



LIU INSTITUTE
FOR ASIA & ASIAN STUDIES

2018 ASIA LEADERSHIP FORUM


Ban Ki-moon

Eighth United Nations Secretary-General
Keynote Address and Response



UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME

KEOUGH SCHOOL OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS



On the cover:
Ban Ki-moon and
his wife, Madam
Yoo Soon-taek,
light candles at
the Grotto at
the University of
Notre Dame.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

All 350 tickets were claimed immediately for Ban Ki-moon's lecture at the Liu Institute's Asia Leadership Forum on September 12, 2018. Even if this wasn't completely surprising, it was gratifying to see the excitement across campus and beyond for the eighth secretary-general of the United Nations. To fill the Patricia George Decio Theatre at the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center was an important success for the Liu Institute in our mission to educate about Asia.

The day was also successful in a different sense. Before his lecture Ban took time to meet with students, including some from South Korea. He was so warm and invested in the conversation that it ran late, throwing off his carefully coordinated schedule. Ultimately, this didn't matter.

What mattered was that a young South Korean woman later told us that many of her countrymen and women consider Ban the most influential person from their country. As such, spending time with him was one of the most significant and inspiring moments of her life. And to have met Ban in South Bend, and not Seoul, was almost beyond belief.

Just as Ban inspired this young woman, his words and presence on campus made an impact on everyone who met or heard him. We are honored to present the full text of his keynote lecture in this publication as a reminder of his important message. Additionally, we are grateful to international policy expert Sara Sievers, a professor of the practice at the Keough School of Global Affairs, for sharing an eloquent and honest response essay that highlights the importance of Ban's work and the urgency of carrying it forward as global citizens.

Michel Hockx

Director, Liu Institute for Asia and Asian Studies



Ban Ki-moon and his wife, Yoo Soon-taek, meet with students before the Asia Leadership Forum.



Ban and Yoo meet with the Liu family, the benefactors of the Liu Institute. From left: Clinton Foy, Emily Liu Foy, Yoo, Ban, Mimi Liu, Robert Liu, Elaine Chok, and Justin Liu.



Ban Ki-moon
with Rev. John I.
Jenkins, C.S.C.,
the president of
the University of
Notre Dame.

A citizen of South Korea, Ban Ki-moon served as eighth United Nations secretary-general from 2007 to 2016. He was the first East Asian elected to the UN's top role. Ban attributed his interest in international cooperation to turbulent life experiences. "I grew up in war and saw the United Nations help my country to recover and rebuild," he has said. "That experience was a big part of what led me to pursue a career in public service."

Born in 1944 in a small farming village in South Korea, Ban received a bachelor's degree in international relations from Seoul National University in 1970. In 1985, he earned a master's degree in public administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Ban continues his humanitarian efforts through the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens, established with former Austrian president Heinz Fischer in 2018. Working within the framework of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, the Vienna-based center aims to empower youth and women.

THE UNITED NATIONS AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C, President of the University of Notre Dame; Mr. R. Scott Appleby, Marilyn Keough Dean at the University of Notre Dame; Dear Students, Faculty Members, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honor and privilege to deliver this keynote speech here today at the University of Notre Dame's Third Asia Leadership Forum.

This is one of the most celebrated institutions of higher learning in the US, and one rooted in the strong Catholic tradition of pursuing teaching and research focused on the common good.

I am very excited to be here on this beautiful campus. This is such a special and inspiring American university. Indeed, Notre Dame's history, academics, culture, and legendary football team are all well known around the world, including in Korea. "Cheer, cheer for old Notre Dame!"

My deepest gratitude goes to Father John I. Jenkins and Dean R. Scott Appleby for inviting me to address you as part of the third Asia Leadership Forum.

I take this opportunity to commend the vision and leadership of the University of Notre Dame for harnessing its academic resources and guiding Catholic tradition into a strong commitment to global engagement and service.

I also applaud the Liu Institute for Asia and Asian Studies for its impressive scholarship and programming in integrated and multidisciplinary research and teaching on Asia. Alongside the other institutes within the Keough School of Global Affairs, your work is particularly timely at this critical juncture for Asia, for our world, and for our collective future.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our world is going through pronounced changes, and this is resulting in elevated uncertainties and new risks.

Tariffs and protectionism are threatening free trade, conflicts between the US and its traditional allies such as Canada are growing, and US trade wars with China and the EU are expanding.

Our climate is changing as well, and this is bringing dire risks to our ailing planet.

At the same time, new technologies are altering how we communicate, live, and work. Sweeping advances in the fields of AI, blockchain, biotechnology, and robotics will alter the future of our countries, cities, businesses, and interpersonal relationships.

Under this backdrop of waning internationalism and dizzying change, we must continue to work together through expanded partnerships and cooperation. We must also forge ahead through a driving commitment to global citizenship to help cope with these seemingly insurmountable challenges.

However, despite these challenges, we have made progress in key areas, and I am confident that we also have invaluable opportunities to change the world for the better.

Much of this progress is grounded in the power of partnerships and cooperation to achieve our development and climate goals. And much of this hope is driven by my belief in education, youth empowerment, and action.

Therefore, I firmly believe that we must remain committed to our international system anchored in multilateral institutions such as the United Nations.

During my ten-year tenure as United Nations secretary-general, I strived to execute my global leadership duties by leveraging the power of partnerships. This is important since the UN and its member states can no longer bear these responsibilities alone in our rapidly changing world.

Today, I will speak to you about how we can advance and also flourish in this era of increased global uncertainty and insecurity. We can achieve this goal through sound policies, the power of cooperation and partnerships, and a driving sense of global citizenship.

But we must all play our part in this process, particularly young people such as you and leading academic institutions such as Notre Dame, if we are to succeed in creating a better world for all.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have taken significant leaps forward in the field of global development in recent years. Extreme poverty rates were cut in half by 2010. This represents over one billion people and is truly an



After his keynote address, Ban answered questions moderated by Sara Sievers (center), global affairs associate professor of the practice, and John Hewko, general secretary of Rotary International.

incredible achievement. During this period, the under-five mortality rate has been halved and rates of maternal deaths have been reduced by 45 percent.

But there is still much work to be done. Nearly 10 percent of the world's workers and their families still live on less than \$1.90 a day. Over six million children perish each year before they reach their fifth birthday.

During my two terms as UN secretary-general, I am proud to have prioritized and expanded the importance of the organization's global development efforts.

The 2030 agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are one of the UN's most significant achievements. Adopted by 193 countries in New York in 2015, the SDGs offer us a way forward to confront the most critical issues of our time. These include poverty, education, inequality, climate change, public health, and gender equality.

However, three years after the SDGs were adopted, progress remains uneven and some sectors and geographic areas are moving faster than others.

Educational institutions and research centers are essential partners in our quest to achieve the SDGs. They serve as launchpads for new ideas and incubators to forge solutions to the seemingly insurmountable problems that we face.

In this connection, I am pleased to see that the Notre Dame Initiative for Global Development* (NDIGD) fits seamlessly into this paradigm.

Indeed, NDIGD synergizes important partnerships, monitoring, evaluation, and training alongside Notre Dame's overarching commitment to the common good to aid the UN's sustainable development efforts.

Similarly, the Keough School of Global Affairs' faculty research initiative "Toward Goal 16," which furthers cross-disciplinary work on SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, exemplifies Notre Dame's dedication to leveraging its expertise in pursuit of the UN's SDGs.

Such partnership initiatives can facilitate the transfer of knowledge, advance critical research, and help instill a driving sense of sustainability in the global citizens of both today and tomorrow.

I would also like to highlight the prominent work of Notre Dame's Center for Ethics and Religious Values in Business and Rev. Oliver Williams, C.S.C., in promoting business ethics in line with the UN Global Compact.

Notre Dame's efforts to this end are a shining example of the power of partnerships in action. But we must maintain our forward momentum, together.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Climate change is altering the character of our planet and creating dire risks and instability. From record-breaking heat waves and wildfires to hurricanes and flooding of historic intensity, climate change is no longer a debate. It is clearly here right now.

Here in Indiana, a warming planet could render this scenic state starkly different in the coming years. Hotter summers and volatile rainfall and flooding could upend the state's \$31-billion-a-year agriculture industry and the livelihoods of its proud farmers.

Extreme weather conditions and a warming climate, if left unchecked, could severely affect crops, livestock, and local ecosystems.

*The Notre Dame Initiative for Global Development was renamed the Pulte Institute for Global Development in November 2019.

The recently released "Indiana Climate Change Impacts Assessment" warned that state temperatures are projected to rise from 5 to 6 degrees by the middle of this century. This could make Indiana's climate feel more like the Deep South rather than the Midwest if we fail to act.

This summer, California has been engulfed in flames and smoke from historic wildfires. So we must immediately take the necessary steps to combat climate change, or these turbulent shifts will continue to bring dangerous scorching heat waves to our cities and rural areas.

With this reality in mind, we must step up our collective efforts to implement the Paris Agreement. The bottom line is that we don't have a plan B, simply because we don't have a planet B either.

The Paris Agreement, signed by 197 countries in 2015, offers us a clear game plan to confront these serious threats to our planet. It sets viable targets to impede rising temperatures, constrict greenhouse gas emissions, and spur climate-resilient development and green growth.

During my time serving as United Nations secretary-general, this was one of my most significant achievements. And I truly believe that the Paris Agreement offers us our best hope to persevere



Ban speaks with Korean language and culture students and professors.

over the serious threats to our ailing planet. But to achieve this goal, we need to keep working together.

However, I must take this opportunity to communicate my deep disappointment regarding the current US government's decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. This isolates the US from literally every other country in the entire world on climate policy. It is scientifically wrong, economically irresponsible, and President Trump will be on the wrong side of history. I greatly hope that this decision is reconsidered and reversed.

There are individual actions we can all take as well, and young people like you can lead these efforts. Don't waste water or electricity. Be aware of your consumption and carbon footprint. Learn more about supply chains and buy sustainable products.

We are all in this together, and we simply must continue our momentum forward, together.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Global citizenship is an important concept that can serve as a unique tool to help solve some of our most pressing challenges and assist us in reaching our global goals.

Global citizens are those who identify themselves not as a member of a nation, but instead as a member of humanity more largely. They are understanding and tolerant of other people and cultures.

They fight for the protection of our planet and human rights. They are committed to service and helping others, including refugees. They build bridges rather than construct walls. They look beyond the narrow prism of national and personal interests and work for a better world.

And to establish long-term solutions, we need inclusive and participatory action from young global citizens as an essential ingredient to leverage the great potential of partnerships that I spoke of earlier.

So for these reasons, I've been trying my best to help elevate global citizenship as a driving vision for young people around the world.

In this regard, I am proud to inform you that I recently launched the Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens to continue my work as UN secretary-general and help forge a brighter future for the next generation.

Based in Vienna, Austria, the Centre aims to help provide young people and women with a greater say in their own destiny, as well as a greater stake in their own dignity.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Please allow me to conclude my remarks by saying that despite the challenges we currently face, if we join together in strong partnerships and move forward as global citizens, we can achieve our global goals and create a brighter future for all.

But to do this, I humbly ask you to harness your vision, studies, and work to prioritize global action. Look outside your immediate surroundings, your state, and your country. Think beyond yourselves. We need to ensure that the global goals are local business—here in Indiana, in Asia, and beyond.

I will leave you with the eloquent words of Pope Francis who, in his encyclical *Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home*, said: "We require a new and universal solidarity... We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and that being good and decent are worth it."

So please, work hard in your life and future careers, heeding these resonant words alongside a driving outlook rooted in global citizenship. Include the excluded and act with both passion and compassion to help humanity, and our planet, move forward.

I have no doubt that you can change the world. Let us work together for a better world for all.

I thank you for your attention.



Sara Sievers, global affairs associate professor of the practice, joined the Keough School at the University of Notre Dame after serving as the founding executive director of Columbia University's Center for Globalization and Sustainable Development and Harvard University's Center for International Development. She also began the Developing Country Policy and Advocacy portfolio for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's Global Health Program.

She has taught applied international development at the Kennedy School at Harvard University as well as at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs.

Sievers earned a BA in government from Harvard and an MBA from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP: THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL WORLD OF BAN KI-MOON

RESPONSE

In downtown Boston across from Symphony Hall on the grounds of the "Mother Church" of the Church of Christ, Scientist—familiarily known as the Christian Science Church—sits a room with a unique view of the world.

The Mapparium, as it is known, is a giant, three-story globe built with 608 panels of stained glass. Constructed by the architect Chester Lindsay Churchill at the peak of the Great Depression, the Mapparium was meant to serve as "a symbol of global outreach." Small groups of visitors walk *inside* this glass world, gazing around them—as if from the earth's core—at the oceans, countries, and continents that we call home, or did in 1935. The vastness of Asia, remoteness of Antarctica, and sheer volume of water and oceans reflect back with unexpected effect. We do, after all, think we know what the world looks like. Yet being surrounded by our planet, even in this miniature form, inspires awe and reminds us that our responsibility not to break the glass is a sacred one.

Listening to the eighth United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon speak at Notre Dame about what it means to be a global citizen, one can't help but wonder whether his impassioned pleas for peace and humanity don't emanate from a similar place. As someone who has lived at the figurative core of the earth for most of his career, eventually entrusted by the countries of the world to be the closest thing we have to our collective global leader, Mr. Ban's perspective is unique to him and a very few others. For this reason alone, when Mr. Ban speaks, as the old advertisement goes, people listen. And if we don't, we should.

Like everyone on the planet's surface, Ban Ki-moon started life as a child, in his case in 1944 in the midst of the Korean War—an experience he presents as formative for his own work, both in pursuit of peace and in dedication to the United Nations. In an intensely personal reflection, he recalled that the blue UN flag brought him hope in his youth, even when surrounded by the frightening realities of

poverty and conflict. Decades after his youth, as he spoke to UN staff on the eve of his departure as secretary-general, Mr. Ban described his four guiding principles:

First, to set priorities and stay focused.

Second, to never give up.

Third, to keep the focus on people.

Fourth, to stand up for those who are left behind. ("Remarks at Final Farewell")

He then described himself as someone who "will always proudly carry the title of global citizen."

What does he mean by global citizenship specifically? Is it all platitudes and warm glow? Mr. Ban gives us his answers and then encourages us to find our own.

SPECIFICS START WITH THE SDGS

Perhaps not surprisingly, Mr. Ban's comprehensive view of a global citizen, about which he speaks frequently at gatherings around the world, rarely fails to mention the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the adoption of which shines as a hallmark of his tenure as secretary-general. These seventeen anti-poverty, pro-planet goals were painstakingly negotiated over a number of years with the full weight of his office behind them. They take over where the Millennium Development Goals built by his predecessor left off and cover an expansive range of issues—from eliminating absolute poverty to safeguarding the oceans and seas; from eliminating preventable disease and death, particularly among children, to preservation of cultural and religious heritage; from good governance to universal primary and secondary education. If agreement on the goals was a diplomatic challenge, all the more remarkable was Secretary-General Ban's ability to secure their formal adoption by the 2015 UN General Assembly membership, which saw all seventeen goals passed by every UN Member State, including a special endorsement in a major opening speech delivered by Pope Francis:

The dramatic reality of this whole situation of exclusion and inequality, with its evident effects, has led me, in union with the entire Christian people and many others, to take stock of my grave responsibility in this regard and to speak out, together with all those who are seeking urgently needed and effective solutions. The adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* at the World Summit, which opens today, is an important sign of hope. ("Meeting with the Members")

Indeed, less than a year after his UN speech, Pope Francis established the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, a Catholic interpretation of the principles articulated in the SDGs. This early example of a UN Member State "nationalizing" the SDGs, interestingly in a city-state with unique global reach, proved a perfect place for Ban Ki-moon's global citizen movement, and Pope Francis an ideal partner for global good.

COMBINING GLOBAL VISION WITH COMPASSIONATE LEADERSHIP

As the world of global citizens has moved *en masse* to adopt and implement portions of the SDGs, Mr. Ban has continued to call for leaders to look beyond their national and immediate interests and instead demonstrate what he calls a "passion blended with compassion." In a speech at the European Forum Alpbach in August 2019, he noted, "During my time at the United Nations for ten years, I have met numerous numbers of leaders, mostly political leaders, but I have not seen many global leaders" ("Promoting the SDGs").

What does he think a global leader looks like? Someone who looks beyond national boundaries to the broader world. Someone who understands and accepts other cultures, beliefs, and people. Someone who thinks about humankind and its impact on each other and the planet. Mr. Ban calls for world leaders to combine their own far-reaching global vision with compassionate leadership. In the end, he asks global leaders to ask themselves the simple question, "What can you do for others?" ("Promoting the SDGs")

Not to be outdone by a fellow global citizen in Pope Francis, Ban Ki-moon established an institution of his own dedicated to the subject. The Ban Ki-moon Centre for Global Citizens was established in January 2018 in partnership with Heinz Fischer, former president of Austria. Its mandate is to create and empower global citizens with leadership and advocacy skills in pursuit of the principles articulated in the SDGs, which act as the Centre's framework. Through online courses, annual gatherings, targeted programs, and a range of other investments, the institution seeks, as Ban states, people to

"Be inspired to go out in the world and to work not only for the betterment of your own country, but the betterment of humankind. Be a global citizen. Act with passion and compassion. Help us to make the world safer and more sustainable today and for the generations that will follow. That is our moral responsibility." (Ban Ki-moon Centre)

POVERTY: BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING

"We are the first generation that can end poverty."

Ban Ki-moon, "Remarks upon Receiving Honorary Degree from Catholic University of Leuven"

Armed with the full spectrum of possibilities, where within the SDGs—or outside them—does an individual aspiring to global citizenship begin to act? SDG 1: "Poverty in All Its Forms Everywhere" seems appropriate—a first, as it were, among equals. In the search for social justice, peace, equity, equality, freedom, or whatever other principle of merit you prefer, the absence of poverty is a *sine qua non*. Amidst the barrage of injustice the world has to offer, the simple truth of poverty and its effects can be all too easily underrated, at least by those for whom it is not a daily burden. We know. We cringe. We forget.

What do we even mean by poverty? At the World Bank, the benchmark is \$1.90 per day, something the UN's numbers ascribe to approximately 10 percent of the global population. In its simplest form, however, absolute poverty is being too poor to dependably survive. Whether it is vulnerability to disease, climate change, violence, hunger, natural disaster, micronutrient deficiency, or any one of a number of other global challenges, poverty, with razor-like precision, identifies who to sacrifice first.

Examples about health and hunger are too common to cite, but the principle also holds true in unexpected ways. Studies show that natural disasters disproportionately affect lower- and middle-income countries more than higher-income countries in terms of death or economic hardship, even if the storms, earthquakes, or tsunamis in high-income countries are of stronger force (Ritchie and Roser). How often in today's news do we hear about unnamed "villagers" being victims of terror or war in Yemen, Congo, Nigeria, or Myanmar? Death tolls in the hundreds of thousands don't register as global emergencies—or even real urgencies. Perhaps the distance is geographical, or cultural, but would a similar loss of remote, diverse, *high-income life* in, say, Japan, Brazil, Russia, or Australia, be as reliably tolerated?

By historical standards, of course, poverty is at unprecedentedly low levels. Climate scientist Michael Mann's famous "hockey stick" graph—which places world history on the x-axis and any one of a number of virtues, including income levels, on the y—tells a great story. Using economist Angus Maddison's famed historical gross domestic product (GDP) data, the graph shows 99 percent of the world's people lived under a US dollar a day from the dawn of time until 1820 (Tables HS-8), when the relevant part of the hockey stick shoots upward. By 2018, gross world product (GWP) had shot up to a reported \$80 trillion, which many regard as an underestimate. In per capita terms, that's about \$17,000.

China and India alone are credited with helping the world achieve the widely regarded success of the first Millennium Development Goal—2000–2015 predecessor to SDG 1—cutting absolute poverty in half (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs). Extreme poverty rates in East Asia fell from 61 percent in 1990 to 4 percent in 2015, and in South Asia, extreme poverty dropped from 52 percent to 17 percent. With a combined population of 2.7 billion people, the Asian giants' impact on this progress alone is breathtaking and worthy of pause and applause.

Still, as the presence of SDG 1 suggests, in many other countries, notably in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as in large sub-populations in middle-income countries such as Bangladesh and Brazil, extreme poverty persists. This abject poverty may now be the exception, when historically it was the norm. But in moral terms, this is of little consolation. In fact, in moral terms the inequality the global community allows to persist is all the more violent when it is a choice gifted by the world's abundance. As the philosopher John Rawls' "veil of ignorance" suggests, a just society is one in which an individual would choose to live without knowing in advance where one's place within it would be.

The immense wealth created since 1820 and accelerated in the post-war era provides, for the first time in human history, the technical means to achieve SDG 1. Joy and love can surely be found in all corners of the world where human beings live with one another and family bonds form amidst the beauty of nature, a faith in goodness, and a shining sun. But don't be fooled. All of that in no way lessens or excuses the violence the global community chooses to allow in the form of absolute poverty, which remains a stain of immeasurable proportion on our collective humanity.

WOMEN AND YOUTH

"As I said last week to the General Assembly—and the world—I am proud to call myself a feminist."

Ban Ki-moon, "Remarks at High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment"

As with absolute poverty, gender inequality is so embedded in world history, religions, economies, politics, and cultures that facing its multi-pronged spears in and of itself often proves radioactive. It's easier to ignore or attribute to a consequence of God's will or culture the facts that women are poorer and hungrier than men and hold a minority of the world's wealth, political offices, and religious leadership positions, to name just a few facts. Women earn less than men virtually everywhere, with German women earning 62 cents for every dollar earned by men, and Bangladeshi women earning only 12 cents. The list is long enough to fill an entire report and beyond.

Encouragingly, education disparities mark a new and notable high point. With some important exceptions, gender parity is largely achieved in primary school, and 60 countries have more young women than men in universities. However, improvements in knowledge without commensurate opportunities and rights fail to achieve the justice that proponents of gender equity seek.

Women's rights to make decisions about their bodies and lives remain hotly debated issues across most of the world and remain perhaps the most stubborn challenge that Mr. Ban hints his global citizens should address. Embedded deeply into beliefs across religions and cultures, the role of women and the legal privileges to which women are entitled remain an open debate. This has implications across the board and, as with so much, the impacts of inaction on the most vulnerable mean that consequences hit with the most vicious precision.

In one particularly poignant example, the WHO recommendation of a three-year spacing between births triggers many of these questions of rights. Lack of availability of modern contraception to achieve the WHO recommendation dramatically raises the risk of maternal *and infant* mortality and morbidity (World Health Organization, Human Reproduction Program). How high the risk depends on a combination of the poverty level and health care services experienced by the mother, but conservative estimates point toward easily tens and more likely hundreds of thousands of preventable infant deaths among the poorest annually. Various studies from the state of Ohio and data from the US Secretary of Defense capture a statistically significant effect among American women as well.

Little wonder, then, that Mr. Ban calls gender equality the "greatest human rights challenge of our time," and places the dignity of women—as we ourselves define it—atop his priority list as a global citizen.

CLIMATE CHANGE

"We urgently need more resources, more collaboration and more political will to make adaptation a global priority."

Ban Ki-moon, "These 5 Big Changes Are Key for Humanity to Survive a Warming Climate"

With so much known and even more said on the subject of climate change, listing it again as a concern of the global citizen seems almost anticlimactic (pun intended). Yet, given the threat it poses to our shared humanity, and its full planetary scope, no description of a global citizen can afford its omission. In a course I teach at Notre Dame, we ask students to rank the top ten global

problems each week. Speakers come and go, and the lists fluctuate in many ways over the course of the term, but invariably climate change takes top billing vote after vote. It is the existential threat of our time, truly a global challenge that can't be addressed in an adequate way without interested global citizens leading the way. Taking as given the evidence of climate change's cataclysmic potential, perhaps a silver lining is precisely this inherent "global-ness" of the challenge. Is this the way global citizens can be created, multiplied, and organized into action?

The 2019 global climate strikes that Greta Thunberg inspired (it is still worth remembering she was 16) demonstrated an activism that offers a hint of hope. Over 2,500 events in more than 163 countries drew four million demonstrators, mainly youth, on all seven continents. This is what global citizenship looks like. Climate change, by virtue of its existential nature, appears to be doing by demand what advocates have found hard to supply: a unifying cause for young global citizens. The *New York Times* reported that in its city alone, 1.1 million public school students were given permission by their schools to participate. The 2019 strikes did not happen in isolation, but rather as a continuation of many major demonstrations in New York, Paris, London, and across the world. While only the sliver of silver linings, this persistent and growing climate activism—still in its relatively early stages—may yet prove the foundations of a broader movement for more issues of relevance to the planet. Time, and our own decisions, will tell.

MEASURING RESULTS

However optimistic and idealistic global citizens might be in attacking the world's greatest inequities, we know that in the end it is the results that matter. While the world of sustainable development has been moving toward increasing measurement precision, it remains a crucial differentiating tool that should continue to see innovation and investment. Technocrats will debate, as they should, methodologies and data quality, but no one can seriously question the critical role that good information and unbiased evidence play in the toolkit of the global citizen. Bill Gates, for example, created a whole institute called Performance Monitoring for Action that is dedicated to improving the measurement of global health outcomes.

Just as "teaching to the test" is inconsistent with effectiveness, blind idealism without the rigor of knowledge is not known to reduce child mortality overmuch, for example. On one end of the spectrum, Esther Duflo, Abhijit Banerjee, and Michael Kremer won the Nobel Prize in Economics for their contributions in adding field research and randomized control trials to the "what works" toolkit. On the other end, Angus Deaton won the same prize a few years earlier for arguing that

broader relevance valid to multiple situations requires a broader toolkit. Either way, the UN has joined this quiet revolution and created a complex network of hundreds of researchers across the world to look into the questions of theory and global best practices and evaluation methods for measuring indicators of success.

A COMPETING VISION

Not everyone agrees with Mr. Ban's vision for the world, and many find it unrealistic, perhaps even a little naive. Some even blame the institution he led. In his 2019 *Foreign Affairs* article "The Broken Bargain: How Nationalism Came Back," Columbia University political science professor Jack Snyder argues that we are seeing a deterioration of the "embedded liberalism" of the US-led postwar order, which was characterized by managing national and global interests through a network of international governmental institutions, such as the IMF, World Bank, WTO, EU, and, most importantly, the UN itself. The governance of these very international institutions played a role in their own disempowerment as a lack of accountability to democratic politics has allowed them to veer off course, he argues, and the balance between national accountability and global cooperation gulfed wide, thus creating the conditions for a resurgence of nationalism to emerge. How are global institutions held to account by global citizens? It is hard to find proponents providing compelling answers or even articulating any conceptual failing.

Whether or not one agrees with this critique and the partial UN responsibility it implies, undoubtedly, across the globe, Ban Ki-moon's vision is under attack as nationalism stages a ferocious comeback. In Europe, both Austria and Hungary saw recent national elections with far-right nativist parties securing nearly half the vote. Switzerland's Swiss People's Party, Denmark's Danish People's Party, and Belgium's New Flemish Alliance all made strong showings for the vote in each country's latest election. One need only read the names to identify which "people" these voters seek to support. Even famously high-scoring-in-happiness Finland saw nearly 18 percent support for the Finns Party, not the family next door. Backsliding toward authoritarianism in Brazil, Turkey, and other important emerging markets is regular front-page news, while countries without the pretense of democracy—such as China and more recently Russia—are seeing their leaders use nativist jingoism as they install themselves in their positions for life.

This leads us, painfully, to the United States. What was once the heart and soul of the international liberal world order, a partial vision of which lies at the heart of the philosophy and institutions advocated so passionately by Mr. Ban, is now a nation at odds with itself. It is a superpower unable

to decide how tribal to be, a bizarre conundrum for a nation of overwhelmingly immigrant stock from likely every country and corner of the world.

If there ever was a place well-positioned to embody global citizenship, it would look a lot like the United States, at least as far as demographics go. A study of the US census shows the remarkably diverse ethnic heritages that comprise the United States ("People Reporting Ancestry"). Nearly 50 million Americans are of German origin, the largest ancestral group, followed by more than 41 million Americans who trace their heritage to sub-Saharan Africa. Ireland provides another 35 million, and nearly 32 million are descendants from Mexico. Language and political history notwithstanding, the US has only 27 million of English descent, followed by Italian (17.5 million), Polish (9.7 million), French (9.1 million), and beyond. Notably, 20 million people simply claim they are Americans, understood to represent indigenous peoples. India, China, the Philippines, Ukraine, Korea, Japan—the list includes millions of people from hundreds of countries, which means there are Americans whose families still care about their families living in all corners of the earth. In an idealist's world, or perhaps just one of someone who loves their family, this should provide ideal conditions for leading a rise to a citizenry of global citizens.

And yet, the voices that at times seem loudest these days sound quite the opposite. America First, white nationalism, anti-Islam, anti-immigrant, and other forms of nativist diatribe drown out the calls for Mr. Ban's "passionate compassion" in numerous corners of the country and among many in halls of power. The Know-Nothings of the 1850s embodied this same spirit 150 years ago, focusing then their ire and bigotry primarily against Irish, Italians, and Catholics. Substitute "Irish/Italian" with "Mexican," and immigrants from this overwhelmingly Catholic country are facing something that looks eerily familiar. Add in anti-Islamic rhetoric, racial profiling, and the ever-present reality of anti-Semitism, and the broader range of targets becomes clear.

The sociology, psychology, and economics that underpin nativism are far too complex to analyze in detail here, and indeed are being openly debated in an attempt to explain its resurgence. Whether driven by social insecurity, deplorable bigotry, creeping ignorance, job loss, technological change, information confusion, or all of the above, philosophies of isolationism and nationalism resonate anew, in the American public and across the world. This poses perhaps the most serious immediate threat to the concept of global citizenship.

While lack of institutional accountability and competing philosophies are surely important dangers to Mr. Ban's call to action, it very well may be the case that simple indifference is the most potent.

Inertia. Lack of imagination. Lack of leadership. Call it what you will, but the power of the present in the face of what's possible is the greatest enemy of progress.

This is where the true genius of the SDGs, and their predecessor MDGs, comes in. They flip the narrative from whether or not it is possible to achieve what many businesses call (with apologies to *Good to Great's* Jim Collins) "Big, Hairy, Audacious Goals" to an assumption that it is not only possible, but our collective global responsibility. Rather than accept the status quo as inevitable, or change as impossible "in the real world," the SDGs spoon-feed those who read them the what, where, why, and how of achieving an unprecedented range of global good. The missing ingredient? Global citizens demanding change in large enough numbers to ensure global leaders comply.

BACK TO THE MAP...PARIUM

Sitting across from Mr. Ban at the Liu Institute's Asia Leadership Forum, I would describe this *homo globalis* citizen not primarily as someone working in support of some combination of things included in the SDGs, however critical that may be. Rather, the power of the concept of a shared humanity is the way Mr. Ban left me and others in the room *feeling* as if we're all in this together, on our glorious blue marble. He invited us to join him inside his metaphorical Mapparium, looking from the inside out onto a world we all share. We can certainly choose to live a two-dimensional life on the surface of one island, country or continent; indeed this is a choice many political, social, and religious leaders argue to great effect at the present confusing, uncertain time. But is that right? Is it kind? Is it wise? Ultimately, is it safe? Ban Ki-moon—and our own history—answer with a resounding "no."

The careful observer will notice that amidst the vastness of the blue stained glass that is the Mapparium's Pacific Ocean lie almost imperceptible islands with the strange-sounding name of Guadalcanal. In 1935 when the Mapparium opened its doors, who could have imagined that a mere seven years later, a lack of Ban Ki-moon's spirit of global citizenship would burn these specks into a conflagration that would kill more people than any conflict in human history and lead to the creation of weapons capable of ending it?

Glass globes are fragile, and so, as Mr. Ban reminds us with living eloquence, is our world.

Become a global citizen, wherever on the planet's surface you live. It will transform your life into three dimensions, and in so doing will create in you a custodian of the glorious planet we all call our home. That is his call to us all.

Listen to him.

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LIU INSTITUTE FOR ASIA & ASIAN STUDIES

2150 Jenkins Nanovic Halls
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, IN 46556

(574) 631-3222
asia@nd.edu
asia.nd.edu



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