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Welcome and Introduction:

ELENA ANDERSON-de LAY
Director, Global Mobility and Visa Services
The Brookings Institution

Featured Speaker:

TARA SONENSHINE
Distinguished Fellow, The George Washington University School of Media and Public Affairs

Panelists:

NICHOLAS ARRINDELL, Moderator
Former Director, International Student and Scholar Services Johns Hopkins University

MIRETTE MABROUK
Deputy Director for Regional Program as the
Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East, Atlantic Council
Nonresident Fellow, The Brookings Institution

KEVIN CASAS-ZAMORA
Secretary for Political Affairs, Organization of American States

KEIKO IIZUKA
Washington Bureau Chief, *The Yomiuri Shimbun*

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. ANDERSON-de LAY: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for your attendance today.

I'm Elena Anderson-de Lay, director of Global Mobility and Visa Services here at the Brookings Institution. I work within the Office of the General Counsel. I am very honored to welcome fellow practitioners and advocates in the field of immigration and international education.

I also welcome my colleagues here at Brookings, the government, and the diplomatic community.

Today, Brookings celebrates its 50th year of designation in the Department of State's Exchange Visitor Program. We are celebrating so much more than visa documents and regulations. We're really celebrating the minds opened and the allies formed. We are celebrating the bridges that are built and the friendships that are made. It's about the peace rather than war. We are celebrating 50 years of bringing great minds together to change the world for the better. What is even better than that is that Brookings isn't the only organization that participates in exchanges. Not only has Brookings benefitted from the Exchanges, so has the U.S. In fact, it's a major mechanism of public diplomacy.

Soon, you will meet three of our success stories discussing their exchange experiences, moderated by an esteemed leader in the field of international education. But first, a keynote speaker, Tara Sonenshine. She will enlighten us on how academic and cultural exchanges have both a personal and a global impact. She is currently a distinguished fellow at George Washington

School of Media and Public Affairs. Until July 2013, she previously served as the undersecretary of state for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, where she not only defined public diplomacy, but she provided leadership to the Education and Cultural Affairs Bureau and the exchanges programs that it monitored. She advanced the priorities of U.S. foreign policy through People to People engagement. Before joining the State Department, Ms. Sonenshine served as executive president of the United States' Institute of Peace. She also served in various capacities at the White House during the Clinton administration. In addition to her success as a public servant and advisor, she has received 10 News Emmy Awards in broadcast journalism. Ms. Sonenshine participated in an academic exchange program herself. In 1980, she was a study abroad student in London from Tufts University through IES Abroad.

So ladies and gentlemen, I present to you our keynote speaker today, Tara Sonenshine.

MS. SONENSHINE: Those introductions always make you feel like you're 112, and then you put on glasses and that really makes you feel old.

Thank you, Elena for that beautiful introduction. It's great to be here at Brookings. I also once worked here at Brookings -- I'm very proud of that history -- and also had the opportunity to speak last year as undersecretary here on the subject of women in the Middle East.

So I want to begin by asking all of you to join in congratulating Brookings on 50 years as a designated sponsor of the State Department's Exchange Visitor Program. Congratulations.

(Applause)

MS. SONENSHINE: I am really honored to be followed after these brief remarks by such impressive alumni. You represent the real change agents in the world. You emerge from exchanges, take research and experience, and what do you do with it? You create more productive, more prosperous, more peaceful countries. I'm very pleased also as I look out that I recognize that there are other implementing organizations here -- IIE, World Learning -- so many fine institutions that help keep the wheels of academic and cultural exchanges turning.

So I also know as I look out that I am preaching today to the converted, those who believe deeply in People to People exchange. But I think it's worth reminding everyone that our world needs two-way, multi-way, multi-directional programs that keep us interacting and sharing knowledge. At the heart of every local, national, and international crisis, be it Kenya or Kansas, Bosnia or Boston, Tokyo or Tashkan, pick your place, the economic, political, social, cultural, religious, educational issues everywhere and anywhere come down in the end to real people -- people with ideas and insights, experiences. And the kind of work that keeps us moving forward. We know what happens when we remain apart -- we become divided. We know what happens when any nation is walled in, sealed off, shut down -- that limits our potential. And can we at least celebrate today that here in this country we are open for business?

Seven billion people. That's a lot of people. But, you know, for seven billion people, we share a lot. The same air, often same waters, often

same basic needs for healthcare, education, and information. I will tell you that in my honest view, information is the oxygen with which a society breathes. And when we cut it off, when we can no longer inhale and exhale our thoughts, ideas, and information, we are trapped. And so if we are going to share all these resources, let's use them to stop extremism, reduce poverty, and prevent disease. Let's use our shared knowledge as we look at discoveries above this earth and beneath it and unlock mysteries together across cultures.

The people you are about to meet represent the kinds of people who benefit when societies engage in exchanges in media, law, security, education, politics, economics. The people you're going to meet today are just like the Nobel Peace Prize winners, many of whom expressed the importance of the role that exchange has played in their early lives and careers; played a role in how they advanced economics, science, health, and security. The people you are about to meet are like presidents and prime ministers of likeminded countries who also often credit their ideas about democracy, tolerance, freedom of the press to their exposure to other countries and cultures.

I will also tell you that the data could not be more clear. There is quantifiable evidence that study abroad, exchanges, global engagement have real impact on civil society building, philanthropy, volunteerism, community service, social entrepreneurship, and the decision by participants to work for positive change. So we need thinkers and doers. And we have to focus on teams.

Teamwork is what is missing often in leadership. Leadership is

not about a single individual or a single country or a single continent. Leadership is rooted in bringing people together around shared interests, ideas, and solutions. If you think about it, nobody goes to space anymore all alone. You rely on a space station, an international space station. People who might not even get along on earth would manage to get along in space. So just as you don't want to be out there in galaxy all alone, we don't want to be out saving the world all by ourselves.

The world is listening. It's watching what we do, what you do, what our country does, what your country does, and only if we communicate and bridge divides will be deal with the fragmentation in the audiences we need to reach.

So let me close by saying firstly that exchanges are not just a good idea; they make economic sense. And so I think as we move forward together to make the case, we need to make it on moral grounds, on cultural grounds, on educational grounds, and on economic grounds. And sometimes that's hard in places where we do differ.

I want to close with a story about my trip last year to Pakistan. I went to Pakistan to look at the U.S. Fulbright Program. Pakistan has one of the largest U.S. Fulbright programs in the world. That surprises people. With so much friction and so much division, we have this common sweet spot around Fulbright's education exchanges, teaching English, micro scholarships, access programs, Gilman, Pell. I could go on and on.

But when I got to Lahore, I did a Q&A with students and I confess

it was a difficult time to be doing a public diplomacy tour in Pakistan. And so maybe I was a little ill-prepared for those young people as they got to the microphones and asked why are you sending drones over Pakistan? I think me, personally. I couldn't fly myself out of a paper bag. But why are you sending drones? Why are you sending raids without permission, even if it's to get bad guys? Why are you killing people and taking innocent lives? The questions got very heated. I did my best as a government official to explain our policies and then to offer to speak with any of the students afterwards to continue the conversation. And a line formed down, around, snaked. And each young person came up to me quietly and whispered, "How do I get on one of those exchange programs?" I will never forget it. In every heart, in every mind, is a window looking to be opened onto the world. And so today, we celebrate all of you in the room who work every day to open windows somewhere and to enable light to come in.

So with that, I am going to thank Brookings, turn it back over to our introducer, who will, I think, turn it over to Nick and the alumni you've been waiting to hear from. And I thank you all for your continued support. Thank you.

(Applause)

MS. ANDERSON de-LAY: Thank you so much, Tara. See? I told you she will enlighten us.

Now, at this time a panel will transition to the stage so that they can get mic-ed. And I'd like to introduce you to our panelists.

First, let's talk about the gentleman coming up first, our moderator,

Dr. Nicholas Arrindell. He is a renowned leader within the field of international education on both national and international fronts. He served as director of the Office of International Student and Scholar Services at Johns Hopkins University's Homewood campus in Baltimore for over 20 years until his retirement last year. In his role at John Hopkins, he supported international, undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral students, as well as faculty and research scientists affiliated with the Homewood and the APL campuses. Dr. Arrindell sits on several boards and is an active member of many committees and associations, including the Association of International Education Administrators; the European Association of International Educators; the Washington International Education Council, Inc.; NAFSA Association of International Educators; and the President's Advisory Council for International Programs. Dr. Arrindell has established the Mid-Atlantic Immigration Workshop, which is very critical to practitioners in the region, like myself. It, to date, is the largest meeting of government officials and international leaders in the Washington Metropolitan area. He is a two-time awardee of the J. William Fulbright Scholarship. He participated in the Education Administrators Program both in Germany and in India.

Now, our panel that we have today. First, we have, to my immediate right and to your left, we have Keiko Iizuka, a national of Japan, who recently returned to the U.S. as the Washington Bureau Chief for *The Yomiuri Shimbun*, Japan's daily newspaper. From 2008 to 2009, she took a leave of absence from *The Yomiuri Shimbun,* where at the time she served as deputy

political editor, to be a visiting fellow in CNAPS, our Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies, which is part of our Foreign Policy program. Ms. Iizuka also served as a former correspondent on Okinawa and in London. She has previously been an international visitor, part of the exchange visitor program previously, and she was an international student when she earned her master's in international security from Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Then, to her right, I have Mirette Mabrouk. She is an Egyptian national currently at the Atlantic Council, where she is the deputy director for Programs in their Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East. She has over 20 years of experience in journalism. In 1995, she was asked to found *Business Today*, becoming the country's youngest editor of a national magazine. It went on to become the top independent business magazine in the region. In 2005, Ms. Mabrouk founded the *Daily News Egypt*, formerly the *Daily Star Egypt*, which rapidly became the leading independent English newspaper in the country. Then, in 2009, she left her post as associated director for publishing operations at American University and *Cairo Press* to become a visiting fellow in the Saban Center for Middle East Policy Studies, which is also part of our Foreign Policy program. We have a common denominator here. And she continues to have a nonresident fellow affiliation with us in the U.S. relations with the Islamic World Project, which is also part of the Saban Center.

We have our second gentleman here, who is Dr. Kevin Casas-Zamora. He is a national of Costa Rica. He currently serves as secretary of

political affairs at the Organization of American States. Previously, he served as senior fellow in Foreign Policy. He has also served as minister of National Planning and Economic Policy, and as second vice president of Costa Rica. Dr. Casas-Zamora has authorized numerous studies on campaign finance, elections, democratic governance, and human security in Latin America. In fact, this panel is actually his second one this week. Just on Tuesday, he discussed his recently published edited volume, *Dangerous Liaisons: Organized Crime and Political Finance in Latin America and Beyond*, which is available in our bookstore right outside these doors. That book combines and brings together the work of scholars and experts to analyze the role of organized crime in the financing of politics and selected democracies in Latin America and in Europe.

So ladies and gentlemen, we know what you've come for. I kindly present to you our phenomenal panel today.

(Applause)

MR. ARRINDELL: Well, before I get started in terms of asking the panel some real questions, I wanted to comment on the value of the exchange programs. The U.S. exchange programs are literally the premier international exchanges that every post-secondary institution, both private and state, use in order to diversity their intellectual research efforts. And throughout the United States, schools and institutions have clearly taken full advantage of opportunities to bring students, scholars, researchers in. This program is broad. It is extremely broad. Not only does it handle higher education, but also trains and prepares people for the private sector with regard to the world of work.

So having said all that it is a truly significant program and most of higher education as we know it today would not be the same without it. It has truly changed our delivery system with regard to internationalizing our campuses as well as our approach within the curriculum and in what we're trying to do with regard to exposing students to a different way of thinking, a different acceptance of the cultures, a different way of hearing information that perhaps had not been transmitted in the same way. It's a different voice, it's a different perception, but it heightens our ability to appreciate what's happening, not only in our country but in other countries as well.

Having said that, I think I'm ready to turn this over to our esteemed panel, and as Tara said, this group of individuals have truly not only taken full advantage of the exchange but they have a tremendous amount of information to share.

So having said that, I'm going to start with my very first question. And this is a question that is really centered around each one of them having been at Brookings. Although all three of you continue to engage with The Brookings Institution, let me first welcome you back to Brookings, and thank you for participating in this event.

Now, tell us about your research, the research you focused on while you were here and what you are currently working on today. And we'll start with Kevin.

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: Thank you, Nick.

It's great to be back, first of all, and it's great to see Elena again,

who had to put up with me for almost four years. And well, and this is such a great place.

I spent nearly four years at Brookings, which were wonderful years. I was part of the Foreign Policy program, and within the Foreign Policy program I was part of the Latin American Initiative, which was the first systematic effort that Brookings did to engage in serious research about Latin America. I mean, there used to be scholars doing research in an isolated way on Latin America, but no Latin American program. So I was part of that for four years, and I mostly -- not exclusively, but mostly focused on issues related to security, organized crime, personal safety in the region which are, of course, major issues when it comes to Latin America. Currently, I serve, as Elena mentioned, as secretary for Political Affairs, the Organization of American States, which I guess, you know, it's a healthy dose of Latin American politics, which is never boring and it's just different. I mean, I don't work on security issues that much anymore. I mostly, not exclusively, work on electoral issues and issues of policy management and issues of democracy in general for which my time at Brookings really, you know, prepared me very well.

MR. ARRINDELL: Okay. All right.

MS. MABROUK: Well, as Kevin said, it's lovely to be back here. I have a huge soft spot for Brookings. I was here for almost a year. And whereas I have an enormous affection and respect for Brookings and would do almost anything here, I must admit I said yes before I read anything mostly because Elena asked me to. Elena, actually, is the first person that most exchange

people see when they arrive. She is hands-on, and she's the last person you'll see on the way out, and she represents everything that is accessible, efficient, welcoming, and just wonderful about this exchange program because it has to do with people. It has to do with accessibility.

So when I was here, I was lucky enough to be doing research on media and how it affected domestic politics in Egypt. And since this was just before the revolution it was a wonderful time to be doing this because before I was a journalist, and anyone here who has worked as a journalist will tell you it's a busy job. And I was running a newspaper, which is an even more nightmarishly busy job. So for someone to give you the opportunity to sit down and think just for a while, sit down and think and write, just yourself, without deadlines breathing down your neck, without people knocking on the door, without all of this, without worrying about production, it's an enormous blessing and it provides a rare opportunity for clarity, for scholarship, and the ability to take a good look around. Because very often as journalists you write about things. You write about domestic politics. You write about international politics, but you do it from your point of view.

The thing here is that all of a sudden you were given enormous access to the way other people made decisions, the way in which a country like the U.S., which is a foremost power, and to Egypt enormously important. A loadstone in foreign politics, if you like. It gave you a good idea of how the U.S. -- one of our major partners, major thorns in our side, however you wish to say it, whichever point of history you're looking at -- works. So it's really an invaluable

opportunity to get to do that.

MR. ARRINDELL: And what are you doing today, currently?

MS. MABROUK: After I finished, I went home because I wanted to, and I'm now back here working on regional programs for the Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East. And that involves all sort of regional outreach because one of the things about being in a think tank on the Middle East and D.C. is that occasionally you tend to speak to people who will speak the same language. But the thing is if you are interested in gaining access and credibility in the regions that you cover, you really do need a presence there as well. So one of the things that I handle is their nonresident fellow program and regional conferences and Arabic language publishing.

MR. ARRINDELL: Keiko.

MS. IIZUKA: Yes. Thank you.

As a journalist, I fully share what Mirette appreciated when I was at Brookings. I feel now very honored and it really feels like homecoming today. This feeling reminds me of my days as part of this Brookings community at the CNAPS, Center for Northeast Asian Studies, from September 2008 to July 2009. And as a visiting fellow, I focused on the U.S. nuclear deterrence policy as security studies, but at the same time I think I was quite fortunate that it was the year of the U.S. presidential election. So I think I could closely observe how Mr. Obama won his first election. It was such a magnificent political development, drama, and so this September, just last month, I came back from Tokyo to D.C. as a Washington bureau chief, and now, day-to-day watching Mr. Obama's

performance, it just strikes me how things and the environment changed. And I really appreciate that. It gives the first basis -- it gave me my days at Brookings here four years ago -- gave me the basis to compare how this very, very strong and popular and strong administration goes through transition politically and in relation to public popularity.

So since I came here, I already went through covering Syria, Iran, shutdown, debt ceiling, and so today I feel like I'm in default mood because I was up all night last night. And because of the time difference, up until this noon, I was trying to meet the deadline and trying to file a story. So tomorrow morning's edition of my paper carries so many stories about Mr. Obama.

MR. ARRINDELL: We are currently here to acknowledge your contributions in public diplomacy. When you were here focused on your research and trying to meet those deadlines involved and the self-imposed pressure that the researchers sort of put on themselves, did you ever consider yourselves to be part of the citizen diplomacy aspect? Or did you see this as just a research opportunity where you were a J-1 scholar and you had your own deadlines and that's just the way it's going to be?

I'll start with you, Kevin.

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: That's an interesting one.

I guess to the extent that your presence here is part of an effort of outreach on the part of the U.S., you become a de facto part of the U.S. diplomacy. And also, I would add to that that I guess your experience when you're at Brookings is probably different than if you are at any normal university

because you know for a fact that you've been brought here to make a contribution and inform U.S. foreign policy. And in my case, U.S. engagement with Latin America. So to that extent you know that the whole idea behind your role here is to make a contribution to U.S. diplomacy. To that extent I would answer the question in the affirmative.

MR. ARRINDELL: Okay. All right.

MS. MABROUK: I think Kevin put it very well. I think any national of any country who is abroad is de facto a diplomat. And if you're abroad you're in a position of being able to possibly explain your country's policies and ideas and positions. And if you're at a place at Brookings, then you're actually in a position to explain them to people who (a) are actively interested, (b) already have a background and therefore can engage in an actual discussion as opposed to simply taking positions. So it makes a huge difference. It makes a huge difference.

MS. IIZUKA: I fully share what Mirette said. I feel like I was a Japanese diplomat, yes, trying to explain Japan's position, but at the same time I was exposed to various aspects of the United States policy-wise and, like Tara said, People to People exchange gave me so much taste of what America was like. And Brookings here gave me very, very precious experience because if I wasn't a journalist, perhaps I wouldn't have been able to enter or encounter certain places and people, but as a Brookings visiting fellow or Brookings community, as a part of the Brookings community I think I was allowed to enter and to meet people.

MR. ARRINDELL: You're suggesting you had greater entre to people that you might not have had entre to?

MS. IZZUKA: Yes. Yes. That's what I wanted to say.

MR. ARRINDELL: That's fair.

Under that note, then we'll go to the next question.

All of you were very accomplished before arriving at Brookings. You all have fairly strong professional backgrounds and had been doing work in your field. Has your time as an exchange visitor at Brookings increased your profile or created career opportunities to you?

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: No question. No question whatsoever about that. I think, well, the visibility that you get, particularly here in D.C. and beyond D.C., it's quite remarkable. I mean, there's no question that Brookings has a special place in policy debates in this town. In that sense it makes an interesting contrast to where I am now because in a way, you know, one of the problems, and I'm going to be very frank here, I mean, one of the problems of the OAS, for those of you that don't know the OAS, I mean, the OAS is in town. It's in Washington, but it's, you know, it has a very limited presence in the whole discussion of Washington, D.C. It has a very significant presence in Latin America. So that that extent it's exactly the opposite of Brookings. Brookings, at that point at least, and perhaps, you know, those of us who are part of the Latin American program were not as effective as we should have been, but it had a relatively limited presence in Latin America, partly because the program was so new and it takes a while to develop that sort of presence. But it definitely had a

lot of presence here in D.C., and it raised -- I would like to think that it raised the level of discussion on Latin America here in town.

MR. ARRINDELL: Were you able to forge new relationships as a result of having the experience here?

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: Very much so. I mean, I'm pretty convinced that it was that level of visibility that had a lot to do with my going over to the OAS. I don't think I would be where I am now without having spent a few years at Brookings.

MR. ARRINDELL: All right.

MS. MABROUK: You know how when you were in school you always wanted to hang out with the cool kids because people would think that you were cool? Being associated with Brookings, people tend to think that you're probably, you know, brighter and more politically astute that you actually are. At least for me. There's a sign outside that says you're celebrating the second century of diplomacy.

This is a think tank that has a reputation for a reason, and especially in my part of the world it is a think tank that is known for asking questions and engaging in discussion rather than being one of those think tanks that takes preset positions based on predisposed concepts. So without doubt it gives you a cache. Without doubt it gives you credibility and viability. And it makes life easier as a researcher because then it will give you access to the type of people that you want to talk to. That credibility is invaluable.

MR. ARRINDELL: And I guess the second part of that question,

were you able to forge new relationships as well?

MS. MABROUK: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. It expands your -- and again, whether you're a journalist or a researcher, it gives you the opportunity to expand your network, to expand your horizons, to have more people to fall back on if you have questions. It's a wonderful, wonderful place.

MR. ARRINDELL: Keiko.

MS. IIZUKA: Absolutely. It increased my profile, of course, and I think back in Tokyo, in 2009, I felt like I'm a diplomat of Brookings back in Tokyo. And I'm back from D.C., and what were you doing? So I was asked, and I was at Brookings Institution. And some people in Tokyo, perhaps some people might not know the institution, the name of the institution, but I explained what I went through. And well, I mean, all of them to whom I've explained were jealous basically. Very jealous. And, of course, that includes the relationships I forged. And the whole experience enhanced my understanding of the United States and perhaps what kind of town Washington, D.C. I mean, it's a policy community, a policy town, and a town of politics. And I think without being here, I mean, just being in the Washington bureau of my newspaper, perhaps I would have been able to make myself immersed in that kind of community. So I really appreciate it.

MR. ARRINDELL: And were you also able to forge new relationships as well?

MS. IZZUKA: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

MR. ARRINDELL: You were?

MS. IZZUKA: Yes. Yes. A lot. A lot. Yes.

MR. ARRINDELL: Kevin, this question is specifically designed for you.

You were once vice president of Costa Rica. Have your views of U.S. policies, especially towards Latin America, changed since you were an exchange visitor at Brookings? Tell me how or why not.

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: No question. No question. I mean, I would put it this way. I have a much more textured view of U.S. foreign policy. In actual fact, one of the things that you learn very quickly when you're in Washington is that there's no such thing as a U.S. policy towards Latin America but several different strands of policy towards Latin America. You end up asking yourself all the time whether what the White House is doing towards Latin America is in sync with what the State Department is doing, and then you have Homeland Security and you have the DEA and you have USAID. There's a plethora of institutional actors that have a bearing on whatever the U.S. does with Latin America towards Latin America. So that sort of much more textured view is a very visible change in the way I perceive now U.S. policy towards Latin America.

MR. ARRINDELL: That's really funny to fully understand your comments given the fact even in our business what we understand that comes through the State Department with regard to the exchange programs and what happens at Immigration and what happens at port of entry is often horses of different complexions. And you need to know how to get through all of them in

order to service. So your comment, I resonate.

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: And if you allow me, you also have the border governors and you have the Latino caucus and congress. It's just very complicated. I mean, the institutional structure of the U.S. political system is extraordinarily complicated.

MR. ARRINDELL: Thank you.

Now, let me turn to Mirette and Keiko. The same question, basically. Has your time as an exchange visitor changed your perspective of U.S. policy? And as a journalist, did the impact of your approach change in any way?

MS. MABROUK: You can start first this time.

MR. ARRINDELL: Would you like to start? Keiko, do you want to go first?

MS. IZZUKA: Okay. Well, thank you.

Well, of course, it, you know, not changed but it influenced a lot my stay here. It influenced me a lot. And, well, there are -- well, perhaps it would be easier for me to explain how the Synapse program worked. There is one visiting fellow from Japan, me, and China, and Korea, and there was Hong Kong. And so basically, we discussed all the time, all the time. And it's such a mixture of whole opinions and views and we sometimes discuss in a very serious way and sometimes we drink. And sometimes we sing. You know, there were so many eye-opening moments for me. And just among the fellows as the Synapse, but just working in this building, I was on the fourth floor, but on other

floors I sometimes asked for an appointment and met people, and there are so many different opinions and views that I did not know. I mean, being in this building was full of experiences and changed my views.

MR. ARRINDELL: So it sounds like you could go between different floors and get several different points of view that you hadn't considered before.

MS. IZZUKA: Right. Yes. Exactly. Yes.

MR. ARRINDELL: A living, walking library of sorts.

MS. IZZUKA: Yes. Exactly.

MS. MABROUK: I was on the same floor.

MS. IZZUKA: Yes. Yes.

MS. MABROUK: I think I was on just the other end but I was actually on the same floor. Good floor. Good floor.

Keiko said something that I think was profoundly correct. She said it didn't change but it did influence. This is important because as a journalist, especially as an Egyptian journalist, very often we are on the receiving end of U.S. foreign policy and that's what you get. You get the end result. So being here you get the opportunity to see what goes into this foreign policy. How it's shaped by local domestic politics, how it's shaped by outside pressures, how it's shaped by financial pressures. So you get a better idea of what's going into it and it does help you nuance your coverage and it does help you nuance your perspectives. So I think that's absolutely invaluable. It does make a huge difference.

MR. ARRINDELL: The next question is sort of a curve ball but I decided to throw it in there anyway. We'll see how we deal with this one.

As you know, the U.S. government has been closed for the last 16 days, and politics are highly polarized here. You can see different pockets and understand -- I think understand where they're coming from. In addition to that, the debt ceiling has finally hit. Tell us the perspectives and opinions that you hear from your home countries about this matter and how that translates to the rest of the world.

Kevin, I'll start with you.

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: Well, I guess this is, I mean, to be entirely honest, I don't think that Costa Ricans in general are that aware of what goes on in the rest of the world, but to the extent that they are, they look at what has just happened in Washington with a mixture of, I would say, bemusement and anxiety. That's the way I would put it. Bemusement because it's truly not what you would expect from a mature political system. But anxiety, in terms of the impact, the undeniable impact, that the decisions made or not made here in the U.S. can have on a place like Costa Rica. So it's a mixed feeling.

MS. MABROUK: I'm Egyptian, so you guys aren't polarized yet.

MR. ARRINDELL: Are you saying that we haven't seen anything yet?

MS. MABROUK: Yeah, you've got a way to go. But I think as Egyptians, as we said for much of the rest of the world, we don't get it. We just don't get it. And I think a lot of people say this is what we have to look forward to

as a fully-fledged democracy. This is it. And it's an old saying but it's true, "When the U.S. sneezes, the rest of the world gets a cold." So what happens here does impact. We're still reeling from your mortgage crisis in 2008, so this whole, you know, it was really Friday the 13th part two where the rest of the world is very worried. There are entire financial organizations in the U.K. who had started to put together a contingency plan and then gave up because frankly, if you had failed to raise your debt ceiling, the consequences would be dreadful for the rest of the world. So we are confused and we don't get it. And we're very worried.

MR. ARRINDELL: I would hope that I would be able to limit some level of confusion, but I'm confused as well.

Do you want to add more?

MS. IZZUKA: Yes. Well, now I feel like I'm a diplomat from Japan.

Yes, it worries back in Japan economically and diplomatically there was so much concern with regard to which way the Obama administration would go. And especially I will just raise one issue. Well, President Obama did not go to Asia, which raised so much concern among the Asian countries where there is so much to talk about, including the rise of China and free trade issues. And so many people or countries were actually waiting for him to come and discuss and lead the discussion. And that didn't happen because of this crisis. So, that was part of my stories I was involved in covering. So yes, I had the biggest interest in what he was going to do and he is going to do from now as

well.

MR. ARRINDELL: Since I was into curveballs, I have another one.

China has advanced the idea that perhaps it's time to consider a de-Americanized world. Can you envision this idea as a real possibility? If so, when do you think something like this might be a prospect? Any one of you.

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: I'm not going to go into the de-Americanized world and all that. All I'm going to say is one of the things I guess that relates to the previous question, I mean, one of the things that is from my perspective -- I'm going to be very blunt here -- I mean, from my perspective it's sad to see the U.S. squander a lot of its credibility of the credibility that this country has when in the past it has spoken about democracy to the rest of the world. To tell you the truth, you know, it's going to be a tough sell for the U.S., at least in Latin America. That's what I know about. It's going to be a tough sale to give lessons to the rest of the world on democracy after this. I mean, I don't want to overplay the argument but there are some people that would laugh in your face, and it's sad to see that because when you see the history of democratic transitions in Latin America. Regardless of what happened in the past, the U.S. has always played a very good and bad role in Latin American politics at different times. But say, in the '80s when the transitions were going on, I think that the U.S. played a really important role in democratic transitions, much more than it's credited for. So that sort of credibility is quite frankly being squandered. And with that goes a very significant part of the U.S. self-power vis-à-vis the rest of

the world.

MR. ARRINDELL: Mirette.

MS. MABROUK: Yeah. I don't think I can really put it any better. Absolutely. Yes, it is possible to view a de-Americanized world, if you like, and I think there are other states that are just waiting in the wings quite eagerly. And again, I'm Egyptian, and we have to remember that this was the case in the '60s. We did have a de-Americanized world. We leaned towards Russia. It worked well for a while. So I think Kevin put it beautifully. I think the U.S. is squandering enormous assets and I don't know that anyone would be able to give you when this might happen, but I think sooner rather than later is probably a safe bet.

MS. IIZUKA: From the Japanese experience, can I just give a small advice to the current U.S.? Up until last December, that's when we had the last general election, so it's nearly one year, Japan was in an age of darkness. There was a divided government and no future for economic recovery, but the prime minister changed. Well, he still has something to improve, but the whole atmosphere change. The so-called Abenomics -- well, our prime minister's name is Abe, so it's called Abenomics. It's the economy of the current Japan. And the whole country's atmosphere has dramatically changed, and actually, all the indexes are changing, improving. So one advice is don't give up. I mean, there is hope. I mean, no matter how much the U.S. squandered, there is hope.

Until last year, Japan was at the bottom and nothing seemed to work very well. But something started to click and it went up and went up. Of course, there is so much to do, of course, for a full recovery, but I'm quite

impressed and amazed at how much a country can change because of the leadership and because of the followership.

MR. ARRINDELL: I think I'll start with you this time as well. Instead of giving Kevin the first shot, I'm going to start with you.

Do you have any insight to share with the U.S. government with regard to its governance and fiscal policy?

MS. IZZUKA: Well, yes. That was my whole advice. Yes. Sorry, I think I went too far, I mean, too fast. But yes, that was, you know, don't give up. And there's hope.

MR. ARRINDELL: So we want to keep hope alive. There you go.

MS. MABROUK: Well, I'm sort of in that odd position of being not a U.S. national but being a U.S. taxpayer. But also, I think as an Egyptian, I really do think -- really, the only thing I can speak to is foreign policy, and on foreign policy I think it's important that the U.S. maintain a policy that it has clarity, transparency, and consistency. I recommend that they pick a position and stick with it because it goes to credibility. That's it.

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: Well, I'm in an even more difficult position because I'm supposed to be a diplomat now. So, well, I mean, and the other thing is that if I knew what to change in the American political system I would be picking stocks or doing something more productive.

But I would say a couple of things. Number one, by all means, be aware that the face that the U.S. shows to the rest of the world in the workings of its political system matters a lot. I mean, people really care about what the U.S.

has to say about democracy. I mean, regardless of where you go, whenever you have prodemocracy demonstration anyway, quite frankly, people don't care an awful lot about what -- to be very blunt, very frank here -- about what Russia or China or Brazil or India say about that particular prodemocracy effort. But they do care a lot about what the U.S. says. That was fairly obvious in the Arab Awakening, I think. So number one.

Number two, you know, I would say to keep your eyes open in the U.S. to experiences in political dialogue that are taking place in other countries that can inform about ways to conduct political negotiations in a more tolerant and sensible way. I mean, I just came back from Mexico and what's happening in Mexico is actually quite remarkable. I mean, they've managed to put together a pact, a national pact between the three main political parties that if everything goes according to plan will be able to push through all the major structural reforms that Mexico has been longing for ages. So that kind of experience has something -- should have something positive to say to the U.S. So keep your eyes and ears open.

MR. ARRINDELL: Would those insights be different if you had not been an exchange visitor?

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: No. No, that's unfair. No, they would be different. They would be different. I mean, I think Mirette put it very well. My view has been influenced by what I saw here during four years, but I guess my advice would be the same.

MR. ARRINDELL: All right. Mirette.

MS. MABROUK: I think they might be more nuanced, but I don't think changed, no. You have, you know, more understanding but I don't think they would change.

MR. ARRINDELL: Keiko.

MS. IIZUKA: Yes, well, it would have been very different, and, well, as I said, it influenced me greatly. Perhaps I would like to in some way return. I feel like I would like to return something from which I have been given being in this community. So I think in the sense of exchange of giving and receiving, that sense I gained very much and it changed me a lot.

MR. ARRINDELL: Okay. I'd like to know if there's any questions from the audience that you'd like to -- okay.

The lady in the black jacket.

SPEAKER: Thank you all for speaking today and sharing your experience. I'm director of Cultural Exchange Programs at International Arts and Artists, and we're also a J-1 scholar sponsor. And I'm actually curious if your participation this program and return home and sharing your experience with your colleagues in your home countries, if there have been partnerships or business relationships or policy shared research or anything like that that has resulted among other people, not just you having new relationships or new colleagues or new projects or new jobs, but did that influence a group of people in your home country who are now partnering with Americans or doing research related to the U.S.? Did it encourage partnerships with the U.S. in your communities?

MR. ARRINDELL: Is that for any particular person or the whole panel?

SPEAKER: Anyone of you. Yeah.

SPEAKER: Shall we take a few?

MR. ARRINDELL: Yeah, take a few.

SPEAKER: There are a couple of hands here.

MR. ARRINDELL: The gentleman in the purple sweater.

SPEAKER: Hi. I'm Fred Altman.

My question is seeing you all had well-established careers before you applied, why did you apply? And did you apply to Brookings exclusively or did you apply at a number of institutions as well?

MR. ARRINDELL: Okay.

Do you have another question? We want to take a few and then try to answer them all at one time.

SPEAKER: Thank you for your insights. Since all of you have been working in Washington and have been pretty deeply ingrained in the U.S. foreign policy apparatus for the past couple of years, one of the weird terms that's come up as of late was is American -- the narrative of American Apology Tour in the last election campaign. And I guess to put it partially, is there really anything that you could actually say that the U.S. should apologize for? And if so, how could they actually go about kind of rectifying these wrongs that they may have committed in the eyes of foreign countries?

MR. ARRINDELL: Do you want to start? Let's take one more

question and then we'll start with the panel.

SPEAKER: Quick question, a bit off topic, but Kevin Casas-Zamora mentioned the changes going on in Mexico. One of the changes there that looks like it is going through is the changing structure of its education and the improvements in education. If the other changes also go through as hopefully expected, will that have an impact on other countries in Latin America?

MR. ARRINDELL: Does anyone want to tackle the first question about partnerships?

MS. MABROUK: Just very briefly for me. It does have a knock-on effect, yes, okay, because when you go back -- I think one of the things that people don't say about exchange programs is that people come and then they want to stay. I think the vast majority of us actually go back, and they go back because we want to take back something -- we want to take something useful back home. So when you do talk to other people, and this is whether you're talking to another journalist who will then be encouraged to vote -- to apply for scholarship or whether you're talking to the American Chamber of Commerce who will be encouraged to ask its businessmen to put down money for scholarships for people to study abroad, there is a definite knock-on effect. So I don't know if that answers your question.

MR. ARRINDELL: The second question was --

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: -- whether we applied specifically to Brookings. The short answer in my case is yes, I applied specifically to Brookings.

MS. MABROUK: Same here. Yes.

MS. IIZUKA: Me, too.

MR. ARRINDELL: Well, why don't we follow it with why?

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: Well, because there was an attractive opening at Brookings and I always wanted to come to Brookings. You know, it's a heck of a place.

MS. MABROUK: In my case, it's an annual fellowship, sometimes twice a year, and they actually called -- someone had recommended me and they called me and they said, "Would you be interested in doing this?" And I said, "Duh." The opportunity to sit there and do the research at this institution is really not anything that anyone would squander. So.

MS. IIZUKA: My brief answer is at that time there was not a Japan chair at Brookings, and actually, well, of course the first answer is that Brookings, I knew that this was a very prestigious, very good institution. But the second major reason was that I wanted to see Japan from somewhere that so many people know about Japan but there wasn't a Japan chair at that time, so I wanted to see my country from somewhere that not very many people are so much familiar with Japan, and Brookings was such an interesting place. But now there's a Japan chair.

MR. ARRINDELL: Now we have one.

Okay. The next question was about --

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: About apologies.

MR. ARRINDELL: -- apologies. Should the U.S. apologize for

some of its misgivings or something to that effect?

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: I'm not going to tell what the U.S. should apologize for. I mean, to begin with, I mean, apology is something that comes from within. So it's up to the U.S. to decide what it wants to apologize for, if anything. In any case, I have to say, and I'm speaking here as a Costa Rica national, I would no doubt say that we have much more to be grateful for towards the U.S. than we are ever likely to demand the U.S. to apologize for.

MR. ARRINDELL: Mirette.

MS. MABROUK: I don't really think an apology is -- no, I would not ask anyone to apologize. That's not good diplomacy and it's counterproductive. We're not going to ask anyone to apologize for something. My only wish would be the one that I said earlier, which is it would be lovely to have a foreign policy that is consistent and clear and transparent and then everyone would know where they stood.

MR. ARRINDELL: Well, I think on that note --

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: There was another question about the impact on Latin America.

Can I take that really quickly?

MR. ARRINDELL: Take that one. Actually, you are the last question.

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: Okay. The impact on Latin America. I think it could have an impact on Latin America for the same reason that it could have an impact. What's happening in Mexico could have an impact here in the

sense that it shows the power of political dialogue of tolerant political negotiation, of sensible political conversation. So it may have an impact to the extent that the U.S. political actors are willing to keep their eyes open to the experience of other countries.

MR. ARRINDELL: Okay. And you are truly the last question.

SPEAKER: I am from Zimbabwe. So my question would be how did you handle the social and cultural transition challenges?

MS. MABROUK: I'm sorry, I couldn't hear.

MR. ARRINDELL: It's a good question.

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: Whether we had cultural or social challenges.

MR. ARRINDELL: The adjustment to being here.

MR. CASAS-ZAMORA: I'll take a crack at that one. Not really. Not really. I mean, you know, every country is peculiar and has its own, I mean, for me the gun issue in the U.S. is something that I don't understand, but other than those peculiarities and the cultural specificities of this country, no, I wouldn't say that I had particular challenges. Mind you, I have to say that in my case, my folks lived in the U.S. for like 20 years, so I was very familiar with the country. All my siblings were born here. They lived in L.A. for a long time. Then, they moved to Costa Rica. So I was very familiar with the country anyway.

MR. ARRINDELL: Mirette.

MS. MABROUK: Yeah. I think it really depends on what background you're coming from. It depends on your exposure. It depends on

what it's like. But I will say that the U.S. is probably an easier place to settle into and assimilate to than many other countries that sort of have older, more established -- I mean, I think it would be more difficult to assimilate in Europe. It would be more difficult to assimilate in India. It would be more difficult to assimilate in the Middle East. The U.S. is actually quite an easy going and welcoming place as far as assimilation is concerned.

MS. IIZUKA: I follow Mirette. Yes. Yes.

MR. ARRINDELL: On that note, I want to thank our esteemed panel for a fantastic exchange. And I want to thank Brookings for having invited us to be here. So thank you, Elena. Thank you very much.

MS. ANDERSON-de LAY: You're welcome. Thank you, Nick, for moderating today, and thank you to the panelists. I'm a personal fan and I am very honored and privileged to have supported you during your transition here and your new opportunity. So thank you for spending some time out of your busy day for coming here.

And thank you, everyone, for coming. I know we went a little bit over our time, but if you have additional questions for our panelists, I would like to ask you to take them over cookies in our hallway. We have another event coming up that involves Secret Service to scan this room, so if you could gradually take your conversations to the hallway, we have cookies and snacks. And if you'd like to stay a little bit longer, we have a reception for you with an open bar.

So thank you for coming, and thank you for supporting this event.

(Applause)

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