

Chatham House 2014 Prize Dinner

HRH The Duke of Cambridge

Melinda Gates

Co-founder, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Kofi Annan

Chair, Kofi Annan Foundation; Secretary-General of the United Nations (1997-2006)

Rt Hon Lord Ashdown

President, Chatham House

Stuart Popham

Chairman, Chatham House

Harry Brekelmans

Projects & Technology Director, Royal Dutch Shell

Dr Robin Niblett

Director, Chatham House

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Robin Niblett

Your royal highness, excellencies, lords, ladies and gentlemen: welcome to the Chatham House 2014 Prize Dinner. This is the Royal Institute of International Affairs' most important evening of the year. We're delighted that so many of the Institute's valued supporters and guests are with us tonight in this magnificent venue, including members of the Chatham House Council, Panel of Senior Advisors, and Second Century Committee; members of the UK government and opposition; and representatives from London's vibrant diplomatic community and civil society community. Thank you very much indeed for joining us here this evening.

I'd particularly like to thank our sponsors of this evening's event, led by Shell, who have been so generous again in enabling us to do justice to this special occasion. Each of our sponsors is recognized in the programme, which you'll find at your tables. I hope you can take time to read through the messages of good wishes that they've sent to this year's Prize winner, Melinda Gates.

The Chatham House Prize is now in its tenth year. In fact, I see my predecessor as director, Victor Bulmer-Thomas, sitting over there, whose idea it was, along with Lord Loomba. Victor, I think it's wonderful to be here today on the 10th year of the Prize. It's a very important moment for us to reflect on why we created this award.

In short, the idea is that Chatham House wanted to be able to recognize the statesperson deemed by the members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs to have made the most significant contribution to the improvement of international relations in the previous year. To do this – and I apologize to those who have heard this before, but I think the process is important – to do this, we ask our senior researchers at Chatham House at the start of each year to nominate an individual from their areas of research whom they believe is worthy of the Prize. Our three presidents – Lord Ashdown, Sir John Major and Baroness Scotland, who are all with us here this evening – review the list of names and agree upon a shortlist, which is then put forward to our members to vote on. Our members select the winner through a secret ballot. It's this process of nomination, review, selection and election that makes the Prize so unique among its kind.

I'm delighted therefore that on this, the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Chatham House Prize, our members voted to award the Prize to Melinda Gates, co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Melinda Gates is awarded the Prize in recognition of her philanthropic and humanitarian work, and in particular for her tireless efforts to improve the health of women and children through increased access to family planning, newborn interventions, life-saving medicines and better nutrition.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation believes that the essential role of philanthropy is to make bets on promising solutions that governments and businesses cannot afford to make. Melinda Gates was instrumental in the foundation's strategic decision at its inception to prioritize vaccines and immunization in the poorest countries in the world, with the goal of saving children from preventable diseases. Among its achievements, the foundation – along with its many partners – has helped cut infant mortality rates across the world.

Melinda Gates is also the driving force behind the foundation's goal to empower women and girls in developing countries, so they can have equal opportunities alongside men and boys. In July 2012, she led the London Summit on Family Planning, with the goal of delivering contraceptives to an additional 120 million in developing countries. As she explained to Chatham House members earlier today, she

continues to advocate for family planning, education, new technologies and economic opportunity, so as to help women realize their full potential and give their children and families a chance for a better future.

Ladies and gentlemen, Melinda Gates has received widespread praise for her strategic approach to philanthropy and her success in broadening the impact of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. We're delighted to add this recognition by awarding her the Chatham House Prize for 2014.

It's now my great pleasure to introduce His Royal Highness, the Duke of Cambridge, who will present the Prize to Melinda Gates on behalf of our patron, Her Majesty the Queen.

HRH The Duke of Cambridge

Thank you for the honour of inviting me to present the Chatham House Prize on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen. The Prize provides a roll call of illustrious names, and this evening we add another: that of Melinda Gates.

For nearly a century, Chatham House has been one of the foremost centres for the study of international affairs. We are proud of the contribution this great institution has made, and continues to make, to national life and to international debate.

A decade ago, Chatham House instituted a prize in recognition of those who have made a particularly distinguished contribution in the field of international relations. This year, a decade later, Chatham House has launched a new initiative. The Academy for Leadership was inaugurated earlier this week by Her Majesty the Queen, and bears her name. It will give an additional dimension to the work of Chatham House, providing new opportunities to promote international progress and understanding.

Past winners of the Chatham House Prize have included distinguished statesmen and women, but the key actors in the field of foreign affairs come from a much wider field than government and politics. Civil society, whether in the form of business, academic institutions, NGOs or philanthropic organizations, play a critical role in shaping international relations and in working for a fairer, more peaceful and healthier world.

No one could provide us with a better example of the impact such organizations can have, when led with vision, commitment and unstinting generosity, than this year's Chatham House Prize winner, Melinda Gates. With her equally remarkable husband Bill, Melinda set up the Gates Foundation to change the world – and change it she has, transforming the lives of women, the poor, the sick and the disadvantaged in Africa and elsewhere. What a wonderful example it is to others, and how fitting it is to add Melinda Gates' name to the Chatham House Prize list.

The Queen, who has been patron at Chatham House since 1952, sends you all this message, which I have the honour of reading now:

'I send my warmest wishes and congratulations to Melinda Gates on being awarded this year's Chatham House Prize for her humanitarian work and her longstanding commitment to philanthropy. Members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs have chosen a worthy winner.'

Mrs Gates, it is now my pleasure to present the Chatham House Prize of 2014, and a scroll signed by the Queen, to you. Many congratulations.

Melinda Gates

Your royal highness, my lords, ladies and gentlemen: it's an honour for me to receive this award, in particular because it's presented on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen, who I long have admired and respected. I'm extremely grateful to His Royal Highness, the Duke of Cambridge, for joining us here this evening, with his energy and his warmth that he's greeted everybody tonight on behalf of the Queen.

I'd also like to thank the President's Council and Directors of Chatham House for their kind welcome of me today, not just this evening but earlier today as well. I'm pleased that the award recipient is voted by ballot of the esteemed members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

Finally, for me, it's a special privilege to get to say that I get to greet my parents, who are here tonight from the United States, and my best friend, who are joining me for the evening. Thank you for being here on this occasion.

This award is especially meaningful to me because of what Chatham House represents. What we desperately need but so often lack in the world of global development is a public that not only cares deeply about these issues, but gets involved and becomes deeply knowledgeable about the issues. There are some challenging and invigorating debates to be had about how to help the poorest countries in the world, how to help people lift themselves up and to prosper, and how to move countries from low-income to middle-income. I was fortunate enough to be challenged by some thought today, with very thoughtful, provoking questions during the Chatham House Q&A that Robin so aptly led. I really appreciated the questions that came in. You got me thinking about some issues too in a new way.

We need to take this discussion about development out of the realm of posturing and rumour. People talk about the runaway Ebola epidemic, which is absolutely crucial to talk about and it's devastating, but we also connect other issues to it that we shouldn't. We talk about a continent that's been ruled by dictators and corruption. We talk about Africa sometimes as hopeless. I'm here to tell you that that is absolutely not the case. Bill and I have been travelling for this work for over 15 years now and what we see is unbelievable ingenuity of the people there, and that if given the right information and the right tools, they will lift themselves up, lift their families up, communities and nations. It's the thoughtful conversation that we have in groups like Chatham House that allows us to discuss what's really possible and what can be done.

We know that poor countries can become middle-income countries and eventually wealthy countries. How do we know this? Because we've seen it happen. South Korea is a particularly great example of that transformation. They now give foreign aid to help other countries. It's remarkable. That's happened in my lifetime.

We know it's possible to cut the number of poor people in half, because that's what we've done in the world in the last 25 years. We know that countries like Ethiopia and Rwanda are setting up health systems that work. Rwanda has had the highest drop in child mortality in the history of the world in the last decade. It's unbelievable.

Getting these kinds of results that we're seeing to scale in every country is our task. It's Chatham House and other partners who are helping keep us on task by leading the serious public conversation about what's really possible in this work.

Chatham House shows the engaged approach that the UK has taken for such a long time. You only have to look at the response you all have had to the Ebola epidemic, the crisis, and how that outward-looking activist approach drives British engagement with many global development issues. It was a pleasure for me earlier today and then this evening to see Professor David Heymann here. He's been at the forefront of many of these issues for a long time, not just polio but Ebola from the very beginning. He shows us that an international response is possible and what to do.

Today's Ebola crisis has also brought in the best of the UK research agencies, along with swift mobilization by governments and NGOs. It's really amazing to see what's going on in Sierra Leone because of your commitment.

The other thing that Bill and I are so thankful for is the British government's commitment to development aid. The commitment to 0.7 of GNI going to development assistance, I can tell you, it makes a difference all over the world. We see progress because of the development assistance that this country makes. It's not just your generosity, it's that relentless focus on seeing where you can get results and where you can have impact, and then making smart investments in aid that we know that works.

I sometimes wish we could take your public here and let them witness first-hand what Bill and I witness around the world, but let me give you one statistic to leave here tonight. Since 1990, we have cut in half the number of children that die under the age of five. We have cut it in half since 1990. At the same time, the population has grown by 2 billion. That's incredible. We have the chance again in the next decade, in the next 15 years, to cut that number in half again. We know the tools, we know what's possible. We just have to deliver them.

Some of the things I've talked about tonight would never have happened without the people like you in this room. What I want to say to you is that in the upcoming year, it's kind of a golden moment for us. At the United Nations, they are going to meet again to discuss the next set of goals. The last set of goals were set at the turn of the millennium, but in 2015 those goals will be updated. That will be a blueprint for the world about where to go to focus on development. If we can get a focused set of goals, we can make so much progress as a world. So if you all can help engage that conversation, not just in Chatham House but to the many people you know, so we have the debate at the right level and we do the right thing for the world, that would be an unbelievable result coming from this organization.

I'm honoured to receive this award tonight, and thank you for your interest.

Harry Brekelmans

Your excellencies, lords, ladies and gentlemen: as one of the few engineers in the room, I'm mindful of the fact that tonight I am something of a cuckoo. Not your typical Chatham House speaker – neither a politician nor a diplomat – but nevertheless, a grateful one. Grateful to be able to celebrate the ongoing partnership between Shell and Chatham House, a partnership that my colleagues and I value enormously.

But of course, also grateful to be able to congratulate Melinda Gates for being the deserving recipient of this year's Chatham House Prize. Twenty-five years working as an engineer around the world has taught me that despite the apparent pre-eminence of global corporations and nation-states, it is people who make change possible: engineers, entrepreneurs, aid workers, teachers and nurses. In a way, Melinda, you are all of these things squeezed into one single person. Robin already noted how your work on

reproductive planning and family health is having a very positive real impact on the lives of many thousands of women and children.

At Shell, we believe that what we do has a positive impact on the world, not just by providing energy but also as a means of the many social initiatives that we support and are involved with. But as a business, we know that we still have a lot to learn. By your work, you remind us of what's possible. You also remind us that changing the world is always done better together. So initiatives to tackle disease or to find cleaner sources of energy are at their most powerful when they are characterized by cross-sectoral collaboration, like the M-KOPA social enterprise in Kenya, jointly funded by the Gates Foundation, the UK government and the Shell Foundation, an independent charity which supports solutions to global developmental challenges. M-KOPA uses mobile payment technology to make solar power available to low-income consumers. It has the potential to provide millions of people with cleaner and cheaper sources of energy. As we all face up to pressing challenges like climate change, that model of collaborative, socially responsible action will be hugely important.

At Shell we believe in innovation. We believe in working together, and we believe in behaving responsibly. But we know there will always be more that we can do. As I say, what you achieve, Melinda, inspires us to reimagine what we can achieve. So behalf of all my colleagues at Shell, congratulations with this award. Thank you for all the work you do, and thank you for being an example we can all follow proudly.

Kofi Annan

Good evening, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, and dear friends. First of all, let me thank our host, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, for their decision to honour Melinda Gates, and commend its leadership as one of the world's top policy institutes. This evening, I extend my warmest congratulations to my friend, Melinda. It is a pleasure to join you all in paying tribute to her and to her extraordinary achievements and her constant effort to help people around the world lead healthy and productive lives.

For more than 20 years, Melinda has worked tirelessly to help millions of people lift themselves out of poverty, hunger and disease. Her generosity, commitment and integrity have and continue to be an inspiration to us all. I consider people like Melinda and Bill as true farmers – true farmers in the sense that the farmer knows that when you take something from the earth today, you need to put something back to be able to go back tomorrow to harvest. That is the way the world turns around. Somehow, when we move into the cities and we succeed and do well, we tend to forget that natural way of making things turn around, putting something back so that life can continue and you can support future generations. So to me, Melinda is a farmer.

As co-chair of the Gates Foundation, she has increased access to healthcare for mothers and their children so that they remain healthy during pregnancy, childbirth and early childhood. This is a crucial investment which has helped to drastically reduce infant mortality. But Melinda is also a powerful voice for more than 200 million women and girls in developing countries who lack access to contraceptives. She is a driver of effective public-private partnerships. Melinda knows that in our interconnected world, partnership and cooperation can be the only answer to complex and intractable challenges we face.

Melinda and I have worked closely together on food and nutrition security. I recall a trip we took to Tanzania, a field trip with other colleagues from AGRA and Gates Foundation, sitting under a tree and

talking to an elderly farmer who told us his story, his concern, his woes. He said: I have four children. Three are already gone, attracted by the city lights. I have the last one with me. I don't know if he's going to stay or he's going to follow him. If he follows them, I don't know what happens to my 40-acre farm. This is the challenge of keeping the youth and the young on the farms and getting them to produce for the billions that we are going to have in Africa and around the world. But it was fascinating to see how engaged Melinda was and how fascinated in the questions she asked this old man. That is Melinda. I think with the support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, smallholder farmers across Africa now grow more food and more money and escape the cycle of hunger and poverty.

Melinda believes strongly that wealth brings social responsibilities, and we are lucky that she does believe that. Her example and commitment has inspired other philanthropists around the globe to pledge half of their wealth to charity and dedicate themselves to improving our world. I must say, several of them come from my continent and I'm pleased about that. We can count ourselves fortunate if they prove to be even half as effective, engaged and passionate as Melinda.

I met Melinda's parents tonight. I think they are here with us, and also her best friend. I spoke with them for a while, so I have a bit of sense of her roots and I'm not surprised she turned out the way she has, and is as dedicated and engaged as she is. So we should thank the parents too, who are here with us tonight. We can give them a hand. Thank you for that.

I see you know how to clap nicely. I see Sir Jeremy here. Once I spoke to President Bush after his second address to the UN General Assembly. It is an assembly – and Sir Jeremy, who was British ambassador there, knows – nobody claps. Nobody stands up and claps as you see in the US Congress. So after President Bush has spoken, we went into the adjacent room and he said: Kofi, this is a tough room to talk to. They don't clap, they don't stand up. They say nothing, they sit silently. You speak and you leave. So it's good you gave a good clap.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me commend once more your recognition of an outstanding servant of the global community and a dedicated advocate for a fairer, more peaceful world. Melinda, many congratulations. Keep up your impatient optimism. I thank you for all you've done already and what you are yet to do. Thank you.

Lord Ashdown

My lords, ladies and gentlemen, I have one complaint: it is a cruel and unusual punishment to ask me to speak after my dear friend, Kofi Annan. How do you follow that? I can, however, follow it by picking up one word that Kofi used. I think you used the phrase, Kofi, 'a dedicated servant to the global community'. That, I think, is the theme of what I'd like to say a few words on.

We called you, as Robin Niblett said earlier on, a statesperson. Of course, it is the only word we have available to use, but it seems to me that the most important part of the extraordinary work that we celebrate tonight, that Melinda and the foundation has done, is precisely that it is not confined to states. It operates on the global scene, on the international scene, beyond the reach of the state and often in areas where the state finds it difficult to get to, frankly.

The phrase that you're dedicated to, that the foundation is dedicated to, is that all lives are of equal value. Can you imagine what kind of a world we might have, how much more peaceful it would be, how much

more stable, if that very simple principle was enacted across the world in the way which you, Melinda, and the foundation are dedicated? There are all sorts of good reasons. You made it so easy for my fellow presidents, Sir John Major and Patricia Scotland, to choose a shortlist which included your name, because it was just an outstanding set of achievements. The philanthropy itself has saved very probably, ladies and gentlemen, millions of lives. That would be enough for us to honour your work, but actually I think it's even more important than that.

We met the other day with Her Majesty the Queen when she opened the Academy of Leadership. Afterwards, in a remarkable and very typically Chatham House dinner, we sat down and we started to talk about what the post-Westphalian state world (you can only do that kind of thing in Chatham House) would look like. The thought that occurred to us was that power no longer lies within the framework of the nation-state, subject to its accountability and responsible to its laws. We have assembled a world on the basis that it is the Westphalian nation-state that is the prime mover, and yet this is not so. I venture to say that there's probably now more power that lies in the global arena, in the international space, than lies within the institutions of the nation-state. That it is at that international level, oblivious of the borders and frontiers of nation-states, that so much of the destiny of our world is decided. This is where the mass information exchange of the internet takes place. This is where the mass systems of travel deliver human beings around the world. This is where the mass speculation takes place that can sometimes – and one time very recently – unbalance the entire world economy. In this space, it is where disease is transmitted, so that Ebola in West Africa becomes a problem for us. Swine flu in Mexico becomes a problem for Heathrow the day after.

And yet, we do not bring to that space the systems of government and the systems of law and order and the systems of governance. It is that space that contains other things that we like, entertainment and news and mass travel. But it's also the things we don't like that occupy there: criminality and terrorism and disease also occupies that space. It seems to me it is one of the defects of the Westphalian nation-state that it finds it very difficult effectively to operate there.

But that's where you operate, because you have proved in your foundation that philanthropy too can occupy that space. It is also possible to act internationally, in a philanthropic way, to make those partnerships that Kofi referred to with private industry, in order to make things happen which our other institutions probably cannot do in such an effective way.

So I think we celebrate not an extraordinary act of philanthropy here but a genuine beacon shining into a turbulent and very fragile and frighteningly disturbed world: institutions that reach beyond the state simply to make things better. That, it seems to me, is one of the reasons why we are so proud to honour what you have done, not just because of the individual achievements but because of the model that sets, working in an arena where others cannot work.

What is that phrase? 'All lives are of equal value'. If only we could make that live. There was a great poem written by that remarkable Indian poet, Rabindranath Tagore. He wrote it, by the way, in 1905. It's called 'The Celebration of Diversity'. We all like to celebrate diversity today, it's quite fashionable to do so. It wasn't in 1905. The poem, I think, might be a creed for our times. It goes: 'We are all the more one, because we are many, for we have left an ample space for love in the gap where we were sundered. Our unlikeness shines with the radiance of a common creation, like mountain peaks in the morning sun'. It is our unlikeness that is the greatest revelation of both our humanity and the existence of the divine, whatever divine you happen to believe in.

Your life, Melinda, your work, your achievement which we celebrate and are proud to celebrate tonight, is dedicated to that proposition encompassed in that phrase that you use as the central proposition of the foundation: all lives are of equal value. Thank you for giving us the opportunity today to honour that commitment.

Stuart Popham

Your excellencies, lords, ladies, members and friends of Chatham House, and guests: good evening. I have to bring this evening's event to a close. Before doing that, may I first add my congratulations, Melinda, to you, and thank you very much for being here to share with us this evening's events, and more importantly, thank you for your timeless activity. We are all here tonight, I think, to testify to all that you have achieved, and as Kofi says, with more still to come.

Secondly, what a great evening it's been in these marvellous surroundings. For me, an evening of celebration, of entertainment, of enjoyment and erudition – in fact, exactly what you really think Chatham House should provide and what it has a reputation for doing.

So let me thank everybody who has made this evening quite such a special evening and made it happen. In particular, our sponsors: Shell, who are the lead sponsors; AIG, BHP Billiton, Chevron, DTCC and HSBC (thank goodness for acronyms). Thank you too to the Duke of Cambridge for his remarks and for bringing the message from Her Majesty the Queen. Thank you, Kofi, for your personal insights, and to Lord Ashdown, Paddy, for yours, thank you.

Then may I thank everyone at the Banqueting House for looking after us quite so well tonight. Of course, to the many staff of Chatham House who actually ensured that this event took place.

I can't finish without mentioning the fact that it's actually a very busy time for Chatham House. We've just launched, as others have said, our Second Century initiative, as we come towards our centenary, intent on raising an endowment to secure our future. On Tuesday, we launched the Queen Elizabeth II Academy for Leadership in International Affairs, in the presence of Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh. That launch was made possible by two cornerstone and most generous gifts which I want to acknowledge tonight: one from the Asfari Foundation and the other from the MAVA Foundation, because we at Chatham House depend upon, but are equally grateful for, all of your support.

So thank you very much, everybody, for joining us here this evening. Let me wish you a safe and pleasant journey home. Thank you and good night.