would say that in many ways Asian religions, Buddhism, Hinduism and so on, relate to this experience of realizing the God within. For that, I think, binding and blinding is not the only definition of religion. Now, what concept of religion will prevail, that is for us to see; and how will that concept be realized, that is for us to see. Will it be the group dance around a totem pole or in individual solitude? Thank you.

**Doris Donnelly:** Thank you for a different point of view of the subject, for the binding and blinding and also for the information that you have religious channels going on 24 hours a day, more than one?

**Surendra Munshi:** Yes, more than one. They carry titles like “Aastha,” which would mean “having faith.” There are more than, fortunately, more than one or two chef channels in India and there are also song-and-dance channels, which run 24 hours –Bollywood.

**Doris Donnelly:** Well, thank you, we will talk about some of this later. Our third panelist is Nico Carpentier who sort of has double citizenship in a way, right? He is an Associate Professor at the Communications Studies Department of the Free University in Brussels and he is also a lecturer at the Charles University in Prague. When I first read about Mr. Carpentier, I thought of him only in Brussels and then I realized he is known here as well. He is Vice President of the European Communication Research and Educational Association and also holds offices in other similar societies. It is sort of interesting that you are coming to speak now after Professor Munshi, because your theoretical focus is on discourse theory. With your interest situated in the relationship between media, journalism, politics and culture, especially towards social domains such as war and conflict, ideology, participation and democracy. Here are some titles of his articles and books: “Media and Movement: 22 Journalistic Experiments to Enhance Citizen Participation,” “The Ungraspable Audience,” “Culture, Trauma and Conflict: Cultural Studies Perspectives on Contemporary War.” Here is one that sort of struck me as a link to what we heard from Surendra: “Understanding Alternative Media: Discourse Theory and Cultural Analysis, Media, Arts and Literature,” and then one I really do not understand at all: “The Trans Reality Television: The Transgression of Reality, Genre, Politics, and Audience.” So, you are to do some connecting for us.

**Nico Carpentier:** OK, thank you very much for the slightly mysterious last part of the introduction and the very kind introduction and invitation. I enjoyed listening to the mini keynote. Of course, being one of the last speakers, you always end up with the problem of repeating, I think, quite normal things that have been said. As a media studies scholar, I always find myself in the very bizarre situation of, on one hand, having to stress the importance of media but, at the same time, also having to add that they are not that important, which is of course going against my profession. But if you will be with me, I will try working with exactly this tension.

There are many approaches to this topic and in the debate we have already seen quite a few: there is the idea of the media as a religion, there is the idea of the mediations of religion and there is also the issue of religious media. I think that we are already in the debate working in that rather complicated field but I want to, in a way, come back to the idea of media as religion and try to connect it to the main focus of this meeting, media and democracy. My starting point is that

at some stage in history, religion and its institutionalized form took a crucial hegemonic position. In contemporary societies it has lost that privileged position. What we are also seeing in contemporary societies, and this is very much the metaphor developed by Claude Lefort, is this idea that there is an empty seat of power. There is not a privileged institution that can hold this one position in society. What we see is a societal struggle for domination, for ideological domination in many cases. At the same time we do see this multitude of spheres; there is not one dominant sphere. But, another sort of addition, we do see specific spheres that have very, very strong claims to become that dominant center in society.

There is a wonderful metaphor developed by, to turn to the media, Nick Audrey. He writes about the myth of the mediated center. The myth of the mediated center is the idea that, first of all, there is a center in society and secondly, that the media actually take that place. He is very explicit in calling that a myth a strategy to emphasize mass media's importance. Media contribute themselves to this myth. They do so in very strange ways. They do so, for instance, by creating so-called "liveness," by giving us the idea that we have direct access to reality, that they are showing us the real. They do so by organizing self-disclosure so that we can get direct access to the psyche of the other. Think about talk shows. Think about all these emotional outbursts we often see on talk shows. This is the idea that media can play that role. This is, in a way, a myth. In many different ways I would argue that it is a very problematic myth, where media claim to be the only institution playing that role. I would disagree with the idea that they actually can perform that role. There are many different institutions still struggling for that position, but they certainly can claim to be doing so, and in many cases I must admit that they do so.

Then, if we turn to the idea of media and democracy, we need to evaluate the position that media try to take, being a sacred space. Of course, the myth of the media at the center is having a claim to being sacred and pushing out the profane. If we look, for instance, at talk show participants, ordinary people entering the media who feel privileged to enter that sacred space and to be part of this media system. If we want to think about a more advanced and democratic role for mainstream media, we have to actually look at the way that they organize this claim towards the sacred. Here the notion of democracy plays a key role because we need to democratize these sacred spaces, allowing them to function. There is a very strong need for togetherness. There is a very strong need for integration, for social integration,

as has been mentioned. There is a very, very strong need to, at some stage, suspend the ordinary, which is, I think, what the sacred does. In a way, we need the aesthetics of the magical. These are very, very significant societal functions. Here comes my title from that famous book you mentioned. We need the transgression of the ordinary by the ordinary. I think these are very, very substantial roles that mainstream media, for instance, can play, but not exclusively. At the same time we need to curb these claims, we need to avoid that they become more than they should become. We need to avoid that they introduce very significant power imbalances, positioning themselves as the only one, as a post-political system that goes uncontested and that has full access to the real, making the ordinary insignificant again. That is one of the problems of mainstream media as a religion.

**Doris Donnelly:** I thank you so much for the clarification, thank you. We have a final speaker. Tomáš Sedláček. Born in Czechoslovakia, as a child he resided in Finland and Denmark. In 2001, at the age of 24, Tomáš Sedláček was invited to become an economic advisor to President Václav Havel and he accepted. In 2006, during studies at Yale University, he was listed in the Yale Economic Review as one of the five hot minds in economics. He is currently, and I do not know if this is still true because I have researched you but do not know that it is up-to-date, still the Chief Macroeconomic Strategist...?

**Tomáš Sedláček:** I have to ask my boss.

**Doris Donnelly:** But as of this morning, I was saying.

**Tomáš Sedláček:** As of this morning I was still fine, yes.

**Doris Donnelly:** ...at Československá obchodní banka and a lecturer at Charles University. He is also the author of a book called, "The Economics of Good and Evil: the Quest for Economic Meaning from Gilgamesh to Wall Street," which was a bestseller in the Czech Republic when it was published, but which has also gained very favorable reviews. In its English incarnation it was published by Oxford University Press. Because society originally sought truth from poets before turning to philosophy and, finally, to scientist and mathematicians, Sedláček feels he is on sound ground with his novel methodology of examining literary, religious and philosophical texts from ancient to modern times. That is the foundation of this book, I just



learned, but when I went back to my room last night I pressed the button on Amazon and I am getting it. A reviewer called his book, “*lively, enlightening, outstanding*” and also, “*a book that is meant for everyone*.” So, excite us a little bit about the book and your theory.

**Tomáš Sedláček:** Okay, thank you very much. I would actually like to continue where you stopped, if I may, because I find this quite intriguing. Of course I am an economist and I thought that economics was the religion of our times. It is kind of interesting, there is a difference. If you tell a media person that media is the religion of our time, they usually go “*Oh, do not exaggerate*.” When you say that to an economist,

“*You are building the religion of our times*,” they feel insulted. They say, “*Oh, what are you talking about*.” So there is this sort of a gap.

*“Sacrificial moments are very important in real religion and these do not often occur with the media, but when they do they are quite astonishing. If you think of the death of Princess Diana, she was a media creation.”*

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Roger Scruton

Many of you also talked about over-exaggeration. I think this is exactly what the problem has become with economics. We fetishized it to the point of becoming an idol. This fetishizing can happen with good things. I just would argue that today, the role of fetish is economics.

One-hundred years ago in Europe we fetishized the idea of a nation. The fetish is something that promises you the road to salvation and yet stands in your way, like money. Here I would like to continue with what you said: it unites, but yet it divides. I mean in the idea of specialized societies there is a distance between you and the object of your desire. So if you want water, for example, it is not at hand. A whole institution has to be employed and the further the distance, the richer the society is and the more institutions you need to bridge the gap that it created itself. Really Jesus’s complaint against the Pharisees is that it does not have a soul, it is an empty system of rules that do not even make sense. They are full of paradoxes. They are really promising a way to God, but yet they are the stumbling block on the way to God because nobody is good enough. This is sort of exactly what you hear today towards economics. It created a system that does not even drive us, we are not in

control, we do not understand. It has a life of its own, it is promising us a way to this promised land, yet it is standing in the way because we are not economic enough. This is sort of like the Pharisees. A hundred years ago: As you are not ethical enough, you are not national enough. Now: What is the problem, what got us in trouble? Economics! What shall bring us out of the trouble? Even more economics!

This, I think, is one characteristic of the fetish. It also does not work if you do not believe it, like religion. Money, for example, it only works if you believe it. So the magic is in the magic itself. The whole debate about Greece today, I would argue, is off. It looks economic on the surface but, in fact, it is a continuation of the theological debate of love versus grace. Should we forgive? Should we treat Greece according to the law –you signed it, you owe us –or should we forgive them? If so, how many times? Should I forgive them seven times or 77 times?

So again, the facet here is technical. We have numbers just to, you know, confuse everybody and to get rid of theologians and other sociologists, so we keep the discourse to ourselves. Once you enter this discourse you hear things like justice, lazy, do not deserve it, etc. So, I will close here, and I am looking forward to the debate.

**Doris Donnelly:** Tomáš Halík is ready to respond to all the people who have responded to him.

**Tomáš Halík:** Thank you all for these inspiring and enriching remarks and answers. Just a few remarks. Professor Scruton, thank you for mentioning the care of the soul, the Platonic idea that was very important in the ideas of Jan Patočka. For Jan Patočka, the spiritual substance of Europe is the care of the soul and for Havel, and the dissident intellectuals in Prague, it was a political program. Another point, you mentioned this idolatry and so on. It is a very important part of religion, especially the tradition of faith based in the Biblical concept. In today’s Christianity, this de-sacralization of power, this iconoclastic tradition, there are many scholars who think that the beginning of secularization is in the Hebrew Bible. In fact, in Exodus for example, Moses said to the Pharaoh, who was the Son of God, “*Let my people go*.” So there is the prophetic tradition in religion that is always the de-sacralization of power. The prophets are always saying to the people of power: “*You are not gods, you are just men*.” The tradition of the martyrs in Christianity, the confrontation of the martyrs, confrontation with the power, with the totalitarian power from the

old Roman time to the contemporary totalitarian regimes forms this tradition of de-sacralization of power.

To our colleague Munshi: I remember my discussion with the former Ambassador of India in Prague. He came from Calcutta and everybody who was in Calcutta knows that it is always crowded by so many people. He told me that he returned regularly to Calcutta from Prague on Sunday mornings and Calcutta's streets were empty because there was a very famous TV series about Indian mythology and everyone was sitting in front of the screen. What is more important and interesting is that almost all of the actors that played the gods were running for Parliament and they were elected!

**Surendra Munshi:** We have other actors in Parliament.

**Tomáš Halík:** But it is also an example of this presence of religion in media. To Nico Carpentier, it is very interesting, this role of the soap opera, of the TV series, in contemporary culture. For many people, if their own lives are banal they live through the lives of these heroes of the soap operas. They are not taking their own life seriously, but watching TV soap operas. It is a sort of mystical participation in the lives of others. It is also the expression of Durkheim, this mystical participation. So instead of living their own authentic lives, they live the artificial, virtual lives of these heroes, of these rich people and so on.

And to Tomáš, yes, it is a great topic, this theology of capitalism and this debt and forgiveness. There are some expressions in German which are not easy to translate. *Vergibt Gott* could be transformed in *Vergott's Geld*. It is not possible to translate it, but this deification of the money, this money-theism, also has iconography of banknotes, you know? It is an interesting example of what is sacred for the different nations, these notes; so the iconography of money and many, many other things.

**Doris Donnelly:** Thank you for that. Roger, I wonder if you have anything to add?

**Roger Scruton:** Well, I have got a few thoughts on that. I was intrigued by Tomáš Sedláček's theory of fetishism because this touches on the fundamental issue about the media: the idea that the fetish that is presented as the means to God becomes an obstacle to God. That is, of course, the age-old Biblical criticism of idolatry. That connects with

what Tomáš Halík has just said about the de-sacralization of power, that religion –real religion –has the de-sacralization of these things as its ultimate goal. We are constantly creating false ideas about the sacred that have to be torn down if we are to confront what is true in ourselves. Nico Carpentier has said something very important about the sacred space of the talk show. People enter that space thinking that they themselves have been transfigured to become the idol they have previously been worshipping and instead of seeing the depth of their own self-deception, they go away with a certain measure of self-satisfaction. To what extent should we be asking them to confront the real question of whether this is a sacred space or not, and if so, what makes it so?

All human beings are weak and easily taken in by themselves and there are times when they cannot take themselves in, when they are confronted by the person they love and are accused, when they are confronted by themselves and accused. The whole point of prayer, the role of prayer, the demand, the quest for forgiveness on condition that you offer it, that is really the essence of real religion; to break through all this substitute sacralization and confront the truth about yourself and your relation to the divine. So I think the media, this sacralization, is something we should be fighting against, but of course, how can we fight against it without the use of the media?

**Surendra Munshi:** Yeah, very briefly. I must also respond to this fetish idea. But before that, very briefly, I share your concern for medium and its content but in many ways, medium is message. As MacLuhan famously said "the more empty it is, the stronger the message it gives." That is why, even though I sounded frivolous, I seriously meant the binding and blinding effect of the media and creating of images. You see that there is so much information, but in-effect nothing. But coming to this fetish. This is a very strong idea that we need to pursue. Fetish basically means an immanent object worshipped for its supposed magical powers, because it is considered to be inhabited by spirit. Because of this it becomes alive and then, whether it has believers or not, it is something to be seen. Then we shift from one fetish to another. There is another sense of fetish though, which we should not overlook, namely sexual desire. Here gratification is linked to an abnormal degree to a particular object: an item of clothing, a part of the body and so on. I understand Victorian men developed fetishes focusing on feet, shoes and boots. This fetish one can see alive even now. The reason I have gone to this dimension of fetish is that I think

media, in certain ways, created a fetish of sexual desire. Explicitly, or not so explicitly, they are working on multiple levels of fetish, both sacred fetish and sexual gratification. Thank you.

**Tomáš Sedláček:** If I may, I call this object-subject reversal. If you fetishize it, an object-subject reversal happens and from a puppeteer, you get a puppet. Kundera writes about this constantly. A man starts a game of, let us say, a sexual nature with a woman. The game gets alive, of course it is an immanent object because he focuses on it so much. You hear this in the markets today, your money talks. What are the numbers saying? Markets even have spokespersons. They are called ratings agencies. This is what Sarkozy has been complaining about. Our degrees of freedom are nil because the rating agencies are dictating what to do. We have become, in a fact, the slaves of debts, the slaves of sin. In professional economic terminology the money we have to pay for debt is called debt service. So literally call it debt servitude. Of course in Greek, the words debt and sin are synonyms. So even if you read on a Sunday morning in *The Financial Times*, with a little bit of hint, you are reading the Gospel.

The Greeks have fallen under the weight of their sins; debts they can no longer carry. They were too large for them, they needed a redeemer; somebody with higher faith and credit to take their debts on their shoulders. The problem with Greece is that we do not know if it is a market or a family. This is in a sort of a Buberian sense: are they It or are they Thou? There are different rules that work on the level of family or friends where we do not have market rules.

Religion is something that, I think, misses the soul. It very easily becomes rules, something we can require but life is elsewhere. That is why Jesus so often talks about love, grace and mercy. That is why his parables are really, you know, based on the whole idea of paradox. It works differently in the Kingdom.

My last point is: yes, spirit. We have spirits in economics. They are called animal spirits. It is a basic of the triangle of belief of any decent economist. You have to believe in the invisible hand of the market, the un-orchestrated orchestra. We always believed in some sort of divine orchestration and now we believe in the un-orchestrated. You know, the motto of the invisible hand is, *"Do not touch it, do not meddle with it; it will orchestrate, you must not orchestrate it; you must sort of do a Kierkegaardian leap of faith and trust the markets."* You think you control it: Aladdin's lamp, Golem of Prague, the Ring of Power in the Lord of the Rings but, you know, nobody owns it, it has a will

of its own. The markets have a will of their own, to which we must now submit because we have maneuvered ourselves into a position where we have become slaves.

**Doris Donnelly:** You know, it seems now that one of the principal needs that religions meet is our need to live together in communities, in harmony, despite our deeply rooted selfish and violent impulses. Does economics do that? Does the media do that? Returning back to the media as a religion, does it meet that need?

**Nico Carpentier:** Well, I think that one of the things we need is to leave this notion of the media for a second. There is a wide variety of mediated practices and mainstream media are just one of the many fields of mediation –how we give meaning to things. So I think we need to be a bit careful with that very strong claim about the media. To come back to this notion of de-sacralization, I think that democracy is always a combination of sacralization and de-sacralization. There is always a struggle going on between these two components. You see that within the religion itself, but you also see that within the media itself. There are resistant movements, there are contestations. There are things like participatory media, community media, alternative media, and there is now, on the Internet, new sorts of communities that are organizing things in a very, very different way. When we talk about media we tend to forget them. What is happening in a wide variety of slightly invisible areas is a totally different kind of logic, which is much more participatory and is de-sacredizing traditional media power. These are areas we need to pay attention to and we need to cherish much more.

**Doris Donnelly:** Good point. Shall you say something?

**Roger Scruton:** Just one point that perhaps is worth mentioning. The concept of the sacred is connected with that of sacrifice, you know? Sacrificial moments are very important in real religion and these do not often occur with the media, but when they do they are quite astonishing. If you think of the death of Princess Diana, she was a media creation. She was only significant because she appeared on television and also in gossip columns and she had been promoted to something more than a human being. She was also a representative of every ordinary person's desire to be transfigured by the throne. Then, suddenly, she died in a terrible accident and there was overwhelming

national grief; you know, people putting flowers outside Kensington Palace for days and you had a sense that really she was being treated as a sacrificial victim, standing for all the frustrations of the people. Then you had something much nearer, I think, to real religion, being born out of the media, a media created goddess. But it did not last. Nothing in the media lasts, whereas Christianity has lasted for 2000 years. Who knows what the next stage is.

**Doris Donnelly:** What was the most important thing surrounding Diana?

**Roger Scruton:** Surrounding?

**Doris Donnelly:** The funeral...

**Roger Scruton:** It was the sacrificial death itself, pursued into a tunnel by screaming motorcycles. That is something out of a Jean Cocteau film, you know? That was the sacrificial moment.



*“Being a woman, I believe, is an extraordinary opportunity, not a tragedy.”*

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**Josefina Vázquez Mota,**  
Mexican Politician and Businesswoman



## Democracy and Media in Russia

October 23, 2012, Žofin Palace, Forum Hall

Participants:

**Ondřej Soukup, Rostislav Valvoda, Jefim Fištejn, Mykola Riabchuk, Alexander Morozov**



**Ondřej Soukup:** Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. I would like to welcome you to the panel which will be dedicated to Russia and those processes which happen there for the past two years and the role played by the media in these processes. It is my great pleasure to welcome here distinguished guests from different countries. Let me start on my left hand side, probably you all know Jefim Fištejn, an experienced journalist, former head of Russian broadcasting on Radio Liberty. From Moscow, we have Alexander Morozov, Editor-in-Chief of the intellectual magazine Russian Life. On my right hand side I have well-known Mykola Riabchuk from Kyiv who will be able to give us the comparison on the situation in Russia and Ukraine. Last but not least Rostislav Valvoda, head of East-European Programs at the Centre for Human Rights and he is one of the founders and initiators of Forum European Union and Russia, which is trying to carry out the dialogue between Russia and European Union at level of the civil society. Let me start with Jefim Fištejn, who has prepared the keynote speech for the framework of our discussion. Go ahead, the floor is yours.

**Jefim Fištejn:** I must apologize, because actually I am alone out of the original composition of this panel, so I was asked by the organizers to prepare my paper in Czech to make the discussion more colorful, but as I said, the other speakers changed, so I will speak Czech but feel free to put your questions in any of the working languages. Because Ondřej actually has forgotten to mention that I am not only Russian, but as well Czech and American.

From all that has been said here it is clear that media, mass media, is an institution of civil society, even if there is certain overlap with commercial interests. We speak about the role of media in democratic society, so we need to be reminded that democracy is a process, not a situation. It is not something you can put into a corner and look at with pleasure. Mass media can contribute to improving the democratic situation, or they can precisely reflect whatever the current situation is. That is what they are doing in Russia. Mass media assists in developing democratic society and can also reflect that there is no development or there is a regression. The borders of media in society are reflected in two situations. Number one, Lenin's definition: newspaper is a collective propaganda maker. When he said newspaper, what he meant was mass media. The second attitude was confirmed by Abraham Lincoln, with a well-known sentence: *"If the people know facts, there will be peace and quiet in the country."* He thought that society

cannot make decisions without objective information and the free exchange of information. Lincoln's sentence might seem naïve in the light of new technologies, but the American system is anchored in that. Thomas Jefferson also believed that he is free to express his opinion. *"If I should choose between a government without a newspaper or a newspaper without a government, I would opt for the latter,"* he said.

Self-governance is always more important than state government. People need to know what the government is actually dealing with so that they can intervene during elections. That is why the American government has next to no participation in the information business. Radio and mass media financed from the state budget have a system protecting them from the political intervention. In American institutions you cannot find a single word about mass media being responsible or accountable to anyone. Only the people can decide about the existence of its media. This is the opposite of Russian mass media. They are dealing with discussions about Western Civilization in all its facets. Officially, Russian journalists love to claim that their situation reflects their free choice and they feel disdainful toward their foreign colleagues, because they are grappling for the freedom. A couple of days ago, the chief of the Russian TV channel, Russia Today, which also broadcasts in English, Mrs. Margarita Simonyan wrote: *"I feel sorry for them, I feel sorry for my colleagues from mass media in the West, they are not able to write the truth as if they were not independent mass media. They are providing information to support the special operations of NATO and I'm most sorry for us. We are such good souls, they are beating us and we suffer quietly."* This discussion is something which appears in Russian history about western countries and mass media and state propaganda. It is paradoxical that an expert who is in charge of a TV channel, which has been established with the sole purpose of creating propaganda, shares these views.

Today the Russian information environment is dedicated to electronic media and it is dominated by electronic media and that is why it is a center of attention of the powers-to-be. The Kremlin is still tolerating low number of independent portals and dailies, but there are only a few of them. From mass media and printed media only a couple of dailies are still independent. From radio there is one radio station with blanket broadcasting and all the TV channels are controlled through oligarchs close to the powers-to-be. This is a reflection of a world directed from above. The TV, which in the Czech and Russian languages is called *"the picture box,"* is the most up to date information when compared to printed media, because distribution of printed

media, especially in rural areas, is irregular. Russian TV though, is not actually bringing the real picture. It is building a reality and forces viewers to believe that what is on TV is real, what is not there does not exist. This is the most repulsive element, when the mass media is offering prefabricated solutions, without striving for intellectual engagement. It thus functions as a parasite.

Viewers believe in their state and the half state-owned mass media. Involvement in social reality is very low and the TV replaces political life. It also replaces other manifestations of political solidarity because viewers are witnessing made up lives and that creates a virtual reality, which lures them. Now, media are acting according to Lenin's definition, but they are no longer only the means of propaganda. Quite recently, the state persecutor started litigation against a group of leftists from the opposition, headed by Sergei Udaltsov, based on the film documentary called *"The Anatomy of a Protest, Part 2."* It was made and shown by LD TV, and they were found guilty of provoking mass protests and civil unrest. They are trying to prove that the opposition is funded from abroad and they are used. They were using shots made by a hidden camera showing the meeting of the accused opposition leaders with a member of the parliament from Georgia. Allegedly they were organizing protests. I say allegedly, because there is no sound, there is just a buzz in the background and dialogue is decoded in the form of subtitles and it is impossible to do the lip reading to verify the accuracy of those captions. The state-controlled TV channels are showing these materials so that it would serve as the evidence against the accused parties. The secret service formally adopted other measures of trying to find a material to compromise third parties through agent provocateurs – women who cooperated to generate false evidence that is then shown on YouTube.

The Russian press, instead of providing some kind of feedback, has become a direct component of the government power, especially of the so called power departments, the power ministries. I would like to point out to the old example of the monitoring of the opposition in America, which in the end Nixon paid for by being impeached. In Russia, it is a different case, but the prosecutor's office used this material for litigation and to dampen opposition activity. One case was badly translated into Czech, when the media wrote about the measures taken against opposition organizations. Foreign donor organizations active in Russia had to register as foreign agents. There was some kind of mistranslation into Czech where the word agent can mean something more amicable than how we understand it in Russian

or English. This law applied to social organizations, non-commercial organizations. It applies also to the media. Many Internet portals in Russia, for instance, have foreign sponsors, so these had to register as agents too. The media image of Russian reality is more important than reality proper. Today, the media can be controlled and that means that the reality can be controlled as well. This is nothing new in Russian history, although it was called Soviet history then. In those days however, there were ideological reasons.

**Ondřej Soukup:** Thank you! Maybe I could follow up on what you said about the documentary. I have to admit that I did not see it to the end. I could not stand it, when Alexander Mamontov, the well-known war correspondent, one of the greatest stars of NTV, besides showing all these secret camera shots, also started saying that the British artist Banksy, who supported Pussy Riot, in fact does not exist. He documented this by saying that he travelled to London, was looking for him for two days, could not find him, and said this was proof that this means there is a group of people who are trying to fight against Russia ideologically. We get quite a lot of news like that from Russia. Yesterday for instance, I heard that the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, which is playing Rachmaninov's piano concerto, banned under-16-year-olds from attending this concert. In other news, Skolkovo, which is a kind of Russian Silicon Valley, will organize a conference where a lot of various Nobel Laureates were invited and the main lecture is titled: "From Perpetual Module and Sci-fi to the Innovation of the Century." I could continue reading the list. In Petersburg, for instance, Madonna is on trial for promoting homosexuality. From a Prague point of view, a Western point of view, it does not have much sense. These are absurdities from our point of view. What do they mean? I would like to ask Alexander Morozov, what he thinks about that.

**Alexander Morozov:** Thank you, I will speak in Russian. Yes, the situation in Russia is a paradox, really, and this is even more marked since the time Putin decided to run for his third term as president. What is this paradox about? Well, in the past, there was no such debate in society, there was no direct discussion of these matters, especially in the circles dependent on the government – not in the way as the discussions have run in the past year. We heard about Pussy Riot, this was news which was spread across the whole world. We heard about other types of protests. We also heard about what is

happening in the left-wing movement and within other fields. And the press too, both federal and Internet sources, which are not so much dependent on various subsidies, do engage in critical debate. However, in parallel, repressions increased and all of us understand that this did not occur by chance. We know that things will not return to what we had in the past, but what we see is the reflection of the lying followed by the Putin government which is trying to liquidate the opposition. There is no dialogue with the opposition, there is no attempt to engage in a dialogue with the opposition, everybody is aware of that.

This is why media consider this to be a paradox which is a part of our lives. Recently I wrote that this is no longer only a matter of the politics. It is fate, because free expression of any journalist leads to a conflict with those in power and may result in prosecution and the banning of such journalists from their profession. How will all this end?

*"Free expression of any journalist leads to a conflict with those in power and may result in prosecution and the banning of such journalists from their profession."*

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Alexander Morozov

Very few know, some people compare the situation with the period of the Brezhnev government. They say there is a certain analogy here, they say that this system, Putin system, will disintegrate, the same as the Brezhnev system did. Others, sociologists, say that this is a completely new phenomenon and we cannot compare what is happening with authoritarian regimes like that of Franco before the war or with the post-war soft authoritarian models. They say this is a completely new phenomenon which is linked to the media-ocracy as Jefim said and also with a profound change in representative democracy and manipulation of the society. I think it is not possible to give a simple answer to how the situation will end.

On one hand, we have a certain freedom of speech for the educated strata. These are the people who took part in the protests or demonstrations or people who read opposition news. These people as a social group will not disappear. They are expressing a certain view. But the Russia corporation will also not disappear, it is standing firmly on its legs. This is the Putin machine, which leaning on *realpolitik* will continue to stand firmly on its legs for a long time to

come and thus destroy the idea of political competition and political reform and freedom of expression.

We hear a lot about how the new media, social media, are important in the process of democratization. I think that we all hoped it would have a greater positive impact than it actually did as reflected in the opposition last year from preventing the third presidential term of Putin. In 1998, we had only 500,000 Internet users and only 50,000 of them used the Internet daily. Now, we have 40 to 50 million active users of the Internet. We also know that only 5 to 7% are interested in social and political events. I do not know what the situation is in the Czech Republic, but the maximum number of people who read an important text would be a 100,000. People like Oleg Kashin or Jurij Saprikin who write about social and political issues, might have about 30,000 readers. And that is an important number. In Moscow, it says who supports political reforms in a rational way. Those are the people with whom you can speak or we can meet at book fairs, for instance.

To conclude, I would like to say something a little more positive. The events of the last year and the whole sense of the protests and their reflection in the media is proof, if we compare for instance the American and the French revolution, that in our country we do not speak about a social revolution but we speak about a revolution of dignity. Whoever protests against the third term of Putin is protesting not against social injustice, but protesting against a destruction of human dignity. This is reflected by opposition media, which was described so well by Jefim Fištejn. Every day we get news that the government exerts pressure on Internet providers, journalists, political activists who write for these media and it seems that this pressure will continue and this paradox will continue for at least another year, year-and-a-half.

**Ondřej Soukup:** I would now like to address Mykola Riabchuk. Of course all these comparisons are sometimes a little bit misleading. In the Ukraine, we often hear that after the return of Victor Yanyukovich to power, the media situation has worsened. So the question is: Can we make such comparisons with Russia? To what degree are they relevant? What is the Ukrainian experience with free media?

**Mykola Riabchuk:** There are a lot of similarities, because these countries spent like 200 years together and they also share some of the legacy of the Eastern Christianity of Byzantium. But at the same time,

of course, there are profound differences. I remember a very nice comparison of the three political regimes in Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia, provided 15 years ago by the late Dmitri Furman, a prominent Russian scholar and intellectual. He tried to forecast the eventual developments of political regimes in all these countries and he was very revealing in his predictions. He tried to conceptualize these developments as attempts of local post-communist elites trying to modernize their countries, because it was the main challenge for all the post-Soviet, all post-communist states. He presented the Russian story as fight between an advanced modernizing capital city and very conservative, reactionary Sovietophile provinces. This fighting ended up with a kind of coup d'état and Yeltsin's imposition of authoritarian rule and the attempt to modernize under an authoritarian flag. This is actually what was continued and is continued by Putin.

*"As long as Russia fails to reconsider, fundamentally reconsider, fundamentally revise its pre-modern identity, it will fail to modernize, fail to democratize."*

The Belarusian story was the opposite. He argued that, in Belarus, the modernizing capital city, modernizing elites had been traditionally weak. Because of this they were defeated by the conservative *Sovietophile* provinces. Lukashenko embodies this force. So *Sovietophile* forces got revenge in Belarus and we still have this neo-Soviet kind of regime. Ukraine's story is the most complicated, because in Ukraine we have the same, according to Furman, modernizing advanced capital with Western thinking elites. We also have very conservative *Sovietophile* provinces. But in Ukraine the provinces are divided, we have really very conservative and reactionary provinces in the southeast, but we also have pro-western advanced province in the west, which are a natural ally of the capital city. So Furman argued that Ukraine has a sort of two locomotives, which may pull this huge train – a very clumsy train – forward. So, in a way he was right because so far Ukraine of course looks more advanced than either Russia or Belarus, but still Ukraine shares the same problems of political culture.

All these countries have a major problem with identity, because in all these nations, a modern identity has not actually been formed. The process of nation building in all these countries was derailed as

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Mykola Riabchuk



early as the 17<sup>th</sup>, or early 18<sup>th</sup> century by this Russian myth about Kyivan Rus, about this fantastic story of continuity of Orthodox Christian identity. The state's imperial identity was sacralized, because of this fusion. This fusion was very dangerous and still works. This fusion still creates and supports mythical idea of *russskiy mir*, which is megalomaniac and messianic and which distracts the Russian population from real problems. Moreover, this identity is very helpful to

*"I believe that the conflict is inevitable, that it will be bloody. I am not happy to say so, but I think that this conflict might culminate in something much worse than the current regime."*

Rostislav Valvoda

manipulate people, because it is very easy to inflame chauvinistic feelings and also this identity legitimizes such a regime among substantial part of the population. So my major argument is that as long as Russia fails to reconsider, fundamentally reconsider, fundamentally revise its pre-modern identity, it will fail to modernize, fail to democratize. The same problem

exists in Ukraine and in Belarus. Ukraine is more advanced in this regard, but still it is a big problem. I emphasize once again that any identity has an axiological dimension, any identity is attached to some values, and the identity, this "*russskiy mir*" identity, is basically anti-modern. It was based on fundamentally anti-western, anti-modern values. So it is very important to revise and reconsider that. So far I do not see in Russia any political force that is ready to challenge this myth.

**Ondřej Soukup:** Well, thank you and our last guest. I know that you were founding the Russian –European Forum at the time of the Medvedev Presidency when it still looked like that Russia would actually try to follow the path of modernization and democratization. And now, Putin is back. So how was that reflected in your work, in your activity at the forum?

**Rostislav Valvoda:** Well, that is a good question, excellent question, because really the atmosphere was reflected in our activities. First, because the policy in relation with non-profit organizations has changed, a new law was adopted according to which all non-profit organizations have to be registered as a foreign agent or they are ex-

posed to the risk of the litigation. But even as the new policy was shaping up it was divided and rule. The Russian state is trying to divide non-for-profit organizations for human rights, ecology, the environment, into those that criticize less and those that criticize more, and the state will try to say, "*These non-for-profit organizations are the right ones, the constructive ones, those with which to cooperate, and those are those we do not like so we will not speak to them.*" And this is the conflict which has been created within the environment, where the situation is getting more and more serious. People are beginning to think about how to behave, "*Do we register ourselves as foreign agents or not?*" This is a crucial decision for organizations and this creates a pressure and that is reflected in our activities at the Forum, because there is an obvious difference in the attitude of normal nonprofit organization and those protecting human rights. In my opinion, this conflict will be get deeper and deeper and as Russian secret services have proved there will be pressure for a new conflict in the environment of not-for-profit organizations, because Russian government perceives them as a potential risk.

What will follow, and I think it is similar to the situation in Azerbaijan, is that the Russian state will subsidize some of these not-for-profit organizations following the logic that there should be a friction created and conflict within the whole sector. If that happens, really, the situation will become serious. This will lead sooner or later to conflict and perhaps my opinion is controversial, but I do not think that this regime will survive this –in 10–5 years. Today's regime had lost the middle class. In a situation where there is 100 people in the streets, these are not the people who would mind that news, or journalists are being shot. These are people who are simply tired of seeing the same faces every day, tired of the attitude of the Russian state towards them. If you are an entrepreneur, if you want to do the business in Russia, at any moment the secret agent can come to you and say, "*Well, I want my share or you will lose your company.*" So if you are doing business with this perspective, well I think that the Soviet regime, sorry Russian regime has lost the middle class. The question is where these people will turn, because if there is a lesson from the Arab Spring, people felt deceived. And I think the same goes in Russia today. In Russia it is clear that this elite which still exist will not be there in 15 years and the question is what elite we would like to see in the country, what elites we would like to support. If they feel that Europe and West is not the way to go, then it is bad news for Europe.

**Ondřej Soukup:** Well, thank you. But media are not creating the society. It is the truth that I first met Mr. Morozov as a well-known blogger in 2006 or 2007. To what extent can the Internet play a role? How important it is for journalists?

**Alexander Morozov:** I would like to say that perhaps we should not take everything so seriously. Do Putin and people close to him really have ideological sources for having the situation under control or does he lack these sources? The second question, those who are from the opposition today, do they have the possibility to get transformed to something like the Charter 77? The Internet has played an important role in improving the social life. It started in 2008 and at that time Medvedev was the President and we were witnessing a certain dynamic situation where discussion was getting more lively. People often ask me whether Russian government would follow the Chinese path, whether they would create Russian intranet and try to cut off Russia from the Internet. Well, I tend not to believe that.

**Mykola Riabchuk:** I believe that today politicians are in way products of mass media. I am not sure whether Mr. Udaltsov would not have existed without Internet, but I am sure, I'm definitely sure that there would have been no Putin without TV.

**Ondřej Soukup:** Thank you. Rostislav?

**Rostislav Valvoda:** Maybe there is no sense in responding to that statement. The Internet is here and thank God. But of course it does bring with it a number of problems. What has been said also illustrates the type of society to which the current Kremlin is oriented, what type of society it perceives as the source of its legitimacy. And in this sense, there has been a certain change in Russia. Some five, seven years ago, when the prices of oil were enormous, Russia was receiving billions in petrodollars and this was a time when journalists and activists were murdered, but Western politicians said: *"Well, yes of course, we do not like the idea of them shooting people, but on the other hand, 70 % of people are happy with the situation there, what can we do? And Russia is developing."* The living standard of the middle classes was improved or maybe, better said, it was the middle classes that were forming in those days. But the prospects of the middle classes today are deteriorating. Russia today is more dependent on oil and gas than when Putin came to power. At the same time it increases its spending on weapons

and police and this is going to deteriorate even further, with the revolution of falling gas prices. They say that Gazprom can expect two or three fat years after which decline will come. Russia is not developing any new oil sources. It will soon have a problem covering its own domestic demand. The consortium Shtokman, which was planning new fields in the Arctic, ended these plans because the price was not feasible. And of course these are other enormous problems that Russia will have to face. The current Russian regime has no idea how to deal with them. It thinks that it will deal with them by taking steps against the active part of the society, which is willing to go out into the streets, which travels to the West, which knows that things can be different. It sees this group of the society as traitors. So this is why I said in the beginning that Russia is on the road to conflict. Five, seven years ago we heard that Putin means stability. What I say is Putin means instability and Western politicians should be aware of this when they speak about doing business with Russia. They should understand what they are trying to support in Russia. I believe that the conflict is inevitable, that it will be bloody. I am not happy to say so, but I think that this conflict might culminate in something much worse than the current regime. The important thing is for us to support people who want a democratic free Russia.

## Closing of the Conference

October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants:

**Jakub Klepal, Gareth Evans, Aung San Suu Kyi** (video message)



*"To be loved for one's spirit is to be loved in the best possible way. And to be cherished throughout the years of a hardship as is the struggle to live in truth, it is never to be alone, that is the kind of friend Václav Havel was to us struggling here in Burma."*

**Aung San Suu Kyi**, Burmese Politician and Dissident



**Jakub Klepal:** Good evening ladies and gentlemen, I am here just to do one thing, which is to thank you and invite His Excellency, the former Foreign Minister of Australia, Mr. Evans, to present a brief summary of the conference. Gareth Evans.

**Gareth Evans:** Thank you, Jakub. Ladies and gentlemen, if anyone had any doubt that Forum 2000 could survive the passing in this last year of Václav Havel and Oldřich Černý, those doubts have been comprehensively put at rest over the last two days. First of all, quantitatively, the figures have just been spectacular: 150 delegates from all over the world, 2,500 registered participants, more than 50 events in 13 separate locations around Prague and three outside Prague; and the attendance just yesterday, on the first day of the conference, surpassing the entire attendance for the whole period of the conference last year. This has been a formidable organizational achievement on the part of Jakub Klepal, his team of something over 150 staff, but particularly volunteers and they deserve our gratitude and our admiration.

But I guess it is the qualitative contribution that will linger in the memory of the participants at this conference. The different sessions gave us an absolute feast of different themes on which to intellectually feed: diplomacy, ethics, economics, poverty and development, environment, human rights, democracy and of course the role of the media. And all of them contextualized in a kaleidoscope of different geographic settings: Burma, Tibet, Hungary, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, the Balkans, China and Taiwan, the Middle East, the Nile basin in Africa, Venezuela. The main theme of the conference, of course, was “Media and Democracy.” And a number of critical issues were very exhaustively debated over the last two days. Three big issues in particular dominated our discussions.

The first was the future of traditional media industry as we have known it. It was acknowledged, as one participant said, *“That there has been an absolutely tectonic shift occurring,”* certainly fundamentally threatening very long established business models. I do not think any of us emerged with a very clear idea of what future business models are going to look like, but it was very clear that there was a hunger among everyone here for the media to survive in at least some form that can guarantee a source of information to the public and to act as an absolutely critical ingredient in democratic decision-making and accountability.

The second set of issues that we debated, were challenges to

free and responsible media, which was seen as coming from both free and un-free societies. In the context of free societies, the challenge came from the imperative of commercialization, the dumbing down that we have all become so familiar with the economic pressures resulting in the closure of huge numbers of newspapers, dramatic reduction in the competition of ideas through traditional media outlets, the Murdoch monopoly syndrome which I am very familiar with in an Australian context, city after city having simply one printed media proprietor operating. In un-free societies, of course, the challenge was seen and argued out over and over again to come from authoritarian censorship, the heavy handed treatment of the media that we have debated in panel after panel after panel.

The third issue about the media and democracy that we discussed was, of course, the role of new media. And obviously, this offers tremendous hope in compensating for the challenges that I have just mentioned. In free societies, by opening up multiple new channels of communication to compensate for those that are closing off or narrowing down. In fact, there was one very interesting exchange at one point in one of the panels, which very starkly revealed the different perspectives that are out there in this respect. At one point, Former President of Romania, Emil Constantinescu, said: *“The media still fail to play their role, if I ask what they know about Romania, the Czechs are not going to be able to say very much.”* But he was immediately responded to by another panelist, the Czech economist Tomáš Sedláček, who said: *“Well, I might not know much, but in five minutes, thanks to the Internet, I will be able to tell you things about Romania that maybe you do not even know about.”* And I think that encapsulated exactly the kind of potential contribution the new media is playing in terms of free society.

But what about in un-free societies? The channels for bypassing authoritarian restrictions, and it is super-abundantly obvious

*“The different sessions gave us an absolute feast of different themes on which to intellectually feed: diplomacy, ethics, economics, poverty and development, environment, human rights, democracy and of course the role of the media. And all of them contextualized in a kaleidoscope of different geographic settings.”*

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Gareth Evans



the potential of those channels, provided of course that they can somehow stay ahead of the censors. And if they can stay ahead of the censors, these new channels will create an atmosphere of really vibrant exchange of ideas and information, but with the qualification that was noted so often in our proceedings that really authoritarian societies can themselves use these channels for even more comprehensive and sophisticated surveillance, so it is by no means a one way process. In terms of the relationship between media and democracy, one of the recurring themes of this meeting that I found really important was the recognition that the difference between free and un-free societies is not always really the stock as we tend to assume when we are making these distinctions. The term illiberal democracy was one used in multiple panels, particularly to describe the situations in Hungary, in Ukraine, but also a number of other countries. And it is really important that we appreciate, we recognize, how fragile some of our democratic and human rights achievements actually remain and how important it is that the ongoing tasks not only of achieving these rights in the first instance, but of consolidating and maintaining them be effectively carried through. Of course it is in this respect that the legacy of Václav Havel and the Forum 2000 that he created 16 years ago, with Elie Wiesel and Yohei Sasakawa, remain so absolutely critically important.

If you are looking for the bottom line value added of this forum, you can find it in abundance of the testimony that we heard through so many panels of the Havel powerful powerless. You heard it in the testimony of Ko Ko Gyi of Burma, who told us how important the message of Václav Havel was to him, sitting there in his prison cell for so many years. You heard it in the testimony by video of Yoani Sánchez from Cuba who told us, you remember, she dreams someday of finding Václav Havel's books in every Cuban library. You heard it in the testimony of people like Alyaksandar Milinkevich from Belarus, the country which barely qualifies even as an illiberal democracy. You heard it in the testimony by video of the Dalai Lama and you heard it personally from the political head of the Tibetan movement Lobsang Sangay. The value of Forum 2000 in this respect I think is very well captured in the language of the declaration which has been circulated and will by the time we conclude unquestionably be signed up to by the delegates attending this conference. The declaration with its three themes that emerge from the page, the first one, that *"injustice and tyranny must be confronted with courage and perseverance"* the theme that *"vibrant*

*and engaged civil societies form the bedrock on which respectful human rights, functioning democracy, social justice and sustainable economic prosperity are based"* and the theme above all, of *"enuine and open dialogue being the key to responsive and effective decision making."* Above all, this dialogue, across countries, across cultures, across disciplines is what Forum 2000 is about.

It is this kind of dialogue that this 16<sup>th</sup> Forum has delivered us in abundance and given every one of us attending here an enormous amount to think about. And it is this dialogue, which we all hope with the support, the continuing support of the donors, the Forum 2000 Foundation under the leadership of Tomáš Vrbá and the very dedicated staff under the leadership of Jakub Klepal, of course, with the participation of the extraordinary distinguished participants who have been attending this forum from around the world –we hope that with this support from all these sources, this is the dialogue which will long continue in the future. So let me conclude by asking you all to join with me in thanking most profoundly all those responsible for making this forum the success that it has been and wishing it a long and abundantly fruitful future for many more years yet to come. Thank you!

**Jakub Klepal:** Thank you so much Gareth! And our final speaker is going to address us via a video message, so please listen now for a few words about friendship by Her Excellency Aung San Suu Kyi.

**Aung San Suu Kyi:** When I think of Forum 2000 and when I think of the Czech Republic I cannot help but thinking of the late President Václav Havel. He was a man I regarded as a true friend although I never have met him and only spoke to him once. But he kept me in his thoughts throughout the years when I was in the house arrest and Burma was struggling for the opportunity to enjoy human rights and democratic standards. Human rights and democracy is a possibility now for our country, but we cannot claim to have achieved everything that President Havel would have wished us to achieve in the end. Struggle for human rights and democracy can be seen from very many different angles. But today I would like to talk about it from the angle of the friends that we gained through our struggle.

There are no better friends than those with whom we share the same values. The late President Václav Havel and we in Burma shared a hunger for democracy and human rights and we became

friends across oceans and continents. I always felt it a great loss that I never met him before he passed away and yet in a sense I can say that he will never pass away from us. What is this friendship that is based on a common dedication to human rights and democracy? It was a friendship based on the shared value in the dignity of human beings, in the belief and confidence that human beings are capable of making a better world and making themselves better people. When I was under house arrest, a friend wrote me and she quoted lines from a poem by Yeats: *“How many have loved you for your moments of glad grace and loved your beauty with love false or true. But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you and the tears of the changing face.”* And actually she left off the last line, perhaps she thought it was not auspicious, but I have included it because I think the whole adds up to the most moving testament to friendship. To be loved for one’s spirit is to be loved in the best possible way. And to be cherished

*“There are no better friends than those with whom we share the same values and of course the late President Václav Havel and we in Burma shared a hunger for democracy and human rights and we became friends across oceans and continents.”*

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Aung San Suu Kyi

throughout the years of a hardship as is the struggle to live in truth, it is never to be alone, that is the kind of friend Václav Havel was to us struggling here in Burma. He made us feel that we were loved and cherished for our period of struggle, for our determination to build our society in a shape that will assure justice and security and peace and freedom for all of our peoples.

Forum 2000 will do everything it can to realize the dreams of Václav Havel and this is why I am proud to be a new member of the Forum and to be able to take part in the present proceedings through this video message. Human rights and democracy add up to a subject that is unending and that will go on until our world comes to an end. Because as long as there are human beings we shall have keep fighting for our rights. It is in the nature of human beings to realize what our rights are and yet often to lose track of what the rights of others are. Human rights, respect for human rights, means respect for others rights as well as the courage to stand up for our own rights. Democracy is a system that enables us best to protect our human rights

and that is why I believe very simply in the sanctity of human rights and democracy and in the friendship of people like Václav Havel, who stood up for human rights and democracy. I hope that all the people that are gathered here today will be inspired by his spirit and by his example, by his life, to go forward in our quest to build our world which is rooted in respect for human rights and democratic institutions.

**Jakub Klepal:** Thank you.

## Full Overview of Conference Panels and Events

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### Václav Havel's Legacy

#### **Conference Opening and Václav Havel: The Powerful Powerless**

Monday, October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants: Gareth Evans, Karel Schwarzenberg, Yoani Sánchez (video message), Ko Ko Gyi, Alyaksandar Milinkevich, Roger Scruton, His Holiness the Dalai Lama (video message)

#### **Václav Havel as a Media Practitioner**

Monday, October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants: Paul Wilson, Karel Hvízďala, Michael Žantovský, Jolyon Naegele, Ivo Mathé

#### **Václav Havel's Civil Society**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants: Jakub Klepal, Tomáš Vrba, Marta Smolíková, František Janouch, Igor Blaževič, Martin Bútora

#### **Closing of the Conference**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants: Gareth Evans, Jakub Klepal, Aung San Suu Kyi (video message)



Hallways bustle with activity between panels, Žofín Palace

## The Changing Role of the Media

### Changing Role of the Media

Monday, October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants: Vendeline von Bredow, Jeffrey Gedmin, Ingrid Deltenre, Marites Vitug, Valeriu Nicolae

### Electronic Activism and Democratization of the Public Sphere

Monday, October 22, 2012, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Participants: Zora Hesová, Tarik Nesh Nash, Sava Tatić, Jaroslav Valůch, Min Yan Naing

### The Al Jazeera Phenomenon

Monday, October 22, 2012, Academy of Sciences

Participants: Jan Šnidauf, Shlomo Avineri, Sultan Barakat, Dan Meredith

### Future of Media in Asia

Monday, October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

Participants: Surendra Munshi, Kiichi Fujiwara, Marites Vitug, Kavi Chongkittavorn, Tomáš Etzler, Jennifer Chou

### Media Choice, Polarization and Democracy

Monday, October 22, 2012, European House

Participants: Erik Best, Ondřej Liška, Nico Carpentier, Mykola Riabchuk, Ondřej Kundra

### Diplomacy in the Age of New Media

Monday, October 22, 2012, French Institute

Participants: Pierre Lévy, Vintsuk Viachorka, U Ohn Kyaing, Yaakov Levy, Majdi Abed, Janina Hřebíčková

### The Role of Social Media in Today's Belarus

Monday, October 22, 2012, Goethe-Institut

Participants: Rostislav Valvoda, Ales Lahviniets, Aliaksandr Atroshchankau, Franak Viachorka

### Media as a Religion

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

Participants: Doris Donnelly, Tomáš Halík, Roger Scruton, Surendra Munshi, Nico Carpentier, Tomáš Sedláček

### Media (R)evolution: Media Changes in Central Europe

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Knight's Hall

Participants: Michael Žantovský, Oana Popescu, Aleksander Kaczorowski, Endre B. Bojtár, David Brauchli

### Balkans: Changing Role of the Media

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Goethe-Institut

Participants: Jan Urban, Fatmir Sejdiu, Gordana Knežević, Sava Tatić, Jeremy Druker

### Media and Education

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Academy of Sciences

Participants: Josef Jařab, Ellen Hume, Jiří Stránský, Min Yan Naing, Valeriu Nicolae



## Media and Freedom

### Media and Freedom

Monday, October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants: Petr Brod, Lobsang Sangay, Gareth Evans, Dunja Mijatović, Bay Fang, Grigory Yavlinsky

### The Persistent Influence of State-Dominated Media and the Challenge to Democracy

Monday, October 22, 2012, Academy of Sciences

Participants: Christopher Walker, Miklós Haraszti, Yuri Andrukhovych, Hu Yong

### Censorship on the Internet

Monday, October 22, 2012, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Participants: Tarik Nesh Nash, Michael Anti, Yuri Dzhibladze, Jaroslav Valůch, Dan Meredith

### Cuba: Public Space in a Closed Society

Monday, October 22, 2012, European House

Participants: Marek Svoboda, Rosa María Payá, Yoani Sánchez, Tomáš Klvaňa, Regis Iglesias, Pavla Holcová

### Freedom of the Press, Poverty and Democracy in Africa

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Knight's Hall

Participants: Jeremy Druker, Gwen Dillard, Ruth Oniang'o

### Opening Closed Societies by Protecting Persecuted Journalists, Editors and Bloggers

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Academy of Sciences

Participants: Jared Genser, Aung Zaw, David Keyes, Steven Gan, Tamara Sujú

### Accessing Free Information in China: Challenges and Perspectives

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

Participants: Jennifer Chou, Michael Anti, Hu Yong, Christopher Walker, Tomáš Etzler, SU Chi

### Democracy and Media in Russia

October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants: Ondřej Soukup, Rostislav Valvoda, Jefim Fištejn, Mykola Riabchuk, Alexander Morozov

### The Role of Media in Burma on the Path to Democracy

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Knight's Hall

Participants: Scott Hudson, Ko Ko Gyi, U Ohn Kyaing, Aung Zaw, Kyaw Thu

### Today's Media: Symbol of Freedom or Manipulation?

Wednesday, October 24, 2012, Antiquarian Bookshop Fiducia, Ostrava

Participants: Libor Magdoň, Tomáš Etzler, Martin Ehl, Jiří Siostrzonek

## Media and Responsibility

### Open Data: A Tool for Transparent Politics?

Monday, October 22, 2012, Goethe-Institut

Participants: Jakub Mráček, Michal Berg, Pavla Brady, Jan Farský

### Public, State and Government Media: Where Are the Boundaries?

Monday, October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Knight's Hall

Participants: Václav Sochor, Ingrid Deltenre, Hu Yong, Yusmadi Yusoff

### Human Rights and the Media

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants: Kiichi Fujiwara, Madeleine Albright, Zygmunt Bauman, Alyaksandar Milinkevich, Abu Bakr Shawky, Marites Vitug, Tarik Nesh Nash

### Politics of Image

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Academy of Sciences

Participants: Ellen Hume, Enrique ter Horst, Oana Popescu, Tomáš Klvaňa, Jørgen Ejbøl

### Do We (Still) Trust Media?

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants: Ivo Mathé, Iveta Radičová, Franak Viachorka, Adrian Sarbu, Vendeline von Bredow

### Media, Responsibility and Ethics

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

Participants: Norman L. Eisen, Josef Jařab, Kavi Chongkittavorn, Zygmunt Bauman, Petr Pokorný, Ahmad Mango

### Media, Culture and Civil Society Development

Wednesday, October 24, 2012, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, University of West Bohemia

Participants: Přemysl Rosůlek, Mykola Riabchuk, Shlomo Avineri, Jaroslav Valůch

### Social Responsibility of the Media

Wednesday, October 24, 2012, Hotel Devín, Bratislava, Slovakia

Participants: Miroslav Kollár, Jan Urban, Václav Mika, Matúš Kostolný, Eva Babitzová, Branislav Ondrášik

## Media and the Economy

### **Towards a Green Economy and a Sustainable Future: Role of the Media**

Monday, October 22, 2012, Goethe-Institut

Participants: Martina Mašková, Jan Macháček, Dagmar Dehmer, Rodrigo Russo, James Randerson

### **Changing Media and Business Models**

Monday, October 22, 2012, European House

Participants: Jeremy Druker, Ian Phillips, Kavi Chongkittavorn, David Brauchli, Jan Macháček, Klaas Glenewinkel, Steven Gan

### **Media, Economy and Politics**

Monday, October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

Participants: Jan Švejnar, Hana Lešenarová, Emil Constantinescu, Tomáš Sedláček

## Special Focus

### **Issues and Solutions for the Bottom Billion**

Monday, October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

Participants: Jiro Hanyu, Motoshige Itoh, Olusegun Obasanjo, Nicéphore Soglo, Wolfgang Michalski, Ruth Oniang'o, Núria Molina-Gallart, Karl Auguste Offmann

### **Tibet: A Way Forward**

Monday, October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Knight's Hall

Participants: Jaromír Marek, Lobsang Sangay, Martin Bursík, Jarmila Ptáčková, Ondřej Klimeš

### **Hungary: Still a Democracy?**

Monday, October 22, 2012, Goethe-Institut

Participants: Martin Ehl, Endre B. Bojtár, András Stumpf, Miklós Haraszti

### **Prague Enlargement Dialogue**

Monday, October 22, 2012, Czernin Palace

Participants: Karel Kühnl, Karel Schwarzenberg, Štefan Füle, Suzana Grubješić, Vesna Pusić, Michael Clauß, Radek Špicar, Bernadette M. Gierlinger, Peter Balas, Guven Sak, Martin Tlapa

### **Women Leaders Panel**

Monday, October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

Participants: Oana Popescu, Iveta Radičová, Josefina Vázquez Mota, Magdaléna Vášáryová, Doris Donnelly, Dunja Mijatović

### **The Nile River: A Problem That is Not Drying Out**

Monday, October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Knight's Hall

Participants: Irena Kalhousová, Ayman Ramadan Mohamed Ayad, David Grey, Václav Cílek

### **Venezuela After the Presidential Election**

Monday, October 22, 2012, European House

Participants: Freddy Valverde, Enrique ter Horst, Jan Ruml, Tamara Sujú

### **Women's Congress**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, DOX Centre for Contemporary Art

Participants: Jana Smiggels Kavková, Magdalena Środa, Daniela Retková, Věra Budway-Strobach, Miriam Letašiová, Anna Karaszewska

### **The Future of Education, A Central European Debate: Corruption**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Goethe-Institut

Participants: Erik Best, Jürgen Marten, Tereza Stöckelová, Mari Kooskora, Ella Salgo, Šárka Daňková, Magdaléna Klimešová, Rytis Juozapavičius, Kilian Kirchgessner

### **Multispeed Europe and the Eurozone: A Central European Perspective**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, European House

Participants: Jan Macháček, Aleksander Kaczorowski, Martin Ehl, Roman Joch

### **The Changing Role of Intellectuals in Today's World**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

Participants: Pavel Fischer, Surendra Munshi, Shlomo Avineri, Roger Scruton

### **Democracy: Challenges from Demagogy and Extremism**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Knight's Hall

Participants: William Cook, Jan Fischer, Jørgen Ejboel, Valeriu Nicolae

### **Ukraine: Democracy on the Borderline**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, European House

Participants: Rostislav Valvoda, Yuri Andrukhovych, Mykola Riabchuk, Ondřej Soukup

### **The Role of Civil Society in EU External Relations**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, European House

Participants: Jeff Lovitt, Yuri Dzhibladze, Susi Dennison, David Nichols, Karina Chircu, Jan Marian

### **The Czech Female President Platform**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, DOX Centre for Contemporary Art

Participants: Jana Šmídová, Anna Hogenová, Adriana Krnáčová, Zuzana Roithová, Marie Čermáková, Klára Samková, Táňa Fischerová, Růt Kolínská

## Exhibitions, Books and Campaigns

### **3 Minutes to Change Their Lives: Campaign for the Release of 3 Prisoners of Conscience**

Monday, October 22 and Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Foyer

### **Tibetan-Burmese Hopes**

Monday, October 22 and Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Knight's Hall

### **Life As I Know It: A Glimpse Into the Roma Community**

Monday, October 22 and Tuesday, October 23, 2012, St. Martin in the Wall Church

### **Cartographies of Hope**

Monday, October 22, 2012, Dox Centre for Contemporary Art

### **Prague Winter: A Personal Story of Remembrance and War, 1937–1948**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Delegate's Lounge

Participant: Madeleine Albright

### **National, European and Human Security: From Co-existence to Convergence**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Karolinum

Participants: Jan Ludvík, Daniel Anýž, Miloš Balabán, Kateřina Bocianová, Pavel Seifter, Marco Overhaus, Petr Pavel, Libor Stejskal, Lubomír Zaorálek, Jiří Parkmann

### **Ukraine Near and Far: Where Does the East Actually Begin?**

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Langhans, People in Need Center

Participants: Radka Denemarková, Yuri Andrukhovych, Mykola Riabchuk



## Social Events

### Opening Ceremony

Sunday, October 21, 2012, Prague Crossroads

Participants: Jan Urban, Jakub Klepal, Yohei Sasakawa, Ivan Havel, Iveta Radičová, Joan Baez

### Monday Breakfast

Monday, October 22, 2012, Žofín Palace, Conference Hall

Participants: Tomáš Vrba, Vesna Pusić

### Gala Dinner

Monday, October 22, 2012, Mlýnec

Participants: Jakub Klepal, Paul Wilson

### Tuesday Breakfast

Tuesday, October 23, 2012, Žofín Palace, Restaurant

Participants: Ivana Štefková, SU Chi

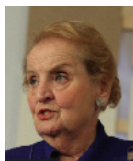


Knight's Hall, Žofín Palace

## Delegate Profiles



**Majdi Abed** is Deputy Director for Public Affairs at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



**Madeleine Albright** is former U.S. Secretary of State, Professor of International Relations at Georgetown University, Principal of The Albright Group LLC, a global strategy firm, and Chair and Principal of Albright Capital Management LLC, an investment advisory firm focused on emerging markets. In 1997, she was named the first female Secretary of State and became, at that time, the highest ranking woman in the history of the U.S. government. From 1993 to 1997, Dr. Albright served as the US Permanent Representative to the United Nations.



**Yuri Andrukovych** is a writer and poet from Ukraine, his latest book is "Lexicon of the Intimate Cities" (2011). He was born in 1960 in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine, and in 1985 founded the popular literary performance group "Bu-Ba-Bu" (Burlesque-Bluster-Boffoonery). He has published four poetry books – "The Songs for a Dead Rooster" (2004), "Exotic Birds and Plants" (1991, with new editions 1997 and 2002), "Downtown" (1989) and "Sky and Squares" (1985); five novels – "A Mystery" (2007), "12 Rings" (2003), "PerverZion" (1996), "Moscoviada" (1993), and "Recreations" (1992); and two collections of essays – "The Devil is in the Cheese" (2006) and "Disorientation in Locality" (1999).



**Michael Anti** is a journalist and political blogger for various Chinese and English-language media outlets and Associate Fellow with the Asia Society. As a public advocate for Internet freedom and online public diplomacy, he is one of the most influential microbloggers in China. He worked as a reporter at the Baghdad and Beijing bureaus of The New York Times. Mr. Anti has received Wolfson Press Fellowship at Cambridge University (2007), Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University (2008), and was a visiting scholar at University of Tokyo (2010). He has a degree in International Reporting from Shantou University.



**Aliaksandr Atroshchankau** was a journalist for Charter 97 in Belarus for 10 years. He was also a spokesman for the group European Belarus. During the Belarusian presidential election campaigns of 2010, Mr. Atroshchankau was a spokesman for candidate Andrei Sannikau. In December 2010, he was arrested covering the post-election demonstrations and later he was sentenced to four years in prison. In September 2011 he was released along with 10 other political prisoners.



**Aung Zaw** is Founding Editor and Director of The Irrawaddy newsmagazine. He also founded the Burma Information Group in Bangkok to shed light on human rights violations in Burma. Aung Zaw previously worked as a correspondent for Radio Free Asia and contributed to The Nation, The Bangkok Post and the Asian edition of The Wall Street Journal. As a student he was an activist and organizer of opposition to the Burmese military government.



**Shlomo Avineri** is Professor of Political Science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and member of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities. He served as Director-General of Israel's Foreign Ministry (1975–1977) and held visiting positions at Yale, Oxford and Central European University, among other places. His widely translated books include: "The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx" (1968), "Israel and the Palestinians" (1971), "Hegel's Theory of the Modern State" (1974), "The Making of Modern Zionism" (1981) and "Herzl: An Intellectual Biography" (2007).



**Ayman Ramadan Mohamed Ayad** is an engineer for the National Water Resources Plan. He is working to prepare a water plan for Egypt for 2017. Mr. Ayad is also a senior GIS and Hydraulic Analysis Engineer at the Alexandria Water Company. He teaches part time at the University Alexandria's Faculty of Engineering and is the Egyptian Coordinator for the Network of African Youth for Development. He has a Master's Degree from the University of Alexandria in Irrigational Engineering and Hydraulics.



**Sultan Barakat** is Founding Director of the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit at the University of York in the United Kingdom. A native of Jordan, he is currently leading a number of research programs for the UK's Department for International Development, the Economic and Social Research Council and Afghanistan's National Solidarity Program and is the co-moderator for the West Asia North Africa Forum. Mr. Barakat has pioneered practices in the field of conflict studies, post-conflict recovery and peace building. He is a Senior Adviser to the United Nations, the World Bank, the European Union, the International Labor Organization and the International Federation of the Red Cross.



**Zygmunt Bauman** is a Polish-British sociologist and philosopher, having served as Professor of Sociology and, at various times, Head of Department at Leeds University from 1971 until his retirement in 1991. He also has taught at Tel Aviv University and at the University of Warsaw. He gained prominence through his studies on the connection between the culture of modernity and totalitarianism. He became known for works such as "Legislators and Interpreters" (1987), "Modernity and the Holocaust" (1989), "Modernity and Ambivalence" (1991) and "Postmodern Ethics" (1993). His most recent publications are "Culture in Liquid-Modern Times" (2012), and "This is not a Diary" (2012).



**Ales Bialiatski** is President of Viasna Human Rights Centre and Vice-Chairman of International Federation for Human Rights. He was a nominee for the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize. Mr. Bialiatski was arrested by Belarusian authorities on tax evasion charges in 2011 and sentenced to four-and-a-half years in prison, which has been widely recognized as a political charged prosecution. Mr. Bialiatski imprisonment has been followed by numerous appeals from international organizations for his release. He has won multiple awards, including the Homo Homini Award and the Per Anger Prize for his efforts in promoting

human rights and democracy. In September 2012, Mr. Bialiatski was announced the winner of the Lech Walesa Award. Ales Bialiatski was invited to the Forum 2000 Conference, but was unable to attend as he remains imprisoned for political reasons.



**Igor Blažević** is Founder of One World Film Festival, the biggest human rights film festival in Europe, which is based in Prague. A native of Bosnia and Herzegovina, he is also a steering committee member of World Movement for Democracy, a member of the Forum 2000 Program Council and was formerly Director of the Human Rights and Democracy Department of People in Need (1994–2010). Mr. Blažević studied Philosophy and Comparative Literature at Zagreb University.



**Endre B. Bojtár** is Editor-in-Chief and Publisher of Magyar Narancs in Hungary since 1999. As a journalist he has written on Central Europe, the Balkans, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Lithuania and Northern Ireland. He published a book of reportage on Central Europe, "Sins Without a Master" (1999). Mr. Bojtár also has an interest in examining the national myths of Central and Eastern Europe as well as the dynamics of ethnic tensions and conflict.



**David Brauchli** is Communications Director at Piano Media, based in Slovakia. An American, he was a professional news photographer for nearly 20 years and worked for Reuters, Agence France Press, European Pressphoto Agency, the Associated Press, The New York Times, Sygma, Corbis and helped found Newsmakers, the first online photo agency that was the nexus of Getty Images. Mr. Brauchli graduated from Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Journalism in 1986. He was three-time Pulitzer Prize Finalist for his work from Sarajevo, South Africa and Grozny.



**Petr Brod** was Prague Bureau Chief for the BBC (2000–2006) and Prague Correspondent and News Sub-editor in Munich for the Süddeutsche Zeitung (1993–1996, 1998–2000). He is a native Czech. Previously, Mr. Brod held several posts at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Munich and Prague (1987–1993). Between 1980 and 1987, he worked at the radio and TV services of the BBC in London. He is the author of a book on Soviet-Israeli relations before 1956. Mr. Brod studied at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich, the London School of Economics and Harvard University.



**Martin Bursík** is Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Environment of the Czech Republic (1998 and 2007–2009) and former Chairman of the Green Party (2005–2009). He worked as a consultant on energy and environmental protection and as Director of Ecoconsulting. Prior to this he served as a member of Prague City Council (1994–1998), including the position of the Chairman of the Environmental Committee. As a member of the Czech National Council, he co-authored the law on the protection of nature and landscape. He was one of the founding members of the Civic Forum (1989) and holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Protection from Charles University.



**Martin Bútora** is Honorary President of the Institute for Public Affairs (IVO), an independent public policy think tank established in 1997 in Bratislava. A sociologist by training, he was one of the founders of the Public Against Violence movement in Slovakia in November 1989 and served as a Human Rights Advisor to Czechoslovak President Václav Havel from 1990 to 1992. He was Slovak Ambassador to the U.S. (1999–2003) and has written and edited a number of books and studies on social transformation, foreign policy, and civil society, including IVO's annual series, "Global Report on the State of Society."



**Nico Carpentier** is an Associate Professor at the Communication Studies Department of the Free University of Brussels (VUB) and a lecturer at Charles University in Prague. A Belgian, he is also Vice-president of the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA) and an executive board member of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR). His theoretical focus is on discourse theory, and research interests are situated in the relationship between media, journalism, politics and culture.



**Kavi Chongkittavorn** is a former Editor-at-Large of The Nation, the Bangkok-based English daily, where he has been a journalist for nearly three decades, covering domestic and international affairs as well as commentaries and editorials. He served as a special assistant to Secretary General of ASEAN (1994–1995) before returning to The Nation as Executive Editor. He was a bureau chief in Phnom Penh (1987–1988) and Hanoi (1988–1990). He was a Reuters Fellow at Oxford University (1993–1994) and a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University (2000–2001). Currently, he is a columnist at The Nation, the vernacular language Nation Sudsubda (Nation Weekender) and Kom Chat Luek Daily.



**Jennifer Chou** is Deputy Director of Programming for Radio Free Asia, supervising the development of programs for Mandarin, Cantonese, Tibetan, Uyghur and Korean services. In her prior position, she led RFA's Mandarin service, establishing it as a leading broadcaster for breaking stories from inside China. In 2007–2008, Ms. Chou wrote a weekly blog about China for The Weekly Standard magazine. Born in Taiwan and educated in the United States, Ms. Chou received a Ph.D. in East Asian Studies and an M.A. in comparative literature from UCLA.



**Václav Cílek** is a Czech geologist, writer, author and moderator of radio and TV shows about science, he is the former Director of the Geological Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences. Mr. Cílek also worked in the Center for Theoretical Studies (1994–2001) and at the Mining Institute of the Academy of Sciences (1980–1990). He received the Vize 97 Prize and the Tom Stoppard Award for his books "Landscapes of Inner and Outer" and "Makom."



**Emil Constantinescu** is a former President of Romania (1996–2000). He was a founding member and Vice President of the Civic Alliance Foundation, an NGO that was influential in the country's democratic transition. In 1992, he was elected President of the University of Bucharest, where he had graduated with a law degree and then returned to earn a Ph.D. in Geology and teach. He was named European Statesmen of the Year by the Institute for East-West Studies in 1998. Mr. Constantinescu is a member of the Board of Directors for the World Justice Project.



**William Cook** is Distinguished Teaching Professor in the State University of New York at Geneseo and Visiting Professor of Religion and History at Wabash College. He received a Ph.D. in Medieval History from Cornell University. He is the author of six books, mostly about the Franciscan movement, has won numerous awards for teaching excellence, and has lectured throughout the world, including recently in Italy, Slovakia, China, the Philippines, and Kenya. Dr. Cook has been deeply involved with the issue of abandoned and abused children, adopting three teenage boys and being legal guardian for eight others.





**Ingrid Deltenre** is Director General of the European Broadcasting Union. She was previously CEO of Schweizer Fernsehen, the leading public TV broadcaster in German-speaking Switzerland. Ms. Deltenre was also CEO of Publisuisse (1999–2004), the commercial unit of SRG SSR and the leading marketer of television in Switzerland. She has also held the positions of Chief Marketing Officer and Member of the Executive Committee Switzerland at Swisscard AECS (1998–1999) and worked at CASH (1991–1998), a business weekly. She is a Dutch national and speaks Dutch, German, English and French.



**Susi Dennison** is Policy Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations since March 2010. She writes and comments on human rights and democracy in the EU's external policy, the transitions in North Africa and is co-authoring the ECFR Scorecard 2013. Prior to ECFR she worked for Amnesty International, carrying out advocacy on human rights protection and promotion in the EU's relationship with Africa, Asia and the Americas. She began her career in the UK Treasury where she held a range of positions, and later worked in the Home Office.



**Gwen Dillard** is Director of the Africa Division of Voice of America, since 2001. She oversees news coverage and programming in 13 languages delivered to sub-Saharan Africa. Before coming to Voice of America, her career in private broadcasting included positions in radio and television news reporting in Washington and Boston, as well as in broadcast management. She has won a number of awards for outstanding journalism and has published an article on the practice of journalism with Boston University Press. Ms. Dillard is a graduate of Oberlin College and was a Peace Corps volunteer in Guinea.



**Doris Donnelly** is Director of The Cardinal Suenens Center at John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio. The Center was established and funded by Mrs. J. Peter Grace of New York City and it exists to serve the unfinished agenda of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). Professor Donnelly has served as President of Pax Christi, the international Catholic peace movement, and also as President of the North American Academy of Liturgy, an ecumenical association of liturgical scholars. She is the author of several books.



**Jeremy Druker** is Executive Director of Transitions (TOL), a media organization he co-founded in 1999 that publishes a newsmagazine on Central and Eastern Europe and runs journalism training programs. In addition to being an Ashoka Fellow, he is a member of the board of the Fulbright Commission in the Czech Republic and a member of the board of Novinářská cena, the Czech journalism prizes. Mr. Druker, an American, teaches a course in social media at New York University in Prague. He holds a bachelor's degree from Harvard and a master's in international affairs from Columbia University.



**Yuri Dzhibladze** is President of the Center for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights, a Moscow-based public policy and advocacy NGO he founded in 1998. He has participated in missions to conflict zones in the Caucasus and with Committee for Anti-War Actions during the first war in Chechnya. He is a member of the Council on Civil Society and Human Rights with the President of Russia, a member of the Expert Council of the Ombudsman of Russia, a member of the steering committee of the World Movement for Democracy, and a member of the NGO Secretariat of the Community of Democracies.



**Martin Ehl** is Chief International Editor of the Czech daily Hospodářské noviny. He has worked as a journalist since 1992, as a reporter at the dailies Hospodářské noviny, MF Dnes, Lidové noviny and weekly Týden. In 1999, he was a research fellow at the Institute of International Relations, Prague. Mr. Ehl has been an Assistant Professor at West-Bohemian University, Pilsen (2001–2006) and Metropolitan University, Prague (2009–2011). He is the co-author of several textbooks and author of recently published book "The Third Decade: On Life, People and Politics Between Brussels and Gazprom." He holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Charles University.



**Norman L. Eisen** is U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic, since 2011. Ambassador Eisen previously served as Special Counsel to the President for Ethics and Government Reform in the White House, prior to that he was the Deputy General Counsel to the Obama-Biden Presidential Transition. Before entering the Administration, Ambassador Eisen was a partner in the Washington D.C. law firm Zuckerman Spaeder. He is the co-founder of Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, a government watchdog group.



**Jørgen Ejlbøl** is Chairman of JP Politikens Hus A/S Media Group and Vice Chairman of the Jyllands-Posten Foundation. He was previously Editor-in-Chief and Managing Director of Morgenavisen Jyllands-Posten. Mr. Ejlbøl has held managerial positions in several media organizations in Denmark and elsewhere, including Serbia and Russia. He was an editor at numerous Danish newspapers including *Fyens Amts Avis*, *Dagbladet*, *Weekendavisen*, *Berlingske Aften*, *BT*, *Billed Bladet*, and *Berlingske Tidende*.



**Tomáš Etzler** is a journalist, reporter, editor and producer. Since 1999 he has worked for CNN acting, among other duties, as its war correspondent in Haiti, Iraq and Afghanistan. Since 2006, he has been working for Czech Television as a reporter in China. He also worked as the external reporter for the Czech weekly *Respekt* and for the daily newspaper *Lidové noviny*.



**Gareth Evans** is a former Minister of Foreign Affairs for Australia (1988–1996) and currently Chancellor of the Australian National University. He was also a Cabinet Minister (1983–1996) and former President of the Brussels-based International Crisis Group (2000–2009). Mr. Evans was Co-chair of the International Commissions on Intervention and State Sovereignty (2000–2001) and Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (2008–2010). He is author of *“The Responsibility to Protect: Ending Mass Atrocity Crimes Once and For All”* (2009), among other books.



**Bay Fang** is U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. She has overseen public diplomacy and public affairs since December 2011. She was previously Diplomatic Correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune*. She also reported on the wars in Afghanistan (2001–2002) and Iraq (2003–2004) for *U.S. News and World Report*. Fang was awarded the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award for her story *“China’s Stolen Wives”* during her time as Beijing Bureau Chief for *U.S. News and World Report* (1999).



**Jan Fischer** is a former Czech Prime Minister (2009–2010), and a candidate in the 2013 presidential election. Mr. Fischer most recently worked as Vice President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Prior to entering politics, he was the president of the Czech Statistical Office (2003–2010). He is a member of the Czech Statistical Society, the International Statistics In-

stitute and is on the board of Bruegel, a European economics think tank. Mr. Fischer is a graduate of the University of Economics, Prague.



**Pavel Fischer** is Political Director at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and formerly Ambassador to France (2003–2010), he worked in the Office of the President as a Press Expert, Vice Spokesman and as Director of Political Department. He served as a Chairman of the Administrative Board of Forum 2000 Foundation (1999–2003) and in 2010 he was awarded the prestigious French Order of the Legion of Honor for his achievements in the field of Czech–French bilateral relations.



**Jefim Fištejn** is a journalist and external associate for the public radio stations ČRo 6 and ČRo 2. He is a member of the Collegium of the General Director for both Czech Television and Czech Radio. Mr. Fištejn formerly served as Editor-in-Chief of the daily *Lidové noviny* and political commentator for the RFE/RL in Vienna. He is the author of numerous articles, commentaries and essays published in the Czech, Russian, German and British press, as well as several books and documentary film scripts. He was born in Kyiv, completed journalism studies at the Lomonosov University in Moscow and philology studies in Vienna.



**Kiichi Fujiwara** is Professor of International Politics at the University of Tokyo. He has held positions at Chiba University, the University of the Philippines, Johns Hopkins University, University of Bristol, and was selected as a fellow of the Woodrow Wilson International Center at Washington D.C. He is known for his writings on international affairs, including *“War Unleashed”* (2007), *“Peace for Realists”* (2004), *“Is There Really a Just War?”* (2003), *“A Democratic Empire”* (2002) and *“Remembering the War”* (2001).



**Štefan Füle** is European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy (since February 2010), former Minister for European Affairs (2009) and former Deputy Defense Minister (2001–2002). Mr. Füle served as Czech Permanent Representative to NATO (2005–2009), Czech Ambassador to the United Kingdom and to Lithuania. He was Director of the Security Policy Department and the United Nations Department at the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He studied at the Faculty of Philosophy of Charles University and at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations.



**Steven Gan** is Editor of Malaysiakini.com. He previously worked for The Nation, a Bangkok newspaper, and as Special Issues Editor and as a columnist for The Sun in Malaysia. After reporting on protests during the 1996 Asia Pacific Conference on East Timor, he was arrested and jailed for five days. Amnesty International named Mr. Gan a prisoner of conscience. Malaysiakini received the Free Media Pioneer Award from the International Press Institute in 2001, and Mr. Gan received the Committee to Protect Journalists' International Press Freedom Award in 2000.



**Jeffrey Gedmin** is CEO and President of the Legatum Institute. He was formerly President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Prague. An American, Mr. Gedmin has been the director of the Aspen Institute Berlin (2001–2007) and Executive Director of The New Atlantic Initiative (1996–2001). He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and has a Ph.D. in German Area Studies and Linguistics from Georgetown University.



**Jared Genser** is President and Founder of Freedom Now, an NGO that works to free prisoners of conscience worldwide, and Managing Director of Perseus Strategies, LLC, a law firm that focuses on public international law and human rights projects. An American, he is former Visiting Fellow with the National Endowment for Democracy. He has counseled and represented clients including former President Václav Havel, and Nobel Peace Prize Laureates Aung San Suu Kyi, Liu Xiaobo, Desmond Tutu and Elie Wiesel. He is co-editor of "The Responsibility to Protect: The Promise of Stopping Mass Atrocities in Our Times" (2011).



**Klaas Glenewinkel** is Founder and Managing Director of Media in Cooperation and Transition (MICT), Germany's largest private NGO and for Media Development and Plural Mediaservices, a new media planning agency focused on conflict and post conflict countries. He was the CEO of Streaminister, a start-up for live Internet broadcasting and founded Kulturserver, the biggest German online community for artists and Head of Production at Ponton European Media Art Lab in Hanover. He has been an Ashoka Fellow since 2011.



**David Grey** is Professor in Water Policy, School of Geography and Environment at University of Oxford, since 2009. He has been Chair of the World Bank's Water Resources Management Group and Board Member of the World Water Council. He is a Fellow of the Geological Society and currently on an international panel of experts for the Mekong River Commission and on an advisory panel for the World Bank's Ganges Strategic Assessment, as well as an advisor to the Bank's Nile Team.



**Suzana Grubješić** is Serbia's Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration. She also held the position of Deputy Whip for the parliamentary group United Regions of Serbia (URS). Ms. Grubješić previously served as the Project Manager of the European Movement in Serbia (1996–1997), and at the same position at NGO G17 PLUS (1997–2003). She was also Executive Director of G17 PLUS (2003–2008). Ms. Grubješić was G17 PLUS MP in the Serbian Parliament from 2003, and in 2007 she became G17 PLUS whip.



**Tomáš Halík** is Professor of Philosophy at Charles University in Prague, Pastor of the Academic Parish in Prague and President of the Czech Christian Academy. He is also a writer and a member of the European Academy of Science and Art, has lectured at various universities around the world and has been involved in international efforts to promote dialogue and understanding between religions and cultures. In 1992, Pope John Paul II appointed him Advisor to the Pontifical Council for Dialogue with Non-Believers and in 2008, Pope Benedict XVI granted him the title of Monsignor.



**Jiro Hanyu** is Chairman of The Sasakawa Peace Foundation since 2008. He played a leading role in adopting the International Committee for Establishment of Maritime Safety System in Micronesia and was a Japanese government official for more than 33 years, where he held various positions, including Vice-Minister for Transport and International Affairs. Mr. Hanyu graduated from Tokyo University in 1969 with a Bachelor's Degree in Economics.



**Miklós Haraszti** is Human Rights Advocate and served the maximum two terms as the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media (2004–2010). A former Member of Hungarian Parliament (1990–1994), he has lectured on democratization and media politics at numerous universities. In 1976, he co-founded the Hungarian Democratic Opposition Movement and in 1980 became Editor of the samizdat periodical *Beszélő*. His books include “A Worker in a Worker’s State” and “The Velvet Prison.” From November 1, he will serve as the United Nation’s Rapporteur on Human Rights in Belarus.



**Ivan M. Havel** is a scientist and former Director of the Center for Theoretical Study, an international cross-disciplinary institution affiliated with Charles University and the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic. His fields of interest are theoretical computer science, artificial intelligence, cognitive sciences, and related philosophical issues. He graduated from the Czech Technical University, holds a Ph.D. in Computer Science from the University of California at Berkeley and is a member of the Academy of Europe. He is the brother of the late former Czech President Václav Havel and was a co-founder of the Civic Forum.



**Janina Hřebíčková** is a former Czech Ambassador to Kosovo and Ambassador-at-Large to the CPA in Iraq. She was Director of the Human Rights and Transition Policy Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2011–2012), and currently works on special projects for the Ministry’s Strategy, Analysis and Project Management Office. Prior to her Foreign Ministry work, she served on four United Nations peacekeeping missions. Ms. Hřebíčková’s early career was as a journalist for Czech and international news organizations. She holds a Master’s from Charles University in Prague, and a Ph.D. in Comparative Linguistics and Literature.



**Hu Yong** is Professor at Peking University’s School of Journalism and Communication. He is a noted new media critic and Internet pioneer and has worked for the China Daily, Lifeweek, China Internet Weekly and China Central Television and is co-founder of the Digital Forum of China, a nonprofit organization that promotes public awareness of digitalization and advocates a free and responsible Internet. His publications include “Internet: The King Who Rules,” and “The Rising Cacophony: Personal Expression and Public Discussion in the Internet Age.”



**Ellen Hume** is an Annenberg Fellow in Civic Media at Central European University’s Center for Media and Communication Studies. She was formerly a Research Director at the MIT Media Lab, Executive Director of Harvard University’s Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, White House correspondent for The Wall Street Journal, and a reporter and television commentator for other U.S. media. She resided in Prague from 1998–2000 and has lived in Budapest since 2009. She is a Harvard graduate with an honorary doctorate from Kenyon College.



**Karel Hvíždala** is a Czech journalist, writer and playwright. He studied engineering and later political science as well as German and German literature. Now a freelancer, Mr. Hvíždala has been a chief-reporter and the chairman of MAFRA, publisher of the daily newspaper MF Dnes. He also worked as Co-founder and Co-publisher of the newsmagazine Týden. He spent 1978–1990 in exile in West Germany, where he cooperated with Radio Free Europe, Deutschlandfunk and the BBC. Mr. Hvíždala has written thirty books of interviews, five books of prose, more than twenty broadcasting plays and five books on media.



**Regis Iglesias** is a member of the Christian Liberation Movement (MCL), since 1989. He has, since 1996, been a spokesman and member of its Coordinating Council. Mr. Iglesias was arrested in March 2003 and sentenced to 18 years in prison with 74 other opposition activists, leading Amnesty International to name him a prisoner of conscience. He was exiled to Spain in August 2010 and lives in Madrid today as a political refugee. His writings have been published in Spain and elsewhere. He previously worked as a journalist in Cuba.



**Motoshige Itoh** is a professor at the Graduate School of Economics and the Faculty of Economics at the University of Tokyo. He is also President of the National Institute for Research Advancement, one of the leading think tanks in Japan. Mr. Itoh has been on various committees for the Prime Minister and various ministries in Japan. He has conducted research on international trade, Japanese industrial policies, and industrial organization. Mr. Itoh holds a B.A. in Economics from the University of Tokyo and a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Rochester.





**František Janouch** is Founder and the Chairman of the Charter 77 Foundation. After the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 he lost his job and was driven into exile in Sweden, where he founded the Charter 77 Foundation. The Foundation played a huge role in helping dissidents in Czechoslovakia. Mr. Janouch represented the European Union in Kyiv as Deputy Director of the Science and Technology Center in Ukraine (1996–2000). In the 1970s and 1980s, he was a Visiting Professor in Nuclear Physics at the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm.



**Josef Jařab** is former Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defense and Security. He is also a former member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. Mr. Jařab was Rector and President of the Central European University in Budapest and Warsaw and of Palacký University in Olomouc. In 1990, he was named Professor of English and American Literature. He has represented Czech humanities in the European Science Foundation and is a member of the Observatory of the Bologna Magna Charta Universitatum.



**Aleksander Kaczorowski** is Editor-in-Chief of Aspen Review Central Europe, a quarterly journal that covers a broad range of topics from the perspective of Central and Eastern Europe. He was previously Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Newsweek Polska, Chief Editor of the op-ed section of Gazeta Wyborcza and an editor of Central European Journal, a monthly supplement to Gazeta Wyborcza. Kaczorowski is the author of several books and translations from Czech literature and a regular contributor to Polish and Czech newspapers.



**David Keyes** is Executive Director of Advancing Human Rights and Co-founder of CyberDissidents.org. He served as a coordinator for democracy programs for Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky and assisted a former UN ambassador. Keyes is a contributor to Newsweek/The Daily Beast and created the First Annual Saudi Women's Grand Prix. An American, he graduated with honors from UCLA in Middle Eastern Studies and completed a M.A. in Diplomacy at Tel Aviv University. He speaks fluent Hebrew and Arabic.



**Tomáš Klvaňa** is Executive Director of the Zdeněk Bakala Non-Profit Programs. He oversaw the development of the Czech branch of the Aspen Institute, where he is also Vice President of the Board of Directors. Mr. Klvaňa also serves on the Board of Directors of Economia Publishing, and the Board of the Harvard Club of Prague. He previously worked as a Special Government Communications Envoy for the Missile Defense Program, and Press Secretary and Policy Adviser for Czech President Václav Klaus.



**Gordana Knežević** is Director of RFE/RL's South Slavic and Albanian Language Services. She previously worked as an online editor with Reuters in Canada, while regularly contributing to the Toronto Star and CBC Radio. Before relocating to Canada, Ms. Knežević lived in Bosnia, where she was the Deputy Editor of Oslobođenje, an internationally recognized Sarajevo-based daily that never stopped publishing during the Bosnian War. For her work there, she received the Courage in Journalism Award from the International Women's Media Foundation.



**Ko Ko Gyi** led peaceful rallies on the University of Rangoon campus in 1988. He was actively involved in the 8-8-88 uprising and was appointed the Vice-Chairman of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU). In December 1991, he was arrested for participating in a student gathering at the University of Rangoon to celebrate Aung San Suu Kyi being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, resulting in a 20 year hard labor sentence. He was released in March 2005. His most recent incarceration came in November 2008, when he was sentenced to 65 years in prison. He was released in January 2012.



**Kyaw Thu** is Director of Paung Ku, a Burmese organization he founded in 2011. The group is a civil society strengthening project that provides funding and capacity building to local civil society organizations. Their work focuses on poor and marginalized communities with an emphasis on improving the delivery of services, strengthening networking and organizing advocacy projects.



**Ales Lahviniets** is an activist with the Movement for Freedom in Belarus. Since 2007, he has worked as an advisor to Dr. Alyaksandar Milinkevich. Mr. Lahviniets has run as a candidate for several recent elections in Minsk. He is also a lecturer, political commentator and the author of a number of articles on the pol-

itics foreign policy of Belarus. He has an M.A. in Political Science from Institute for Political Studies in Strasbourg, a Diploma from the Polish Diplomatic Academy and is currently a visiting scholar at the Jagellonian University.



**Yaakov Levy** is Israel's Ambassador to the Czech Republic. He entered the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1970 and during his career he has worked for the Consulate General of Israel in New York, as a Counselor at the embassy in Rome. He was Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva (2000–2004). He has worked in the Public Affairs, Education and Human Resource departments and later as CEO of Press and Public Relations department for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



**Pierre Lévy** is French Ambassador to the Czech Republic. He served as Director of the Policy Planning Staff of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was Secretary General of the Commission of the White Paper on France's Foreign and European Policy and Head of the Service for Common Foreign and Security Policy (2002–2005). Mr. Lévy was Deputy Director in the cabinet of Pierre Moscovici, Minister for European Affairs (1997–2002). Mr. Lévy taught at the École Nationale d'Administration and at the Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris.



**Ondřej Liška** is Chairman of the Green Party since 2009. He previously served as Minister of Education, Youth and Sport (2007–2009) and as Member of the Parliament of the Czech Republic. He previously worked with the Forum 2000 Foundation and also served as Chairman of the Czech-Austrian Discussion Forum (2003–2004). Mr. Liška was a member of the local municipal assembly in Brno for the Green Party and worked as an advisor on the Cohesion Policy and Structural Funds to the Green Group in the European Parliament.



**Liu Xiaobo** is the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, recognized for his struggle for fundamental human rights in China while serving his fourth prison term. He is the first person since Von Ossietzky to be denied the right to have a representative to collect the Nobel Prize for him. Mr. Xiaobo was detained in December 2008 because of his leading role with the Charter '08 manifesto. Prior to that he was President and Editor-in-Chief of Minzhu Zhongguo (Democratic China) electronic journal. He served as President of the Independent Chinese

PEN Centre (2003–2007) and has been a visiting scholar at Columbia University, the University of Oslo, and the University of Hawaii.

Liu Xiaobo was invited to the Forum 2000 Conference, but is unable to attend as he is imprisoned for political reasons.



**Jan Macháček** is a Czech journalist and economic commentator for the daily Hospodářské noviny and the weekly Respekt. In 2000, he served as Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Respekt and was awarded the Ferdinand Peroutka Award in 2009. Mr. Macháček was a Fellow of the National Forum Foundation in Washington and of the William Davidson Institute at the University of Michigan. Mr. Macháček was a member of the underground music band The Plastic People of the Universe.



**Ahmad Mango** is an Advisor to His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal, since 1970. He was a member of the Higher Planning Committee, Ministry of Planning (1975–1995) and a Member of the Board of Directors of the Central Bank of Jordan (1989–1992), and Member of The Board of Directors of the Amman Stock Exchange (1983–1989). He is currently a Member of the Board of Directors of a number of Jordanian companies, including Société Générale de Banque Jordanie.



**Jürgen Marten** is a member of the Transparency International Board of Directors. He was also actively involved in founding the organization. In addition to his role on the Board of Directors, Mr. Marten worked as the Ethics Officer and Counsel for Transparency International Germany. Prior to joining Transparency International, Marten was the Founding Director of the Institute for Cultural Research at the Art College.



**Martina Mašková** is a journalist with Rádio Česko. She studied journalism in Angers, France and worked for the BBC Czech section in Prague and London. Her work placements include Radio France La Rochelle and Deutsche Welle in Cologne. As a reporter she travelled with Czech prime ministers and President Václav Havel. Ms. Mašková is the author of radio documentaries made in the Czech Republic, Germany, Switzerland, Israel and Namibia.



**Ivo Mathé** is Rector at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. He became the first General Director of Czech Television in 1991 and remained in this position until early 1998. For part of this time (1995–1998), he also served as Vice President of the European Broadcasting Union. He was the Head of the Office of the President of the Republic for Václav Havel (1999–2003). Since 1990 he has been a lecturer at FAMU, and since 2005 he has been Rector of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague. He serves as a member of Board of Directors of Czech Technical University in Prague and the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague.



**Dan Meredith** is Director of Internet Freedom Program at Radio Free Asia. He was previously Senior Technology Fellow at the New America Foundation in Washington, D.C. and a Senior Producer and Technologist at Al Jazeera Network in Doha, Qatar. He has consulted with U.S. government agencies including the Federal Communications Commission, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Department of State, and the Department of Defense.



**Wolfgang Michalski** is Managing Director of WM International, a company providing strategic intelligence and policy advice to business, governments and international organizations. From 1980 until 2001, he served as Chief Advisor to the Secretary-General of the OECD, responsible for the analysis and evaluation of emerging economic and social policy issues. He has published 13 books and more than 150 papers which have been translated into more than 10 languages. He is a native of Germany and holds a Ph.D. in economics and has been Professor of Economics at the University of Hamburg since 1972.



**Dunja Mijatović** is Representative on Freedom of the Media at the OSCE, since 2010. As one of the founders of the Communications Regulatory Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, she helped to create a legal, regulatory and policy framework for media. Ms. Mijatović was also involved in creating a self-regulatory Press Council and was elected Chair of the European Platform of Regulatory Agencies in 2007, the first non-EU Member State representative and the first woman to hold this post. As an expert on media and communications legislation, she worked in Armenia, Austria, Iraq, Jordan, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, Morocco and the United Kingdom.



**Alyksandar Milinkevich** is a Belarusian opposition leader and former presidential candidate (2006). He is also Chairman of Movement for Freedom. Mr. Milinkevich has authored more than 60 academic works dealing with laser equipment and technology, the history of culture, and the science and architecture of Belarus. He received the Sakharov Prize of the European Parliament in 2006. He holds a Ph.D. in Physics and Mathematical Science and regularly attends trainings and discussions in the United States, Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland and other countries.



**Min Yan Naing** is Co-founder of the Burmese pro-democracy youth movement Generation Wave, which was established in October 2007 in reaction to the Saffron Revolution. He and the other three co-founders were all activists involved with student demonstrations in 1996 and 1998. Generation Wave was initially formed by people between 15 and 25 years old, and much of their work involved new ways of spreading a pro-democracy message through hip hop music and the Internet.



**Núria Molina-Gallart** is Director of Policy and Research at Save the Children UK. She has previously served as Director of Eurodad, as Policy and Development Officer at the European Anti-Poverty Network and as an Executive Officer at the Ubuntu Network in Barcelona. Ms. Molina-Gallart was a consultant for the World Federalist Movement and the UN Financing for Development Office in New York. She holds a M.Sc. in Political Theory from the London School of Economics and a DEA in European Politics from the College of Europe in Bruges.



**Alexander Morozov** is a journalist, political scientist and blogger. He is creator of the Moscow bloggers' club. At present, he is also Editor-in-Chief at Russian Journal Magazine and a columnist for OpenSpace.ru. He formerly served as a Head of Department at the Daily News on M-BIO (Co-Ordination Center of the Informal Movement) and a reporter at the Department for Communist Education at the Teacher's Newspaper. He has written for Ogoniok, Komsomolskaya Pravda, Russian Thought, Independent Paper and is one of the 50 most quoted bloggers in Russia.



**Surendra Munshi** is a retired Professor of Sociology at the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta. He was the academic leader of an international project on good governance involving European and Indian institutions of higher education and research that was supported by the European Commission. More recently, he delivered a keynote speech on the future of democracy at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology in Karlsruhe Dialogues 2012. He earned his doctoral degree in Sociology from Bielefeld University, Germany.



**Jolyon Naegele** is Political Director for the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). He previously worked as a staff correspondent covering Eastern and Southeastern Europe for RFE/RL, Voice of America and Business International. Mr. Naegele, an American, began reporting regularly from the former Yugoslavia, including Kosovo, from the mid-1980s, eventually covering the country's break-up. He has an M.A. in International Relations from Johns Hopkins University and a B.A. in International Relations from City College of New York.



**Tarik Nesh Nash** is a Moroccan electronic activist and the CEO of Software Centre, a software R&D startup. He previously worked as a manager at Microsoft in Seattle and Beijing, and as a delegate in Iraq for the International Committee of the Red Cross. He is on the board of Transparency Maroc, the national chapter of Transparency International, and a member of the Regional Council of Human Rights. Mr. Nesh Nash founded political crowdsourcing initiatives related to constitutional drafting, election monitoring and fighting corruption.



**David Nichols** is Senior Executive Officer for EU Foreign Policy at Amnesty International. He hails from the United Kingdom and is based in Brussels.



**Valeriu Nicolae** is Founder and President of Policy Center for Roma and Minorities in Romania. He is presently a Senior Consultant for the Open Society Institute. Mr. Nicolae previously served as Deputy Director and Interim Executive Director of the European Roma Information Office in Brussels. He works with

UEFA and FIFA on anti-racism campaigns and has published a host of books and articles on Roma issues, human rights and social inclusion. His latest book is "We are the Roma! One Thousand Years of Discrimination" (2012).



**Olusegun Obasanjo** is a former President of Nigeria (1976–1979 and 1999–2007) and former Chief of Staff of Supreme Headquarters in the Nigerian Army. He became President (1976–1979) after the death of President Murtala Mohammed and was the first military head of state in Nigeria to peacefully transfer power to a democratically elected government. In 1999, he ran as candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and was reelected in 2003. He is a member of the Africa Progress Panel and United Nations Special Envoy to the Democratic Republic of Congo.



**Karl Auguste Offmann** is the former President of the Republic of Mauritius. He was elected as President in February 2002 and he served in the post until October 2003. Mr. Auguste Offmann was a full-time politician from 1976 to 2002. As a Minister of Economic Planning and Development he was entrusted to convince the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to limit cuts to the country's civil service and preserve free health and education services. His success helped laid the groundwork for economic growth and some ten years later the trend was deemed the "Mauritian Miracle."



**Ruth Oniang'o** is Executive Director of the Rural Outreach Program. She was formerly a Member of Kenyan Parliament (2003–2007), also serving as Shadow Minister of Education. Ms. Oniang'o served on the boards of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Agriculture Strategy Advisory Committee, International Fertilizer Development Center. She is the founder of the African Journal of Food, Agriculture, Nutrition and Development and has taught at the University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology.



**Rosa María Payá** is daughter of the prominent Cuban dissident Oswaldo Payá, who died in a 2012 car accident under mysterious circumstances. Ms. Payá is a member of the movement Christian Liberation Movement, a movement that was founded and lead by her father in opposition to the one-party rule of the Cuban Communist Party. The late Oswaldo Payá was also the leader of the Varela Project, a petition drive in 2002 seeking a national referendum to



guarantee democracy in Cuba for which he was awarded the Sakharov Prize by the European Parliament in 2002.

Rosa María Payá accepted the invitation to the Forum 2000 Conference but has been denied permission to travel by the Cuban government.



**Ian Phillips** is News Director for East-Central Europe for the Associated Press. He is in charge of text, TV and photos from Poland to the Balkans. A native of Britain, Mr. Phillips has reported and edited from Europe, North America, Africa, Latin America and Asia for AP and was Deputy Europe Editor in London prior to moving to Prague in 2011. Prior to joining AP, Phillips worked in Argentina for Reuters and The Buenos Aires Herald.



**Petr Pokorný** is President of The Learned Society in Czech Republic. He previously served as Minister of Protestant Church in Prague. He was a member of the Council of the Government of Czech Republic for Research and Development. He was a Senior Research Fellow at the Center of Biblical Studies of the Academy of Sciences and Charles University in Prague, and taught at the University of Greifswald in Germany and Faculty of Protestant Theology in Prague.



**Oana Popescu** is a political analyst and Founder of Global Focus, a think-tank with a focus on Romania's Euro-Atlantic position. She is Editor-at-Large of the Romanian edition of Foreign Policy magazine. Ms. Popescu is also Director of the Center for Conflict Prevention and Early Warning in Bucharest and Secretary General of Romania Black Sea Gateway, a business association which promotes Romania as a regional hub for EU-Asia trade.



**Vesna Pusić** is Croatia's Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, she is a Vice President of the Croatian People's Party – Liberal Democrats, serving twice as its President, and a Vice President of European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party. Elected to Croatian Parliament in 2000, Ms. Pusić was Deputy Speaker (2003–2007) and Chairwoman of the National Committee for Monitoring EU Accession Negotiations (2008–2011). Since 1978 she has been employed at the University of Zagreb Department for Sociology of the Faculty of Philosophy, where she became full professor in 1988.



**Iveta Radičová** is a professor of sociology at Comenius University in Bratislava, and was Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic (2010–2012). She also served as Minister of Defense (2011–2012). Before that, she was a deputy in the Slovak National Parliament (2006–2009) and served as Minister of Labor, Social Affairs and Family (2005–2006). In 1992, she founded the non-profit Social Policy Analysis Centre, which she headed until being appointed Director of the Slovak Academy of Science's Institute of Sociology in 2005. She received her master's degree in sociology from Comenius University in Bratislava and her PhD. from the Slovak Academy of Sciences (1981).



**Mykola Riabchuk** is Senior Research Fellow at the Ukrainian Center for Cultural Studies in Kyiv, and a member of the editorial boards of Krytyka, Nowa Europa Wschodnia and the Journal of South Eastern Europe. He graduated from the Lviv Polytechnic Institute and the Gorky Literary Institute in Moscow, and has published a number of books and many articles on civil society, state and nation building, nationalism, national identity, and post-communist transition in the post-Soviet countries, primarily in Ukraine.



**Jan Ruml** is a Czech politician and human rights activist. He is a former Senator and Member of the Green Party. He was among the signatories of Charter 77 and became the movement's spokesman in 1990. Mr. Ruml co-founded the samizdat newspaper Lidové noviny and later the journal Respekt. He served as a member of Czechoslovakia Parliament after 1992 and served as Minister of Interior and Vice President of the Senate. For political reasons, he was several times refused admission for university studies and earned a law degree at age 51.



**Yoani Sánchez** is a Cuban blogger and activist. Her blog is available in more than 20 languages. She has received much international recognition for her work, including the Ortega y Gasset Prize, Spain's highest award for digital journalism. In 2008, Time magazine listed her as one of the world's 100 most influential people and Foreign Policy magazine named her one of the 10 Most Influential Latin American Intellectuals in 2008, and one of the World's Top Dissidents in 2010. She has recently published a book in English titled "Havana Real."

Yoani Sánchez accepted the invitation to the Forum 2000 Conference but has been denied permission to travel by the Cuban government.



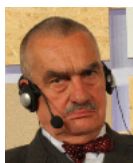
**Lobsang Sangay** is Sikyong, the democratically elected Tibetan political leader based in Dharamsala, India. He previously worked as Senior Fellow at Harvard University and organized conferences between the Dalai Lama and Chinese scholars. He has lectured at various universities and think-tanks throughout Europe, Asia and North America as an expert on Tibet, international human rights law, democratic constitutionalism and conflict resolution. In 2007, he was selected as the one of the 24 Young Leaders of Asia by the Asia Society. Dr. Sangay was the first Tibetan to graduate from Harvard Law School in 2004.



**Adrian Sarbu** is President and CEO of Central European Media Enterprises, since 2009. He is also the Founder of the Media Pro Group. Mr. Sarbu served as General Director and President of the Board of Pro TV in Romania. In 1997, Mr. Sarbu established a charitable foundation named Fundatia Pro that is focused on education. As State Secretary for Mass-Media in the first post-communist government of Romania in 1990, he promoted the first Romanian audiovisual law, which laid the foundation for independent private-owned television. He was a member of the first Council of the National Salvation Front during the Romanian Revolution of 1989.



**Yohei Sasakawa** is Chairman of The Nippon Foundation, one of the largest private foundations in Asia and a renowned Japanese leader in the philanthropic and NGO fields. He has initiated projects and worked on a global scale in such areas as public health, agricultural development, education and social welfare. He serves as the World Health Organization Goodwill Ambassador for Leprosy Elimination, as well as Japan's Goodwill Ambassador for the Human Rights of People Affected by Leprosy. Together with Václav Havel and Elie Wiesel, Mr. Sasakawa co-founded Forum 2000.



**Karel Schwarzenberg** is Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the TOP 09 party. He has already served as Minister of Foreign Affairs (2007–2009) and was a member of the Senate of the Czech Parliament (2004–2010). During the first half of 2009, he also served as the President of the Council of the European Union. He was President of the International Helsinki Committee for Human Rights (1984–1991) and former Chancellor to President Václav Havel. In 1991, he was awarded, together with Lech Walesa, the Council of Europe's Human Rights Award.



**Roger Scruton** is a British philosopher and political scientist. He is a Fellow of Blackfriars Hall at Oxford University, and Visiting Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. Mr. Scruton has written more than 40 books including "A Political Philosophy" (2006), "England: an Elegy" (2006) and "Beauty" (2009). He taught at the University of London (1971–1990) and at the University of Boston (1990–1993), before becoming a full-time writer and consultant. During the 1980s he played a part in founding and supporting underground universities in Prague, Brno and Bratislava.



**Tomáš Sedláček** is Chief of Macroeconomic Strategies of ČSOB Bank and a former member of the National Economic Council (NERV). He was advisor to the late Czech President Václav Havel and to the Minister of Finance (2004–2005). Mr. Sedláček lectures at Charles University. He is the author of numerous articles and a best-selling book "The Economics of Good and Evil." He studied at Yale University and holds a Ph.D. in Theoretical Economics from Charles University.



**Fatmir Sejdiu** is a former President of Kosovo (2006–2010). He took part in the Vienna negotiations with Serbia on the future status of Kosovo and was one of the authors of Kosovo's constitutional framework in 2001. Mr. Sejdiu was elected to parliament in both the 1992 and 1998 elections. He is a founding member of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) and was later elected as its president. Mr. Sejdiu remained a professor at the University of Priština, teaching throughout his tenure as an MP.



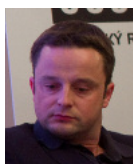
**Abu Bakr Shawky** is an Egyptian filmmaker and activist who divides time between Cairo and New York. His latest documentary "Martyr Friday," followed the events in Tahrir Square during the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. The film has been screened in 250 cities worldwide. It won Best Film Promoting Human Rights at the American International Film Festival and was an official selection at the Palm Springs, Raindance and Angelus film festivals. He is currently pursuing an M.F.A. in Filmmaking at New York University.



**Marta Smolíková** is Executive Director of Václav Havel Library. She previously held a variety of positions with the Soros Foundation (1993–2003) and founded ProCulture, a research, information and education center for arts and culture within the Open Society organization, which later developed into an independent civil society group. She is a board member of International Theatre Institute and other cultural centers in the Czech Republic and teaches Art Management at the Academy of Art and Design in Prague and Cultural Policy at The Academy of Performing Arts in Prague.



**Jan Šnidauf** is International Relations Officer at the Middle East division of the European External Action Service. He previously served in the Policy Unit of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and in the Strategy and Analyses Office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. Mr. Šnidauf was a senior research fellow specialized in the Middle East at the Association for International Affairs, and Project Coordinator at the Forum 2000 Foundation. He was a lecturer in international relations and European studies at Metropolitan University and Anglo-American University in Prague.



**Václav Sochor** is Editor-in-Chief for Czech Radio-Rádio Česko. He previously headed the foreign news section for the BBC, working both in London and Prague. He has worked at TV Nova and helped launch the television station Z1, where he hosted a weekly program. Mr. Sochor directed the media and communications journal Strategie and moderated the program Media and the World for Czech Television.



**Nicéphore Soglo** is Mayor of Cotonou since 2002, and was formerly President of the Republic of Benin (1991–1996). His 1991 election victory over an incumbent president is seen as a major benchmark in the development of African democracy. Mr. Soglo has served as Executive Director of the Central Bank of West African States and as an Executive Director on the Board of the World Bank. His academic career includes a fellowship at the Center for International Affairs at Harvard University and teaching at the National University of Benin.



**Radek Špicar** is Executive Director, Aspen Institute Prague. He also serves as Vice-President of the Confederation of Industry in Czech Republic and previously served as Director of External Affairs at Škoda Auto, responsible for relations with public institutions at national and European level, structural funds and the Corporate Social Responsibility concept. Mr. Špicar lectured at the Institute of Economic Studies at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague and at the Diplomatic Academy Prague. He studied at Charles University and the University of Cambridge.



**Jiří Stránský** is an author and the Director Emeritus of the Czech Centre of the International PEN club. A former political prisoner, Mr. Stránský has focused his literature on similar subject matters and his short stories were published under the title “Štěstí” (Happiness). His major works include the novels “Zdivočelá země” (Feral country) and “Aukce” (Auction), for which he subsequently wrote a film script and Czech Television broadcast as a series. Mr. Stránský is a recipient of Egon Hostovský Prize (1992), the French Order for Art and Literature (2002) and the Karel Čapek Prize (2006).



**András Stumpf** has been a journalist responsible for home affairs at the Hungarian weekly Heti Válasz since 2004. His articles – including reports, interviews and opinions are also published every week on the Heti Válasz online news portal as well. Besides journalism, he works as a teacher at the Heti Válasz Workshop and is a frequent analyst of politics on Hungarian television and radio shows. He received his diploma from the Péter Pázmány Catholic University majoring in Communication (Journalism) where he also studied German Language and Literature. In 2009, he received the Junior Prima Prize in the press category.



**SU Chi** is former Secretary General of the National Security Council (2008–2010) of Taiwan, a professor at Tamkang University's Institute of China Studies and Chairman of the Taipei Forum. Prior to this Dr. SU served in numerous government posts including as a Legislator (2005–2008) and National Policy Advisor to the President (1997). He has a Ph.D. from Columbia University and also worked as a Research Fellow at Harvard.



**Tamara Sujú** is a Venezuelan human rights lawyer and President of New National Awareness Foundation, which promotes human rights and democratic principles and provides legal support to political prisoners. Ms. Sujú is also founder of Fundapres, a foundation that provides aid to prisons throughout Venezuela, and Director of the Ladies in White – a group of wives, mothers and daughters of political prisoners. She has a Law Degree from Universidad Católica Andres Bello in Caracas.



**Jan Švejnar** is Director of the Center on Global Economic Governance at Columbia University and Founder and Chairman of the Executive and Supervisory Committee of CERGE-EI. He was runner-up in the 2008 Czech presidential election. Prior to this he was the Director of the International Policy Center at the University of Michigan, where he was also a Professor of Business, Economics and Public Policy. He served as Economic Advisor to President Václav Havel as well as the Founding Director of the Economics Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (1992–1999).



**Sava Tatić** is the Prague-based Managing Director of Sourcefabric. A native Serbian, he previously led the development of digital technology solutions for news media at Media Development Loan Fund (1999–2010). Mr. Tatić was Electronic Publications Editor and Associate Editor at Transitions (1997–1999) and Associate Editor at the Open Media Research Institute (1997–1998). Between 1992 and 1999, he was a writer and foreign correspondent at Vreme weekly.



**Enrique ter Horst** is former United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights. He is also a lawyer and political analyst. Prior to this, Mr. ter Horst was the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Haiti (1996–1997). He has also worked as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for El Salvador and Chief of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador. He served as a Deputy Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations and a representative to the Commission on Human Rights.



**U Ohn Kyaing** is a member of the Central Executive Committee for the National League for Democracy in Burma. He studied journalism before working for several newspapers and magazines. As a result of his participation in the People's Democratic Movement in 1988, he was forced to resign his position as Editor of the Botathaung newspaper. In 1990, he was elected as Member of Parliament for the NLD, before being imprisoned and sentenced to 17 years for "seditious pamphlets and threatening state security." Since his release in 2005, he has been again active in NLD.



**Jan Urban** is a Czech journalist and one of the leading dissidents during the communist regime. He is a professor at New York University in Prague. Mr. Urban was a member of the International Independent Commission on Kosovo and worked in Iraq training journalists and on heritage preservation projects (2003–2006). He served as a war correspondent in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1993–1996) and was the publisher of Transitions magazine (1997–1999). Mr. Urban made two documentary films on the Kosovo conflict and in November 1989, helped to found the Civic Forum, working as its spokesman.



**Jaroslav Valůch** is a One World Social Innovation Program Manager at International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival One World and co-organizes or facilitates variety of social innovation events in Czech Republic, Bosnia, Kazakhstan and Moldova. A native of the Czech Republic, Mr. Valůch provides consultations and trainings to activist initiatives in Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, Caucasus, Central Asia, Southeast Asia and elsewhere. He works closely with the media development organization Transitions (TOL). In 2010, he was a Fulbright Fellow at the University of Maryland.



**Magdaléna Vášáryová** is a member of the National Council for the Slovak Democratic and Christian Union – Democratic Party (since 2006). She served as State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2005–2006), as Czechoslovak Ambassador to Austria (1990–1993) and Slovak Ambassador to Poland (2000–2005). She was a candidate in the 1999 presidential election. She is the founder and director of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association and of the journals "Zahraničná politika" and "Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs." She has written five books related to diplomacy and etiquette.





**Josefina Vázquez Mota** is a Mexican politician and businesswoman who was a 2012 presidential candidate. She began her political career with PAN organization, eventually becoming a Member of Parliament as was the head of the PAN Parliamentary Group in the Chamber of Deputies, among other things.

As an economist, Ms. Vázquez Mota worked for various business organizations and was also formerly an editor for Novedades. She has an economics degree from the Universidad Iberoamericana.



**Franak Viachorka** is a member of the Young Front. He is a founder and formerly the chairman of the BPF Youth (2008–2009), the youth wing of the Belarusian Popular Front. Beginning in 2007, he was involved in the BPF Party, first as a Member of the Board and then the National Council and finally Chairman of the Commission on Culture. He has worked as a journalist and editor for several independent media outlets including BelaPAN, the monthly political newspaper Naviny BNF and the Belarusian Service of RFE/RL.



**Vintsuk Viachorka** is a Belarusian opposition activist. He is the former leader (1999–2007) of the major opposition party, the Belarusian National Front. He previously worked as a Professor at the Minsk State Pedagogical Institute and the Belarusian Humanities Lyceum, and as a journalist and Deputy Chief Editor of the culture magazine Spadčyna. Mr. Viachorka is the founder and head of an educational non-governmental organization, the Supolnaść Center and was head of the working group of the NGO Assembly of Belarus (1999–2000).



**Marites Vitug** is Chairwoman of the Advisory Board and a writer at Newsbreak magazine in The Philippines. She has written for various global media outlets, including The International Herald Tribune, Christian Science Monitor, Newsday, and Asahi Shimbun. In 2006, the Eurasia Group named her one of 50

Global Leaders for her work at Newsbreak. The author of several books, including “Shadow of Doubt: Probing the Supreme Court,” “Power from the Forest: the Politics of Logging,” and “Jalan-Jalan: A Journey through EAGA.” She was a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University.



**Vendeline von Bredow** is Deputy Europe Editor/Europe Online Editor for The Economist. She started to work for The Economist as a finance correspondent and was sent to Paris as European Business Correspondent. Later, she covered consumer goods, retail and marketing. Ms. Von Bredow took a leave of absence

to write the authorized biography of Italian businessman Giovanni Agnelli. Before joining The Economist, she worked for Merrill Lynch in London, as London correspondent for FT Deutschland and an editorial-page writer at The Wall Street Journal Europe in Brussels.



**Christopher Walker** is Executive Director of the National Endowment for Democracy’s International Forum for Democratic Studies. He previously served in Freedom House’s New York office as Vice President for Strategy and Analysis overseeing a team of analysts and senior scholars in devising overall strategy for Freedom House’s analytical projects. His articles on media freedom and democracy have appeared in a wide range of publications, including The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and Foreign Policy. He has served as an adjunct professor of global affairs at New York University and holds degrees from Binghamton University and Columbia University.



**Paul Wilson** is a Canadian author, editor, radio producer and translator. He helped establish The Walrus, serving as its Editor-in-Chief until 2004. Mr. Wilson has previously written for Books in Canada, The Idler magazine, CBC Radio, and The National Post, where he also edited the review section. He was a regular columnist for Our Homes magazine and is a contributor to The New York Review of Books. His translations of Czech writers like Josef Škvorecký, Václav Havel, Ivan Klíma, and Bohumil Hrabal are widely praised. Mr. Wilson was a member of the Czech psychedelic rock band The Plastic People of the Universe.



**Grigory Yavlinsky** is Professor of Economics at the State University – Higher School of Economics in Moscow. He is Co-founder and former Chairman of the Russian Democratic Party Yabloko (1993–2008). In 1996 and 2000 Mr. Yavlinsky was Yabloko’s official candidate for the Russian presidency. He served as a member of the Russian State Duma (1993–2003). He is Chairman of the Board of the Centre for Economic and Political Research. Since the mid-1990s, he has focused his efforts on tax and budget reforms.



**Yusmadi Yusoff** is a Member of Parliament of Malaysia for the People's Justice Party and a partner at a regional law firm specializing in public interest litigation and criminal defense cases. Mr. Yusoff is a fellow at the Institute for Policy Research, Founding Director of GERAK (Movement for Democracy and Anti-Corruption) and a Founding Member of Malaysia America Friendship Alumni Association. He writes a weekly column for the daily Utusan Malaysia.



**Michael Žantovský** is President of the Aspen Institute Prague and Czech Ambassador to the United Kingdom. He was previously member of the Senate of the Parliament of the Czech Republic (1997–2003), Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defense and Security and President of the Civic Democratic Alliance. Mr. Žantovský has also served as Czech Ambassador to the United States and Israel, and as Spokesman and Political Director of the President's Office for President Václav Havel. He is a founding member of the Civic Forum and of the Czech PEN Club.



Visitors take in the "Life As I Know It" photo exhibition, St. Martin in the Wall Church

# Forum 2000 Delegates 1997–2012

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**Tahir Abbas**, Director of Birmingham University's Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Culture, United Kingdom

**Sharif M. Abdullah**, Director of the Commonway Institute, USA

**Izzeldine Abuelaish**, Doctor and Peace Activist, Palestine

**Majdi Abed**, Deputy Director for Public Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France

**Hasan Abu Nimah**, Director, Regional Human Security Center, Jordan

**Nasr Hamid Abu-Zayd**, Scholar of Islamic Studies, Egypt

**Patricia Adams**, Economist and Executive Director of Probe International, Canada

**Akyaaba Addai-Sebo**, Consultant on Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Transformation, United Kingdom

**Mohammad Afzal Khan**, Former Lord Mayor of Manchester, United Kingdom

**Farish Ahmad-Noor**, Historian and Political Scientist, Malaysia

**Yilmaz Akyuz**, Economist and Scholar, Turkey

**Tariq Jawaid Alam**, Students'Forum 2000 Delegate, Pakistan

**Madeleine Albright**, Former Secretary of State, USA

**Mohammed Mohammed Ali**, Islamic Researcher and Politician, Human Rights Activist, Iraq

**Jitzschak Alster**, Partner at Shimoni, Alster & Rasiel, Israel

**Oswald Alvarez Paz**, Founder, Popular Alliance, Venezuela

**Christiane Amanpour**, Chief International Correspondent, CNN, USA

**Shahira Amin**, Journalist, Egypt

**Robert R. Amsterdam**, Attorney, Canada

**George Andreopolous**, Professor of Political Science, City University of New York, USA

**Yuri Andrukovich**, Writer, Poet, Ukraine

**Eduardo Aninat**, Economist, Scholar and Former Minister of Finance, Chile

**Michael Anti**, Journalist, Blogger, China

**Muriel Anton**, CEO, Vodafone Czech Republic, Czech Republic/Canada

**Dewi Fortuna Anwar**, Deputy Chair, Indonesian Institute of Sciences, Indonesia

**Uzi Arad**, Former National Security Advisor, Israel

**Mohammad Bashar Arafat**, President of Civilizations Exchange and Cooperation Foundation, Syria/USA

**Anna Teresa Arco**, Chief Feature Writer, Catholic Herald, United Kingdom/Austria

**Riprand Count Arco**, Founder and Chairman, American Asset Corporation, USA

**Maen Rashid Areikat**, Coordinator General, Negotiation Affairs Department of the PLO, Palestine

**Jose Maria Argueta**, Former National Security Advisor of Guatemala, Guatemala

**Oscar Arias Sánchez**, Former President, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate (1987), Costa Rica

**Timothy Garton Ash**, Political Scientist and Writer, United Kingdom

**Ken Ash**, Deputy Director for Food, Agriculture and Fisheries at the OECD, Canada

**Hanan Ashrawi**, Former Minister of Education, Palestine

**Hamed Assaf**, Water Resources and Environmental Engineering, American University of Beirut, Lebanon

**Aliaksandr Atroshchankau**, Journalist, Former Political Prisoner, Belarus

**Aung Zaw**, Founding Editor and Director, The Irrawaddy, Thailand/Burma

**Shlomo Avineri**, Professor Emeritus of Political Science, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

**Edith Awino**, Students'Forum 2000 Delegate, Kenya

**Ayman Ramadan Mohamed Ayad**, Water Engineer, Alexandria Water Company, Egypt

**Mehmet Aydin**, Dean, Faculty of Theology at the University of Dokuy Eylul in Izmir, Turkey

**Patricio Aylwin Azocar**, Former President, Chile

**Mark Azzopardi**, Students'Forum 2000 Delegate, Malta

**Huseyn Bagci**, Professor of International Relations, Middle East Technical University, Turkey

**Khassan Baiev**, Chairman, International Committee for the Children of Chechnya, USA/Russia  
**Zdeněk Bakala**, Entrepreneur and Investor, Czech Republic  
**Miriam Balaban**, Secretary General of the European Desalination Society, USA  
**Leszek Balcerowicz**, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Poland  
**Ehud Barak**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, Israel  
**Sultan Barakat**, Director, Post-War Reconstruction and Development Unit, University of York, United Kingdom/Jordan  
**Catherine Barber**, Economic Policy Adviser, Oxfam, United Kingdom  
**Andris Barblan**, Historian and Political Scientist, Secretary General of the Association of European Universities, Switzerland  
**Debi Barker**, Executive Director of the International Forum on Globalization, USA  
**Alexandre Chambrier Barro**, Economist, Gabon  
**His All Holiness Bartholomew**, Head of the Orthodox Church, Greece  
**Ladislav Bartoš**, EHSS Manager, Veolia Voda, Czech Republic  
**Władysław Bartoszewski**, Historian, Author and Diplomat, Poland  
**Thomas Bata**, Czech-born Businessman, Canada  
**Zygmunt Bauman**, Sociologist, United Kingdom/Poland  
**Stefan Behnisch**, Architect, Partner, Behnisch Architekten, Germany/ USA  
**Walden Bello**, Professor of Sociology and Public Administration, Philippines  
**Carlos Felipe Ximenes Belo**, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate (1996), East Timor  
**Pavel Bém**, Lord Mayor of the City of Prague, Czech Republic  
**Francisco Berumudez**, Former Minister of National Defense, Guatemala  
**Robert L. Bernstein**, President of Human Rights Watch, USA  
**Ales Bialiatski**, President Viasna Human Rights Centre, Belarus  
**Kurt Biedenkopf**, Prime Minister of Saxony, Germany  
**Murad J. Bino**, Executive Director of the Inter-Islamic Network on Water Resources Development and Management, Jordan  
**Prince El Hassan Bin Talal**, Chairman, West Asia-North Africa Forum, Jordan  
**Andrzej Błach**, Partner, CMS Cameron McKenna, Head, CEE Energy Sector Group, Poland  
**Igor Blažević**, Founder, One World Film Festival, Czech Republic/Bosnia and Herzegovina  
**Akin Birdal**, Former President of the Human Rights Association, Turkey  
**Lajos Bokros**, Former Minister of Finance, Hungary

**Sylvia Borren**, Director of Non-governmental Organization Novib, The Netherlands  
**Lydia Bosire**, Students'Forum 2000 Delegate, Kenya  
**Endre B. Botjár**, Editor-in-Chief and Publisher, Magyar Narancs, Hungary  
**William Bourdon**, Attorney and Former Secretary General of the International Federation of Human Rights Leagues, France  
**Jean-Louis Bourlanges**, Chairman of the European Movement, France  
**Boutros Boutros-Ghali**, Former UN Secretary General, Egypt  
**David Brauchli**, Communications Director, Piano Media, Slovakia/USA  
**Josep Bricall**, Former President of the Association of European Universities, France  
**Petr Brod**, Journalist, Czech Republic  
**Hans Van Den Broek**, Member of the European Commission, The Netherlands  
**David B. Brooks**, Senior Advisor of Fresh Water, Friends of the Earth, Canada  
**William Browder**, Founder and CEO, Hermitage Capital Management, United Kingdom  
**Alan Brown**, Group Chief Investment Officer, Schroder Investment Management, United Kingdom  
**Jan Bubeník**, Founder, Bubenik Partners, Chairman, Corporate Council, Forum 2000 Foundation, Czech Republic  
**Ignatz Bubis**, Chairman of the Central Council of Jewish Organizations, Germany  
**Richard Burdett**, Professor of Urban Studies, London School of Economics, United Kingdom  
**Nino Burjanadze**, Speaker of The Parliament, Georgia  
**Martin Bursík**, Former Minister of Environment, Czech Republic  
**Martin Bútora**, Sociologist, Institute for Public Affairs, Slovakia  
**Mario Cafiero**, Politician, Argentina  
**Kim Campbell**, Former Prime Minister, Canada  
**Fritjof Capra**, Physicist and Systems Theorist, USA  
**Natasha Carmi-Hanna**, Policy Advisor, Negotiations Support Unit, Negotiation Affairs Department, Palestine  
**Nico Carpentier**, Board Member, European Communication Research and Education Association, Czech Republic/Belgium  
**Jose Casanova**, Sociologist of Religion, Georgetown University, USA  
**Jorge G. Castaneda**, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mexico  
**Cornelius Castoriadis**, Philosopher, Greece/France  
**Vojtěch Cepl**, Professor at the Faculty of Law of Charles University, Czech Republic



**Vladislav Čerych**, Educational Expert, Czech Republic  
**Chi Steve Chan**, Politician, Taiwan  
**Joseph Chan**, Sociology Professor at the University of Hong Kong, China  
**Clement C.P. Chang**, Founder of Tamkang University, Taiwan  
**Tze Chi Chao**, President of World League for Freedom and Democracy, Taiwan  
**Oksana Chelysheva**, PEN Center Writer, Finland/Russia  
**Shunling Chen**, Students' Forum 2000 Delegate, Taiwan  
**Shih-Meng Chen**, Politician and Economist, President of the Ketagalan Institute, Taiwan  
**Tain-Jy Chen**, Former Minister, Council for Economic Planning and Development, Taiwan  
**Alexander Cherkasov**, Board Member, Memorial, Russia  
**Frederick F. Chien**, Cathay Charity Foundation, Taiwan  
**Pavel Chikov**, Chair, Interregional Human Rights Association "GOR A" Russia  
**Kavi Chongkittavorn**, Group Editor, Nation Multimedia Group, Thailand  
**Jennifer Chou**, Deputy Director of Programming, Radio Free Asia, USA  
**Robin Christopher**, Former British Ambassador to Argentina, Indonesia, Ethiopia and Eritrea, United Kingdom  
**Natalia Churikova**, Ukrainian Service, RFE/RL, Czech Republic/Ukraine  
**Ivan Chvatík**, Director Jan Patočka Archive, Czech Republic  
**Václav Čilek**, Geologist and Climatologist, Academy of Sciences, Czech Republic  
**Hassane Cisse**, Deputy General Council, Knowledge and Research, The World Bank, Senegal  
**Mamadou Cissokho**, Honorary President Conseil National de Concertation et de Cooperation Ruraux, Senegal  
**William J. Clinton**, 42nd President, USA  
**Hillary Clinton**, First Lady, USA  
**Emil Constantinescu**, Former President, Romania  
**William Cook**, Professor of History and Religion, State University of New York, USA  
**Robert Cooper**, Director-General Politico-Military Affairs, Council of the EU, United Kingdom  
**Marcus Cornaro**, Director, Development and Cooperation, European Commission, Belgium/Austria  
**Allan Cox**, CEO, Allan Cox & Associates, USA  
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**Colin Crouch**, Professor of Governance, University of Warwick Business

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**Yavuz Cubukcu**, Water Adviser Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey  
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**His Holiness the Dalai Lama**, Supreme Spiritual Representative, Tibet  
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**Kenneth W. Dam**, Professor of Law Emeritus and Senior Lecturer, University of Chicago, USA  
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**Martin Davidson**, Chief Executive, British Council, United Kingdom  
**Grace Davie**, Sociologist of Religion, University of Exeter, United Kingdom  
**Joyce Davis**, Director of Broadcasting of the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Prague, USA  
**Stephan M. Davis**, Specialist on International Corporate Governance, USA  
**Thomas C. Dawson**, Director, External Relations Department of the International Monetary Fund, USA  
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**Gabor Demszky**, Former Lord Mayor of Budapest, Hungary  
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**Susi Dennison**, Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations, United Kingdom  
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**Hernando de Soto**, President, Institute for Liberty and Democracy, Peru  
**Jayantha Dhanapala**, Chairman of the UN University Council, Sri Lanka  
**Geshe Tenzin Dhargye**, Buddhist Scholar, Austria/Tibet  
**Avi Dichter**, Former Minister of Internal Security, Israel  
**Jiří Dienstbier**, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Czechoslovakia, Czech Republic

**Gwen Dillard**, Director, African Division, Voice of America, USA  
**Philip Dimitrov**, Former Prime Minister, Bulgaria  
**Thomas A. Dine**, President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, USA  
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**Waris Dirie**, Human Rights Activist and Fashion Supermodel, Somalia  
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**Yuri Dzhibladze**, President, Center for the Development of Democracy and Human Rights, Russia  
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**Peter Eigen**, Founder, Transparency International, Germany  
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**Kakuhan Enami**, Representative of the Tendai School of Buddhism, Japan  
**Amitai Etzioni**, Sociologist and Social Psychologist, Germany/USA  
**Tomáš Etzler**, Journalist, Reporter, Editor, and Producer, Czech Republic  
**Gareth Evans**, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Australia  
**Bay Fang**, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Department of State, USA

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**Pavel Fischer**, Political Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic  
**Franz Fischler**, European Commissioner and Former Federal Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Austria  
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**Ivan Gabal**, Sociologist, Czech Republic  
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**Mariko Gakiya**, Advisor, The Harvard International Negotiation Program, USA/Japan  
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**Petr Gandalovič**, Minister of Agriculture, Czech Republic  
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**Mohammad Gawdat**, Managing Director for Emerging Markets, Google, Egypt  
**Fara Gaye**, Sufi Sheikh, involved in the Sulha Peace Project, Promoter of Islamic-Jewish Dialogue, Senegal  
**Adam Gebrian**, Architect, Czech Republic  
**Jeffrey Gedmin**, President of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, USA  
**Bob Geldof**, Musician and Political Activist, Ireland/United Kingdom  
**Jared Genser**, President, Freedom Now, USA  
**Susan George**, Political Scientist, USA/France  
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**Phillip Henderson**, Vice President, the German Marshall Fund, USA  
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**Thor Heyerdahl**, Ocean Traveler and Author, Norway  
**Colin Hines**, Author of “ocalization: A Global Manifesto” United Kingdom  
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**Jeremy Hobbs**, Executive Director of Oxfam, USA  
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**Takeaki Hori**, Anthropologist and Advisor to the President of the Nippon Foundation, Japan  
**Helena Houdová**, Founder and President, Sunflower Children Foundation, USA/Czech Republic

**Janina Hřebíčková**, Former Ambassador to Kosovo and Ambassador-at-Large to CPA Iraq, Czech Republic  
**Pavel Hroboň**, Former Deputy Minister of Health, Czech Republic  
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**Azhar Hussain**, Vice President for Preventive Diplomacy and Director, Pakistan  
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**Jana Hybášková**, Politician and Diplomat, Czech Republic  
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**Zaid Ibrahim**, Chairman of ZICO, Chair of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus, Malaysia  
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**Atifet Jahjaga**, President, Kosovo  
**Martin Jahn**, Member, Board of Management of Škoda Auto, Czech Republic  
**Karel Janeček**, Mathematician, CEO, RSJ Algorithmic Trading, Czech Republic  
**František Janouch**, Chairman, Charter 77 Foundation, Sweden/Czech Republic

**Josef Jařab**, Former Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defense and Security, Czech Republic  
**Claude Jasmin**, Professor of Oncology, France  
**Michaëlle Jean**, Governor General, Canada  
**Wei Jingsheng**, Dissident and Father of the Chinese Movement for Modern Pro-Western Democracy, China  
**Erik Jonnaert**, Chairman of the European Center for Public Affairs, Belgium  
**Jonas Jonson**, Bishop of Strängnäs and Member of the World Council of Churches, Sweden  
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**Wahu Kaara**, Activist and Member of the Women' Environment and Development Organisation, Kenya  
**Aleksander Kaczorowski**, Journalist, Poland  
**Ayşe Kadioğlu**, Professor of Political Science, Sabanci University, Turkey  
**Jürgen Kaiser**, Former Coordinator of the Jubilee 2000 Campaign, Germany  
**Petr Kaláš**, Former Minister of Environment, Czech Republic  
**Mary Kaldor**, Professor of Economics, London School of Economics, United Kingdom  
**Noerine Kaleeba**, Activist fighting HIV/AIDS, Uganda  
**Sandra Kalniete**, Member of European Parliament, Former EU Commissioner, Latvia  
**Ahmad Kamel**, Bureau Chief of Al-Jazeera' North and Central Europe, Belgium  
**Martin Kameník**, Project Coordinator, Oživení, Czech Republic  
**Koei Kani**, Representative of the Tendai Buddhist School, Japan  
**Dani Karavan**, Sculptor, Israel  
**Joshua Karliner**, Senior Fellow of Corp Watch, USA  
**Mats Karlsson**, Economist and Vice President of the World Bank, Sweden  
**Jan Kasl**, Architect and former Lord Mayor of Prague, Czech Republic  
**Garry Kasparov**, Opposition Leader, Russia  
**Mikhail Kasyanov**, Former Russian Prime Minister, Russia  
**Inge Kaul**, Director of the Office of Development Studies at the United Nations Development Program, Germany  
**Farhad Kazemi**, Professor, New York University, USA  
**Gilles Kepel**, Sociologist, Sciences Po, France  
**Ella Lazarovna Kesaeva**, Co-Chair, The Voice of Beslan, Russia



**David Keyes**, Executive Director, Advancing Human Rights, Co-founder, CyberDissidents.org, USA  
**Irina Khakamada**, Opposition Politician, Russia  
**Nader Saleem Al-Khateeb**, Director of the Water and Environmental Development Organization, Palestine  
**Daud Khattak**, Journalist, Radio Mashaal (Pakistan Service of RFE/RL), Pakistan  
**Yousif Khoei**, Director of the Al Khoei Foundation, Iraq/United Kingdom  
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**Kenzo Kiikuni**, Professor at Tokyo Women's Medical University, Japan  
**Henry A. Kissinger**, Politician and Diplomat, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate (1973), USA  
**Michael U. Klein**, Vice President of the World Bank Group's Private Sector Advisory Services, Germany  
**Théo Klein**, President, Musée d'art et d'histoire du Judaïsme, France  
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**Tomáš Klvaňa**, New York University in Prague, Czech Republic  
**Vadim Klyugant**, Lawyer, Russia  
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**Ko Ko Gyi**, 1988 Student Leader, Burma  
**Leszek Kolakowski**, Philosopher, Poland/United Kingdom  
**Petr Kolář**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic  
**Ted Koppel**, Anchor and Managing Editor of ABC News' "Nightline" USA  
**David C. Korten**, Economist, President of The People Centered Development Forum, USA  
**Yakov Kostyukovsky**, Criminologist, Sociological Institute, Academy of Science, Russia  
**Sergei Kovalyov**, Deputy of State Duma and Human Rights Activist, Russia  
**Karel Kovanda**, Director-General (Acting), DG External Relations, European Commission, Belgium/Czech Republic  
**Sai Felicia Krishna-Hensel**, Professor of Anthropology, Auburn Montgomery, USA  
**Meena Krishnamoorthy**, Students' Forum 2000 Delegate, Australia  
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**Anwei Law**, Founder, Hansen's Disease Association, USA  
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**Marguerite S. Lederberg**, Professor of Psychiatry at Cornell University, USA  
**Lee Teng Hui**, Former President, Taiwan  
**Francis Lemoine**, Senior Policy Analyst with European Network on Debt and Development, France  
**Hana Lešenarová**, Member, Corporate Council, Forum 2000 Foundation, Czech Republic  
**Charles Levesque**, Chief Operating Officer of the Interfaith Youth Core, USA  
**Beryl Levinger**, Education Development Center, USA  
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**Yaakov Levy**, Ambassador to the Czech Republic, Israel  
**Flora Lewis**, Correspondent, The New York Times, USA  
**Chan Lien**, Politician, Former Vice President, Taiwan  
**Ondřej Liška**, Chairman, Green Party, Czech Republic  
**Chao-Shiuan Liu**, Former Prime Minister, Taiwan  
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**Bobo Lo**, Independent Scholar and Consultant on Russia and China, United Kingdom/Australia  
**Javier Loaiza**, Consultant and Political Analyst, Colombia  
**Mikuláš Lobkowicz**, Philosopher and Former Rector of Munich University, Germany  
**Bjorn Lomborg**, Director of Environmental Assessment Institute, Denmark

**Leopoldo Lopez**, Mayor of the Municipality of Chacao of Caracas, Venezuela  
**James Lovelock**, Scientist and Writer, United Kingdom  
**Edward Lucas**, Journalist, The Economist, United Kingdom  
**Sergey Lukashevsky**, Director, Museum and Social Center of Andrey Sakharov, Russia  
**Fyodor Lukyanov**, Editor-in-Chief, Russia in Global Affairs, Russia  
**Cardinal Jean Marie Lustiger**, Archbishop of Paris, France  
**Glen MacDonald**, President, Wealth and Giving Forum, USA  
**Graham Mackay**, CEO of South African Breweries, USA  
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**Soho Machida**, Professor at Graduate School of Integrated Arts and Sciences, Hiroshima University, Japan  
**Kishore Mahbubani**, Dean and Professor in the Practice of Public Policy at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University, Singapore  
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**Khotso Makhulu**, Archbishop of Central Africa, South Africa  
**Fumihiko Maki**, Architect, Principal, Maki and Associates, Japan  
**Kanan Makya**, Professor, Writer, Iraq/USA  
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**Ahmad Mango**, Advisor to Prince El Hassan bin Talal, Jordan  
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**Jürgen Marten**, Transparency International Deutschland, Germany  
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**Jana Matesová**, Economist and Senior Advisor to Executive Director of the World Bank, Czech Republic  
**Ivo Mathé**, Rector, Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, Czech Republic  
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**Vladimir Petit Medina**, Political Analyst, Venezuela  
**Michael Melchior**, Politician, Former Chief Rabbi of Norway, Israel  
**Robert Ménard**, Journalist and Secretary General, Reporters Without Borders, France  
**Dan Meredith**, Director, Internet Freedom Program, Radio Free Asia, USA

**Raja Miah**, Director of Peacemaker, United Kingdom  
**Alles Michalevic**, Politician, Former Presidential Candidate, Belarus  
**Wolfgang Michalski**, Managing Director, WM International, Former Chief Advisor to the Secretary General of the OECD, Germany  
**Adam Michnik**, Former Dissident, Editor-in-Chief, Gazeta Wyborcza, Poland  
**Dunja Mijatović**, Representative on Freedom of the Media, OSCE, Austria/Bosnia and Herzegovina  
**Ladislav Miko**, Director for Nature, Directorate General for Environment, European Commission, Belgium/Czech Republic  
**Alyaksandar Milinkievich**, Opposition Leader, Belarus  
**Min Yan Naing**, Co-founder, Generation Wave, Burma  
**Anuradha Mittal**, Journalist, Co-Director of the First Institute for Food and Development Policy, India  
**Festus G. Mogae**, Former President, Botswana  
**Abbas Mohajerani**, Professor and Leading Iranian-born Islamic Scholar, Australia/Iran  
**Dominique Moisi**, Deputy Director of the Institute of International Affairs, France  
**Bedřich Moldan**, Member, Senate of the Parliament, Czech Republic  
**Núria Molina-Gallart**, Director of Policy and Research, Save the Children, United Kingdom  
**George Monbiot**, Author and Columnist, The Guardian, United Kingdom  
**Carlos Alberto Montaner**, Political Analyst, Cuba/Spain  
**Mike Moore**, Director-General, WTO, Former Prime Minister, New Zealand  
**Alexander Morozov**, Political Scientist, Editor-in-Chief, Russian Journal Magazine, Russia  
**Frédéric Mousseau**, Independent Expert, Focusing on Humanitarian Aid, France  
**Mark L. Movsesian**, Director, Center for Law and Religion, St. John's University, USA  
**Beatrice Mtetwa**, Lawyer, Human Rights Advocate, Zimbabwe  
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**Surendra Munshi**, Sociologist, India  
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**Shinichi Nakazawa**, Professor of Religion and Anthropology at the Chuo University, Japan

**Ashis Nandy**, Director, Center for the Study of Developing Societies, India  
**Simonetta Nardin**, Senior External Relations Officer of IMF, Italy  
**Harsha Kumara Navaratne**, Chairman, Sewalanka Foundation, Sri Lanka  
**Ricardo Navarro**, Chairman of Friends of the Earth International, Salvador  
**Japhet Ndabeni-Ncube**, Mayor of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe  
**Manfred A. Max Neef**, Rector of Universidad Austral, Chile  
**Aryeh Neier**, President, Open Society Foundations, USA  
**Jacob Nell**, TN K-BP, Moscow, United Kingdom  
**Boris Nemtsov**, Politician and Advisor to the President of Ukraine, Russia  
**Tarik Nesh Nash**, Electronic Activist, Morocco  
**Willem Jan Neutelings**, Architect, Principal, Neutelings Riedijk Architecten, The Netherlands  
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**Valeriu Nicolae**, Founder and President, Policy Center for Roma and Minorities, Romania  
**Luděk Niedermayer**, Former Vice-Governor of the Czech National Bank, Czech Republic  
**Masashi Nishihara**, President, Research Institute for Peace and Security, Japan  
**Gabriel Nissim**, Head of the World Catholic Association for Communication (SIGNIS), France  
**Njoki Njoroge Njehu**, Activist and Director of 50 Years Is Enough Network, Kenya  
**Jose de Jesus Noguera**, Opposition Politician, Venezuela  
**Hans Heinrich Nolte**, Professor of Eastern European History in Hannover, Germany  
**Michael Novak**, Theologian and Political Scientist, USA  
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**Colm O'Cinneide**, Students' Forum 2000 Delegate, Ireland  
**Karl Auguste Offmann**, Former President, Mauritius  
**Yael Ohana**, Students' Forum 2000 Delegate, Ireland  
**Ruth Oniang'o**, Executive Director, Rural Outreach Program, Kenya  
**Viktor Orbán**, Former Prime Minister, Hungary  
**Wiktor Osiatynski**, Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, Poland  
**John O'Sullivan**, Political Commentator for Radio Free Europe, United Kingdom/USA  
**Jean-Francois Ott**, Founder and CEO of OR CO Property Group, France  
**Cem Özemir**, Co-Chair, Alliance 90-The Greens, Germany  
**Juhani Pallasmaa**, Architect, Principal, Juhani Pallasmaa Architects, Finland

**Šimon Pánek**, Director of People in Need Foundation, Czech Republic  
**Raimon Panikkar**, Professor at the University of California, USA  
**Jelena Panza**, Students' Forum 2000 Delegate, former Yugoslavia  
**Remi Parmentier**, Special Advisor to Greenpeace International, The Netherlands  
**Chris Patten**, Politician and Former Governor of Hong Kong, United Kingdom  
**Rosa María Payá**, Christian Liberation Movement, Cuba  
**Josef Pazderka**, Former Moscow Correspondent, Czech Television, Czech Republic  
**Jana M. Petrenko**, Director, Coalition for Health, Czech Republic  
**Jiří Pehe**, Director of the New York University in Prague, Czech Republic  
**Ming Min Peng**, Political Scientist and Former Dissident, Taiwan  
**Shimon Peres**, Politician and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate (1995), Israel  
**William Pfaff**, Correspondent of the International Herald Tribune, USA  
**Zoya Phan**, International Coordinator at Burma Campaign UK, Burma/United Kingdom  
**Ian Phillips**, Director, East-Central Europe Region, AP News, Czech Republic/United Kingdom  
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The Closing Reception at DOX Centre for Contemporary Art

# About Forum 2000 Foundation

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## Mission

The Forum 2000 Foundation pursues the legacy of Václav Havel by supporting the values of democracy and respect for human rights, assisting the development of civil society, and encouraging religious, cultural and ethnic tolerance. It provides a platform for global leaders, as well as thinkers and courageous individuals from every field of endeavor, to openly debate and share these critical issues.

## Origins

Forum 2000 was founded in 1996 by Czech President Václav Havel together with Japanese philanthropist Yohei Sasakawa and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Elie Wiesel.

## Core Activities

### Forum 2000 Conference

The Annual Forum 2000 Conference in Prague assembles global thought leaders and offers a voice to dissidents from non-democratic countries, facilitating the development of a worldwide network of those who support the core principles of Havel's legacy. Among the speakers at our annual conference are world-renowned personalities such as His Holiness the Dalai Lama, President Clinton, Madeleine Albright, Prince El Hassan bin Talal and numerous Nobel Laureates including Elie Wiesel, Shirin Ebadi and Joseph Stiglitz.

The conference is unique in being open to the public and attracts over 3,000 attendees and more than 3,000 online followers each year, mostly from the Czech Republic and Central Europe, but with an increasingly international audience. These include representatives from politics, civil society, media, diplomacy, academia and business.

### Interfaith Dialogue

The Interfaith Dialogue is an integral element of the annual conference and facilitates a unique dialogue between secular humanism and the world's spiritual traditions. Participants seek better understanding and deepening cooperation between world religions and political, scientific and economic leaders.

### Regular Contributors

- **His Holiness the Dalai Lama**, Spiritual Leader and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Tibet
- **Shirin Ebadi**, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Iran
- **Vartan Gregorian**, President, Carnegie Corporation of New York, USA
- **Tomáš Halík**, Sociologist and President, Czech Christian Academy, Czech Republic
- **Gilles Kepel**, Political Scientist, France
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- **Rabbi David Rosen**, International Director of Interreligious Affairs, American Jewish Committee, Israel



## Shared Concern Initiative

Launched in April 2005, the Shared Concern Initiative (SCI) idea was conceived, in the context of the Forum 2000 Conference in Prague, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in cooperation with the late President Václav Havel, Prince El Hassan bin Talal and Frederik Willem de Klerk. The SCI is an open and informal group of recognized personalities representing various cultures, historical backgrounds, religions, and traditions. In the interest of fostering principles of good governance, respect for human rights, and tolerance, the SCI endeavors to address, by the issuance of joint-statements, the important challenges of today's world with the understanding that changes towards the better can be effectively promoted with a common voice. Developments in Venezuela, Tibet, Ukraine and most recently Burma are all among the issues the Initiative has addressed.

### SCI Membership

- **Prince El Hassan bin Talal**, Chairman, West Asia-North Africa Forum, Jordan
- **His Holiness the Dalai Lama**, Spiritual Leader and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Tibet
- **Frederik Willem de Klerk**, Former President and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, South Africa
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- **Grigory Yavlinsky**, Economist and Politician, Russia

## NGO Market

Our annual NGO Market has become the largest exhibition of its kind in Central and Eastern Europe and offers non-profit organizations the opportunity to showcase their activities to potential corporate partners and the general public. During the event, NGOs share best practices and are able to draw on international experience. Capacity is at present limited to 200 NGOs but we are seeking additional funding to meet the increasing demand.

## Exploring Water Patterns in the Middle East

This year marks the seventh year that the Forum 2000 Foundation has addressed the issue of water scarcity in the Middle East through its initiative, Exploring Water Patterns in the Middle East (EWAP). The aim of EWAP is to comprehensively address the issue through a series of events, which keep abreast of political, economic, and technological developments. The ultimate goal is to help facilitate a peaceful, equitable, and stable resolution that is shared by all stakeholders.

## Forum 2000 Supporters

Together with our many supporters, we are determined to take forward Václav Havel's legacy and to firmly establish Forum 2000 as the primary global platform for dialogue about democracy, human rights and freedom.

*"I would like to thank Forum 2000 for making this issue a really significant one in our century. With your help we shall be able to go forward in our process of democratization, with your help the world will know how important Rule of Law is."*

**Aung Sang Suu Kyi**, Opposition Leader and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Burma

Addressing the Forum 2000 Conference, October 2011

*"Havel will continue to inspire all of those who believe in the rights of every citizen to dignity, self-esteem and the fundamental freedoms upon which principled societies and governments are based."*

**Yang Jianli**, Dissident, President and Founder, Initiatives for China, USA/China

*"The void left by the death of Václav Havel is enormous, but his legacy lives on, and will continue to inspire us to aim for the high peaks of freedom, equality, justice, human rights and human dignity."*

**Shimon Peres**, President and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Israel

*"Václav Havel was the moral voice of his country and his era. His humanity, humility and decency were an example for us all. In the face of the great challenges today that shall test a newer generation, let his profile in courage be our inspiration."*

**Ban Ki-moon**, Secretary-General, United Nations, USA/South Korea

*"I know Forum 2000 will keep up the spirit of Havel's tireless work with renewed vigor and determination. I look forward to working in close cooperation with your foundation towards building a more peaceful, open and just world."*

**His Holiness the Dalai Lama**, Spiritual Leader and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Tibet

## Get Involved

The Forum 2000 Foundation is committed to support the values of democracy and respect for human rights. All our activities are made possible with the help of a thriving community of supporters and through the generosity of our donors.

### Join the Forum 2000 Community

Join us on Facebook and Twitter, be informed about the latest news, discuss and share your opinions. Use your voice to help us to take the mission of Forum 2000 further.

Volunteers are the cornerstone of Forum 2000 and we are grateful to those who devote their time to support us. Increase your impact on our work by spreading the word, volunteering or becoming a fundraiser.

### Simple Online Donations

If you wish to make a donation, the most convenient way is to use a fast and secure online form. It is that simple.

## Regular Donations

Your regular donation can help us plan our long-term strategy more effectively. If you wish to provide regular support, just fill in the donor form on our website and set up a standing order to the Forum 2000 Foundation account.

## Corporate Support

At Forum 2000, we understand the importance of mutually beneficial partnerships. You can choose to support the entire mission, a specific project or a specific event and receive special recognition as part of these activities.

## In Kind Support

One of the ways how you can support our mission is to provide an in-kind support. This involves equipment, products or services that are necessary for our functioning. Such support is just as important as any other donation to us.

## Philanthropy Program

Join a group of private philanthropists interested in and actively supporting democracy and human rights. They see the value in connecting with other global leaders from business, politics, civil society and philanthropy in a private setting and uphold the values that the late President Václav Havel stood for.

By making a much needed donation today you will help the Forum 2000 Foundation support the values of democracy and respect for human rights. Find out more detailed information on our website or contact us at [secretariat@forum2000.cz](mailto:secretariat@forum2000.cz).

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President Havel is never far from people's minds

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