

Globalization and Human Rights

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If we might start with a moment of prayer. A moment of reconciliation. A moment of non-violence. A moment of peace and reflection.

Remembering the victims of the holocaust and Auschwitz; the bravery of Lech Walesa and Solidarity. Blessing a new democracy in Poland.

We pray for the safety of the refugees fleeing war torn regions of the world.

Fill your heads with visions of Dr. King and Gandhi; of Lech Walesa.

Fill your hearts with thoughts of peace and non-violence.

Remember the words of the prophet Isaiah:

“And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

Thank you to Professor Kolodko and university leaders for inviting me here today, to your beautiful country, this historic battleground for human rights and worker dignity. The home of Copernicus. Chopin. Marie Curie. Pope John Paul II. Kominsky Park back home where the White Sox play. Cong. Rostenkowski. Puckinsky. It is an honor to be with you at this distinguished university, and to speak to you about globalization and human rights.

A Framework for International Policy

Global foreign policy should flow from our fundamental values. When I ran for President in 1988, I articulated 5 principles for a new American foreign policy:

- (1) respect for international law;
- (2) human rights;
- (3) self-determination;
- (4) economic justice;
- (5) consistency—measuring by one yardstick, and enlightened labor policy.

I believed then, and I believe now, that all nations must play by one set of rules. Science has changed distance and time. We are all connected now through social media, in real time. There are no more foreigners.

With the spirit of solidarity so crucial to your country's history, allow me to frame some principles pivotal to the quest for global peace, justice and shared economic security.

We speak different languages, but we share one message: human rights, workers rights, liberty, equality, shared economic security.

The universal message of human rights is most applicable to the Great Powers. The Bible teaches us that to whom much is given, much is required.

The nations with the most power, and the most wealth, have the most responsibility. They have the most responsibility to contribute to the creation of a world governed by peace rather than war, and a world stable with shared economic security.

Even the superpowers are not above the arch of justice. The arch of justice must apply to all. Pride and arrogance of power precedes the fall.

We must have human rights for all measured by one yardstick.

Let me give you my frame of reference:

I first visited South Africa in 1979 and I said: Human rights for all human beings, measured by one yardstick, in the face of race and religious supremacy. It was considered to be an insult. It set off a firestorm.

Two tiers of legal protection and authority are not acceptable, whether the stratification is a result of race, religion, political party, or economic status.

I was first arrested in 1960 for trying to use the library in the Jim Crow South. The US was then legally divided by race, and segregation was the law of the land. African Americans face lynchings, and were barred from using public facilities. This was the law of the land.

In Poland, before the elevation of Solidarity as private virtue and public policy, the right of political expression, and opportunity for economic growth, were not available to all the public.

Where there are walls of separation, on the other side of the wall, there is ignorance, fear, and hatred, and violence.

When the walls come down, we grow together under the understanding that our fates are integrated and interwoven.

We had to break down the walls of separation and build new bridges of hope and unity.

We must not allow for the legal and political enshrinement of division. We must demand the legal and political enforcement of the vision – the vision of hope springing forth out of the stream of human dignity.

In the new world order, we are all neighbors. An ocean might separate our nations, but that ocean is but a puddle next to the raging rapids of justice.

Let me ask you to think about the Scripture, the story of the Good Samaritan.

Story . . .

Jesus was asked, who is my neighbor. In the parable, there once was man beaten and robbed, through no fault of his own. He was left to die.

A minister of his own religion saw him, but crossed to the other side of the road.

A levite of his ethnicity saw him, but crossed to the other side.

The Samaritan, a man of a different religion, different culture, and language, he worshipped God differently – he stopped and got him refuge.

Beyond color, culture and religion and language, is character.

Jesus then asked, “who is your neighbor?”

Globalization

We’ve globalized capital and technology, but not human rights; worker’s rights; children’s and women’s rights; environmental rights.

Our world today is fraught with income inequality; the gap between rich and poor are widening; economic divisions are widening.

1/6 of the world, what I call the “surplus” cultures, the cultures of privilege. And then we have the “deficit” cultures, the cultures of pain, 5/6 of the world. Too few have too much; too many have little at all. The richest fifth of the world’s people consume 86% of all goods and services, while the poorest fifth are left with just over one percent. That is immoral. Its unacceptable. It’s unsustainable. Until we bring the world into balance we will not have peace. We will not have justice.

The birthplace of the human family is Africa. Human rights for all measured by one yardstick demands that Africa receive the same protections, opportunities, and liberties as the great powers of the Western World. The G-20 must include Africans in the execution of its mission to “promote growth across the developing world.”

Europe and North America account for 14 percent of the world’s population, but occupy nearly 50 percent of seats at the G-20 table. Africa, home to 16 percent of the world population, occupies only one seat.

Human rights must prevail when we see an American air strike hit a Doctors Without Borders hospital, and when we see immigrants across Europe struggle for housing and hospitality. Or Russia, overwhelming Crimea and threatening the sovereignty of Ukraine.

Every nation, every people, every race, and every religion is part of a great chain stretching around our entire planet. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. If that link is to shatter, the entire world will fall with it.

We must ensure that all life has equal value. We watched with pride when the world gathered in sympathy and solidarity for the victims of the Charlie Hebdo attack.

We then watched with shame at the world's silence in the hideous face of the Boko Haram massacre in Nigeria.

The renewed violence in Israel and Palestine remind us that Israeli security is inextricably linked to Palestinian freedom. We must use the same yardstick to measure human rights whenever Israeli security is at stake, and Palestinian justice is under threat. As I advocated during my presidential campaigns in the 1980's a two state solution in the Middle East is the road map toward peace, stability and mutual co-existence. We must get back on that road.

And let's define human rights.

The second principle of our movements is that peace and prosperity come only through policy, and visions of redemption and reconciliation.

The global family is made up of many races; many faces from many places. We are multi-racial, multi-cultural. We practice many religions. No matter the nature of our spiritual beliefs, we live in our faith. But we live under the law.

The laws had to change before Obama could become President, before African Americans could become CEOs, and before African Americans could become deans of universities.

The hands that picked cotton now pick governors, senators, company executives, and presidents. The law had to change before hearts could heal.

In Poland, the law had to change before workers could come together under the protections of one organization. The law had to change before voters could choose their representation. The law had to change before entrepreneurs could enjoy the opportunity of free enterprise.

The World Court provides us with the discipline of shared security through the practice of responsibility and accountability.

Poland was right to recently award \$260,000 in reparations to two suspected terrorists who were secretly and illegally interrogated in a CIA Prison in Poland. Its cooperation with the ruling of the European Court of Human Rights demonstrates leadership for an America unwilling to come to terms with its own violations of international law. If Poland can account for hosting the prison, America must account for running the prison.

The world community is questioning the escalation of “invisible” drone strikes and midnight raids aimed at political enemies, with civilian communities often being victims. We deplore the use of chemical and biological weapons and the new weapons more adept and more creative in killing each other.

Nuclear disarmament and adherence to international law must guide all the decisions of powerful nations.

The US-Iran Nuclear deal is an encouraging step towards a world of less conflict and tension. We must seize this opportunity to continue to form mutually beneficial relationships. Iran benefits from American economic engagement, just as America benefits from an Iran assimilated into the global community.

The safety of the world is not dependent merely on the eradication of arms, and the end of war. It requires we excavate the root causes of so many wars. We must adopt aggressive measures to stop the proliferation of the world’s deadliest weapon of mass destruction: poverty.

Poverty breeds desperation. Desperation creates despair. Despair turns to anger, and anger ignites conflict. We cannot expect peace and security, while so many suffer with so little, and so few enjoy so much.

We must curb the recklessness of the global financial elite, who must not only pay recompense, and be held accountable for the damage they inflicted on the global, economic order.

The Polish Trade-Union movement teaches that prosperity is not possible without solidarity, and that liberty is not profitable without dignity.

Too often our trade agreements are lopsided, and our treaties are one-sided. China, India, and America have accumulated great wealth since the financial crash of 2008, but the overwhelming majority of those gains concentrate at the top; creating a top heavy system of weight that the bottom cannot bear.

Trade policies between these nations must lift the masses out of poverty, and close the poisonous margins of economic exploitation and income inequality.

Find the moral center.

Three great questions are often asked of mankind.

Migration / Immigration Policy: How do we treat the least of these?

Vanity asks, “is it popular?” Popularity has its place.

Politics asks, “can it win?” For that, there seems to be no boundaries.

But Morality and Conscience asks, “is it right?”

The great answer is that the question of conscious always prevails.

So often we have one party with two names. A third rail is the path less chosen. It’s sustainable freedom.

Right wing politicians in America, like political candidates throughout Europe, have grabbed the microphone to demonize and stigmatize immigrants desperately fleeing war and poverty. They are condemning the patient without addressing the disease.

Immigrants go where the grass is greener. If we want more stable borders, we must create a global economic order with a more equitable distribution of resources. Concentration of wealth in the hands of the few, leads to disenfranchisement and desperation of the masses.

Why do we have mass migration from Syria and other countries?

Much of the chaos in the Middle East, and the creation of millions of refugees, is the result of America's, the UK and the coalition of the willing, immoral and inhumane unnecessary war in Iraq and Libya. It has resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives; even more injured. It has resulted in devastation economic calamity. It inflamed religious divisions, upsetting the delicate relationships between the nations – leading to untold and unending turmoil, new local and regional wars... And it is now resulting in massive de-stabilization of the region, with no end in sight.

The refugee crisis emanating out of Syria gives the powers of the Western World an opportunity to act with conscience, rather than calculation, in accord with international treaties and obligations. It gives the Western World a chance to expand with compassion rather than shrink with selfishness. We should never slam the door in the face of refugees. We must open the door, and partner with people around the world to advance the commonality and community we all claim. Our human community comes out of a shared ancestry. A consensus, collaborative approach by the EU – including Poland – urging each country to do their share, will go a long ways to alleviating the crisis and burdens being placed on nations.

Let us keep first and foremost on our minds the need to save and protect the lives of women, children and families. To ensure the human rights of all migrants are respected, as urge countries and international bodies to adopt and implement humane migration policies.

Lesson of WWII: “race, religious and gender supremacy is a suppressor, a divider, and oppressive ideology: dividing people into inferior and superior – not a sustainable model. Uplift the human race, not master race”

This human crisis challenges our moral character and resolve, and tests the thesis of how we treat the least of these.

Poland has a rich and proud traditions of leaders like Jacek Kuron who urged Poland to embrace the least of these, and for Poland to embrace a multi-cultural oriented society.

Today, we cannot give in to the hot rhetoric of ultra-nationalism and reactionary demagoguery. We cannot give in to our worst fears. We stood up against anti-Semitism. We stand up against Islam-phobia. We stand up against xenophobia and the incitement of fear around the migration issue.

Remember that Jesus was born poor, outdoors, under occupation, under a death warrant. In the face of tyranny, Mary and Joseph, the earthly parents, migrated to Egypt with Jesus – he and his family were refugees fleeing the policy of genocide. He lived as a migrant in Egypt until he was 12 years old before he returned to his homeland.

You may know that the second largest Polish population outside of Warsaw is my hometown of Chicago. 1.5 Million Polish people now reside in this city – where you were received as immigrants, migrating to the US to make a better life. And you have made enormous contributions to America – the land of immigrants – over the years.

And finally, let us heed the prayer and appeal of Pope Francis,

Christian compassion—this ‘suffering with’ compassion—is expressed first of all in the commitment to obtain knowledge of the events that force people to leave their homeland, and where necessary, to give voice to those who cannot manage to make their cry of distress and oppression heard. They are all elements that dehumanize and must push every Christian and the whole community to concrete attention.” Our martyrs deserve better!

A Rainbow World

The crisis gives rise to new opportunity – to not just adjust, but to embrace the changing world in which we live.

The world is a rainbow of people, with formerly “mono-chromatic” nations becoming more diverse with each passing year. Multi-racial. Multi-cultural. Multi-religious.

In today’s world, half the world lives in Asia, with half of them in China. A billion people live in India, next door to their foe, Pakistan—and both are armed with weapons of mass destruction.

One-eighth of the world lives in Africa, 1/5 of them in Nigeria.

The United States is not even a majority in its own hemisphere, where more people speak Spanish than English.

Most people in the world are black, brown, yellow, young, female, non-Christian, and don’t speak English.

We must learn to live together. If, as moral human beings, we want to end violence in the world, unilateralism is a dead end.

The lost sheep of which Jesus spoke must be found, and fed, and healed.

We have come back full circle to a profound point that Dr. King made when he spoke out against the Vietnam War in 1967.

“A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of our past and present policies... A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth... ...We still have a choice today: non-violent coexistence or violent co-annihilation... We must find new ways to speak for peace... and justice throughout the developing world.”

This is the third lesson of our movements: If the playing field is even, and everyone has the same chance to succeed, the results matter.

The results have value. We now have a world that enforces different rules for people with different bankrolls. Meritocracy is empty without equality. The march for justice shifts the earth under our feet, just as the cry for equality thunders throughout the sky, in Greece, in Great Britain, in Poland, and in America.

Why is it that athletes of different race or religion can achieve together on the football field or the basketball court? Whenever the playing field is even, rules are public, referees are fair, goals are clear, and the score is transparent, we can make it. You couldn't have a soccer match if players from one side of town start with three goals, and players from another side of town start without any. You couldn't have a football match if the nets were wide for one team, and narrow for the other. Only when the playing field is even can we all cultivate our talents, and bring them home for harvest.

When the third Reich failed, apartheid failed. Race supremacy in the US failed. Lynching as a practice failed.

The spirit of Selma and the way of Warsaw are alive. We see it in Chile where students demand affordable college education. We see it in Greece where voters demand equal justice for rich and poor. We see it in America with the expansion of health care access and affordability.

We see it wherever people are struggling for freedom from their oppressor and occupier. We see it wherever people protect the innocent from police attack. We see it wherever people help a child crying for a crust of bread. We see it in the outstretched arms and enjoined hands marching for movements of peace.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said that "we must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools." He urged us to find common ground. To identify common interest.

There will be no peace until lions and lambs lie down together. Until the strong and the weak mutually agree to reconcile.

But what would make an arrogant and powerful lion agree to lie down with a lamb? And what would make a weak and defenseless lamb agree to trust a lion long enough to lie still?

Only one thing—they have mutual interests. Coalitions of unlikely partners are built on mutual interests, common ground.

There will be no peace until lion and lamb learn to live together.

Both the lion and the lamb will be destroyed if the forests are set on fire. Both lions and lambs will perish if the air is warmed too much, and the ice caps melt, and the oceans wash up over our islands and shorelines, and the ecology of the jungle and the farm are forever altered.

Neither a lion or a lamb can exist while drinking polluted waters. Neither a lion or a lamb can survive a smart bomb. Or, for that matter, a fundamentalist fanatic armed with a box-cutter or a suicide bomb.

The Golden Rule has not been repealed—do unto others as ye would have others do unto you. This rule works for nations, as well as for neighbors.

We have learned to survive apart. Now, it is time for us to learn to live together.

We live together when we study war no more – when we pursue peace as our passion and purpose. We live together when we protect human rights and dignity everywhere. We live together when we honor life as life, and all as one.

Through our laws, treaties, trade, practices, and policies – We must learn to live together. When we mourn, our hearts guide and direct our futures; united in the bonds of love and compassion: Solidarity.

Youth and students here today – you have the power to change the world. When young people come alive, the whole world moves forward.

I just urge you to Dream.

Dream, chose minds over missiles.

Dream, choose coexistence over co-annihilation.

Dream, choose negotiation over confrontation and intimidation.

Dream, that someday, swords will be beaten into plowshares.

Spirit and faith will always be tested; but faith can move mountains.

Faith helped Moses march out of Egypt, and across the Red Sea.

Faith helped Joshua bring the walls tumbling down.

Faith helped Jesus turn crucifixion into resurrection.

Faith kept Mandela alive following 27 years in jail, long enough to liberate his own jailer.

Faith helped Lech Walesa rally shipyard workers to inspire a nation to bring down tyranny and democratize a nation.

We know that Dr. King's lesson still lives:

“The arc of history is long, but it bends towards justice....

that

“Justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream.”

Let us live together. Let us rise together. Come on up for the rising. The vision we cradle in our minds is calling. The world we carry in our hearts is waiting. And so we Dream, and we Keep Hope Alive.