New Zealand Centre for Global Studies
Te Pokapū Akoranga Aorere o Aotearoa

Public address
on the occasion of the 11th Annual Global Affairs Lecture by Hon Nanaia Mahuta
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Founding Director,
Board Member 2012-24

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa.
Let me begin by acknowledging former parliamentarian colleagues in the group today; actually, personal friends – Sue Kedgley, Winnie Laban, Chris Laidlaw and Nanaia Mahuta.

My heartfelt thanks, Chris, for the tribute and, above all, for the friendship and collegiality. And, indeed, to you all. And especially Dr Adrian Macey, our first Board Chair and Libby Giles, our current Director.

He waka, eke noa. We are all in this together.

By 'this', I mean that we share one planet – all 8 billion of us. When my father was born, it was 1.7 – nearly a five-fold increase over two lifetimes. And now, in order to serve our contemporary lifestyle, we need 1.7 Earths.

So, it is now all about thinking globally; whatever form that might take.
And giving it some theoretical structure and intellectual rigour – without getting carried away.
Combining realism and idealism – for an informed insight and a credible goal.

Our journey to this spot and this moment commenced here in Wellington with the study of international relations in the early 70s. VUW did not then teach international relations, but it creatively agreed to international study across three schools – political science, economics and law. That was the springboard for a master's in international law and diplomacy in Boston, with a thesis on the international civil service. It was called "*Values in Paradox".*

In the '70s and '80s, our work in New Zealand's foreign ministry focused on, among other things, strategic security and disarmament. That had two closely-related policies: a nuclear-weapons ban in our national territory and, of greater global significance, a rejection of nuclear deterrence theory. My own doctoral thesis was on nuclear-free zones, and I thank Dr Rod Alley, who is here with is today, for being my supervisor.

With Ambassador Chris Beeby as our leader and mentor, we negotiated the Rarotonga Treaty of 1985. A scholarship then enabled a study tour to the USSR, USA, Europe and India, to discuss security concepts with allies and adversaries – everyone without exception proving to be very human.

A posting in Geneva in the late '80s was mainly comprised of exporting our nuclear-free policy to a faintly bewildered diplomatic community in the Conference on Disarmament, and a book, commissioned by Ambassador Dhanapala of UNIDIR, on security concepts of states, from our own national viewpoint.

The philosophical basis for the global concept in the 21st century is rooted in 20th c. thought.
That parentage is three-fold:

- First, the Russell-Einstein Manifesto on the nuclear threat. Quote: *"We appeal as human beings to human beings. Remember your humanity and forget the rest."*
- Second, Hammarskjöld's *"constitutional framework for international cooperation"* that viewed the nation-state as the contemporary achievement of our times but, quote: "*not the end of the road".*
- Third, Gorbachev's *'global security'* concept: a step above international security which rests on regional alliances and mutual deterrence.

But, how to get from here to there? The personal answer came in 1986 during a run along a Khandallah street, in training for rugby refereeing: Buckminster Fuller's prescriptive advice – do not seek to change the status quo incrementally; work to replace it with a qualitatively different model, to be ready on offer.

Thus was the concept of the 'planetary interest' born, with which 200 legitimate national interests can be reconciled. So, a switch in 1989 from national diplomacy in Geneva to New York to work for Parliamentarians for Global Action, accorded the freedom to promote that new concept. Our delegations often met with the UN Secretary-General. This included Boutros Boutros-Ghali who declared in 1993 that "*the first truly global era has begun*", and Kofi Annan who described the 'planetary interest' as "*the kind of forward-looking concept we need as the world goes through a period of profound transformation".*

In 1995 a fellowship at Cambridge University's Global Security Programme gave an opportunity to write up the planetary interest concept in a research report. Today, that kind of work is done at Cambridge's Centre for the Study of Existential Risk and, elsewhere, the subsequent pioneering work, by Rockström and the late Will Steffen, on planetary boundaries, and Nick Boström on global risk.

In 1998, with Rockefeller support, the report became a book, with chapter contributions by 20 parliamentarians from around the world, including Brazil, Russia, Japan, India and China. It included contributions from Russia's Andrei Kozyrev, New Zealand's David Lange, and the Commonwealth's Secretary-General, the late Sonny Ramphal. Carl Sagan, with whom we had been working, was about to write the conclusion. Tragically, he died early, and our book was dedicated to him.

The ten-year period 1996 to 2005 embodied work as an international civil servant under the UN Oath of Allegiance – *Values in Paradox*…. In Jordan, our UN Leadership Academy taught the concept of global leadership, to mid-career aspirants from around the world, recommended by UNDP. We had former world leaders, including Liberia's Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, act as tutors in our courses, and we took our students into India, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, West Bank, and Gaza. That was during 9/11, and the 2nd intifada – not especially easy.

That work included UN consultancy reports on global-regional cooperation:
- In 2004, for the Chair of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, Thai Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun, for the report *'A More Secure World – Our Shared Responsibility'*.
- In 2005, for UN Under-Secretary-General, Ibrahim Gambari, on partnership by regional organizations with the Security Council in peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

A decade later, in 2012, our Centre for Global Studies was born, the theoretical embodiment of this work. For 12 years now, the Centre has held annual lectures, convened conferences and symposia at universities, employed interns, and published research reports. Its pedagogical approach reflects the theory of consilience – the underlying unity of knowledge.

In recent years the Centre has developed a close working relationship with Auckland University's Global Studies Programme, due very much to the University's Dr Jamie Gillen, who is also a Board member and with us here today.

The Centre's purpose is set out by Board members in the 2017 Special Issue of VUW's Policy Quarterly, titled *"Global Studies: The Challenge of Governance in the 21st Century.* As we explained, the distinction between international relations and global studies is four-fold:

- First, international relations considers the international community of states, but global studies explores the broader goals of humankind. The phrase 'we the peoples' has a political legitimacy beyond the rhetorical flourish in the UN Charter. And a rigorous respect for international law replaces a loose muttering about a multilateral rules-based order.
- Second, international relations analyses the traditional framework that is the UN-Bretton Woods system. Global studies applies a fit-for-purpose approach, exploring the choice between UN reform and UN replacement.
- Third, international relations rests on traditional academic disciplines: largely politics and economics. Global studies is trans-disciplinary, relating citizenship and education, with law and governance.
- Fourth, global studies addresses less the collective goal of 'how we live together', and more the existential goal of 'whether we live together' – not 'what ought to be', but 'what needs to be'. The approach is not normative but imperative. In the late-Westphalian, early-global era, idealism rests on a unique challenge – how to survive on a single, finite, fragile, planet. That is demonstrably self-evident, today more than ever.

So, that is the Centre. Its original Board of 12 has now moved on, with the exception of our then youngest member, Dr Chris Gallavin, who is now the Chair. The Board has had exceptional people serving on it, over the decade. And exceptional staff – Lucy Stewart, our Secretary for some years, is with us today, up from Christchurch.

Let me pay a special tribute to three outstanding individuals who have graced the Centre's Board – Rod Oram, Professor Kevin Clements and Professor Klaus Bosselmann.

- Rod was one of the most capable, likeable and reliable people I have known. The integrity of his research and the depth of his insight on sustainability, and particularly on climate change, was without peer. He made a major contribution to NZ journalism and, separately, to our Centre. I counted him as an inseparable colleague and friend, and I still do, six months after his passing. I remember the intense discussion Rod and I had in Rio in 2012, about the idea of creating a global studies think-tank down-under. He helped make it real.

- Kevin has been, and remains, a thought-leader in peace and conflict studies. His work at universities and think-tanks in the US and Europe, Singapore and Japan, Australia and New Zealand, is unrivalled. His contribution in the field is outstanding, along with his leadership of organizations such as International Alert, International Peace Research Association, and now Toda Peace Institute. His development of a collaborative relationship between Toda and our Centre, is highly appreciated. The Centre is honoured to have Dr Ria Shibata on our Board, and undertaking research on climate-related security issues in the Pacific.

- Klaus has been a thought-leader in environmental law, once bringing a deceased seal into a German court in the 1970s in what was perhaps the first practical suggestion of legal personhood for natural systems. His teaching at universities in Germany and New Zealand has been outstanding, his prescriptive work with IUCN, his involvement with the Earth

Charter, and his conceptualisation of '*Earth Trusteeship'*, including an address to the UN General Assembly on the subject, has also been unique. Klaus was admitted in 2023 to the Academy of the NZ Royal Society. Just last week, he was engaged with the UN Summit of the Future in New York.

As I mentioned, the Centre holds annual global affairs lectures. We have had, over the years, leaders from many backgrounds around the world – Johan Rockström from Sweden, Gareth Evans from Australia, Ramesh Thakur originally from India, Augusto Lopez-Claros originally from Chile, and Sir Geoffrey Palmer and Hon James Shaw from New Zealand.
Klaus give our 1st Lecture, in 2014. Kevin gave our 10th Lecture, in 2022.

It is now my pleasure to welcome three of the next generation to the Centre's Board – Guy Sinclair, Anna Hood and Hon Nanaia Mahuta.

- Guy is Associate Professor in International Law from Victoria and Auckland universities. He is a working colleague with Prof. Lopez-Claros on global governance issues. His 2017 book: *To Reform the World,* was awarded the EU's Academic Book Prize. Guy is the Centre's new Coordinator for the Global Law & Governance Programme.

- Anna is also an Associate Professor in Law at Auckland. Her work on international security and disarmament law is widely recognised, and she has served as Vice-President of the Australia-NZ Society of International Law. Anna is the Centre's new Coordinator for the Global Security & Disarmament Programme.

- Nanaia, of course, needs no introduction to this audience. But it is my honour to welcome her to give the Centre's 11th Annual Lecture. Nanaia entered the NZ Parliament at the politically tender age of 26, and survived through to become the Mother of the House in 2023. Among myriad cabinet positions, she was our Foreign Minister and made a unique contribution in that regard.
  Nanaia and I overlapped in Parliament for three terms, and I personally witnessed her contribution there. My brother was privileged to work with her father, and I have been privileged to work with her. Nanaia is now a member of the Centre's Board.

It is a delight to welcome her to that role, and to invite her to give the Centre's 11th Annual Global Affairs Lecture. Nanaia, the floor is yours, as, indeed, is the world.