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ARE GLOBAL ACTIONS MATCHING GLOBAL ASPIRATIONS?

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. TALBOTT: Okay, everybody. Good afternoon to all of you. Welcome to the Brookings Institution and welcome to a discussion which we're looking forward to your taking part in on the subject of global governance.

Now, that phrase is a little bit tricky. There are some people who regard it as a contradiction in terms, because individual states govern themselves but the globe as a whole does not. And I think that there are also people in some circles who regard the term "global governance" as even more insidious than that. They think that it's a synonym or a euphemism for world government, with the aura of black helicopter rudders in the background and all that kind of thing.

In any event, that is not the topic that we are discussing here this afternoon. My three colleagues on this panel are going to be addressing global governance in the sense of a whole network of organizations, institutions, arrangements, and attitudes whereby the nearly 200 sovereign states in the world find ways of cooperating in order to deal with those problems that individual states simply cannot handle all by themselves, and that includes the superpower. These are problems like nuclear proliferation, global warming, the spread of infectious diseases, and several other issues that are certainly going to come up in the course of our discussion.

All four of us up here have been part of a World Economic Forum effort to assess how the world is doing in terms of global governance. It's called the Global Governance Initiative. And I'm going to introduce very briefly my three colleagues who have agreed to serve on this panel. Each of them is going to offer his or her own brief

perspective in some opening remarks and then we're going to have some discussion among ourselves and also a discussion involving all of you.

Ann Florini is our resident specialist on global governance here at the Brookings Institution. She is a senior fellow of the institution and she is going to retain that connection with Brookings when she becomes, as she soon will, the director of the Center on Asia and Globalization at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore. She's going to summarize very briefly the report that has been issued just today by the Global Governance Initiative of the World Economic Forum.

Tim Wirth and Moises Naim are members of the steering committee of the Global Governance Initiative. Tim, as I think all of you know, served for six terms as a member of the House of Representatives and also as a United States senator from Colorado. I was fortunate enough to be his colleague in the State Department in the '90s, when he was the under secretary of state for global affairs. And he is now the president of the United Nations Foundation.

Moises I've known for many years as well. He was at one point the minister of development of Venezuela—and that was, by the way, long before anyone, I suspect even including Moises, had ever heard of Hugo Chavez. He has also been an executive director of the World Bank, and he is now the editor of Foreign Policy magazine, which I think is just about the best journal there is in the world on the subject of globalization. By the way, the cover story in the most recent issue happens to be about Hugo Chavez.

Moises is also the author of a terrific new book. He's a very brave man indeed. I've heard of a lot of people giving books one-word titles, but not very often is that one word an adjective. The title of his book is "Illicit," and it's about a whole range of nefarious activities in trade in all kinds of dangerous substances and services that constitute a threat to international common interests.

So all of these are good friends. I'm honored to serve with them on the Global Governance Initiative at the World Economic Forum, and we're very pleased to have them with us here today.

Ann, if you will please get the discussion started.

MS. FLORINI: Sure. Let me start by giving you a little bit of background on how the Global Governance Initiative came about.

For quite some years, governments around the world have been in the habit of setting goals for the world. They sign these major declarations saying we're going to achieve wonderful things on reducing poverty, educating children, ending war, et cetera, et cetera. The reason they do this is because there are obviously some pretty big problems that need that kind of attention and governments want to be seen to be doing something about them.

Unfortunately, the being-seen part seems to be more important for most of them than the doing part. But there hasn't been until recently any way to get a handle on the size of the gap between these lofty aspirations that keep getting put forward in these international declarations and what is actually being done on the ground to achieve those lofty goals.

So several years ago, we created the Global Governance Initiative as a way of trying to get a handle on the size of that gap. The way the project works is we have identified six major issue areas drawing from a series of international declarations—primarily the United Nations Millennium Declaration from 2000, but several others as well—and identified what are the goals that essentially all of the world's governments have signed on to saying this is what the world ought to be trying to achieve.

The best-known of these are the Millennium Development Goals, the MDGs, which call for the world to achieve very specific targets on poverty, education, health, and hunger by the year 2015. But there's a series of others as well, on peace and secretary, on environment, on human rights, and all of those are covered within the GGI. We use these goals as opposed to making up stuff ourselves, because these are the ones that have been legitimated by the world's governments. We're not saying what the world should be trying to do; we're merely holding the world accountable for whether it is doing what it said it wants to be doing.

We also looked not only at governments but also at business and civil society, on the grounds that even though governments have the lion's share of the responsibility for trying to achieve these goals, there is no way they are going to achieve them without the active involvement of the corporate sector and of civil society.

The project comes out every year with the report that you saw on the table out front. I hope you got a copy of it. In that we have text that explains what the state of the world is, what happened during the previous calendar year, what did it all mount up to? And for each of the six sets of goals that we have, we give the world a

score. It's a grade on a 0-to-10 scale. We considered using an A-to-F scale, but found out that most of the world doesn't give grades on an A-to-F scale, so that wouldn't have been meaningful for most parts of the world.

A zero is worse than a failing grade. It means that what we're doing in that issue area is so bad that it's actually sending us the wrong direction. It's not even meager progress. A 10 is just a passing grade. It means that the level of effort that was exerted during that calendar year was about what was needed to have us on track to achieve the goals about when we think we ought to be achieving them. So a 10 is not an outstanding score. It's a mere passing score.

In the current report, we looked at the fact that 2005 got billed as "the turnaround year." This was the year that the world was finally going to get serious about particularly the development goals, but really all the goals across the board. And I want to run through with you the highlights of what actually happened that year and then talk about what kind of scores did the world get, and then say where does that leave us for 2006 and where do we go from here.

January started off pretty promisingly because in January the Millennium Project released a series of roadmaps on what is it the world ought to do over the next 10 to 15 years to achieve the goals that have been laid out by the world. And these are impressive reports. I strongly commend them to anyone who hasn't seen them. Very detailed. The stack is, I think, a few feet high if you go into all the background reports as well. On what it is the world can and should be doing, what kinds of resources it will take, how we can actually go about achieving the goals. We had never had such a roadmap before.

Another one of the major events of the year was not quite so positive—I think you'll be hearing about that a little later from Tim—was the series of efforts at U.N. reform leading up to the world summit in September, which I think was not a total failure, but was not the revamping of the system of global governance that it could have been.

Probably all of you heard about the G-8 summit in July in Scotland, the new promises on aid. We promised to double aid to Africa over the next five years. The total increase, I think, amounts to about $50 billion by 2010. It was a substantial increase.

And the year ended with three fairly major disappointments. One was on trade—the Hong Kong Ministerial, where we were supposed to be making serious progress on a development round in trade so that developing countries could fully participate in the international trade system. We did not see much of anything happen there.

We saw a fairly disappointing outcome, although not a surprising one, in Montreal, on climate change negotiations, where, again, some positive things happened, but not nearly as much as should have happened if we were serious about achieving the goal on climate change.

And the third disappointment is that by the end of 2005 we had to acknowledge that we missed the first of the goals completely. The world had set a goal to achieve gender equity in education so that boys and girls would have equal opportunity to go to school around the world by 2005. We're nowhere close.

So that was the downside of 2005.

All of this was big headlines stuff. But at least as important in 2005, as every year, were the whole series of examples of things happening at a lower level, often things that did not hit the headlines—things from particular individual governments, from businesses, from civil society campaigns. The civil society campaigns got some attention this year—the Live Aid concerts that many of you probably heard about. In fact, it was those civil society campaigns that were largely responsible for the fact that governments moved as much as they did on poverty alleviation this year.

Where that kind of civil society mobilization was missing—where it largely was in other issue areas like environment and human rights—we saw much less, if any, progress at all. We saw China and India continuing to put new resources into agriculture and rural poverty. We saw Brazil putting huge new resources into its major antipoverty and anti-hunger program. We saw on the environment some really surprising movement in the business sector—General Electric announced that it's going to start spending up to $1.5 billion a year on clean water and energy. Wal-Mart, which usually hits the headlines for rather different reasons, promised to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent over the next 7 years and, much more importantly, promised to pressure its suppliers to follow suit. Given the chain of Wal-Mart suppliers around the world, that could be very significant.

So it's clear that there are some useful things happening. And that's why all the scores are above 1. But it's also clear, if you look at the whole range of activity over 2005, that what's being done around the world doesn't add up to anywhere near the level of effort needed if we're serious about achieving the global goals. The highest score this year is a 5. So we did about half of what we should have been doing on

poverty and a couple of other issues. And that's, by the way, the best score the Global Governance Initiative has ever given.

So we are falling short. We are falling short every year, and we are falling short by a lot.

So where we are now at the beginning of 2006. We have much better roadmaps on how to proceed. We have not only the Millennium Project, we also have a series of roadmaps on ecosystems and biodiversity from a project called the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. We have the Education For All initiative. We have a whole series of plans that would make a good deal of sense, that would actually have a fair hope of achieving the kinds of goals that we've laid out for ourselves. We have continuing work on U.N. reform. We have promises from the rich countries to provide more official development assistance—although it's important to remember how often those promises are honored in the breach.

We have important steps by a number of developing countries on poverty alleviation and development, a few moves on the environment, et cetera. But overall, 2005 did not represent the turnaround that it was billed as being. It may have rotated us a few degrees, but it certainly did not reverse us.

I want to end on a personal note. For the last three years, as the director of this project, I've been in the privileged position of traveling around the world and getting the world's leading experts to tell me what' going on in the world, what matters, why it matters, and who is responsible for doing what. It's been an extraordinary experience. There's a huge amount of frustration out there, but there are also quite a

number of extraordinary people doing pretty impressive things about trying to achieve these goals. And there are grounds for hope, and we do have things to build on.

But there's one issue area that stands out as the one where the world is most dramatically falling short and where the consequences of inadequate action could be truly potentially catastrophic for all of us, and that's the environment. The score for environment this year is a 2. That means barely above holding still. And if we had scored biodiversity and ecosystems separately, the score there would have been a 0, meaning what we're doing is making things much worse relatively fast.

And remember, when thinking about that score, that the goal is things like avoiding dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate. We're not talking about trying to provide a pristine planet. We're talking about avoiding screwing this one up so badly that we may not be able to live here in the future. And we are way off track even on that minimal goal.

So on that positive note, let me end there.

[Laughter.]

MR. TALBOTT: Thank you. Before turning to Tim, there's one seat up here which is available. And if anybody sees other seats, there are a couple of people standing in the back. So there are a couple up in this area. Please don't be bashful.

Tim, over to you.

MR. WIRTH: Great. Thank you very much, Strobe. And let me just begin by commenting on Strobe's excellent genes, which came from his father, who's sitting in the front row. Nelson Talbott is here. Mr. Talbott, it's so nice to see you again. Thank you for all your good work on so many things.

Ann mentioned not going from A to F, which is probably a good idea. In this world of grade inflation, probably people would have said, maybe, they're B's and C's when in fact they wouldn't be. It's much more realistic to have, I think, the grim numbers that we're going to talk about today.

But first, let me say this is a really good report. It's fine fodder for journalists and it certainly is a great reference point for scholars. I think it ought to be required reading for every student in the field of international affairs and development economics. It's just a really good piece of work. And Ann, we're going to miss you. I hope that from the perspective of Singapore you can swing around and come interview us about next year's report, because you've done such a super job on this.

It's also pretty remarkable coming out of the World Economic Forum that I think is known to most in the world as sort of that retreat of plutocrats in the mountains of Switzerland. And in fact, you know, it is probably one of the best places where the forces of liberal globalization occur, in the best way. And this report reflects that and it reflects the best of what the world ought to be doing together in a cooperative way on a whole variety of areas. So I think it's a tribute to Davos, the World Economic Forum, that this report exists.

Strobe and Ann asked me to comment briefly on institutional progress, on the one hand, and also, on the environmental chapter.

On the first, on institutional progress, 2005 started as a year of great promise for institutional strengthening at the U.N. It seemed that this was going to be, in the terms of the report, a turnaround year for the U.N. as well, a time for a grand bargain between the developing and developed countries: For developing countries, a time for

significant moves on poverty and related activities, and in exchange for a lot more help from the developed world, they in turn would concede a much stronger center within the U.N. institution, a center focused on such issues as terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and human rights. A grand bargain between the two. It seemed that this was going to be a year for that.

And even as late as June, in the secretary general's own report—another piece of very good work called "In Larger Freedom"—it seemed that the diplomatic process was going to work its way toward significant change. And as Strobe knows so well, that diplomatic process is long, tortuous, arduous, takes enormous patience and a lot of very, very specific, detailed work, particularly as that was being within the context and the complexities and suspicions engendered by the Iraq war.

History is going to tell us with greater certainty what really happened during this year, and there will be various interpretations as to why the year ended up for many a disappointment, for many the glass was half full. And the reasons for this sort of not meeting the promise of 2005, making some progress but not meeting the promise, are still many.

There still remained, and we haven't gotten over it, the basic disagreement over strengthening the center. Why was that to the advantage of all nations around the world, who were suspicious of devolving more authority of the Security Council, more authority on a few nations? There is only—as in any political situation, there is only so much power, and if you give up some power to somebody else, that's a diminution of power for you. That bargain still has not been cut.

Another reason, particularly if you listen to the right wing in America, is that there were such basic structural flaws at the U.N. that therefore we ought to abandon some of its basic political missions. And that impulse remains and unfortunately is creeping elsewhere in the world.

And a third reason, illustrated most recently in some very good writing by Colum Lynch in the Washington Post, focuses on really clumsy U.S. diplomacy reflecting the reality and the preeminence of U.S. leadership. Is it appropriate that this combative style, praised by some as the only way to get the U.N. to move, disparaged by others who find that it's counterproductive both to the U.S. national interest and to fundamental U.N. reform—has this style and has this U.S. leadership been productive or not? The proof will be in the outcomes, and those are largely going to be seen in the first six months of 2006.

Small gains occurred, some of them very important. We had the opening of a window on the acceptance of Israel. We had the acceptance of the norm of duty to protect and the principle of universal jurisdiction—those who commit international crimes can be tried anywhere in the world. A new peace-building commission, a Democracy Fund, internal reforms on audit, conflict of interest, whistleblower—important steps toward beginning to reform and change the U.N. No progress at all on small arms, on proliferation, on Security Council reform. The next few months will be very important—a review of the U.N.'s mandates, trying to design a new Human Rights Council to replace the old, thoroughly inadequate human rights machinery. And maybe we have an opportunity to move toward the U.N.'s very special opportunity of norm-setting in a definition of terrorism.

This will all be major tests in 2006 for a new secretary general, who will be chosen probably about half-way through the year. And whether he or she receives a mandate to deal with these issues will be part of the 2006 report, which Ann has started to draft as we speak.

Turning to the environment and the dismal and declining score of this report, we're now down to a 2 on a 10 scale, and I think that that may be generous. The indications that are used are three: climate change, biological diversity, and access to water and sanitation.

If the purpose and leadership of the United States in the area of governance, which I discussed first—if the purpose and leadership of the U.S. is at best ambiguous, in this area related to the environment, there is no ambiguity at all. At a time when U.S. leadership is absolutely critical on these issues that are central to the long-term health of the planet, to social and political stability, economic opportunity, the U.S. has been absent and, some would say, delinquent.

Let me quote from the report. "It may clearly be too late to avoid dangerous man-made interference with the climate, and we will be dealing with the problem for generations to come. Overall, we must decide how willing we are to roll the dice on humanity's future." And later: "President Bush's administration found itself more isolated in its refusal to take the problem seriously."

While some hopeful signs can be read into the recent Montreal agreement on future negotiations and the impressive leadership, as Ann noted, of a few companies like GE and Xcel Energy and in the advent of some interesting new economic approaches to climate—trading within the EU, the use of the clean development

mechanism, the role of pension funds and their investment policies—none of these steps is a substitute for strong government action.

If the U.S. won't move, how can we possibly expect China and India to take the issue as seriously as they must? And the world is slowly baking. The long-term consequences are dire indeed. Even though he appears to want to get out of town before he has to do anything, the retreat to Crawford, Texas, will be a retreat to a hotter and hotter, drier and drier place. There is no escape from the consequences of our actions, or inactions.

In biodiversity protection, the results may be even worse, as there are no frameworks in place under which the world has agreed to cooperate. The U.S. Senate has refused to ratify the Biodiversity Convention and the Congress is in attack mode on such landmark protection measures as the national Environmental Protection Act and the Endangered Species Act, telling the world that we don't think that these are important.

Released during 2005, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment provided "compelling evidence of our failure to keep pace with the rate at which we're damaging nature." An audit of our management of the planet showed that most of the 24 ecosystem services, key to human well-being, are now being degraded or used unsustainably, from fisheries and forests to freshwater resources. Defending ecosystem integrity is key to alleviating poverty, protecting against natural disasters, ensuring global public health, and redressing some of the causes of violent conflict.

In a dismal summary, the report comments on "the disastrous performance of governments on environmental commitments" and gives the world 0 out of 10.

In summary, a new secretary general will find himself, or herself, faced with severe challenges and some great breakthrough opportunities. Following the often unfair pummeling that it received in the oil-for-food issue, can the U.N. regain its balance and again become a broadly saluted and supported moral force in the world? We'll begin to look at that in 2006. Can the new Human Rights Council be made to work? Can the grand bargain be recrafted? And will the U.S. be a constant partner, not a sometime or occasional leader? Will further natural disasters finally alert governments to the urgent environmental crises facing humanity?

Hopes ran high that 2005 would be, as Ann said, the turnaround year. As the report says, it came maybe a bit closer than cynics expected. Now we look to 2006. We can build on some of the institutional changes. We can take heart from some of the health victories—polio and measles, for example. We can continue to reinforce the role of women in fighting AIDS, protecting themselves, and battling against regressive health and other social policies. And maybe in questions we can talk a little bit about the need we can raise once more, the urgent issue of population at a time that every political force is arguing against understanding that the world is growing faster than it ever has before in our history. And we can take advantage of the price of oil, which may well change much of the resistance to much-needed alternative forms of energy and may be the answer for finally sorting through the very dangerous and damaging agricultural subsidy issue which has so harmed so many elements in the world.

These will be some of the highlights of 2006—an ambitious agenda for the U.S. and for the U.N. and for the world.

Thank you very much. I look forward to your comments and questions.

MR. TALBOTT: Thank you, Tim.

I see a couple of other folks have come in. We still have one chair over here and a couple of chairs over there. So standing-room-only is a great compliment to my three colleagues up here, but we don't want to have any empty chairs and have any of you have to stand unnecessarily.

Moises.

MR. NAIM: I am willing to give someone a chair.

[Laughter.]

MR. TALBOTT: Moises is offering to give up his chair.

MR. NAIM: Thank you, Strobe, and thank you all for being here.

In 1996, I was invited to go to Geneva. The World Economic Forum invited a small group to convene and discuss how can one track what was being done or not done, and how effectively, to deal with problems that we all agreed were urgent and were getting worse. Many, many years ago.

The problem was intractable, because, first, you start with thinking, What are the problems? How do you make the list? The list is very long. Even the definition of the list is complicated—do you include inequality on the list, does it have to include poverty? The science behind some of these problems was controversial. Who would you invite to decide what are the rankings? And so on.

It took a long time. Frankly, I thought at different points of that process that it was impossible, the exercise was not going to go anywhere.

In fact, I was wrong, and it has come to where we are today. And that is in large measure due to efforts of the World Economic Forum and Ann Florini. It is a

massive undertaking. It's six groups of experts—all of whom are experts and therefore prima donnas—with strong opinions. It was very important from the beginning to make sure that this was not ideologically homogeneous. It was very important that the group would be legitimate, credible, and scientific as much as possible in these areas, and so on.

And how do you identify some of the best experts in the world? Even after you decide on what are the subjects, how do you agree on who should be giving the opinions on these subjects?

Ann and Parag Khanna and others here have done a wonderful job. And last year, I think, we had the first report. Right?

It's very important to remember that what these numbers track is not outcomes, but efforts. There are enough other reports that track outcomes. We know, or there is all sorts of information concerning how are we doing in terms of outcomes—how many more people are poor today or not than before; how is the environment doing? What we don't have—and this is one of the unique characteristics of this report—is how much effort humanity is deploying in trying to deal with these very urgent problems. And it is done, as I said, by convening some of the best minds in the world in each of the experts groups that then discuss and come to an agreement.

In short, this index is the only place that you will find, is the only publication in which you will find a concise, readable overview of what the world is doing, or not doing, to tackle problems that are important to all of us.

Inevitably, when you do that you end up with an exercise in frustration, because inevitably there is a gap between what the world is doing and what our needs

are, what the expectations are, and even worse, what the promises are. If you compare what people that have promised to do certain things, that is, governments that have promised to do certain things, and what actually they're doing, you will find a gap. And you'll find an even bigger gap between what is promised to be done and what is actually done and what is needed.

So there all sorts of doubts in this arena. So the question is why. Why this permanent frustration and permanent gap? The explanations are many and some are well-known.

One that I wanted to highlight this afternoon has to do with the thinking about the market for global public goods, the supply and demand of global public goods and what happens with that deficit. I thought that an example would be useful to illustrate what I'm talking about.

In 1970, the world recorded 78 major natural disasters. Those 78 disasters cost about $10 billion in losses and 80 million people were affected. 1970. By 2004, the number of recorded major disasters had climbed from 78 to 384. The number of people affected, the number of victims of these natural disasters, climbed from 80 million to 200 million. And the costs multiplied by 5, from $10 billion to $50 billion.

So one of the reasons is that now we have better statistics. One of the reasons is that some of the disasters that before went unrecorded, now we know. Another important reason is that population growth has forced people to leave in more vulnerable areas, more fragile areas, more prone to climatic accidents—neighborhoods that are built where they shouldn't be built. And I think here Katrina is a good example of that, but that's throughout the world.

And note that I have not even talked about the frequency of these disasters, which some people associate with climatic change. You don't even need to go into that to just say that there are more accidents, there are more disasters, there are more people killed every year at more expense, and that today what is generally referred to as environmental refugees are more than the refugees because of wars. There are more people displaced, killed, and in the status of refugees because of climatic accidents and catastrophes than because of war. By 2010, four years from now, it is estimated that the world will have something like 50 million people displaced that are refugees because of climatic accidents.

Meanwhile, the efforts and the money that is being devoted, that the world devotes to try to deal with these accidents after they happen—don't even think about prevention, but after they happen—has declined, or has increased very minimally. It depends how you count it, how you do the accounting. But for sure, the reality is that it has not even approached the level of explosion in need that the world faces. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which is one agency that is responsible for dealing with refugees, the budget since 1990 to today, the budget has increased 62 percent. Meanwhile, the need has multiplied by factors of 5 and 10. The World Bank, that lends money for reconstruction, the lending has declined. So any measure that you use to try to estimate the supply of these kinds of public goods shows that is declining or stagnant.

Meanwhile, the needs—call it demand—for those services has boomed, partially because of globalization. And not only in the area—I am using natural disasters just as an example. But pick the problem of your choice. Pick health, pick education,

pick any one, and you will see that, almost universally, what has happened is that the demand for global public goods has soared and the supply has either been stagnant or declined, thus creating a deficit between supply and demand.

In economics, when you have a market for goods, when you have a lot of demand and not enough supply, you have inflation. Prices go up. In international security and in these kinds of issues, when you have a gap between the demand for global public goods exploding and not enough supply to respond to it, what you get is insecurity and instability, and death.

So we have plenty of macroeconomic deficits—you know, American fiscal deficits and Europeans are not growing enough and China has all sorts of imbalances. Those generate poverty and inequality and all sorts of problems. But none of those deficits kills as many people as the deficits in the market for global public goods. And that has many reasons. Again, the soaring demand—it has to do with globalization and we can discuss why; and the constraint in supply has to do with the fact that a lot of these responses are grounded domestically.

And the politics of it all becomes very complicated. In fact, one of the reasons for the dismal numbers that the report shows has to do with the lack of constituencies. We do not have constituencies that build to create the pressures that are needed to react to these demands.

Therefore, we need to borrow constituencies. And we get lenders to give us constituencies. I'm thinking of Bono. The reason why Bono is so important to this is that he is—we are borrowing a constituency. Because the constituency around global poverty is not there, we need to borrow it from Bono. Bono has a constituency, not

because of poverty but because he's a rock singer that people love. So we have millions of people that would not otherwise be engaged in this now more aware, thanks to the constituency we have borrowed from Bono. Or Angelina Jolie, who is an ambassador to the United Nations for—I think for children or something.

And so on. So we need—the trick has been to borrow constituencies. But as you can imagine, there are limits to that. So the challenge is to really create a political constituency that would create the incentives for politicians worldwide to act on this.

Thank you.

MR. TALBOTT: Thank you, Moises. I think it's a particularly appropriate point to end on because I suspect, as I look out across this room and recognize quite a number of faces, there are some people here with constituencies that they might be prepared to lend.

Let's consider it now your meeting. We have a microphone. So please, raise your hand if you'd like to ask a question. And if you want to address to one of the three panelists, that's fine.

QUESTION: Hi. Amy Christianson [sp]. I'm an independent consultant. I have a question about the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.

It seems, with the challenges we have in creating a framework for cooperation around biodiversity and trying to reduce the conflict—perceived conflict, at least—between north and south on environment versus development, that the MEA really could be a framework for moving forward on that cooperation because it shows the inter-linkages between environment and development. So I was wondering if any of

you could talk to Next Steps for that Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. Is it being marketed to folks in the development world, to the World Bank, to others? I know that Bob Watson was very involved in that. I was just curious if you know Next Steps and how it could be a potential framework.

MR. WIRTH: For those of you may not be — the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment was probably, along with climate change, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, is this remarkable assemblage of international scientists. I think 1,300 of the best biologists and chemists in the world came together to look at the state of the 24 or 25 major ecosystems that support life on earth. That report was done in part sponsored by the U.N.; WRI, World Resources Institute, was key to driving it, and a number of other institutions. I think Brookings was involved in that. We were involved in helping to get this fine piece of scientific work done.

The problem was, like all of these things, it's an interesting problem of public policy that all of the effort went into the science and into the analysis. I was at a meeting of some conservative philanthropoids a couple of months ago and an interesting fact, Amy, came out of that. These guys—it was all men—these guys were talking about what they do in their institution. And they spend 20 percent of their time and effort on the substance of what they do and they spend 80 percent on the messaging. And I thought—and that was just, oh, yeah, that's what we do. And I thought, well, that's really interesting—how dumb are we, you know, if we're on the other side of this. And this is a very good example. You know, this fine piece of work with almost no effort made to roll it out and to explain what it means and why it's important and why it is so absolutely critical to the future of life on the earth.

It will be rolled out, finally, this Thursday or Friday. It's being published by Island Press. And I think it's Thursday or Friday the major roll-out will occur, with some really terrific scientists there and it will be a very interesting session. But the report came out, you know, last spring or early last summer. And there's a great gap of time. And it's, you know, it's pretty hard to kind of catch up on that.

But it was a major piece of work, but it also—what happened is kind of a metaphor for, you know, how do you get into people's consciousness at a time when everybody's competing to get into this limited space and how do you do it. I think the MEA, unfortunately, so far hasn't been able to penetrate.

Maybe that's more than you want to know, but it's a pretty interesting little case study as to how to do it or how not to.

MR. TALBOTT: Ann, you wanted to add something?

MS. FLORINI: Yes. Given that so much of this has been so grim, I wanted to interject one relatively positive note. It is very possible for environmental groups or other kinds of civil society organizations to take what has come out of the MEA and take it to the public in very vivid ways.

Let me give you an example of another group that did this. There's a law in the United States that requires corporations that release certain quantities of toxic materials into the environment to report on what they're releasing to the EPA. The EPA makes those data public. They make them public in a form that is not terribly useful or media-friendly. So an environmental group called Environmental Defense set up a Web site called Scorecard, where they took that data and merged it with other data and put it into a form that was extremely user-friendly.

The initial way they set it up was you put in your Zip Code and up would pop a map. On it were indicated all of the facilities that were covered by this toxics release inventory, with links to it saying what was being released, what was known about the health and environmental consequences of what was being released, and the fax number of the CEO of the company involved. That Web site has had a powerful effect on toxic releases in this country.

There is no reason that groups cannot do this same kind of thing around the world with Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. That kind of disclosure-based public policy is becoming more and more common around the world. So it is quite possible to take these reports that, as Tim says, tend to be all about the substance and not at all about the messaging, and have other groups take on the messaging function.

QUESTION: My name is Navid [ph]. I'm with WRI. I'm actually working on the follow-up on the MA. My boss will be happy that she sent me down here.

If you have any questions—you did a very good job of answering—if you have any questions or prefer to talk to me afterwards, I won't go into all the detail, but currently right now one project we're working on is to actually make a document on the political implications of the MA, to actually translate the scientific findings into the policy realm. And that will, hopefully, be published by March. Some would say, maybe, too little too late, but we're hoping to actually keep, you know, following up on this important report. Maybe there's potential for another one to be done in another 10 years.

It was a very difficult process because it involved a couple thousand scientists from about 90 different countries around the world. So just the language and solving translation difficulties was significant. But the point is it was done, and it can be done again. So look out for that.

And feel free to come talk to me afterwards if you have any questions.

MR. TALBOTT: Thank you.

MR. WIRTH: Well, it was a great piece of work and, you know, very, very important, very substantive, incredibly well done. You know, the job I think that many of us have is to help get it out — I mean, that's the—and we ought to learn lessons of when we know certain things about what's happening in this world, how do you get it out. And even if you get it out, then of course the battle is very difficult with the chemical companies, for example, who are going to be replying, you know, with enormous public affairs capability to deny or to take on or to contradict or whatever, just as we saw in the climate world with all of these energy companies taking on the findings of what— You know, ultimately reality sinks in and we'll get that out there, but boy, it's a hard thing. But you guys did a wonderful job.

QUESTION: My name is Paul Joffe. I'm with the National Wildlife Federation. I want to commend the panel for developing and highlighting the index. And I want to suggest that there's another set of numbers that we need, and that is what would it take to close the gap between how badly we're doing now and where we're supposed to be? I'm just going to tell one anecdote to illustrate this.

We, as probably others in this room, were in Johannesburg for the World Summit in 2002. And as many of you know, the administration fought the idea of

establishing a goal for dealing with sanitation, for having the number of people with access to decent sanitation around the world, and then very reluctantly and with much gnashing of teeth agreed to the goal at the end of the summit, but successfully fought the idea of developing any sort of benchmarks or a work plan to achieve the goal.

Now, I ask you. How can we make progress toward these goals and how can civil society—I mean, we completely agree with Moises's point that we need to—I mean, that's what we do, we—constituencies don't get turned on and off like a light switch. We have to educate, mobilize, organize. But we need to have this kind of information that we can take to our constituency and be able to hold officials accountable for making progress towards those goals.

So I would be interested in your— And by the way, Congress recently passed a law, led by Congressman Blumenauer and Congressman Shays, on water and sanitation, requiring the administration to submit to Congress a strategy for achieving that goal. And we need that for all of these goals. I'd be interested in your comments on it, and we would certainly be interested in working with your initiative on efforts to make that a reality.

MR. TALBOTT: I think it is such an important question because it pushes us—and I think I include everybody in the room in that—to move from identifying the problem to trying to identify a solution. And I'm going to ask each of the three panelists to give you his or her own answer. I think we have an interesting diversity of perspectives. That's not to prejudge what each of them will say, but Moises in his checkered career has been in the international financial institutions and also in a government, Ann knows the issue of international civil society very well, and Tim has

been in two branches of the U.S. government. So maybe each of you would take a crack at the answer.

MS. FLORINI: Well, I'll start with talking a bit about civil society. First, on the goals themselves, many of them do in fact have various quantifiable indicators, and United Nations has gone through all sorts of jumping through hoops trying to set up various kinds of benchmarks. Very often they're not terribly adequate. And for a number of the world's very crucial goals on human rights, on climate change, on peace and security issues there are no indicators whatsoever of what we're supposed to be trying to accomplish with any kind of specificity. It's been a perennial question for those of us involved in the project of against exactly what are we trying to measure the level of effort that should be required, because the level of effort there is versus some notional idea of what we should be doing, and it is not an easy thing to answer whenever there are not very specific and quantifiable goals or very clear agreement on how it is you go about achieving those goals.

I think the—one of the things I found very striking in this year's report was the degree to which success paralleled international civil society and mobilization, that we saw significant improvements happening in areas where there were these borrowed constituencies, where there were large numbers of people at least willing to pay some kind of attention, so that governments and businesses felt that they had to do something. And we saw that particularly on poverty. Where we didn't see it—we did not see it much on human rights. We saw lots of media hoopla on human rights, but we did not see large-scale organization international civil society going after governments on a lot of the human rights issues. And we saw significant slippage on human rights.

On environment we saw much the same thing. There is no well-organized large-constituency civil society movement around the world that's looking at ecosystems. And ecosystems are completely ignored as a result.

So if we want to see progress actually being made, I think we need a couple of things. We need much more specific indicators of what it is we're supposed to be trying to do and we need large groups of people—not just borrowed constituencies of the kind that Bono can do, but much larger groups of people getting together and demanding much better from their governments.

MR. TALBOTT: Moises or Tim?

MR. NAIM: That's a great question. I'm thinking of a matrix in which you identify the problems, and if you want to take the problems, identify the six areas. In each one you can identify interests, political will, and ideas as obstacles to achieve those goals. And what I'm saying is take, for example, poverty. First, I want to question the assumption that we make very often, that we all make, that a lot of these problems are not so just because of lack of political will. If only governments had the political will, the problems would be solved. Well, that's often the case, but not always the case. There are problems in which there is the political will, but we don't have the ideas or we don't have the consensus. Or we don't have the institutions.

Think about—take poverty, for example, and just think about the furious debate between the make-poverty-history side of the, you know, the Jeff Sachs approach, book campaign. Essentially, you read that book, you listen to Jeff Sachs, and there is no doubt that he has, if not the solution, he has a lot of ideas of how to move the world

towards a solution. That essentially has to do with more resources spent in a more intelligent way.

But then there are as respectable economists and others that don't think that that's right. Bill Easterly is an example. He wrote an article in Foreign Policy magazine called The Year of Living Utopianly, in which he says, you know, in 2005 we had all sorts of events and all sorts of summits and concerts and documents and high-level commissions and commitments about making poverty history, but there is a problem with that idea because very often more money thrown at the problem aggravates the problem. I think I can relate to that. I come from a country, Venezuela, where money has never been the problem. And it's one of the worst—it's a very poor country. So you have a lot of countries that are very wealthy and yet very poor. So there is something there, where money is necessarily but not sufficient.

Or take education. Education has become the universal solution. Whenever you are at a meeting and there is a huge, terrible problem, from AIDS to development, you know, the solution is education. Somebody will tell you with a very profound voice and very deep—you know, it's a problem of education. And that sounds like a solution. Well, it's not, because we don't really know how to do or what to do with education.

In most of the world, people will tell you that they're experiencing an educational crisis, including the United States. Most presidents these days, around the world, run on being the education president platform. The world seems to have a universal educational problem. And if that's true for the OECD countries, just imagine what's going on in a school or in a high school in a favela in Brazil or in a poor

neighborhood in Indonesia or somewhere in Africa. And the gap there and what we know— And so the challenge of solving the education problem is not just political will. There is also—we lack ideas and tools.

And finally, very often it is also related to interests. Very often there are very powerful interests that prevent the problems from being solved.

MR. TALBOTT: Tim?

MR. WIRTH: Well, the question is how do we build constituencies to get the kind of change that I think we'd like to see. Or that's one way of paraphrasing the question. Let me take the two issues that I was asked to address, the U.N. and the environment.

On the negative side—let's look at the U.N. for a minute—for the first 50 years of existence, the U.N. went along in the United States with an approval level somewhere between 70 and 75 percent. And people were for the U.N. That was just sort of an article of faith in the country. We all thought it was a good idea. It had a lot of warts and problems, but we were for it.

In the last three or four years, you know, with the—particularly from the Iraq war, there has been a relentless attack on the U.N. and we've watched, you know, a real erosion of the support base. It bounces back up again from time to time. But it's hard to find—and we were talking earlier—a constituency that's out there working on behalf of these international questions. You know, it's much easier to go beat up on the U.N., and we see an awful lot of cheap rhetoric, a lot of misrepresentation of oil-for-food. It's really a lot of pretty cheesy stuff, you know, in the face of the reality. For example, we run into a crisis on Iran, which we're in right now—the U.S. can't solve it,

the EU can't solve it, and where does everybody run? They run right to the institution that they've spent the last four years denigrating in every way possible. Pretty maddening and pretty cheap politics. But it works.

Where is the constituency coming the other way? We're trying to work on that, and we all are, but boy, it's hard to find constituencies that you can borrow for the U.N. They're just not there. It's going to take political leadership to get it back to the top, and that's not going to exist for awhile.

On the other hand, let's take climate change. If you look at climate change, climate change was taking a pretty brutal beating three or four years ago. You remember the Byrd-Hagel resolution in the Senate on the climate treaty, and it was 99-1, or 90-1, or something like that—you know, some horrendous number reflected. So we're going nowhere on climate change.

Look what's happening today. It's turning around, I think, very rapidly and very effectively everyplace but at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue. You know, people know. You look at mayors and look at governors, look what's happening in one major industry group after another—it is shifting quickly.

And the economic opportunities are there. It is now understood this is not a hand-wringing environmental problem as reflected in "The Death of Environmentalism," this is fundamentally an economic problem with an underpinning of a huge new constituency coming in, the evangelical community—you know, What Would Jesus Drive? Not a flippant question, but a very real question related to a very large, at least 60 million people becoming engaged in this issue. It's really interesting to watch how this is forming, and it's going to be interesting to watch in 2008—not 2006,

probably—2008. You know, how are presidential candidates going to grab an issue that is suddenly becoming a reality?

So that's the other side of this, is to see a lot of natural constituencies out there for climate change. There are a lot of them and they are beginning to evolve. So we can feel good about that.

I wish that—if somebody has any great ideas as to where the natural constituencies are for the U.N., please let me know. We are searching.

QUESTION: Paula Stern, Stern Group.

I don't have any answers for you, Tim, but I do reflect on 30 years ago, when I was here at Brookings working on domestic politics and the shaping of U.S. policy, foreign policy. And I want to go back to the U.S. and its role in this global governance, global responsibility.

Because of our system, Congress gets involved in global issues through the trade bills and when there's a trade round that comes back, under the rules. And then the question becomes, well, the institutions, this World Trade Organization, this Bretton Woods system that was GATT that morphed into the— What are they doing about the environment? What is the impact on human rights issues, on labor issues, et cetera?

What this says to me is not only do we need the reforms in terms of the U.N., but the Bretton Woods systems as well. The WTO's shoulders are just not broad enough to deal with this broad range of issues. But when Congress gets involved it's only in this back-handed way, through trade debates, trade negotiations.

So what do you do about it?

What I would like to ask is your reaction to the following: a virtual organization. If not a global environmental organization or you-name-it, the International Labour Organization written wider, but a virtual organization along the lines of experience that I had as co-chair of the International Competition Policy Advisory Committee for the Department of Justice, where we went through an encyclopedic study of problems in trying to coordinate and harmonize antitrust and competition policies around the world.

And what we suggested was a virtual organization, using the Internet, if you will—a lot of clearing house responsibilities, a lot of best practices responsibilities, and something that might not be a whole new organization, but it might still be an institutional backbone that would help us build on not only tracking the problem, but also who's doing what and what are the best practices, and then build from there.

MR. : Don't you think we should get Strobe to respond to one of these? Ann? Isn't there a consensus that we ask the chairman to respond?

MR. TALBOTT: Sure, I'll take a stab at it. I think that, Paula, you're not only advocating something that's a good idea, but I think, as you know, you're identifying something that's already beginning to happen. You've clearly been part of it. Including, as you say, in the governmental sector. Anne-Marie Slaughter has done some good work and a good book on this—I think it's called "The New World Order"—where she talks about the networking that is going on at what former State Department officials like Tim and I would call, respectfully, the working levels of the government, where you have the permanent governments of relevant countries hucking up with each other and

working these problems quietly, very often below the radar screen of politics, which is probably good for the enterprise.

So I think a lot of that is happening. But the question is how you get it up a level in every sense.

MS. FLORINI: I say, it's not happening only among the governments that Anne-Marie Slaughter identifies, it's also happening with all sorts of public-private partnerships, various rather odd mechanisms that come about because there is such a driving functional need to fill this enormous gap that we've been talking about, that all sorts of odd experiments are under way. Things like, for example, we have a treaty now, an antipersonnel landmines treaty—the U.S. is not party to it. The monitoring agency is an offshoot of the campaign that brought about the treaty in the first place. It is not a government body, but the governments are using it because there isn't anything else.

So I think what you're getting is a great deal of the rise of ad hoc semi-official, sometimes not even semi-official institutions that are starting to play these kinds of roles. But as Strobe said, they are not tied together. And the biggest problem is that there is very little accountability for them. We have accountability mechanisms for governments; we do not have accountability mechanisms for most part of what there is in the way of global governance.

MR. TALBOTT: I might just add one other thing since [inaudible] was foolish enough to give me the floor, as it were. And this relates your point, Paula, to the one that the gentleman in the back of the room asked about how do we get at the solution end of the spectrum. One way we get at the solution end of the spectrum is to generate good, bold, but realistic ideas on how to address these problems.

One source of such ideas is the world that many of us here in this room currently inhabit, which is to say the world of think-tankery. And in the four years that I've been at this think tank, I have noticed with relief and approval that, while there will always be a competitive dimension to the relations between and among different think tanks, public policy research institutions, there is also a collaborative dimension. And I hope I'm not imagining things, that the ratio of competition to collaboration is shifting in the direction of collaboration. Because we're all chasing a lot of the same funds, we're chasing a lot of the same talents, and we are addressing many of the same problems. So there is a lot more double, triple, and quadruple teaming of these issues among institutions that previously had, I think, spent too much time competing with each other. So that's yet another perhaps small piece of good news.

MR. WIRTH: Well, let me just—one other comment on that. I think what you're suggesting and the ad hoc institutions growing up, or as Ann calls them, sort of the odd institutions growing up, you know, are all great. And that's a very important thing to do. But they are no substitute for the basic institutions of government and quality people therein.

I think that that is—you know, if we're looking at one particular area in which you could really make a difference, it is in the recruitment, for example, of some of the best young people internationally to come in in the U.N., the kinds of people in the United States that run for United States Congress, the kind of people that are going to be career—you know, interns going into the management intern programs in the government and moving up. The necessity of having in the midst of all of this change

and ad hockery and the Internet and so on, it is still absolutely essential that you have very good people who are at the core. We have to have very good people at the core.

And this is, I think, one of the most alarming—I think it's a very alarming situation of the, sort of the decline about the idea of public service and where we ought to go. That needs a real boost and a real push. It's great that so many young people are here today. It's absolutely imperative and it's—to have a report like this that in fact, Ann, as I said before, is so easy to read but it's also so very real, and you're to be congratulated. I was trying to figure out as I was reading it, you know, how do you get this out to all the student groups that I've talked to in my life. It's just terrific. It's just so good. And hoping to recruit young people, this is really interesting stuff and what a wonderful way to spend your life, you know, is working on issues like this, not managing some dumb slob's money on Wall Street.

[Laughter.]

QUESTION: My name is Andreos Ninos [sp]. I'm a loan officer. I like to think of myself as an analyst, independent analyst, as well.

My question is this. I hear everybody talking about international organizations, how to make the environment better, and all these issues that we've set goals—some are failing, some are doing better. But my question is should the goal be strengthen the United Nations and other international organizations to achieve global governance—or something you have not talked about is regional actors.

Regionalism. Regional leaders being more accountable, holding them more accountable, and allowing them, with resources from the superpowers—one among is the United States—holding them accountable and allowing them to basically

push through those goals on the environment, human rights, so on and so forth, at the regional level, holding countries there accountable, and then slowing expanding and then getting to the United Nations. Like a step-by-step policy of dealing with these issues instead of just setting daunting tasks and deadlines that are never met.

MR. TALBOTT: I might, if I could, say a word on that and then my colleagues will perhaps want to join in. I think it's an essential point, and it's one I was going to try to make sure came up before the end of our discussion, and I appreciate your raising it.

I think we're putting much too much of an onus on the United Nations and we need to share the responsibility for the task of global governance at a regional level. There is, in my mind, at least, no question which region of the world is most advanced in this regard, and it's Europe. Now, the United States is a party to that very promising set of networks that have developed in not just Europe but the transatlantic region. Historically the United States created a security umbrella so that it was possible for the European Union to come about. We now have the OSCE, and if you do sort of Venn diagrams of various regional cooperative organizations, they are thick on that part of the map. They're very thin on other parts of the map and there are some parts of the map where there are virtually no regional cooperative organizations. Not coincidentally, those tend to be the parts of the world where a lot of the trouble is and comes from. And here I'm speaking particularly of the Greater Middle East.

But I think it's heartening that you now find, for example, in Southern Africa, now that South Africa has gone from being a pariah to a regional leader, you have regional cooperation there. Also in East Africa. Unfortunately, not much in North

Africa, which blends into the Greater Middle East. There are beginning to be some signs of significant regional cooperation in South Asia. And then in East Asia, you've got the ASEAN countries, which have reached out to the north so that you now have the makings, a kind of an incipient East Asian community. And Moises can speak to the health of regionalism of the right kind in Latin America.

But what we have to hope for, I think, is that these regional organizations will not only get stronger, but that they will get stronger in a way that looks out to the rest of the world rather than becoming protective, so that we don't recreate the nightmare that George Orwell foresaw in "1984," where you had—fortunately, that date has passed and the nightmare didn't come true then, but it still looms, perhaps, in the future—where the world divides into sort of three super-regions that are all competing with each other.

MR. WIRTH: Let's be careful not to gallop too rapidly in this direction. Let's remember that there are places where the indispensable international institution is going to deal with—dealing with the ozone, for example. You can't do that on a regional basis. Climate change—burning coal one place, we all get warm together; what do you do with the oceans? Setting some kind of basic framework for nuclear nonproliferation. All of those may start at a regional level—probably not. They're probably the kinds of things that have to be done globally, you know, at a time there unquestionably can be strengthening regional institutions. It's not an either-or situation. Interesting question, but it's a both-and.

And you certainly want to see—you know, you look at Africa, and you certainly want to see the capacity of Africans to work on transparency, to work—African governments to be working on issues of peace and security, to be looking at

development or looking at how do they handle their natural resource base. These are issues ultimately, you know, if you could get those kinds of issues routed and handled there, it would be great, and then look at the broader global issues that can be handled probably only in some kind of a global institution. It's not either-or in any of these situations. It's a very good question.

MR. TALBOTT: Absolutely. Moises?

MR. NAIM: I tend to agree more with Tim than with Strobe. Because behind the hope for regionalism there are three assumptions that have to do with numbers, regional homogeneity, and globalization.

Essentially, you prefer to go regional because the numbers are small. You cannot get all of the countries in the U.N. to organize, so why don't you do subsets and try to work in numbers. And perhaps working with smaller numbers is easier. That's the first assumption.

Second assumption is that regions are homogeneous, that, you know, you put together a region and the homogeneity of Africa or Latin America will then help you, the combination of smaller numbers and more homogeneity. Well, those regions are not homogeneous. And you know how within the regions you have huge disparities and very often very deep conflicts that are even deeper than those that are with other regions.

And finally, the assumption is that globalization is not happening and that a lot of these problems are in fact regional and can be contained and managed regionally. And some are, undoubtedly, and I am all for having regional organizations. But the

illusion there is that you don't have global problems, you know, the ones that Tim mentions.

Think about a regional approach to avian flu. You know, you could argue, what, avian flu is essentially—we thought—an Asian problem. So let's have a regional organization in Asia that deals with that. Well, you know, it just happened in Turkey and it's going to happen elsewhere. So you cannot build the region—you know, imagine a World Health Organization that is not the world, it's just regional. Or an environmental organization. Or—

Some of the problems I—Strobe mentioned a book I wrote called "Illicit," that deals with these networks of traders of banned goods. You have Nigerian traffickers operating in Northern Thailand. So if you want to do the policing of this regionally, how would you do it?

So the point is that globalization is happening and eroding the effectiveness of regional arrangements. Moreover, very often these regional arrangements, instead of being stepping stones, are stumbling blocks. And we have seen some of that in the trailer [?].

MR. TALBOTT: Well, I guess one of the things we specialize in around here is vigorous and civil disagreement, but I think there's actually less disagreement than would seem apparent. I think my ally, insofar as we do have a split here, is the gentleman who asked the question, because I think you certainly implied that there was no either-or choice between globalism or global institutions and regional ones, and I know—Tim, I'm sure you would vouch for this too—that people at the U.N. would very, very much like to have stronger regional institutions, particularly, I might add, when it

comes to facing security challenges. The United Nations simply does not as an institution have anything like the military police capability in order to rush in and deal either preemptively or de post facto with a security threat. And having strong regional institutions would help very much there. But they have to be tied into a global network. That's what it really comes down to.

QUESTION: Gary Mitchell from the Mitchell Report.

I want to come back to two factors that have been raised here. Tim talked earlier about messaging and Moises talked about borrowed constituencies. I want to make a couple of observations and then lead to a question.

The first observation is that the issues of messaging and positioning and constituency development, if you will, borrowed constituencies, have been central to the successful marketing and promotion of products and services for a long time. Wheaties figured that out a long time ago and then along came Nike, and Pepsi and Coke have done it and, you know, Imus and Oprah sell a lot of books—including some they shouldn't.

What's happened in that commercial sphere is that the imagery has moved from what was once a predominantly performance imagery—how fast the car went, you know, how quickly the detergent worked, how bright it made your clothes, et cetera—to what that community now refers to as user imagery, which is "our kind of folks," which is why Bono could deliver you a lot of folks.

So thinking about the messaging and the positioning and the business of borrowed constituencies, the question that I really want to pose to this panel is what would it take for the policy and the philanthropic communities—both of which tend to

get hives when the subject of significant investments in strategic communications, thinking seriously about these issues, comes up—what would it take to move the policy and philanthropic communities to invest in that discipline as seriously as they invest in the sort of policy wonking component of it at the outset?

MS. FLORINI: Well, there's a little bit of that happening now. There is a major initiative under way that involves a number of think-tank types of groups and a number of foundations on exactly how is it you describe global issues and global problems to an American audience in ways that will resonate with that audience. They came out with a book last year that is actually very helpful if you want to give talks on this topic, of some messages that would seem to make sense, such as talking about the world as a neighborhood, actually don't play very well. And the reason is that if you start talking about bringing the neighbors over so that you can sit around and solve problems, well, Americans like their neighbors to go home after awhile. So it doesn't work in the long range.

But there are other images—talking about partnerships, joint effort, that kind of language that does in fact resonate. So there is the beginning of this happening. I agree with you very much that it's happening on a much smaller scale than it should. I was quite startled by Tim's point about spending 20 percent of your time on substance and 80 percent on messaging. I think we're probably more along the ratio of 98 percent on substance and 2 percent on messaging. Obviously that's not a ratio that's proving very effective at getting these messages out.

MR. TALBOTT: Yes, sir. Last question.

QUESTION: Good afternoon. My name is Philip Black [ph]. I'm a student at American University's Washington Semester Program.

This particular question is targeted to Dr. Naim, but everyone else is free to answer on this one. You talk of the importance of celebrities like Angelina Jolie or Bono as far as making their respective constituencies more aware of such pressing global issues like eradicating global poverty or conserving the environment. Are you in some sense advocating that famous people or celebrities, or normal people through grassroots organizations or organized efforts, take a stand on international issues, considering how in some countries, like the United States, it's particularly frowned upon for celebrities, like the Dixie Chicks and, recently, Kanye West, to express their candid views publicly on American politics and policy that bring their constituencies either in support of or against the government?

MR. NAIM: What I noted is that the issues that we are discussing, the issues behind global governance that are transnational in nature, don't have local constituencies. The local constituencies are very weak on those issues. And as you know, all politics is local. At the end of the day, the Congress and women that were Tim's colleagues for decades, they care more about what the constituents back home think about these issues than others.

And the point is how do we create incentives for these politicians who are very calculating and rational in their positions. How do we create incentives for them to align their behaviors, their votes and their activities more in line with the needs in creation of more public goods on a global level? And the point was that because there are no widespread constituencies, some people are using borrowed constituencies.

What I don't know is that the people that are fans of Bono can be converted into political activists, and how many. Because I don't doubt that there is a lot of support and a lot of enthusiasm generated by the celebrities. Because we live in a celebrity culture, being telegenic matters a lot. Then there is this propensity to rely on them as messengers, to see if through them one can recruit more wills towards one's cause. What is unclear is that those wills can be converted into votes, and the votes that eventually define the incentives of the politicians. We don't know that. What we know is that there is a lot of energy, but we don't know that that energy will be converted into motion.

MR. WIRTH: I think we do know that that kind of celebrity focus provides attention to issues. Whether that makes any difference in voter behavior, I think that—I've never seen any evidence that in fact it does. I go back to—you know, the basic rule of politics is pretty simple. If you don't get elected, you have an absolute chance of not holding office.

[Laughter.]

MR. WIRTH: So, I mean, it goes back. That's why all politics is local. I mean, that's what it's about. You know, it's people at a local level who are the people that are going to elect you. And, you know, what is it that drives them? It's not Angelina Jolie talking to somebody in Lakewood, Colorado. They could care less if they even had any idea who Angelina Jolie may be. Maybe a small percentage at the University of Colorado would do that, and that's about all. But it's that kind of localism. And then how do you knit together a kind of enlightened constituency that helps people who share your values to get elected. That's what politics is all about. That's what Tip

O'Neill used to say: All politics is local. It's putting together that constituency. That's the magic of American politics.

And by the way, that's the catastrophe of the current Abramoff situation, because what you're really doing is intervening in that and really cheating on that. You know, you're really pushing aside the wonderful nature of American democracy, which is—or democracy anywhere—which is people getting together and figuring out, you know, how do all these different kinds of issues come thing and come to some kind of resolution. It's a very exciting, very—it's awkward, difficult, and so on, and it's very fragile and extremely important. And celebrities have almost nothing to do with that. It's a local process.

I'll just put in a final note for those of you who are looking at the political process. I mean, there is nothing like it and nothing more important than in fact running yourself or getting into a political campaign, because you get right smack in the middle of just this very essence of, you know, how does a democracy work and why is it that all politics is local. What's that really all about? You know, it's very exciting and it's a wonderful thing, which is why it's so hurtful to see that black hat that's become kind of a symbol of this—it really is, you know, to see that kind of cheating on something that is as fragile and as terribly important. And, you know, on the other hand, it's exciting that, sort of, the hammer's coming down on the hammer. It's not a bad thing. And that's a good thing to see that happen, and that will sort of restore some of this.

That was a little bit of an aside, but—

MR. TALBOTT: I think everybody in the room got the allusion. I have a wonderful black Borsalino my wife gave me a number of years ago and I've been told not—

MR. WIRTH: You've stopped wearing it.

[Laughter.]

MR. TALBOTT: Ann, last word.

MS. FLORINI: Okay. I want to give a global answer. Tim was giving you much more of an American domestic kind of answer. Your question was do people have—are we saying that people have an obligation to step up and speak out on this whole range of issues, celebrities and ordinary people? And speaking for myself now and not for the project, but I think the answer is absolutely yes. We don't have an effective system of global governance. We don't have an effective system in place for dealing with these issues. We are weak at every level from local government to roles of nongovernmental actors to national government, up through the regional levels and certainly at the global level as well with global institutions. All of those levels fall short when dealing with the kinds of issues that we're talking about.

They will continue to fall short unless you have much more mobilization of people than we have had to date. We don't have a formal system of global democracy and I don't think we ever will, an elected world government, anything like that. So the kinds of mechanisms that Tim was talking about won't apply beyond the national level, and I don't think they should.

But what we are developing is a very messy system—but it some cases it's actually starting to work a little bit—of a kind of participatory democracy, which is a

lot of—some celebrities, a lot of ordinary people stepping up and organizing themselves and organizing the people around them to get things done that would not otherwise be done. It's not being done, by and large, through formal institutions, it's being done in all sorts of ad hoc ways, it has all sorts of problems. But unless we get a lot more of that, I see very little hope that any of the scores on any of these issues that we're talking about are ever going to get any higher than we've seen to date.

MR. TALBOTT: I would like to ask all of you to join me in thanking Moises and Ann and Tim, but in applauding, you're going to be applauding yourselves as well because this was a terrific conversation we had this afternoon, thanks very largely to all of you.

[Applause.]

MR. TALBOTT: By the way, in addition to Ann's report, as we'll call it, we didn't have a chance to talk about Moises's thesis more on the deficit in global public goods. There's a copy of his column on the table as you go out as well.

[End of conference.]