

Brussels Forum

March 22, 2015

Closing Remarks

Dr. Karen Donfried: Thank you so much, Ian. And thank you so much to the panel. My closing remarks are focused on one topic, which is gratitude. I am not going to try to tie up in a neat package all of the topics that we talked about over this weekend. And I want to start my thanks with a thank you to all of you. Because as you've seen throughout the weekend, ultimately, the success of Brussels forum depends on you, whether that is these plenary sessions, whether it's the night owls, the breakout dinners, the breakfast and perhaps, most strikingly, the Nik Gowing mystery session. Ultimately, it's what everyone in this room contributes.

I also want to give a special thanks to Senator Sessions and Senator Murphy and their colleagues for coming at what, I know, is a very busy time. And it was so important to have your perspectives as part of this.

I also want to give a shout out to our amazing set of partners, our founding partners and strategic partner, Daimler, the federal authorities of Belgium, Deloitte and then, of course, we have a set of forum partners who are important to us. BP, Chevron, OCP Policy Center and, of course UPS.

Now, the most important thanks for me goes to my amazing colleagues here at GMF and all of the volunteers around. Because really, the magic of this weekend happens thanks to all of them, so we're going to break and do a special applause for that group. And now, I just want to wish everybody a safe journey home. I hope you leave inspired or provoked, but whatever you do with the ideas you heard here, I hope you'll do it in a transatlantic spirit and in a Brussels Forum spirit. And so with that, I just want to go back to where we started, where I want to just quote again the words of Brzezinski when he encouraged all of us to think strategically and reflect historically. And on those words, again, a final thanks to everybody in the room who made this, for me, just a wonderful weekend.

So to Brussels Forum number ten, big success and we'll be onto next year.

Mr. Mark Leland: As a co-chair of the board with Robin and having a lot of board members here, it's kind of been a tradition. Usually, I have to fight Craig for this and you don't have to fight Karen, which is very nice. At least she's politer about it. But you can't let the Brussels Forum finish, tenth anniversary, without thanking Karen. The whole--she was involved very early on, as everybody knows, she left to do much higher, greater things in the government. We're very grateful to the fact that she's back. She spent now a year almost and for us, this has been a very special Brussels Forum for the whole board, not just because it was the tenth anniversary, but because it was the first one with Karen as chair, so thank you

again. You're right to thank--you can't name all those staff, which is a problem. You can't name Ian, you can't name Nicola, you can't name all these people we know who we, on the board, know do it. But the credit goes to you and your staff, so thanks, Karen.

Dr. Karen Donfried: So on that note, I'm a little bit--got a little more color in my cheeks now and I will wish all of you, again, a safe journey home. So thank you all.