



LAUNCH OF THE SECOND SEMI-ANNUAL MUNK DEBATE

Actress Mia Farrow and former Canadian general Rick Hillier gather with other notables to debate the merits and pitfalls of humanitarian interventions

Debate proceedings broadcast live in Cineplex theatres across Canada

November 3, 2008 – Peter and Melanie Munk announced today the resolution and presenters for the second semi-annual Munk Debates to be held in Toronto on Monday, December 1st and broadcast live in Cineplex theatres across Canada.

In a world of failed and failing states the December 1st Munk Debate will focus on the merits and pitfalls of humanitarian interventions. The resolution: “Be it resolved that if countries such as Sudan, Zimbabwe and Burma will not end their man-made humanitarian crises, the international community should.”

Arguing for the resolution is **Mia Farrow**, an award winning actress and one of the most vocal and high profile proponents of stopping man-made humanitarian crises. She will be joined by **Gareth Evans**, CEO of the International Crisis Group. Mr. Evans served as Australia’s Foreign Affairs Minister from 1988 to 1996 and spearheaded the creation of the Responsibility to Protect doctrine at the U.N.

Speaking against the resolution is **Rick Hillier**, the former Chief of the Defence Staff and one of Canada’s most outspoken military leaders. He will be joined by **John Bolton**, whom *The Economist* has called "the most controversial Ambassador ever sent by America to the UN." Mr. Bolton is an active participant in major international policy debates including the Responsibility to Protect doctrine.

“With Barack Obama’s all but certain victory tomorrow the issue of humanitarian intervention is set to come roaring back to the centre stage of American and Canadian foreign policy debates,” said Rudyard Griffiths, Co-Director of the Munk Debates. Griffiths added: “Our December 1st debate will dissect the merits and pitfalls of the view expressed by Barack Obama, and other leaders and nations, that the international community has an overriding moral responsibility to stop genocides in Africa and elsewhere, including through the use of military force.”

In an era where political spin and public grandstanding are fast displacing serious discussion about the challenges facing Canada and the world, the Munk Debates aims to provide a lively and substantive forum for leading thinkers to discuss the pressing issues of our time. Two debates are held each year, one in the spring and one in the fall. The inaugural debate on the impact of the U.S. election on international affairs took place in Toronto on Monday, May 26, 2008.

(over...)

The Munk Debates is a signature initiative of the Aurea Foundation, a charitable organization founded in 2006 by Peter and Melanie Munk to support Canadian institutions involved in the study and development of public policy.

“Our philanthropy is aimed primarily at improving the quality and vitality of public debate in Canada,” said Peter Munk, speaking about the rationale for the Munk Debates. “Whether it is the support we provide to the Munk Centre for International Studies at the University of Toronto or the creation of the Munk Debates through our new Aurea Foundation, Melanie and I are committed to broadening public knowledge, education and informed discourse,” Mr. Munk added.

A national survey conducted by Ipsos-Reid for the Munk Debates revealed that fully three out of every four Canadians (77 percent) are concerned about the one-sidedness of public debate in Canada today. Fully eight in ten (79 percent) feel that as a people Canadians are “too reserved” when it comes to debating issues. On a more positive note, eight out of ten Canadians (83 percent) enjoy being exposed to people and ideas that challenge the way they look at the world.

The Munk Debates are open to the public. The humanitarian intervention debate will take place on Monday, December 1, 2008 at the Royal Ontario Museum (100 Queen’s Park, Toronto) at 6:45 p.m. with a free public reception to follow. The entire debate proceedings will also be broadcast live in high definition video in Cineplex theatres in the following cities: Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, London (Ontario), Oakville, Toronto, Richmond Hill, Kingston, and Ottawa.

Tickets to the ROM debate are \$30 each and can be purchased online at www.munkdebates.com. Seating is limited. Tickets to the Cineplex theatre live broadcasts are \$14.95 and can be purchased online at www.cineplex.com.

For more information on the Munk Debates including biographical notes for presenters appearing at the December debate and past debate proceedings visit: <http://www.munkdebates.com/media/>

Contact:

Rudyard Griffiths
Co-Organiser
Munk Debates

rudyard@munkdebates.com
(416) 737 9626