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**Studies in Leadership: Conversations to Make a Difference**  
**MANAGING THE TECTONIC SHIFTS IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE**

**JUNE 20, 2013**  
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**St. Petersburg, Russia**  
**2013**

**Moderator:**

**Marina Kim**, Anchor, Russia TV Channel

**Panellist:**

**Helen Clark**, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme

**M. Kim:**

I am very pleased to welcome all of you to my hometown, St. Petersburg. My name is Marina Kim. I am a news anchor for the Russian Federation's biggest television network, 'Russia'. I was invited to the Forum to host and to moderate what will hopefully be, thanks to our esteemed guest today, Ms. Helen Clark, one of its most exciting panel discussions. It gives me great pleasure today to welcome Ms. Clark, who is internationally known as a modern thinker and is widely respected as a very successful politician. She was the first woman to be Prime Minister of New Zealand. She is well-known for her contribution to education in New Zealand. Her strong management fostered a very stable economy in her country. Following three terms as Prime Minister, Ms. Clark assumed her current position as the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The title of our panel discussion today is 'Managing the Tectonic Shifts in Global Governance'. I should begin by defining global governance. It is governing without sovereign authority the relationships that transcend borders. In simpler terms, it means doing internationally what governments do domestically. We must recognize that we live in an ever-changing world, especially in terms of information. Information transmission methods are changing all the time. Consider the Twitter and Facebook revolutions in the Arab world. Has the United Nation's approach changed? What kind of new methods has the United Nations implemented?

**H. Clark:**

Firstly, I think it is important to distinguish global governance from the competence of national governments to legislate and govern for their people. Global governance is about those things that we need to manage together. No one country can deal with what has to happen on climate change, for example. We need a global agreement; we need a new treaty. Similarly, in the regulation of trade, we need global multilateral agreements, which is why it would be nice if there was a breakthrough in the Doha Development Round with the governance of the world's oceans. Again, we need countries agreeing on these things. There are areas of the

public space where we must move beyond our national sovereignty and say, “What can the world as a whole decide on this issue?” That is the concept of global governance.

Now, when we talk about global governance, we often talk about governments negotiating. And of course, in the end, governments negotiate, and they will make the decisions on what is to be done. What we are seeing in global governance, however, is the hugely expanded voice of citizens. This is made increasingly possible through social media because you can crowdsource opinion. For example, when the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) – the organization coordinating our response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic – wanted to get ideas about a new strategy for engaging young people on combating the spread of HIV and AIDS, it did so by crowdsourcing through social media. The level of engagement is much higher.

This has been very much the case for the United Nations and its discussions of the post-2015 period. What will succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) when they reach their target dates at the end of 2015? While ultimately it falls to the Member States of the United Nations and their governments to say what that agenda will be, the United Nations said, “Let us go out and ask the people what kind of future they want. What development priorities do they have?” There have been hundreds of thousands of people engaged. Now, of course, some have been at face-to-face consultations and meetings, but most have actually been through social media engagement, crowdsourcing ideas and responding to surveys. I think bringing this global citizens’ voice into global governance discussion and getting direct feedback is very, very important to the United Nations these days.

Now, you also mentioned what the role of new media has been in some of the big upheavals we have seen in countries, particularly over the last couple of years, and in the Arab States region in particular. We cannot underestimate the role that social media has played – and innovation in social media. For example, many people in developing countries do not yet have a smartphone. They are too expensive both to and to get access to the Internet. But text messaging on mobile phones is prolific.

Consequently, in some of the uprisings in the Arab States, there was use of talk-to-text. People could phone in a message that would be turned into text, and that could be put into a tweet. There are very innovative ways for people who did not have direct access to social media to actually have their voices heard. I saw one young Egyptian activist quoted as saying that they had a very segmented use of social media in these uprisings. They used Facebook to publicize where the day's mobilization was going to be, where people should gather. They tweeted and texted from the site of the event, and later posted videos on YouTube. That is a very sophisticated segmentation of media. In the many uses we now see of information and communication technologies, one use is to drive these tectonic shifts in governance and give citizens a voice and the ability to participate in what is going on around them.

**M. Kim:**

What is the United Nations' new approach? You have mentioned crowdsourcing from social media. You are getting ideas from people, but maybe this could somehow influence the decision-making process.

**H. Clark:**

The idea is that when Member States actually negotiate what the decisions are going to be, they need to be informed as to what the people are saying. With the extensive participation we have had around post-2015, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), leading the United Nations development system, has now drawn together an initial report on this big, global conversation. We are completing the final report now to be ready for the General Assembly and the Special Session on the Millennium Development Goals to be held in September. We will make all this information available to the Working Group and enable other Member States to look at the sustainable development goals, which could be the next generation of MDGs. We are seeing it as our job at the United Nations to help give voice to the world's peoples. When the founders of the United Nations wrote

the Charter of the United Nations, they did not write, “We the Member States”, they wrote, “We the peoples”. We are trying to give some substance to the “We the peoples” by using new technologies to reach out, engage and involve them.

**M. Kim:**

Is it realistic to consider that during Security Council meetings we might see leaders tweeting each other?

**H. Clark:**

It is not unrealistic. At the United Nations itself, we use social media extensively. I think UNDP has been really in the vanguard of doing this as an organization, and I, myself, tweet quite a good deal about what I am doing from @HelenClarkUNDP. We do use Facebook and YouTube. We are out there trying to communicate widely. But when I came to UNDP, I thought it was rather inward-looking as an organization, and, in a way, for the purest of motives: it did not want to take credit for countries’ development achievements. It said the credit lies with the country itself. But I said, “We have to be able to say what our role in these transformations is. If we are doing good work, and that is resulting in people having better lives, then we need to talk about that.” Consequently, we have moved to become outward-looking to engage with very large global audiences. Social media really helps us do that.

**M. Kim:**

Having discussed information technologies, let us turn to culture, which is very important as well. On one hand, nowadays, we see an unstoppable process of multiculturalism developing. On other hand, we have recent examples of countries that have used the modern technologies we discussed to change their governments, but have then shifted to a less multicultural way of governing and greater conservatism. Take the example of Egypt. What is your view on finding the right balance?

**H. Clark:**

That is the case for every country. These are very complex transitions that countries have embarked on. They are transitions across the Arab States region in many secular, and often modernizing, regimes, but that are authoritarian. For a range of reasons, a tip-over point was reached in a number of these countries – a tip-over point of resentment against authoritarianism. I think there was also a large economic element in this however. There was a global recession; it made life tougher for people in Egypt and Tunisia, for example. Young people, in particular, are on the front line of unemployment and underemployment. They have a lot of reason to be hopeful for their future, but could not see it in their country, and thus got very, very angry. Circumstances combined to topple regimes, but without necessarily a clear path as to what would follow that. An analogy is making an omelette; you must break eggs, so the eggs were broken, but then you may not get to the perfect omelette in everybody's eyes.

About two years ago, UNDP led a very important conference with the transitional government in Egypt to look at this phenomenon of transition. We brought to that conference people who had done the hard yards on transitions in Latin America, in South Africa, and in Indonesia, moving those places away from authoritarian governments to more democratic and participatory governments. One clear message that came from all people involved in such transition was: it is not going to be on a straight line. You are not going to get a straight line from where you have been to where maybe people want to go. There are going to be ups and downs; there are going to be setbacks; there are going to be knockbacks.

**M. Kim:**

Is it up and down, or back and forth?

**H. Clark:**

It is both up and down and back and forth in a way, but it is not linear. That is the main point. I think it is very important that the driving factors of these upheavals – a lot of voice and participation and energy – needs to continue to characterize transition so that there is genuine dialogue about the country's future. But indeed these can be exceedingly rocky transitions. If we look, for example, at Egypt's economy, it is smaller now than it was before the transition began. Let us hope that Egypt can get breathing space and stability to try to revive its tourism sector and its economy as a whole, because there are a lot of people, particularly young people, in need of jobs and opportunities.

**M. Kim:**

With regard to the concept of multiculturalism, is it still appropriate for the modern world? Not only in Arab countries but in Western countries as well, we can see the rise of nationalistic sentiment, even in Europe. Perhaps the concept of multiculturalism is about to die and is not very suitable for the modern world.

**H. Clark:**

But the modern world is about multiculturalism; it is about diverse people living together. An observation I would make from my own country, New Zealand, which was the last significant landmass on earth to be settled by human beings around only the 1200s. Who is the New Zealander today? A New Zealander may look like me; a New Zealander may be an Indigenous person; a New Zealander may be of Chinese, Indian, or African descent. This is akin to the United States of America as a great melting pot, and to this country, the Russian Federation, which also has had so many people live within its borders. It is also similar to Europe with significant populations from North Africa and elsewhere.

We cannot take an exclusive approach to who we are. We are increasingly nation States which are great melting pots of many people. We will not survive as harmonious societies unless we move with that and embrace diversity. We will draw



strength from diversity, not disaster, but strength. We have to build on unity around diversity.

**M. Kim:**

That begs the question why this has not already taken place. Over the past 20 years, we have studied multiculturalism and the directions in which it has been developing. Yet even in Europe we can still see people or nations saying, “We want to live in our country and not let immigrants enter.”

**H. Clark:**

We do see intolerance in a lot of parts of the world, and I think this can also be exacerbated by hard economic times. When people are perhaps losing their jobs, they may react against those they see as outsiders. Yet often, those they see as outsiders may have been in the country for several generations. It is home for them. I think it is very important that, as leaders, all of us embrace the notion that everyone who has chosen to live in a country has status therein, is embraced for what they have to offer, and is not stigmatized because they belong to a particular minority group.

**M. Kim:**

This leads to a question about the political situation. The United Nations has spent many years promoting international unity, but politically the world is changing. The directions of change are, at present, sometimes hard to define: the Arab Spring; the shifts in global terrorist movements; and the rise of nationalist sentiment in Europe. How has all this happened? Where do you think the United Nations may have failed in its mission to bridge the gap between different political ideologies? Perhaps the idea of global governance is unrealistic in our times.

**H. Clark:**

If you go back to the foundation of the United Nations with its three pillars – peace and security, development, and human rights – the world has changed immensely over the past 70 years. One fundamental way in which the world has changed is that wars between countries are much less frequent. This has been achieved through diplomacy and peaceful dispute settlement. But we are still dogged with internal conflicts. If not outright civil wars, then wars between different communities based on different kinds of characteristics. These are exceedingly difficult conflicts.

**M. Kim:**

More difficult to resolve?

**H. Clark:**

Yes, much more difficult. If you go back to what is driving such conflict, it is often a lack of social cohesion; perhaps some groups have not been as well accepted; perhaps the governance has not been fair; perhaps people have not been fairly treated. These things are rectified overnight. They are quite complex processes of peace-building, followed by state-building, followed by social cohesion, followed by economic construction efforts which work for everybody and do not marginalize or disempower. That work is very much ongoing business.

If we look at the currently developing aspiration of extreme poverty eradication, some are saying we should do this by 2030 and I agree. I wish it could be sooner. To achieve the eradication of extreme poverty, we must achieve it in Somalia; we must achieve it in Afghanistan; we must achieve it in the Central African Republic; we must achieve it in Mali; we must achieve it in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. What we will increasingly see is the geography of extreme poverty overlap with the geography of conflict. That means we really need to return focus to how we, as an international community, can help countries overcome these debilitating conflicts that are preventing their people from getting ahead.

**M. Kim:**

What, for example, is the strategy for Afghanistan? Do you plan to implement some development programmes there, perhaps something different from what is currently planned?

**H. Clark:**

Afghanistan is UNDP's biggest programme anywhere in the world. Many hundreds of millions of dollars go through the books every year. For example, we administer payments for the Afghan police. The police are paid for by donations from donor governments, and the money is put through UNDP.

**M. Kim:**

Even for the local police?

**H. Clark:**

Indeed, we pay the police salaries, so we have a lot of responsibility. We work very hard to maintain integrity in those programmes.

**M. Kim:**

Economically, what is the solution?

**H. Clark:**

Economically, it is my understanding that if it were possible to get the wonderful things that can be grown in Afghanistan – such as apricots, vegetables, and other fine fruits – to market, for the small farmer that would be as good a price as they get from a poppy. The problem is the poppy has a high-value distribution system. Consequently, it is able to get to market illicitly and then causes damage and despair and creates addiction and criminality around the world. The trick for Afghanistan is to have the infrastructure that will enable the small farmer, the small holder, to grow the good things...

**M. Kim:**

Soya for example.

**H. Clark:**

Yes, soya, for example. It really is an issue of not just growing, but getting it to a market and getting value and return on it. As I said, small farmers will not get much more from poppy cultivation than they would for apricots, if you could sell and distribute the apricot.

**M. Kim:**

Right, but you cannot really use the distribution system they have now. A new distribution system must be built.

**H. Clark:**

Yes, a legal and licit one that is based on infrastructure, basic road networks and the ability to market.

**M. Kim:**

Now a question with regard to the Brazil, Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) group, of which Russian Federation is of course a part. What is the stance of the United Nations towards BRICS? How can the United Nations and BRICS build a relationship with each other?

**H. Clark:**

There is a lot of what we might call 'informal multilateralism' in groupings at the moment. The G20 is another good example. It is not set up by treaty and conventions like the United Nations or the international financial institutions. It is set up by informal agreement, and there is a place for everything. There is place for formal multilateralism and for informal multilateralism. I think the BRICS grouping is a great idea. These are very significant emerging economies. They have ideas; they

are all active in South–South cooperation. We might call it East–East cooperation in the Russian Federation because the Federation is very active in development cooperation. For that reason, UNDP is looking for a relationship with the Russian Federation on a strategic basis. BRICS States are currently talking about having a development bank. This is a fantastic idea. There is a lot of development finance potential in BRICS countries. Indeed, in the latest UNDP Human Development Report, we comment on the fact that there are huge reserves of capital in developing countries, and if ways could be found of getting that capital into productive investments and infrastructure, developing countries' transformation could really be accelerated. I welcome the discussion BRICS are having on this, and I would very much welcome a development bank that is not only available for investing in BRICS countries but could be available for Africa and could be available for South Asia, Southeast Asia, the Arab States, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific. I think it could do a power of good.

**M. Kim:**

Today, we see not only changes in ideology, but also the breakup of traditional institutions, for example family units or certain government structures, all over the world. At times, the United Nations mechanism struggles with recent developments. We can see and recognize this. Do you feel some kind of restructuring and maybe reassessment of strategies is in order or is necessary? Would you feel a fresh start is needed with the creation maybe of some new body inside the United Nations?

**H. Clark:**

You see, if you did not have the United Nations, you would have to invent it. You have to have a forum where the nations of the world can come together and work through their issues and differences, and while...

**M. Kim:**

But times have changed since the Cold War.

## **H. Clark:**

They have changed a lot, in the sense that these are better times. These are multipolar times. The point is that multipolarity has not necessarily translated into greater multilateralism. Consequently, this is kind of an uncertain time as people sort themselves out.

Allow me to make two points. First, people often ask, "What does the United Nations do?" "Why does anybody bother?" What I can say, having been there for the last four years, and having been leader of my country every year at the United Nations General Assembly, is that the number of leaders who come is staggering, the number of very important events and meetings about crises and major topical issues is impressive. The United Nations has huge convening power, that is what we must capitalize on.

Second, we must look at the Organization's structures. The truth is that the Charter was written in 1945, and it is proving almost as difficult to change as, for example, the United States to change its constitution. Things became a little bit rigid. The Security Council was designed in a different time and place. The Security Council clearly has to accommodate the changes happening in our world. The question is how. Let us hope there will be some fresh energy devoted thereto, because if institutions do not adapt and reflect the reality of the times, those who are significant but excluded start looking to put their energy elsewhere. That would be unfortunate because the United Nations, as I said, has the convening power and the space.

I can make the same points about international financial institutions. It is important to progress with quota reform and ratification for the International Monetary Fund (IMF). World Bank reforms are important. I could also make the point about the governing boards of United Nations funds and programmes like UNDP. We are set up in a way that developing countries would like to see changed. They would like to see a composition of our governing boards which better reflects the composition of the United Nations, and personally I agree with that. I think that has to be addressed by the General Assembly. It is really important that we try not to have these

structures set in stone but able to react to and adjust to the changing geopolitical and geoeconomic realities of our time.

**M. Kim:**

I see. By 'fresh energy', do you mean fresh members on the Security Council?

**H. Clark:**

The Security Council needs to be expanded. The question is how; the question is...

**M. Kim:**

How many members?

**H. Clark:**

I think people have been thinking of adding to the present 15, I think five...

**M. Kim:**

Fifteen?

**H. Clark:**

Five are permanent; the Russian Federation is one – China, the United Kingdom, France, and the United States of America. Then there are 10 elected members that rotate. The question is whether a reformed Security Council will have more permanent members? Will they have the veto? If not permanent, would they be long-term members with a review mechanism? This is the territory that is being discussed. I think it is very important to have another go at achieving consensus on a way forward. There is an old saying, "Do not let perfection be the enemy of the good." It may be that reform is not ideal for everybody everywhere, but there has to be reform because that is what will keep the United Nations relevant and meaningful in its chief organ which is the Security Council.

**M. Kim:**

What is your view on the veto issue? Do you think it is an outdated...

**H. Clark:**

You are speaking to a New Zealander, you see, and New Zealand at the founding Conference in San Francisco opposed the veto and has always opposed the veto. That has always been a problem.

**M. Kim:**

And working from within the United Nations now, have you changed your mind?

**H. Clark:**

No, I am loyal to New Zealand. I have articulated that position many times.

**M. Kim:**

Do you think organizations as the Group of 20 (G20), and perhaps the Group of Eight (G8) as well, are possible analogues to the United Nations?

**H. Clark:**

No, for one huge reason.

**M. Kim:**

Namely?

**H. Clark:**

Legitimacy. The United Nations is set up by charter. People formally accede to it; it is open to every Member State of the world. The Group of 20 (G20), obviously, is not. There is a G193 sitting around the table. They are never going to accord the G20 the legitimacy of a universal membership body like the United Nations with its General Assembly where every state has one vote with equal power. That is the



issue. There has certainly been a trend, though, in more recent G20 meetings for the country that is chairing the Group – I think we could say starting with the Republic of Korea, and then moving to France, Mexico and now to the Russian Federation – to be looking to try to include and to engage. I think that has been very positive, and the United Nations very much values the association it has with G20. I, myself, go to the G20 Finance Ministers' Conferences started by invitation of France, continued with Mexico, now with the Russian Federation. I think we are well set for a tradition. The Secretary-General always engages with the Leaders' Summit. We want to be there and to support the G20 because it is such an important collection of the world's leading economies, but we also make sure that, as the G20 talk among themselves about what they think should be done, they are informed of the broader international community's perspectives.

**M. Kim:**

It is true that the United Nations is composed of very many countries, the whole world in fact, but sometimes it takes a very long to come to any decision. For example, when a situation is volatile, like in Libya or Syria, we with can see that sometimes very important decisions are postponed just because of bureaucracy, because there are a lot of countries and opinions.

**H. Clark:**

Not bureaucracy; it is called politics. There are acutely real differences of opinion. I have to look at it from the point of view of people; a lot of Syrians are suffering. I sincerely hope the international conference being discussed in Geneva can take place and take place soon. There is a real push for some kind of political and diplomatic solution because people are hurting. They are hurting in Syria; they are hurting as people cross borders into Lebanon and Jordan. We are involved in trying to help communities that have been so unsettled by this, both in Syria itself and in Lebanon and Jordan. It is not easy.

**M. Kim:**

Moving to the topic of climate change. Could you speak to the international situation in that regard? What is the current agenda? What is the most important problem at the moment?

**H. Clark:**

If you go back to the big Bali Climate Change Conference that took place at end of 2007, the timeline was set to have a new global agreement on climate which would be agreed to in Copenhagen in 2009. That deadline was missed. We then had climate conferences in Cancún, which started to regroup our efforts, and then in Durban at the end of 2011. We can say the South African Government did a good job of getting a new roadmap for a climate agreement, which is supposed to be adopted in 2015. This is getting extremely urgent. What I can say is that we are not yet seeing enough ambition and enough urgency in the negotiations. There are things that need to be built on, determined, and agreed to now for there to be a successful outcome in 2015. I know that France is offering to host the conference in 2015. France is an important country, and a great power. I think it has the weight and the gravitas to help the world reach an agreement, but the work has to be done now to nail some of these things down.

What I can say, having gone to the last four annual Climate Change Conferences in my capacity as Administrator of the UNDP, is that I see a huge disconnect between the scale of the problem we are now facing and the pace at which it is being addressed. We are being told by eminent forecasters from the private sector, by international energy agencies, and by others that with current conditions, we are on course for a six degree temperature rise globally over and above preindustrial levels. A two-degree increase was supposed to bring irreversible catastrophic change, begging the question what six will degrees do. We cannot carry on like this. We have to have an agreement which will, in essence, allow us to live within the two degree limit. We do not yet see enough ambition for that. It is urgent because the longer you delay action, the harder it becomes to take the action that is required.

My last comment on this would be that often people look at the adjustment that has to be made and say, "Oh, it is going to cost too much." Look, the cost of adjusting to more sustainable ways of producing, consuming and living is a fraction of what it will cost us to adjust to a wrecked climate ecosystem with extreme flooding, droughts, sea-level rises, displacement of people, devastated crops and agriculture, tourism, and so on. What I would say is spend now, save later.

**M. Kim:**

It is true that the global financial crisis was an obstacle to the process. That may be why, mentally, governments and countries were not ready for this kind of expense.

**H. Clark:**

Yes, but we need to see it as an opportunity. I really think that green growth can be a source of new jobs, new products, new services, new exports, and that it will generate new GDP growth. We have to see the opportunity in this. Sometimes, people have a mind-set where they see the cost of everything and the value of nothing. We have to see the value in investing in this transformation.

**M. Kim:**

One of United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for 2015 was to promote women's rights and to promote equality between men and women. When thinking about the Russian Federation, I would say there is a lot to be done. Only 14% of our Members of Parliament are women. By way of comparison, in Rwanda it is 56%. As far as I know, the goal has not been met internationally, and the percentages the United Nations wanted to see by 2015 are impossible to achieve. Is that true?

**H. Clark:**

The target set was to have women holding 30% of national parliamentary seats. We have not quite made 20%, but it is better than it was.

**M. Kim:**

What do you mean by “not quite”? What is the percentage?

**H. Clark:**

It is probably 19 point something. So the United States of America has not met this Millennium Development Goal either. My own country met it around 1996. We introduced a new electoral system of proportional representation, and the percentage of women parliamentarians shot up from around 20% to 30% with just that change in electoral system. What you find around the world is where elections are based on one member of parliament to one electorate, this is the hardest kind of system for women to break into. This is because the image of a member of parliament traditionally was of a man with a family and a supportive wife, and you have to change that image.

In New Zealand, we had changed this image somewhat, but only to achieve 20% of seats held by women. With proportional representation, political parties have to present whole lists of candidates. If they did not put forward any women candidates on those lists, women would say, “Why should I vote for you? You do not think I am very important. People like me are not prominent on your list.” Actually, the proportional representation system has been very good for representation of not only women but also of minorities of all kinds.

**M. Kim:**

When you were Prime Minister, how many women were in your cabinet?

**H. Clark:**

It was probably around a third as well. You had around a third of the Parliament and around a third of the cabinet.

**M. Kim:**

What is the situation now? Has it changed?

**H. Clark:**

Oh, it is worse.

**M. Kim:**

It is worse?

**H. Clark:**

Parliamentary representation still keeps women representatives up there around the 30% mark. It needs to go higher. Why should we be satisfied with 30%? Ideally, it needs to go to parity, but 30% was a good target for the MDGs.

**M. Kim:**

What was the main obstacle to this internationally? Are there stereotypes? Are there perhaps some economic factors?

**H. Clark:**

First, in all societies, there has been a culture that men have held these positions. You must start by breaking that. You must have women prepared to go out there, to compete and to show that they are as good as, or better than, any man in the running. You must deal with that social and cultural barrier. Second, with regard to economic barriers, there can be, of course, considerable costs in campaigning. Women do not always have access to election finance as easily as men do. Third, there is the life cycle issue. Women tend to end up taking more responsibility for the care of not only children but elderly, disabled, and infirm family members. That tends not to fit with a political career at all. It can be very difficult unless you live in the capital city and have the means to purchase care for your children or older relatives. It can be extremely tough.

Women face societal barriers, economic barriers, family barriers, and also the further problem identified in some societies of security. Women candidates can be particularly vulnerable. Consequently, we produced a guide for increasing women's parliamentary participation. The guide was based on what political parties could do to change these things. They could lead by means of the way in which they select candidates, the way in which they support candidates, and the way in which they support women after they are elected. You must take a whole electoral cycle approach to this.

**M. Kim:**

Is the United Nations open-minded enough to consider the possibility of appointing a woman as its most senior representative? Is the Organization ready for that? Is it the right time for the United Nations to have a woman leader? In your opinion, is it possible and realistic to say that you would see this within the span of your career?

**H. Clark:**

Women are storming these last bastions. A woman is the head of the IMF. This is certainly fantastic.

**M. Kim:**

Why not the United Nations?

**H. Clark:**

Well, why not the United Nations? It will happen. Who knows when it will happen, but I have no doubt, and I hope it is within my lifetime, that a woman will be Secretary-General of the United Nations. I think the women of the world would see that as momentous step. Just as women have become heads of government and heads of state, it will happen.

**M. Kim:**

We very much admire you. Should we write a letter to Mr. Ban Ki-moon in your favour?

**H. Clark:**

The Secretary-General is on his second five-year term now, and he has been highly supportive of women. It is under his leadership the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) was set up. I myself was appointed, and he has appointed many women to senior positions. He is really doing his bit. He wants to see more women holding high office in the United Nations system. Now, who comes after present Secretary-General is a question for the Member States and of course they are not...

**M. Kim:**

Will you be ready to be a candidate?

**H. Clark:**

Oh, no, I am stating no such ambition. But I really hope that Member States will seriously consider the talents of women out there when searching for either a successor to Mr. Ban or for a future Secretary-General.

**M. Kim:**

Speaking hypothetically, then, for a minute, once because Secretary-General of the United Nations, what would be your first action to promote women's rights?

**H. Clark:**

I think there is a big opportunity now with the post-2015 development agenda to place women's empowerment of women and gender equality as an extremely high priority. That is because investing in opportunities for women and for girls is probably the greatest thing you can do for development in terms of the multiplying impact that it has. For every extra year of education a woman has, the greater

chance her child will live to its fifth birthday, and that child will go on to have greater education. This is phenomenally important. The question is how to get the high prioritization of the needs of women and girls? Frankly, we need a lot more women in decision-making positions at the local, national, regional and international level. In my experience, you need a critical mass of women in decision-making to change the priorities of decision-makers.

**M. Kim:**

What one thing would you do to empower women? Perhaps you would propose raising the percentage of women at the United Nations to 100%?

**H. Clark:**

No, we could not do that. We have to be fair. We are talking about general equality, not dominance, you see. Certainly, we can continue to grow the numbers of women in very senior positions. I think at the national level, the most critical thing is to see that the laws and policies of a country are completely non-discriminatory. In so many places, there are still laws, policies and regulations which are not fair to women. Those need to change; the legal status and rights of women are extremely important. Then we have to look at economic empowerment, and we have to look at political empowerment. Those are the three areas that you really need to focus on.

**M. Kim:**

I believe it is time to wrap up our discussion and summarize some basic ideas. We were really offered a very deep insight into the United Nations' current role in global governance. I think we see that the world is changing, and the way the United Nations implements its leading role should be changed substantially, on different levels and in different directions, be it culturally, ideologically, or with regard to information technology. Finally, the key idea is that the United Nations should strengthen its leadership role in the modern world by perhaps becoming more



flexible, more operational in its structure, and by enhancing its influence in the modern world.

**H. Clark:**

Firstly, I think the United Nations is adapting the ways it works as we discussed, reaching out to the world's peoples. Obviously, the Member States make the decisions, but from within the United Nations, we can engage people so we get feedback and make it available to the global Member State community. I think that is extremely important. Since Kofi Annan's time, the United Nations has also reached out for a dialogue and a relationship with the private sector. Bear in mind that a significant number of large global companies have a turnover's far bigger than many small countries. Consequently, the global private sector is important, as are global non-governmental organizations (NGO) and global philanthropy foundations. There are many new constituencies out there with which the United Nations is very actively engaged

Secondly, I think the United Nations needs to play to its strength, i.e. its tremendous convening power. It is the preeminent, leading multilateral organization. Everybody belongs. I gave as an example General Assembly week in New York in September, everybody wants to come. The United Nations has to ensure that it is relevant and that it is organized in the forums for dialogue around the key issues of our time. Next year, for example, the Secretary-General will have a high-level, leader-level event on climate change at the General Assembly because he wants to put some energy and momentum into the climate change negotiations, hoping there will be a final agreement in 2015. We must continue working at those ways of using the convening power to get people together to address the big issues to drive human progress. That is what the United Nations is about.

**M. Kim:**

Ms. Clark, thank you so much for this discussion and thank you to everyone present. Are there any questions? No? Okay, then we can wrap up our session. Thank you so much for your attention.

**H. Clark:**

Thank you.

**M. Kim:**

Oh, there is a question. Go ahead, but allow me first to introduce you. Andrey Egorov is a professor at Saint Petersburg State University in the Faculty of Economic. Is that correct?

**A. Egorov:**

Do you think that it is possible for Western institutions, the UN, and financial institutions to subsidize production by Afghan farmers, to even the playing field with European and other Western producers? In other words, is it not better to pay or subsidize Afghan farmers, rather than police officers?

**H. Clark:**

In Afghanistan, with its myriad challenges, everything needs to be done. You need basic law and order, you need a basic functioning police force. Donors wanted to fund that capacity in particular, but wanted to put the money through an independent institution. Consequently, UNDP has ended up being that institution. The important thing for us is to support Afghanistan in building its institutions of government, not just at the central level but, very importantly, at the regional level, because Afghanistan has never in its whole history had a strong central government. It has had strong regional centres. We work very much at that level and will work increasingly at the local level as well.

Then there is this basic issue of what Afghanistan's economy is going to look like and how to support the livelihoods of small farmers. And yes, we are engaged at

that most basic level as well. I think where Afghanistan really does need help and support is with infrastructure investment. I hope that big companies in the global South and governments in the global South who invest in development support that. That can be a priority because Afghanistan lacks energy and lacks basic quality transport infrastructure. That is going to be critical for addressing issues such as getting agricultural produce to market.

**M. Kim:**

Just one more question and that is it because we have indeed run out of time.

**P. Frolov:**

My name is Pavel Frolov, I am an IT entrepreneur. What do you think about the institution of the family? Do we need to strengthen it or destroy it? If we want to keep the institution of the family, my question concerns democratic representation: should the vote of a family man really be equivalent to that of a single person in the decision-making process?

**H. Clark:**

I think family is extremely important, but I think our notion of what defines a family is changing. In my own society, I suppose a family was always seen as a mother, a father, and children. That is no longer the case.

**M. Kim:**

Not a parent 'A' and a parent 'B'.

**H. Clark:**

No, a mother and a father, and children, but that is changing. A family nowadays may be a mother and children with the father elsewhere. It could be a father and children with the mother elsewhere. It could be a grandmother and grandchildren. But whatever the structure, which I think is very fluid, I think we have to hang on to

this concept of family and belonging as a very basic unit of society, and one that important to people. Their relationships are important to one another. I would say, however, to not try to define family too precisely, because the family is a very dynamic structure now in so many societies.

**M. Kim:**

But it should still exist. Family has a value.

**H. Clark:**

Yes. I think family is extremely important. Yes, family has value, but people have different sorts of families. I, myself, do not have children. I do have a 91-year-old father, I have a husband, I have nieces, I have sisters, I have nephews. This is very important to me.

**M. Kim:**

To return to a part of this question: does the voice of single people have the same influence and power as voices representing families?

**H. Clark:**

Well, ideally, it should have. I guess family advocacy is often around the importance of supporting children for the future, and consequently that gets more voice than perhaps the needs of the single person. Yet the single person's needs can be quite acute. If a single person is not supported, for example, by others in a family, they can be more vulnerable when unemployed, more vulnerable when sick, more vulnerable in old age. I think it is very important to advocate for the single person and their needs as well.

**M. Kim:**

Thank you kindly for participating in this discussion. And thank you again to Ms. Helen Clark.