



INDEPENDENT SECTOR
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Opening Plenary **"A Conversation with Luis Ubiñas"**

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Discussant:

- LUIS UBIÑAS, President, Ford Foundation

Interviewer:

- JOEL FLEISHMAN, Professor, Public Policy and Law; Director, Samuel and Ronnie Heyman Center for Ethics; and Director, Duke Foundation Research Program, Duke University

MR. FLEISHMAN: Good morning, everyone. It is a pleasure to be here. I am honored to be asked to serve this role here at the conference.

We are really fortunate in having with us here the piesta resistance of the next part of the session who is Luis Ubiñas. You know that, the new president of the Ford Foundation. He is not so new. He has been in office for a while, a very impressive guy who was born in New York in the Bronx, worked for most of his career with MacKenzie and Company as a management consultant in which capacity he developed a practice of working with non profit organizations, and it was the effectiveness with which he worked with those organizations that led some of the clients of those organizations to recommend him to the search committee of the Ford Foundation, which is a great way to be recommended.

So it is an honor to be here this morning, and I would like now to introduce and welcome Luis Ubiñas. Where are you?

[Applause.]

MR. FLEISHMAN: Well, good morning, everyone, again, and welcome, Luis.

I pulled out a copy of Luis' first annual report in the Ford Foundation, which has an almost prescient title to it. It is called "The Urgency of Now," and so I thought that we would start off the session, which is what I think probably foremost on everybody's mind, which is the question of how has the turmoil in the financial markets affected your thinking about what Ford should be doing going ahead.

MR. UBIÑAS: You know, the turmoil in the financial market comes and goes.

In fact, I was speaking to some folks, who are working with the new administration about this, just last week, and it is extremely important not to let the short term challenges of the financial markets and they never last more than 24, 36 months, unless we have a truly dramatic event undermine the long term requirements, the long term social justice mission of the administration or an organization like mine. So there is a lot we are doing.

We are being incredibly prudent with budgeting. We frankly started that in February. We knew this summer would be difficult, not as difficult as it ended up being this fall, but we knew it would be difficult, and we took actions. In fact, half the actions we needed to take, we look much earlier this year. That has held us in good stead.

We are doing everything we can to protect core program budgets to make sure that our grantees are protected and well served, but in the end, the central message is that if we allow this short term economic dislocation to undermine our long term work in social justice, we have done a disservice to the sector, to ourselves, to the country.

MR. FLEISHMAN: What is that going to mean in terms of the spending levels of the foundation?

MR. UBIÑAS: We are doing everything well, two things. The first thing is we are increasing spending level this year versus last year. We are moving the payout rate up about 10 percent.

[Applause.]

MR. UBIÑAS: Now, like every organization, we have taken substantial financial hits. Every organization has. Every individual has. It has been impossible to avoid.

So what that means is that we are going to be making every effort to keep core program spending as close to level to last year's as possible, and my last estimate and this could change. It changes day by day. My last estimate was it will be, on an absolute dollars basis, between 3 and 5 percent of last year's spending, which has taken extraordinary effort.

MR. FLEISHMAN: In order to maintain your grant making levels, as you have just described, there is bound to be cost cutting involved in it.

MR. UBIÑAS: Right.

MR. FLEISHMAN: What kinds of cost cutting are you going to be engaged in?

MR. UBIÑAS: I will give you two examples. The first thing to keep in mind is we are technologically in a different place than we were five years ago, 10 years ago, or, God knows, 15 years ago.

We have now almost weekly meetings that happen for free, face to face with our international staff through IP video conferencing, a technology that allows a level of interaction that was impossible just a few years ago, and it is effectively for free. That vast, vast spending done in physical travel to

create small sporadic meetings every quarter or, in some cases, every year is an unnecessary expense. I have face to face interactions with the folks leading my international offices every few days.

Another example and I think this is a little more mundane we are going to have our unit meetings in three different locations around the world, in Vietnam and other places, and for the first time in anyone's memory, we are going to have the entire program staff of the foundation in New York all at once. That happens to save a half million dollars, but you know the other thing it does is it brings us all together as one unified foundation. It underscores the institutional priorities we are setting. It allows us to get to know each other personally.

So is that a cost cutting, or is that better management? I don't know, but in the end, we have a better outcome, and we happen to be able to send a half million dollars back into grant making.

MR. FLEISHMAN: And I assume that you are going to be looking at other opportunities to use technology and other management kinds of practices in order to do that.

Let me just interrupt here one moment to say that there are index cards on the table. Please write questions on there, as soon as a question occurs to you. Signal one of the persons around the room to bring it up, and they will bring it up. I will sort through them and ask the questions that seem to fit into the discussion.

So do you think there is going to be any change of mix substantively of what you do in grant making?

MR. UBIÑAS: You were asking about technology.

MR. FLEISHMAN: Yes.

MR. UBIÑAS: Let me deal with your technology question first.

MR. FLEISHMAN: Okay. Sure.

MR. UBIÑAS: I think technology needs to play a vastly greater role than it does in what the non profit sector in how the non profit sector operates.

If you step back and think about MySpace and FaceBook, these are enormous platforms, enormous platforms with vast audiences. We just saw this in the Presidential campaign this week last week.

We have the opportunity to reach out to tens of millions of people effectively for free. Many of our grantees and grant proposals that come by my desk are getting grants to build websites, and I always have a hard time understanding why they would be building on their own separate platforms rather than embedding what they are doing in preexisting platforms, on YouTube and so on.

I think we as a sector have to step back and ask yourselves not how do we more effectively use the technology that existed when we were children, television and radio, but how do we use the technology that is going to exist when our children are our age, all of which are digital. That, were we to begin to do it, would make us much, much more effective with this next generation.

MR. FLEISHMAN: The panel yesterday afternoon talked a great deal about how technology and community organizing had made a difference. Both of those are things which Ford has started to do, and historically, Ford has been very much engaged in supporting organizations that organize the various components of the communities to do that. So it really has changed everything for non profits as well as for the Ford Foundation.

That, of course, means that there are new ways that you can relate to grantees that you haven't related to before, and I am sure you have thought of that. What would you like to say?

MR. UBIÑAS: We are relating to grantees, and I don't know how different it is because I wasn't there a year ago, but I will tell you how we are relating to them now.

In our strategy setting process, a strategy we have been engaged in for much of this year, we have had over 2,000 grantees now come to us and talk to us, some of them as organizations, some of them as individuals, non grantees, folks from government, folks from business, over 2,000 now. I have met separately with over 500 folks in our ecosystem.

We are relating to them in a two way dialogue that requires that we listen, that we incorporate their thinking in our strategies. We are working with them much more aggressively in organized ways, like the Center for Effective Philanthropies' survey tool where between 2 and 3,000 grantees have given us their input on an individual basis, to individuals at the foundation as well as foundation wide.

We have a website and web based survey tools that allow us to hear from grantees in ways we have never been able to before.

It provides us incredible capacity to be able to listen and learn from a vast number of people, and it changes the nature of transparency.

Lots of people think of transparency as something that happens after the fact, after you are done, but the way I think about transparency begins at the beginning, being transparent in how we are setting up our work, being transparent in what the results are, being transparent in what we are pursuing as objectives.

MR. FLEISHMAN: To what degree does the strategy setting that you are engaged in result in a change as opposed to a reaffirmation of the kinds of areas that Ford has worked on over the years?

MR. UBIÑAS: You know, I tell folks when I get asked that question by my children, I tell them, "Well, you know, guys"

MR. FLEISHMAN: Thanks.

[Laughter.]

MR. UBIÑAS: They are curious to know why we moved to New York.

I tell them, "You know, guys, my mission is to make the Ford Foundation even more the Ford Foundation," and so our strategy setting effort begins with a sense that what we do is, in many ways,

unique, that our fight for social justice for poor and marginalized people, our definition of social justice is fairness, and that profound link between social justice and fairness where we can pursue our individual goals, but always pursuing our individual goals as a society, knowing that there is some basic fundamental sense of fairness and equality of opportunity that is required. That has been definitional for the Ford Foundation, and you know where that comes from, philosophically. I know you do.

So, if you think of that as the organizing framework for the foundation, organizing framework because it is what has defined us for our history, and then make sure that every dollar we spend passes through that filter, you end up with a foundation that is more forward than it has ever been before, but at the same time substantially focused on a smaller number of issues pursued much more intentionally, with much greater clarity of goals, much greater accountability, and much greater transparency.

MR. FLEISHMAN: That suggests that there are things that Ford has done in the past that you might not be doing in the future.

MR. UBIÑAS: I work from the presumption that every single thing that Ford has ever done has been of great utility and great value.

The question I ask isn't were there things we did that weren't spectacular. My presumption is it was all spectacular.

The challenge now is to drive the kind of change we are responsible for, to achieve the kind of goals we are accountable for requires greater scale. The cost of doing business has just gone up. The needs of grantees are higher, and when we say we are doing something, we need to be able to do it not at the level of 1 or \$2 million, but at the level of 10 or \$20 million, so that we can lead, so that when we commit to something, we have the resources, not just the economic resources, but the people resources required to make the likelihood of success much higher.

MR. FLEISHMAN: Are there new things that you are going to do on that agenda in addition, and have you thought about that?

MR. UBIÑAS: You know, what is exciting about the strategy process is that in almost every area we work in, there are new approaches emerging.

So, for example, we have done work in voting rights forever. It is the bread and butter at the foundation. We have been doing the work since 1954.

We have stepped back and said right now, right now what is most urgent, what do we have to be doing right now, and the feeling is that the voting ecosystem, the system of voting in this country is broken. We know that. It is a non partisan issue at this point. Everyone is suffering with this question.

And if you step back and you ask yourself how do we think about the Census, how do we think about redistricting, how do we think about the mechanism of voting and the tabulation of voting, there are many non profit organizations in this room that spend every day fighting to make sure that those mechanisms are as effective as possible.

Remember, a mechanism that is beneficial to one party today is detrimental to another party tomorrow. It is completely non partisan. It is about bringing basic fairness to the most important element of what it is to be American, to be able to have your voice counted as one of 130 million or 126 million this year, to have your voice counted and have your ability, your agency, your franchise be part of what happens in the country.

MR. FLEISHMAN: Some questions have come from the floor which relate directly to this, and that is, what do you see the role of the Ford Foundation going forward in building the capacity of vital, social, benefitting organizations during the economic downturn?

MR. UBIÑAS: We, I think, have an enormous responsibility. Even in this downturn, there is tremendous resources, and we have got to step back and ask yourselves as we think about some of these organizations, organizations fighting for expansion of the earned income tax credit, fighting for SCHIP.

Actually, let me just raise that up. If you think about organization fighting for the basic notion, that if you work full time, if you get up in the morning and you fight your way through 2,000 or 2,500 hours of work in a year, that you shouldn't go home to a family living in poverty, that the basic dignity of working outside of poverty should be the concept of a basic fairness of this country, that we should never have someone, never have someone working 2,000, 3,000 hours a year.

[Applause.]

MR. UBIÑAS: And when you think about stimulus packages and you think about the money that is sent out in checks to middle class families, to affluent families in many cases around the country, those stimulus packages cost nothing compared to what it would cost to bring dignity to working families, to make the minimum wage credible.

It was over \$9.50 in 1968. We are spiraling to a number below \$8 now.

SCHIP. How on earth could anyone think that in America a child shouldn't have health care, expansion of the earned income tax credit to single men? Those kinds of basic, fundamental, economic questions, that is a real stimulus package, and that is the kind of initiative to bring dignity to working families, to really work on bringing dignity to working families. That is essential, I think, to our short term economic policy work.

MR. FLEISHMAN: I think that is right. I think also another one of the questions that has come from the floor which relates to that is Ford has a history of working with community foundations and with smaller foundations, and so the question is how do you think about it? If you thought about it in the context of what you just said, how do you work with smaller foundations that might want to join in efforts of those sorts and community foundations increasingly?

MR. UBIÑAS: You know, it is an interesting thing. I spent some time with the Great Cleveland Foundation, an organization I just admire so profoundly and its exceptional leader, and he and I talked a little bit about the fact that community foundations, above all others, bear the responsibility of ensuring that a fair and accurate Census happens, that a fair and accurate voter participation happens.

Why? Because many of the things we have just talked about – food stamps, school funding allocations – begin with accounting of individuals. If there is any single thing a community foundation can do right now to benefit the people they are supposed to be serving, it is to make sure that every one of those people is counted because every one of those people comes with thousands of dollars in Federal entitlements.

So, whether it is by speaking at their upcoming meeting or working with them individually, I think it is very important we engage them, not in esoterica, but in the basic, pragmatic, current issue of helping them understand how they can help the most needy in their communities get the resources that they are entitled to get.

MR. FLEISHMAN: What about small foundations, aside from community foundations?

MR. UBIÑAS: We have just a fantastic online tool called GrantCraft, and it is reaching many thousands of individuals and small foundations.

The tool helps foundations understand that while the tendency will be to do small things that are easily understandable or, even worse, easily quantifiable, that, in fact, social justice philanthropy, working at the policy level to make America more fair is something that even the smallest foundation can engage in, the newest foundation can engage in.

And GrantCraft, which is readily available on our website – I recommend all of you to take a look at it, especially any of you that are in small foundations – has proven to be an exceptional tool to help people begin to understand the role they can play not in small charitable activities that many small foundations devolve to, but the – much more important task of making wholesale change.

MR. FLEISHMAN: In relation to the general goal of Ford, the incidence of poverty and disadvantage and suffering in the rural areas is very great, and one of the members of the audience has asked have you thought about the challenges and opportunities, particularly in rural areas.

MR. UBIÑAS: You know, it's a funny thing, and that is just an excellent question. In our strategy setting process, we ask very profoundly where are the gaps, and what we found was that given the level of attention being paid to the urban issues and developing countries, that our work, given our expertise, given what other foundations are doing, and given needs, our work internationally in economic development and asset building might better focus in rural areas.

In our community forestry work, which is about providing title, we have some work we did in Brazil which led to over a million acres being retitled, so that those people can protect the lands, maintain the resources themselves. Ironically, it has enormous environmental benefits.

Our work in financial services for the poor and micro credit is very well established in urban areas, but not in rural areas.

Many of our social program work in those countries is now around selective conditional grants, where people in rural areas are encouraged to send their girls, in particular, to school.

So the answer to that question is we fully understand that, and in fact, it is central, in particular, in our international strategy.

MR. FLEISHMAN: You might say a word, as two or three questions have come up, about what the balance between U.S. and international programs will be. Are you going to continue programs that help create a more just global world?

MR. UBIÑAS: There are two things about that. The first thing is that the Ford Foundation has a long and rich tradition of working internationally. Its offices, I think, are an immense resource. They are not just a resource to us. They are a resource to the sector.

It is hardly the case that I visit one of our international offices where a grantee or another foundation hasn't either just been there, is about to arrive, or is there while I am there, an immense resource, and we are going to nurture and support that resource as effectively as we ever have.

We typically spend 45 to 55 percent of our resources on our international work. It will continue to be in that range, but it is important to also understand that there has been a very high interest, especially among the newer foundations, to work internationally.

There is this, I think, unfortunate — and by the way, my former employer hasn't contributed to this thinking — belief that somehow the net present value of a dollar spent overseas is higher than the net present value of a dollar spent in the United States. That is an exceptionally dangerous notion because, if you hold that, if you hold it for a dollar, you can save 10 lives in Sub Saharan Africa, but only one life in the United States, so that, in fact, it is immoral to spend that dollar in the United States, if you hold that dangerous idea, soon there will be no grant making in the United States.

MR. FLEISHMAN: Going back to the domestic situation, yesterday in the panel, there was some support, I think, for the notion that government will increasingly deliver services going forward through non profit organizations or, in general, work through non profit organizations in achieving public policy objectives.

A parallel question that came up from the floor also is the question of what about the role of business.

So I guess the question that I am putting to you is what, if anything, do you think that Ford might do with respect to helping non profits and business try to work together with government in solving the public policy problems.

MR. UBIÑAS: One of the things I said at the foundation many times and that I have asked people to embed in their strategies is this notion that we shouldn't be working in isolation. By we, I mean the independent sector. That every problem has an environment around it, that every problem has multiple participants — government, business, non profits, foundations, and others — and that if we are going to address a problem, it is very important that we understand all the partnerships that need to be part of that solution.

That it is naive to think that we as an independent sector can work independently to solve anything. That all of these problems are the problems of business, are the problems of government, are the problems of individuals, and are the problems of the independent sector foundations and non profits alike, and that until we can begin to work in that fully integrated way, until we can do that, we are not as effective as we can be.

MR. FLEISHMAN: One of the members of the audience has sent up a card which says this. You said you are increasing payouts to 10 percent. We were told by a program staff member that their budgets are being cut by 35 percent. Please comment.

MR. UBIÑAS: Yeah.

[Laughter.]

MR. UBIÑAS: I think it is hard for program staff untrained in math. Just kidding.

[Laughter.]

MR. UBIÑAS: The reality of the situation is our core program budget last year was \$412 million, and it looks like we will spend between 400 and \$412 million this year in core program budget.

Now, does that mean that every program staff member is going to have the same level of funding? Absolutely not, and this is actually an important point.

We are going to fund not in any way that represents entitlement, where someone shows up and is automatically given a \$2 million check or a \$4 million check to spend on an individual isolated basis, a plan by themselves.

We are moving to institutional priorities. When you move to institutional priorities, you move to institutional funding, which means and this is extremely important. It means that we are going to match funding to need, and so there will be some strategies we are working on that will have 10 times the funding, and there will be other strategies we had been working on that will have a tenth of the funding.

So, in fact, there may be individuals who see their budgets go to zero.

MR. FLEISHMAN: Well, we talked a little bit before, and there was an article on Friday in The New York Times about the increasing use of advocacy by donors and by foundations.

One of the questions from the floor was what are your thoughts, basically, on raising the bar for more funders to give strategically on big picture changes and including advocacy.

MR. UBIÑAS: You know, we are barred legally from advocacy, and we should be. So the question is how do we bring voice to our issues.

I think we can bring voice to our issues in the way we are doing now, but we can bring voice to our issue, as Frank Thomas who was president of the foundation some years ago has so eloquently told me, by letting our grantees speak, by ensuring that the many, many fine organizations that we support, organizations that are in many ways profound partners of ours, organizations in some cases we have supported for 54 years, by letting those organizations speak for the issues we care about and providing them the substantial resources they need to bring voice to those issues.

MR. FLEISHMAN: One of the questions from the floor was what strategy, if any, will Ford employ on the issue of immigration reform in the U.S.

MR. UBIÑAS: You know, this question of the changed demographics of the United States is an important one.

If you look at the annual reports of the foundations in the United States, if you look at much of the work of the grantees, the work doesn't yet reflect the fact that 25 percent of the children in the United States under seven happen to be Hispanic, that 50 percent of the folks in the United States under 21 are of Asian or Hispanic or African American descent. In that mix of vast under spending and under representation sits the question of immigration.

The United States has such a long we are built. We are all immigrants. There is no one here, except for some folks we ended up oppressing, and we have, I think, in the end, no choice but to acknowledge the fact that there are 13 million or 14 million or 15 million we don't even know how many people in this country who are working here, working hard. The whole sectors of the economy cannot function without them. Meat packing cannot function. The agricultural sector cannot function. There aren't Americans to do those jobs.

Years ago, 20 some odd years ago, I was working at the Los Angeles times and wrote articles about the fact that these aren't jobs that are available to Americans because Americans don't want them. It is not as if they are fungible assets. They will only be done by these people, and if we don't acknowledge that, if we don't accept the fact that this country should not only acknowledge these people, accept these people, but welcome these people, then we have got something profoundly wrong.

There is one other thing. What we are doing in response to the perceived threat of these hard working individuals, these law abiding, hard working, tax paying individuals is unconscionable.

We have U.S. citizen children behind razor wire because they were scooped up with their parents. That is not okay.

[Applause.]

MR. FLEISHMAN: I think everybody here agrees with you.

We have only got about 10 minutes left, the timekeeper says, and I would like to touch on a couple of other issues, if possible.

You have mentioned in our discussions the importance of transparency and foundation work. I was one of those who felt that Ford was making a serious mistake in not using the Center for Effective Philanthropy for its grantee perception reports, and I know that you have now decided to do that.

Can you say a few words about why you made that change?

MR. UBIÑAS: You know, I hate to think of things as mistakes or not mistakes, but let me get to it. It is very important for me, given the fact that I am new in the sector, to have as many sources of

input as I possibly can. I think it is very important for Ford as it begins strategy setting for this next generation of work to have as many sources of input as it possibly can.

So we have created a slew of mechanisms to have folks in this room, many whom I have met with, have folks not in this room speak to us, and so getting specific input and guidance from grantees through this survey is frankly a small component of what we are doing. We are engaged in thousands of conversations to get input from grantees, from government, from business, from individuals, from experts, from you.

It's funny you and I are having this conversation, but you and I have had I don't know how many conversations now. But the point is that is not isolated. We need to be a foundation engaged in conversation, and this is just one way we are engaged in conversation.

MR. FLEISHMAN: There seems to be a strong reaction, disagreement from the floor about the point about advocacy, and the card says foundations are not legally bound from advocacy. That is a dangerous misstatement. Please correct it.

Secondly, what bars you from advocacy? You are barred from lobbying, except self defense, by regulation, but not advocacy. Would you like to qualify?

MR. UBIÑAS: You know, I know that legalistically and we are undoubtedly over represented by lawyers here.

[Laughter.]

MR. FLEISHMAN: Including me.

MR. UBIÑAS: Undoubtedly, that's the case.

MR. FLEISHMAN: Right.

MR. UBIÑAS: But when you begin to take political positions, when you begin to be seen as partisan, when you begin to blur the lines between a (c)(3) and (c)(4), you undermine one of the most important things that a foundation has, which is its sense of independence and non partisanship.

We fight for the issues we fight for, and we fight for this question of fairness not because we are Democrats or Republicans or Independents, but because we are American, and when we think about the things we have talked about today, bringing justice to the life of someone who works, those 2 or 3,000 hours, bringing justice to the rights of someone who has come to America to help America be stronger through their work, the notion of being able to vote in a fair and equitable way because that is an American right and an American responsibility, are we advocating for those issues? We are advocating for those issues, but not in the, you know, hiring for lobbyists and running through political bounds.

Martha Tellado, our communications expert, tells me that we have been unprecedented in the level of writing we have had in the number of convenings we have had at the foundation. We are working extremely hard to bring attention to the issues that we care about which are going to be

central to our strategy over the coming 10 years, but this question of advocacy and lobbying and this legalistic formulation, I think runs the risk of being dangerous because remember what we can do now in a Democratic administration may come to be detrimental in a Republican administration. What we can do in a Republican administration taken too far can be detrimental in a Democratic administration, which is why the administration doesn't matter.

Our fight for our issues, this basic question of social justice is fairness is so important to pursue in a way that, yes, brings voice to our issues, but never runs the risk of in any way being politicized.

MR. FLEISHMAN: We have five minutes left now. I would like to turn your attention briefly to the question of impact. What are you doing to increase the impact? You are talking about a number of initiatives. It is hard to measure impact in those areas. What are you doing to try to increase impact, and how are you going to measure, know whether you have actually done that?

MR. UBIÑAS: Right. So the first thing we are doing is we are working much more intentionally. We are designing explicit strategies for our work. We are in that work identifying specific benchmarks for success, real benchmarks, not simple quantitative benchmarks the way everyone thinks when they hear the word "benchmarks," but thoughtful approaches that are understandable as to whether or not we are moving and making progress.

That much more intentional approach pursued with these institutional priorities is then supported in two ways, at least two ways. The first is that we are putting together mechanisms whereby we can actually talk about our impact from a management point of view on a quarterly basis.

We are also hiring, have created and hired, for want of a better phrase, I will call for now, a chief impact officer, someone from within the foundation, profoundly trained in how we think about impact, how we plan for impact, and how we evaluate impact.

MR. FLEISHMAN: There seems to be yearning on the floor. A card comes up. Please tell us something about Luis the person, and so I think you all sense from what Luis has said about his passion for social justice and the extent to which he is devoting his career to that. So the question is what motivates that, and tell us a little bit about yourself.

MR. UBIÑAS: What motivates? What motives it is I have two little boys, and they are 11 and 13. When I think about the country I want them living in, I ask myself do I want them living in a country where there isn't dignity in work, where you can work and in the end go home to children who are hungry, where you can sit in a palace in India and walk out the front door and have someone who is obviously starving be at your feet, where for a decade the elections in this country were disputed. Those are unacceptable conditions for a country this great, for a world that is supposed to be this fair.

[Applause.]

MR. UBIÑAS: And you know, when I was working in my former career, I woke up one morning and I turned to my wife, and I said, "You know what, I can stay in my current career, and we can make yet more money, but what is the dignity in that? How on earth could I possibly continue to

do that in a world where I wake up in the morning and I am uncomfortable with the direction of the country for my children?"

So what motivates me is this sense that we together, here in the United States and internationally as well, can be part of a generation of people who can restore to this country the sense that the unfairness that we have seen creeping, this creeping unfairness and lack of dignity to the basic individual in this country and what he or she does day to day and how he or she walks through the country day to day, that we can be part of a generation of people who can bring that back in a way that is calm and decent, that doesn't involve the kind of anger that represented what happened in some other times.

MR. FLEISHMAN: Let me take a different tack on the question. Many are wondering about what the transition from MacKenzie to Ford was like for you.

So, on the surface, it would appear that these are very different environments, or are they?

MR. UBIÑAS: I get that question a fair amount.

It is much less of a difference than one would imagine. If you think about it, both organizations are global organizations. At MacKenzie, I worked in one way or another in two dozen countries. At Ford, I have already visited either before or since starting five or six countries, six or seven organizations, global organizations with global challenges in how you manage people and how you think about problems.

The people who work at Ford, like the people who work at MacKenzie, are fantastic, a level of capability and intellect and pride in what they do, a richness of culture that you find in very, very few organizations. Both places are exceptionally well run.

I was astonished by the level of just raw operating capability at the foundation. We are talking about two fine American institutions, and I have had the grace, the gift of now having in my second career, the opportunity to work in what is truly a topnotch leading organization.

MR. FLEISHMAN: Well, I have observed the Ford Foundation for over 50 years and have written a great deal about it at one point or another, and I have to say that Ford is very lucky to have you, I think, as its new president. And I wish you success in your role there.

I know we all pull for the success of the Ford Foundation. I think it has been one of the smoothest transitions I think I have ever seen in any foundation, and I compliment you on that, and I wish you all the very best, and I am sure we all do.

MR. UBIÑAS: Thank you.

[Applause.]