



EIGHTEENTH SEMI-ANNUAL MUNK DEBATE ANNOUNCED

HOW DO WE RESPOND TO THE GLOBAL REFUGEE CRISIS?

Louise Arbour, Nigel Farage, Simon Schama, and Mark Steyn convene in Toronto, Canada, to debate the pressing issue of our time

March 1, 2016 – Toronto, Canada

The Munk Debates announced today the resolution for the eighteenth semi-annual event, to be held in Toronto on Friday, April 1, 2016. To engage in the geopolitical debate of the moment, the Spring 2016 Munk Debate will move the motion: ***Be it resolved, give us your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free...***

The world is facing the worst humanitarian crisis since the Second World War. Over 300,000 dead in Syria. One and a half million injured or disabled. Four and a half million people fleeing the country. And Syria is just one of a growing number of failed or failing states in the Middle East and North Africa. How should developed nations respond to human suffering on this mass scale? Do the prosperous societies of the West, including Canada and the U.S., have a moral imperative to assist as many refugees as they reasonably and responsibly can? Or, is this a time for vigilance and restraint in the face of a wave of mass migration that risks upending the tolerance and openness of the West?

Arguing **for the resolution** will be **Louise Arbour**, who served as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and as justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, and was Chief Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. She will be joined by leading historian, political commentator, and art critic **Simon Schama**, the award-winning author of numerous books, including *Rough Crossings* and *The Story of the Jews*.

Speaking **against the resolution** will be **Nigel Farage**, the leader and founding member of the UK Independence Party, who was ranked first in the *Daily Telegraph's* top 100 most influential right-wing politicians, and recently named "Briton of the Year" by *The Times*. Also speaking against the resolution will be **Mark Steyn**, who is an international bestselling author, a Top Five jazz recording artist, and a leading Canadian human rights activist. At Steyn's recent appearance in Australia's National Parliament, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop described Mark as "sharp, observant, witty, (and) prescient."

Rudyard Griffiths, director and moderator of the Munk Debates, says: “How developed countries should respond to the global refugee crisis is one of the great moral debates of our times. I am looking forward to a hard-fought and substantive debate on April 1st.”

The Munk Debates are Canada’s preeminent forum for leading thinkers to discuss the pressing issues of our time. Two debates are held each year in Toronto, one in the spring and one in the fall. Previous Munk Debate participants include former British prime minister Tony Blair, Henry Kissinger, Christopher Hitchens, Paul Krugman, Fareed Zakaria, Dambisa Moyo, Mia Farrow, Malcolm Gladwell and Glenn Greenwald.

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

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

The Munk Debates are open to the public. The Debate on the Global Refugee Crisis will take place in Toronto at Roy Thomson Hall on **Friday, April 1, 2016** at 7:00 p.m. EDT. **Tickets go on sale to Munk Debate Premium Members at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 3. Any remaining tickets will go on sale to the public at 12:00 noon on Saturday, March 5.** For information on purchasing tickets, or premium membership, please visit www.munkdebates.com. Seating is limited.

The debate will also be broadcast live over the Internet for global viewing audiences. For more information on the livestream of the Munk Debate on the Global Refugee Crisis visit www.munkdebates.com.

Our archive of commercial-free, HD videos of past Munk Debates is now free for unlimited viewing to all Munk Debate members. For a free membership, and to view past debates, visit www.munkdebates.com.

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