



MUNK DEBATES TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE EVE OF THE U.N. COPENHAGEN SUMMIT

Bjorn Lømborg, Lord Nigel Lawson, George Monbiot and Elizabeth May debate the merits and pitfalls of global climate change policy

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Peter and Melanie Munk announced today the resolution and presenters for the fourth semi-annual Munk Debate to be held in Toronto on Tuesday, December 1st.

The fourth Munk Debate will explore the opportunities and hazards of the global response to climate change by debating the resolution: "Climate change is mankind's defining crisis, and demands a commensurate response."

The debate will consider whether rising CO2 levels in the atmosphere require bold international policies to avoid the catastrophic effects associated with out-of-control climate change. It will also explore if the economic cost of reducing CO2 emissions are warranted as the world fights its way out of recession, and whether or not the threat of climate change to humans and nature has been overstated.

Arguing for an ambitious global response to climate change is acclaimed environmental activist and *Guardian* columnist **George Monbiot**. His bestselling book, *Heat: How to Stop the Planet Burning*, outlines how massive reductions in carbon emissions are both necessary and possible for modern economies. He will be joined by **Elizabeth May**, the leader of the Green Party of Canada.

Opposing a robust international response to climate change is **Bjorn Lømborg**, professor at Copenhagen Business School and acclaimed author of *The Skeptical Environmentalist* and *Cool It*, two hugely influential books questioning the social and financial costs of climate change mitigation. He will be joined by **Lord Nigel Lawson**, former Chancellor of the Exchequer in the United Kingdom, and author of the acclaimed book *An Appeal to Reason: A Cool Look at Global Warming*.

Rudyard Griffiths, the director and moderator of the Munk Debates, comments: "By holding our debate six short days in advance of Copenhagen we hope to acquaint Canadians about what has surely become one of the great public policy questions of our time: what should be the global response to climate change?"

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In an era where political spin and public grandstanding are fast displacing serious discussion about the challenges facing Canada and the world, the Munk Debates provide a lively and substantive forum for leading thinkers to discuss the pressing issues of our time. Two debates are held each year, one in the spring and one in the fall. The previous Munk Debate participants include U.S. diplomat **Richard Holbrooke**, activist **Mia Farrow**, journalist **Charles Krauthammer**, historian **Niall Ferguson**, former diplomat **Stephen Lewis** and former general **Rick Hillier**.

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

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

Rudyard Griffiths added: “With over 4,000 members the Munk Debates have become not only a sought after ticket in Toronto, but an important national event.” Mr. Griffiths continued: “The debates' success is a testament to Canadians' desire for high-quality discussion of the big issues facing our country and the world.”

The Munk Debates are open to the public. The climate change debate will take place on Tuesday December 1st, 2009 at The Royal Conservatory – TELUS Centre for the Performing Arts, at 7:00 pm, with a reception to follow.

Tickets to the debate at the Royal Conservatory range from \$20 to \$50 each and can be purchased online at www.munkdebates.com or through the Royal Conservatory box office by phone at 416-408-0208 or online at performance.rcmusic.ca. Seating is limited.

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

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