SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL ADVOCATE FOR PEACE AWARD

INTERNATIONAL ADVOCATE FOR PEACE AWARD

Dr. Rajiv Shah
The Seventeenth International Peace Award Recipient

On April 6, 2017, the *Cardozo Journal of Conflict Resolution* presented the Seventeenth Annual International Advocate for Peace Award to Dr. Rajiv Shah. What follows is a transcription of the award ceremony, including Dr. Shah's acceptance speech.

DEAN MELANIE LESLIE: I would say welcome to Cardozo Law School, but I think most of you have been here before. This looks like a great in-home crowd. It's a real pleasure to be able to introduce the Advocate for Peace Award. This is always a very special night and a very inspirational one. The *Journal of Conflict Resolution* was created eighteen years ago and is now one of the most highly regarded publications in its field. In partnership with the Kukin Program, the Journal has helped to educate a generation of lawyers and taught them how to . . . consider explor[ing] alternatives to litigation. This is particularly relevant in today's world where conflict seems to be around every corner. So now more than ever, people who can bridge gaps, make divides a little bit less wide, I think are especially valuable.

The International Advocate for Peace Award was born to recognize those who have dedicated their lives to resolving conflict and striving to push the world towards peace. We are here to honor one of those people, Dr. Rajiv Shah, who, through his work for the Rockefeller Foundation, and as Administrator of USAID [U.S. Agency for International Development], has helped resolve many of our world's greatest crises . . . I think [that] most of us will live a very long time before we accomplish half of what Dr. Shah has accomplished, including stemming epidemics and rebuilding nations after national disasters. Through his work, Dr. Shah has touched millions of lives and helped prevent large-scale global conflict . . . We are so happy that you're here with us tonight, and we're very honored to have you.

Before you come up, I would like to introduce Professor Lela Love, the head of our ADR Program here, and a friend . . . one of our most beloved colleagues. Someone who's built a program that is sort of the envy of the country. And we are so grateful for Lela and everything she does for the school. So, please give her a warm welcome!

PROFESSOR (DR.) LELA LOVE: My mission tonight is not to introduce our truly remarkable honoree. I wanted to say a word about the award itself and the people who are bestowing it. Cardozo Law School is well known in the dispute resolution world . . . because of our students. This award itself was created in 2000 by students who said, "Wow, we are doing so much around the world! We should be honoring great peace-makers." So, they started this annual award. For those of you who are new to this, I wanted to point out some of the past honorees.

The first awardee in 2000 was Richard Holbrooke, who brokered the Dayton Peace Accords. The 2002 awardee was George Mitchell, who brought together the two warring sides in Northern Ireland—it took him two years to do that, but he did it. The 2003 awardee was Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who was the architect, along with Nelson Mandela, of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The 2013 awardee was Jimmy Carter, who mediated the Camp David Accords. And last year, Peter, Paul, and Mary came to receive this award. So, what a group to join. But the people who really deserve recognition right now are our students who have gone on to do remarkable things. This year, this event rests on the shoulders of Ben Dynkin, Nicole Hertzberg, and Kelsey Weiner, who have done so much to get such a famous person to come and accept the award.

For some reason, what kept coming to my mind is . . . people say, "Well some people get lucky." There is this quote, "I always notice that the harder I work, the luckier I get." And there is something about building peace. It's not luck, it's really, really hard work. Dr. Shah is a little bit out of the mold of the mediators. Well, out of the mold of Peter, Paul and Mary too, unless he is going to sing tonight. But in terms of building peace, it's hard work. It's day-in and day-out rebuilding infrastructure. As I looked into his background—raising and dispensing funds, responding to critical crises all over the world, innovative development, data-driven compassion—he is the preeminent peacemaker. So, it is with great pleasure we have him here, and with great plea-

sure, I have these students that I get to affiliate with every year. So, with that, Ben Dynkin, who is the Editor-in-Chief of the *Cardozo Journal of Conflict Resolution*!

BENJAMIN DYNKIN: Thank you very much Professor Love. I'll just be a little selfish for a minute. I want to first thank everybody that helped throughout the year for the Journal's various activities as well as organizing tonight's event. Nicole and Kelsey, you both are really the people that deserve to be up here and . . . receive an award also. It couldn't have been done without either of you. It's been a pleasure working with you to plan the Symposia tonight. I thank you for that tremendously. Professor Love and Donna, you've been invaluable resources to the Journal. You have always been, and I hope you always will be. I know that we would not be anywhere where we are today without your guidance, support, and mentorship.

So, with that, I'm just going to now turn to introducing our International Advocate for Peace, Dr. Rajiv Shah . . . Dr. Shah was appointed to be the Administrator of USAID very early in the Obama Administration. I think a testament to something that I don't think we can ever see again today; he was confirmed unanimously. I think that speaks volumes about the work that he's done and the work that he's doing . . . Five days into office, horror struck the world when a 7.0 magnitude earthquake hit Haiti . . . Dr. Shah created one of the largest humanitarian relief efforts that we've ever seen. He saved countless lives, changed many more, and . . . in horrible circumstances, really did amazing work there. Now Dr. Shah is the President of the Rockefeller Foundation where he is continuing a lot of the work that he did with USAID.

I want to give you a little bit of background on what we did as a Journal when we were selecting Dr. Shah. We considered a lot of candidates. We looked at traditional candidates as Professor Love pointed out, but then we saw his work. That he had spent his life really building up the world, building up disenfranchised individuals, communities, and economies. He really created the basis by which people could achieve for themselves. And really that's the way to eliminate conflict in the long term. With all due deference to peace negotiators, peace mediators, and international advocates in the traditional context, the conflict has already happened. Lives have been lost. Horrors have been had. But development is a tool whereby we can avoid conflict, rather than fix it. I think that it's a great testament that this Journal has recognized that, as we are to-

night. I think it goes a very long way in what we hope to be doing in the global community.

I do want to share thoughts as we were preparing for tonight. I had spoken with someone that worked with Dr. Shah at USAID, and I wanted to share some of his thoughts. Nishant Roy was a veteran in Operation Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. He said that he had seen the harsh reality of conflict. In kinetic environments, lives were being lost around him. But he learned when he got an opportunity to with work with Dr. Shah, that resolution of conflict starts with conflict avoidance. That starts only with development, aid, and diplomacy. As he put it, "Victories on the battlefield can only be sustained by building livelihood through development assistance."

Before I introduce Dr. Shah and bring him up here to present the award, I'd like to leave you with some words, not from me, but actually by his former boss, President Barack Obama. In his words: "Dr. Shah is single minded in terms of trying to help as many people as possible all around the world and is an extraordinary representative for our country. So, I'm very, very proud of him! Although, he does always make me feel like an underachiever whenever I listen to him." With that, it's my distinct honor and privilege to be able to present Dr. Rajiv Shah with this award.

DR. RAJIV SHAH: Thank you, Ben. I want to see what texts come through . . . Thank you. Thanks very much. I very much appreciate that. That was very kind, and I am very grateful! So, thank you Ben, and thank you Nicole and Kelsey and the other students who were involved in this effort. Thank you Professor Love for your comments and your hard work here. And of course, it's always nice to get a chance to meet and interact with Dean Leslie, who I understand won the First Year Best Professor award when she started teaching. That's a great honor.

I do have the pleasure of knowing actually many of the prior award recipients, many of whom earned this award the hard way by actually preventing meaningful crises around the world. And Richard Holbrooke, who I think was your first award recipient, became a great friend of mine during our time together working on Afghanistan for President Obama. I got to know him very, very, well before he passed away. We traveled quite a lot together. He brought an extraordinary energy to the task, like many of your other award recipients, but he almost exclusively would call after

midnight. It got to the point where my wife would be like, "can you please tell Dick Holbrooke to stop calling at an inappropriate hour?" I would be like, "actually I can't. So, we should just deal with it." But you know it's a . . . good reminder that the pursuit of peace and, even more so, the pursuit of its close cousin, justice, is something we should all be passionate and committed and energetic about pursuing. And you all have proven that by your work in this school and in this program.

Certainly, if Benjamin Cardozo were here with us tonight, I think he would have some fascinating thoughts about the extraordinary and extraordinarily different times we now live in. Not necessarily because of who he was as a jurist, I'll leave that to legal experts, but rather because of who he was as a person, where he came from, and from the schools named after him of course. Justice Cardozo was from right here in New York City. He was born in the United States of America, as were his parents. He actually grew up down the street on Fifth Avenue. But that didn't keep him from being able to understand the plight of those who came from elsewhere; of the immigrant, the persecuted, the refugee. That's probably because he was descended from Portuguese Marranos Jews who practice their faith in secrecy after being forced to publicly convert to Christianity during the Spanish Inquisition. After his ancestors fled the Iberian Peninsula in the 17th Century, they sought refuge in the Netherlands, in England, and then finally, in the New World, coming to America decades before the Revolutionary War. While I can't say for sure, it appears that family history made a lasting impression on how Benjamin Cardozo viewed the world.

In the late 1920s, about ten years before he died, Justice Cardozo was preparing to give a speech at the opening of the new school of jurisprudence at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Ultimately, he didn't make the trip and the speech was never given. We don't know the reason why, but thankfully, we do have that original text. And in this undelivered speech, Cardozo . . . called for the great treasures for jurisprudence buried in the Holy Land. He planned to cite passages from the Hebrew Bible to make the case that these ancient precepts still mattered in modern times. And there is one quote in particular he was going to use from the Book of Exodus that stands out as especially prescient and timely since these words will be recounted at many a Passover table just next week. "Do not oppress a stranger, you knew a stranger's life, you were yourselves strangers in the land of Egypt." His argument

wasn't rooted in faith, quite the opposite. Despite of his observant upbringing, he was hardly a religious man. Instead, his point was that things like pursuing peace and justice and not oppressing strangers are not exclusive to any one group. These are universal values. Ideals that endure across people and across passages of time and are worth working for. I say this because we live in a very unique moment today, when we are really testing these very values and the foundation of what that means for our country as a nation of immigrants.

Right now, as we stand here gathered tonight, humanitarian crises of virtually unprecedented proportion are taking place beyond our borders. And we, both as governments and, more importantly, as individuals and civil society institutions, have the responsibility to do something about it. Today, I represent the Rockefeller Foundation, which was created in 1913 by John D. Rockefeller Sr. Motivated in part because of his devout Northern Baptist faith, he charged the foundation with the mission of promoting the well-being of humanity throughout the world. The goal wasn't to reduce suffering for a day or a week or even a month; but as he himself put it, instead of giving alms to beggars, if anything can be done to remove the causes which lead to the existence of beggars, then something deeper, and broader, and more worthwhile will have been accomplished. And we've had a long-standing institutional commitment to humanitarian causes. Going back to World War I, when his son, John D. Rockefeller Jr. actually led what was probably the first big act of global American philanthropy in bringing together families of means to give to the U.S. war relief effort during World War I. The consortia of partners that Rockefeller pulled together at the time provided more relief during the war than the entire U.S. government. That actually taught both Rockefellers an important lesson. That while we could put a tremendous amount of resources into dealing with the consequences of conflict, it wouldn't really solve the problem in the end. And so, theFoundation at that time adopted a relentless focus on what they called "root causes."

As we look around the world today at multiple humanitarian and displacement crises that are impacting tens of millions of people worldwide, the "root causes" are things like poor governance, weak institutions, corruptions, cycles of prolonged and intense armed conflict, failing economies, and insufficient opportunities for citizens to realize their aspirations and frankly feel a sense of basic human dignity. Around the world, more than 65 million people

have been forcibly displaced from their homes, 21 million of them are refugees fleeing conflicts from Syria to Afghanistan and all around the world. This is literally the largest global refugee crisis we have had since the end of World War II and perhaps the largest crisis of displaced people on record at any time.

Those factors alone have been enough to cause significant political and economic stresses on the international community. But there's also the prospect of catastrophic famines now taking place in four different countries. Not one, but four. And let me put that in perspective. If you've ever seen or remember those gut-wrenching images of famine inflicted refugees pouring out of Ethiopia in the 1980s, the ones that spurred the huge Live Aid Concerts and the song "We Are the World," well this is many, many, many times worse. And famine is not about just not having enough food, famine is technically a declaration of an actual death rate. It means that two children out of a thousand die every single day in affected areas. And right now, as we gather here tonight, some 20 million men, women, and particularly children, in Nigeria, Somalia, Yemen, and South Sudan are at risk of starving to death in the next six months. To give you a sense of scale, that's the entire population of New York or Florida. Witnessing the agony and suffering of famine is something you will never forget. In Afghanistan and Somalia, I've heard the cries of children afflicted by chronic hunger and malnutrition. I've had the honor to hold some of these children in my arms. And it makes very real what Cardozo meant about the need to know and care about the plight of the stranger. There is nothing quite so morally powerful and painful as watching a child perish, let alone for that to happen because in the midst of this world of plenty, children are actually still starving to death. It's not like we couldn't see these famines coming. Thanks to satellite imagery, on the ground photography, other ways of collecting real time market price information, it's actually not that hard to predict where light rain fall or even a drought could lead to significant food insecurity. And if you get the right kind of assistance to the right people at the right time, you can and we have, time and again, prevented millions of people from needlessly dying.

But in each of these four countries right now, internal violent conflicts are exacerbating the environmental causes of famine and making it much harder to serve those that are at risk. In Nigeria, particularly in the North, it's a fight against Boko Haram. In Somalia, it's the terrorism of al-Shabaab. In Yemen, it's the civil war between Houthi rebels and loyalist forces. And in South Su-

dan, it's escalating violence between two rival political factions of the same former Sudan People's Liberation Movement ["SPLM"]. The effect of these conflicts is that even when there's a sufficient amount of food, water, and broader economic opportunity in the country, it's not getting to those who need it. Instead, armed groups use food as a weapon, stealing or killing the livestock of their enemies, burning crops, raiding food stocks, hijacking aid shipments, and even killing humanitarian service personnel. And since these places are where extreme poverty is the norm, it can very quickly become very hard for people to afford the bare minimum of food and water that they need to survive.

The Rockefeller Foundation has actually spent a tremendous amount of its history successfully fighting hunger and starvation all across the world. In fact, our investments in the science of agricultural productions started in the 1910s, bore fruit in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s as we led a green revolution that moved more than a billion people off the brink of starvation and often out of poverty. But today, in these four countries, the root causes of this famine are not related to agriculture but rather to conflict. And today, preventing children from starving to death is just as much a task of global governance and smart preventative conflict resolution, as it is humanitarian aid and action. And so, at the Foundation, we are looking for new solutions to those age-old tasks. And as we do so, I've been reflecting on some of my experiences from the Obama Administration that might offer some insight into what we might do. I was dispatched somewhat regularly to these settings when I ran the U.S. Agency for International Development. After multiple trips to Juba in South Sudan, for example, we actually hosted a South Sudan investment conference, and had President Salva Kiir and his cabinet come to Washington, called and strong-armed every potential investor in Africa, in agriculture, health services, road construction and asked them, with some support from us to take the risk out, to put their money and their hopes in this new country that had been born in South Sudan. The government made commitments to reform its civil service, fight corruption, and embarked on a path to attract private investment to try to grow the economy. And then, within short order, just a couple of years, President Kiir and his number two in the SPLM essentially had a political falling out. It split the military, and the violence has now ravaged that country for nearly three years, unwinding a tremendous amount of economic progress, undoing all the good that hundreds of millions of dollars of aid and investment were creating,

and leading to photos as we've seen in the papers as they relate to it of young kids with the tell-tale orange hair, that is a signal for near death starvation in these environments.

In Yemen, I had the, I guess we call it, opportunity to visit the South of Yemen, the Abyan region, just a couple of weeks after the Yemeni military working with some American advisors had effectively cleared Al Qaeda from that local region and the capital city of that State called Zinjibar. After meeting with President Hadi, I, actually at his request, took his helicopter and flew down to try to improve the prospects of aid and assistance in that community to create normalcy and more hopefulness. As we were flying in, we circled the stadium there, which used to be a thriving soccer environment, and saw the actual facilities that the Al Qaeda group was using to govern that State when they were in charge, including the tents they had set up for their administrative meeting places and the stone pit at the edge of the stadium that they used for publicly executing people, mostly women and girls. It was horrific as you would imagine. When we landed, we met with the governor and local humanitarian partners, who were working endlessly to demine schools, hospitals, and homes, so that people could safely return to the city of Zinjibar, their communities, and embark on building a more normal community. Of course, just a few years later, after pouring in that case a few hundreds of millions of dollars of aid and assistance, violence again overwhelmed Yemen. Today they are looking at a wide-ranging set of humanitarian crises, including famine, in both the North and the more traditionally vulnerable South.

In Somalia, we were all quite enthusiastic when we successfully negotiated peace, when there was a real effort that had succeeded in removing al-Shabaab from power. As part of indicating our confidence in the future of Somalia, I was dispatched yet again to Mogadishu. It turns out that on the way over there, I realized that I was the first senior U.S. official to go since Black Hawk Down. As our plane was landing in the airport, they made the judgment based on local intelligence that we wouldn't be leaving the tarmac. So all we did was a press conference at the airport. But even in that somewhat security challenged environment, we were able to try to stand up programs. As we were talking to the mayor and the new president . . . their focus was very much [about] turning on street lighting in the evenings as a security measure, but also to demonstrate that peace brought dividends, and people should aspire to and appreciate those dividends and fight for peace.

Some of those efforts were successful, but once again, instead of effective governance and real growth and opportunity taking hold, they descended back into crisis as al-Shabaab took over more and more parts of the country. That's again today where we stand.

In Nigeria, it turned out that I ended up there shortly after the Chibok schoolgirls were kidnapped in northern Nigeria. So, our U.S. Ambassador at the time and myself hosted a meeting with all of the Nigerian state governors to understand how they were reacting [and] what they were doing to protect their own communities—particularly girls and particularly in schools—from the threats of Boko Haram. It was one of those surreal meetings. We were sitting there and . . . we got our briefings so we know . . . who we were dealing with on the other end. Every one of them sitting in our Ambassador's residence was asking for financial support, military support, and security support to protect their schools and public places as the fear set in. Yet, we also knew that every state in the country gets a significant amount of money from the Nigerian Oil Fund, which at the time was greater than 42 billion dollars. We also recognized that not one of those states published an accurate public accounting or budget of any kind. So, it's hard to know whether any additional assistance would have any impact. It was pretty clear that transparency, accountability, [and] corruption were the underlying root causes that undermine governance effectiveness, particularly in northern Nigeria. Today, as you know, many—in fact, the majority—of those schoolgirls are still missing.

So, with all this in mind, in my new role at the Rockefeller Foundation, I've been asking myself—what would it take to actually solve these types of problems? What would it take to get ahead of these crises and create genuine conflict resolution and risk mitigation in these settings. For example, what if the U.N. [United Nations] had a sort of governance SWAT team that could be entrusted with helping fragile states and fragile communities, improve the structures and administration of their local governments—so that development and conflict prevention could be more effective, in a timelier way, in more difficult settings. Could the U.N.'s dormant Trusteeship Council be revived, rebranded, and reconfigured to take on a task of that sort? Are there other ways to shape 20th century institutions to meet 21st century conflict and security requirements? What if there was a way to make absorbing influxes of refugee into neighboring countries more economically attractive to those countries—so, places like Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon wouldn't have to continually take on more debt obliga-

tions in order to provide expanded social services? What if we could build on how we successfully reduced the death toll from the 2011 Somali famine—by applying data science and having real time information about food prices, local migration patterns, and local economic activity to offer us a guide . . . to address humanitarian crises and signal where conflict is likely to emerge in the near future? What if there was a better way to leverage cutting edge commercial distribution of technology—so that food and medical aid could always get to places where they are needed using drones, autonomous systems, chip-size cameras, compasses, accelerometers—things that each of you and I have in the smartphones in our pockets—to overcome the challenges that result in all those children being on the verge of death today, in this moment? What if rising defense budgets could be leveraged to address the true root causes of conflict and thereby prevent them from taking place?

America's top military and defense leaders, whom we respect because of the risks they take and the discipline they bring to the task, have all consistently called for more investment in USAID and the State Department—in efforts to mitigate conflict as opposed to simply building up hardware to fight wars directly. That's why General [David] Petraeus was one of the most powerful voices in funding USAID. Stan[ley] McChrystal had a piece in yesterday's New York Times advocating, not for the funding of the Department of Defense, but for making sure they maintain funding for public broadcasting in this country. That's why Jim Stavridis, who is our EURO S.A.C. [Supreme Allied Commander] of NATO, said last month publicly that cutting foreign aid—as has been proposed by the current administration—dramatically diminishes our security and makes us less safe. It's why more than a 140 military leaders have signed a letter opposing the budget that President Trump put forward that effectively eliminates America's six-decade role as the world's humanitarian leader.

These are the kinds of issues I think we're all going to have to work on together. And we'll look to you, in the student community, and at colleges, and law schools across this country to think through—how do we create new institutions and new solutions that could actually alleviate these conflicts before they lead to the crises that we now see? We came out of the Ebola crisis with ideas for what we can do to reshape the World Health Organization and create a pandemic-threats response capability that actually could go in and fight a disease like Zika before it becomes pandemic. Today it is endemic. Today, we know that nearly ten percent of all women

exposed during their pregnancy to the Aedes Aegypti Mosquito—ten percent—will have children born with microcephaly, which is a lifelong debilitating brain defect.

We know that NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] needs to be modernized and changed. That's been much in the news because [of] our current President's insistence that other countries don't pay their fair share, even though they quite clearly and quite directly do. But what if NATO had an operational mechanism that brought together all of the different humanitarian and development agencies in at least NATO-orientated security environments, [and] deployed those capabilities with protection and support; so that we could operate in places like Benghazi or Libya post-fall of Gadhafi and prevent the next set of crises from happening.

I pose these questions because the global fight on poverty, the global fight for disease reduction, the global fight against hunger, and on behalf of humanitarian causes, will increasingly be focused and concentrated in fragile states defined by conflict. It might seem somewhat outlandish that we can sit in this room and come up with these kinds of solutions, but if we don't, nobody will. And frankly, it's been in the DNA of the Rockefeller Foundation to at least try to shape global governance around the world. In fact, when Rockefeller created the Rockefeller Foundation, his wealth as percentage of U.S. GDP was more than 2% of the entire size of the economy. It gave him an ambition for the Foundation that was stated in its mission to improve the state of humanity around the world. So, when the U.S. government wouldn't fund the League of Nations, Rockefeller did, supporting technical working groups in the operations of the institutions that ultimately became, as we all know, the U.N. When Nazis were rolling across the borders of Europe, we funded the evacuation and relocation of key League of Nations departments that focused on economic and financial affairs; not only preserving their work and enabling them to continue, but ultimately shaping the framework for post-war financial mechanisms that took hold in the Bretton-Woods Conference. The Foundation's international health division at that time asked the League of Nations to create a special standing committee that ultimately became the forerunner of World Health Organization. The Rockefeller Foundation's personnel and expertise helped established the U.N. Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, the post-war predecessor of today's U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees.

At times, when governments were unable or our politics stood in the way of making genuine progress towards global governance, foundations, civil society, and university institutions came together and laid the groundwork that ultimately shaped the institutions that have enabled peace to flourish by and large over the last six to seven decades. The question I have for you is: do we have an opportunity to do that right now? Is this crisis of leadership caused by election results here in the United States, but also in Western Europe, in the Philippines, and many other parts of the world, which causes our governments to look more inward and address the more populist concerns that have been expressed? Does that create an opportunity for us to address institutions that can help to mitigate conflict and avoid crises? We believe that it does, but we don't have the answers. So, we look forward to exploring which of these opportunities might ultimately help prevent the next set of famines in the future. Thank you for your time. I'm very grateful for this very special award and a little bit overwhelmed by the extraordinary previous recipients that have stood here and been honored as such. I look forward to comments and questions. Thank you.