



FOURTEENTH SEMI-ANNUAL MUNK DEBATE ANNOUNCED

IS OBAMA'S FOREIGN POLICY EMBOLDENING OUR ENEMIES?

—Robert Kagan, Bret Stephens, Anne-Marie Slaughter, and Fareed Zakaria convene in Toronto, Canada, to debate Barack Obama's foreign policy—

September 17, 2014 – Toronto, Canada

The Munk Debates announced today the resolution and debaters for the fourteenth semi-annual event, to be held in Toronto on Wednesday, November 5, 2014. To encourage public discussion of the debate of the moment, the autumn 2014 Munk Debate will move the motion: ***Be it resolved Obama's foreign policy is emboldening our enemies and making the world a more dangerous place.***

From Ukraine to the Middle East to China, the United States is redefining its role in international affairs. Alliance building, public diplomacy, and eschewing traditional warfare in favour of the focused use of hard power such as drones and special forces are all hallmarks of the so-called Obama Doctrine. Is this a farsighted foreign policy for the United States and the world in the 21st century – one that acknowledges and embraces the increasing diffusion of power among states and non-state actors? Or, is an America “leading from behind” a boon for the nations and blocs who want to roll back economic globalization, international law, and the spread of democracy and human rights?

Arguing **for the resolution** will be **Bret Stephens**, deputy editorial page editor for the international opinion pages of *The Wall Street Journal* and 2013 Pulitzer Prize recipient for Distinguished Commentary. He will be joined by one of America's most influential proponents of a proactive role for the U.S. in world affairs, **Robert Kagan**, a senior fellow of Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution's Center on the United States and Europe.

Speaking **against the resolution** will be **Fareed Zakaria**, host of CNN's flagship global affairs program, Fareed Zakaria GPS and editor-at-large of *TIME* magazine. Zakaria will be joined by **Anne-Marie Slaughter**, the President of the New America Foundation, one of America's top international affairs think tanks, and the Director of Policy Planning for the U.S. State Department from 2009 to 2011.

Rudyard Griffiths, director and moderator of the Munk Debates, comments: “This is the geopolitical debate of the moment. Is the foreign policy of this President to blame for the upheavals we are witnessing in the Middle East, Ukraine, and in the balance of power with Russia and China? Or are these events and trends the results of larger geopolitical shifts and forces which are outside any one nation, or any one president’s control?”

The Munk Debates offer a lively and substantive forum for leading thinkers to discuss the pressing issues of our time. Two debates are held each year in Toronto, one in the spring and one in the fall. Previous Munk Debate participants include former British prime minister Tony Blair, Henry Kissinger, Christopher Hitchens, Paul Krugman, Lawrence Summers, Dambisa Moyo, UN Special Envoy for HIV AIDS Stephen Lewis, Mia Farrow, and Glenn Greenwald.

The Munk Debates is a signature initiative of the Aurea Foundation, 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 School at the University of Toronto or the creation of the Munk Debates through our Aurea Foundation, Melanie and I are committed to broadening public knowledge, education, and informed discourse.”

The Munk Debates are open to the public. The Debate on Obama’s Foreign Policy will take place in Toronto at Roy Thomson Hall on **Wednesday, November 5, 2014** at 7:00 pm EST. **Tickets go on sale to Munk Debate Premium Members at 10:00 AM on Tuesday, September 23. Any remaining tickets will go on sale to the public at 12:00 NOON on Thursday, September 25.** For information on purchasing tickets, or premium membership, please visit www.munkdebates.com. Seating is limited.

The debate will also be broadcast live over the Internet for global viewing audiences. For more information on the livestream of the Munk Debate on Obama’s Foreign Policy visit www.munkdebates.com

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