



Suite 400 · One Belmont Avenue · Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004 United States · +1 610-668-5488/5489 · Granoff@gsinstitute.org

The Axis of Responsibility

Addressing the Critical Global Issues of the 21st Century

An address by

Jonathan Granoff
President, The Global Security Institute

as Representative of

The International Peace Bureau

to

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Bureau International de la Paix
Internationales Friedensbüro
Oficina Internacional de la Paz

41, rue de Zurich, 1201 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel.: + 41 22 731 64 29, Fax: + 41 22 738 9419
E-mail: mailbox@ipb.org, Web: www.ipb.org

Let us challenge those who aspire to political office:

- 1) What are your plans to address crushing poverty and ensure sustainable livelihoods and productive, just employment?**
 - 2) What are your plans to protect the global commons such as the oceans, the climate, and the rainforests—the living systems upon which all civilization depends?**
 - 3) What are your plans to eliminate nuclear weapons?**
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Axis of Responsibility: Ensuring Our Common Future

Many native peoples wisely made policies holding before themselves a question: How will decisions today affect the next seven generations?

Today, the world is interconnected as never before. It is not only connected presently but decisions made today will have permanent consequences long into the future. If our decisions today are flawed, we cannot say how long the future will last. This is unique in human history. We are the first generation which must ensure consciously and intentionally that we are not the last.

Our most critical challenges require new levels of holistic creative thinking and governance that can integrate local concerns with global responsibility. The dangers that used to threaten just a few now threaten the existence of all. Wisdom to understand the interconnectedness of these dangers is now also required. No longer can we afford to think locally and act globally. Humanity's global footprint must be met with appropriate thinking and policies.

There is an Axis of Responsibility. Three issues require global cooperation, the rule of law, and universal norms. Whether we effectively address crushing poverty, adequately organize ourselves to protect the global commons such as the oceans, the climate, and the rainforest—living systems upon which civilization depends—and eliminate nuclear weapons before they eliminate us, defines whether we pass on a sustainable future.

Successfully addressing the Axis of Responsibility requires new levels of international cooperation. No state, nor even a powerful group of states, can succeed alone. Universal coordinated approaches using our highest values and the arts of law and diplomacy are needed.

Globalization reminds us that we are in fact one human family. The living ecosystem of the planet is our shared home. We would never permit conduct that dishonors our personal homes. Healthy people know that nurturing a family is a crucible of training wherein learning to care for others determines success more effectively than dominating others.

The lesson of the last century is that we cannot find security by attempting to dominate each other, nor by trying to dominate nature. In fact, learning to live in harmony with each other and nature is not an ideal; it is both a moral and practical imperative.

Publics will not empower leaders with the political room required to create necessary changes unless they are made aware. All too often, the media fails to inform the public on important issues. Yet this must not prevent us from engendering the political passion and will to act now. Responsible hope requires clarity of vision and analysis. We must make these global concerns part of domestic and local agendas. By asking the correct questions we can help reframe the public debate.

At the outset, let me thus place before your minds several questions to hold before setting forth the nodes of the Axis of Responsibility: Will we achieve the necessary cooperation in a world with nuclear weapons in the hands of a few? Will we achieve a global security

framework with this nuclear apartheid system? Is our planet secure when the problem for some is what to do with the garbage, and survival for all too many others requires picking through garbage for food? Can civilization be sustained through a global economic order which does not adequately honor the balance and limits of the natural world?

Protecting Global Commons

No nation can be secure when the living systems upon which everyone depends are at risk. Global warming will lead to radical changes in food production and increase the likelihood of disease pandemics. Climate change will cause population displacements leading to instability and conflict. Rainforest destruction—whether in Brazil, Canada, or anywhere—destroys the lungs of the planet and thus the air we all need to breathe. If one country can dump in the oceans, all can dump toxic chemicals and life destroying waste through that country's flag. We must protect the oceans' biodiversity and fishing stocks. This issue is gaining public traction but cannot be addressed in isolation. Is there anyone so naive as to think that global warming will exempt any country from its destructive forces?

In this regard, here are some recommendations:

1. Create an International Environmental Protection Agency
2. Create an International Sustainable Energy Agency to advance non-fossil fuel, safe, clean, renewable energy resources
3. Support the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Plant for the Planet: Billion Tree Campaign
4. Complete negotiations for strengthened legal instruments to protect the climate

Poverty and Sustainable Development

Can we survive a world where vast millions lack a simple glass of clean water? A world where half of the population lives on less than \$2.00 per day cannot be sustained. It is both immoral and impractical to ignore such suffering when we know there are solutions achievable at low cost. The Marshall Plan worked well, helping to build a post-WWII security system with trading partners. The same principles can now be applied between the developed and developing communities. The Millennium Development Goals and the plans developed at the World Summit on Social Development set forth excellent maps. Crushing poverty is an injustice that breeds instabilities and suffering wherein hopelessness turns to terrorism. Immigration becomes a problem because people cannot sustain their families by staying home. The world is now our collective home. We have to make every room in the home hospitable. And again there is traction and public awareness to pursue a sustainable development agenda.

In this regard, here are some recommendations:

1. Fulfill the Millennium Development Goals

2. Convene a Global Marshall Plan Summit
3. Review and reform agricultural subsidy policies of developed nations
4. Declare that there is a human right to water
5. Advance access to micro-credit

Nuclear Disarmament

Security in all its aspects must be redefined as integrated and based on cooperation, engagement, law, and shared interests. We cannot sustain a world where the security for some is valued more than for others. The greatest present disequilibrium in the quest for common security is the persistent existence of nuclear weapons apartheid. There are now over 25,000 nuclear weapons in the world in the hands of only a few countries. Five members of the nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty – US, Russia, UK, France, and China – have pledged to negotiate nuclear disarmament in exchange for all other parties to the treaty restraint from acquiring the weapons. Three states with weapons remain outside the treaty – India, Pakistan and Israel. It is unsustainable for eight nations to try to tell all others that nuclear weapons are legitimate for themselves but not acceptable for others. Nuclear weapons are unworthy of civilization and the only security against their spread and use is their universal, legally verifiable elimination. Every step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons must reduce threats, enhance security, and promote the rule of law. Nuclear weapons themselves are dangerous in anyone's hands, and are themselves more dangerous than any problem they seek to solve. We cannot achieve a nuclear weapons free world overnight, but we can diminish risks and begin the journey today.

Also, the weaponization of space will undermine non-proliferation and disarmament efforts on earth. Cooperative security requires cooperation in ensuring the peaceful uses of outer space.

Without clear commitment to the vision of cooperation, law and disarmament, the inequities of the current order will generate greater instabilities and conflicts. Our choice is a sustainable non-proliferation regime with movement toward disarmament, or an irresponsible ignoring of the inequities thus ever more dangerous efforts to stem proliferation through force and even war. We cannot think the status quo will hold. We must either accept ever more violent counter proliferation efforts or get on with nuclear disarmament. There is insufficient public traction on this axis. We know that we cannot achieve a nuclear weapon-free world overnight, but we can diminish risks and must begin the journey today. The process of disarmament will liberate enormous amounts of resources that will benefit needed development.

In this regard, here are some recommendations:

1. Reaffirm the commitment to nuclear disarmament embodied in the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and expressed in its Review Conferences of 1995 and 2000;
2. Take practical steps that demonstrate that commitment, including:
 - permanently banning nuclear weapon testing through universal ratification of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty

- verifiably banning all future production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons;
- taking all nuclear armed missiles off of hair-trigger, launch-on-warning alert status;
- pledging never to use a nuclear weapon first; and
- undertaking verifiable reductions in every nuclear arsenal, leading to the total universal elimination of these horrific devices.

3. Ensure—by legally binding instruments—that no cities can be targeted with nuclear weapons nor nuclear weapons deployed in or near cities.

4. Advance cooperative security in space and ensure its uses for the common interests of humanity

Conclusion

We must help generate the will to create new initiatives, for the only “coalition of the willing” that can successfully address the problems identified as the Axis of Responsibility is a global coalition of states, organizations, private enterprises and other relevant actors. Global problems require global solutions, not clubs or vigilante groups.

As members of the human family, we are fully aware that today’s choices will dramatically affect those yet to come. We thus ask three powerful questions. We have suggested steps to answer them, but realize that others may have better approaches. But having no coherent approach spells irresponsibility.

For those who understand, for those who care about our future, certainly for Nobel Peace Laureates and Laureate organizations, it is high time that we challenged every significant political candidate with meaningful questions. Thus, it is urged that we collectively and individually ask those aspiring to political office, those individuals who seek to represent the common interest a few basic questions:

1. What are your plans to address crushing poverty and ensure sustainable livelihoods and productive, just employment?
2. What are your plans to protect the global commons such as the oceans, the climate, and the rainforests—the living systems upon which all civilization depends?
3. What are your plans to eliminate nuclear weapons?

If these questions are answered correctly, our responsibilities to future generations will be fulfilled.

Jonathan Granoff, President of the Global Security Institute, is also Co-Chair of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Nuclear Nonproliferation and Senior Advisor to the National Security Committee of the International Law Section of the American Bar Association. He serves on numerous governing and advisory boards including the Global Dialogue Institute, Middle Powers Initiative, Jane Goodall Institute, the Parliamentary Network for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament and the Bipartisan Security Group.

Mr. Granoff is both a Member of the World Wisdom Council and a Fellow of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, and has represented the International Peace Bureau at the Nobel Peace Laureate Summits in Rome every year since 2002.

Jonathan Granoff has lectured worldwide emphasizing the legal, ethical and spiritual dimensions of human development and security, with a specific focus on the threats posed by nuclear weapons. He is an award-winning screenwriter, and has been featured in more than 30 publications.

The International Peace Bureau (IPB) is a Nobel Laureate Organization (1910) composed of 282 member organizations in 70 countries. Together with individual members in a global network, it advances the vision of a World Without War. Thirteen of its officers have been recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Global Security Institute is dedicated to strengthening international cooperation and security based on the rule of law, with a particular focus on nuclear arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. GSI was founded by Senator Alan Cranston whose insight that nuclear weapons are impractical, unacceptably risky, and unworthy of civilization continues to inspire GSI's efforts to contribute to a safer world.

GSI has developed an exceptional team that includes former heads of state and government, distinguished diplomats, effective politicians, committed celebrities, religious leaders, Nobel Peace Laureates, disarmament and legal experts, and concerned citizens.

Philadelphia

1 Belmont Avenue
Suite 400
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004
(t) 610-668-5470
(f) 610-668-5489



New York

Suite 315
675 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017
(t) 646-289-5170
(f) 646-289-5171

www.gsainstitute.org