

## Closing Address Tracy Roosevelt

It's a pleasure to be here today to represent both the Roosevelt family, and my generation. Each of the laureates is inspiring and each of them demonstrates the commonality of challenges faced around the world. In the words of Tom Friedman, the world is getting flatter and flatter. Developments in technology mean that our communities are increasingly interconnected. With advances in railways and highways, we can be in another province or sometimes even another country in hours. I can be in near constant contact with my boyfriend who lives in London while I live in the United States by using a free messaging application, Whatsapp. Yet despite our increasing interconnectedness, conflict still exists.

Even with great strides to unite with our neighbors through political and economic mechanisms such as the European Union and free trade agreements, we still often see our differences rather than our similarities. If we can look past these differences, I believe we are often surprised by our preconceived notions.

The last time I attended the Four Freedoms Awards in 2008, I was working in London for a museum design company. The main project I worked on was the first presidential library for an African leader. From my quiet British open plan office I often phoned my colleagues in Nigeria. My colleague Vitalis' voice would boom from one end of the phone and mine would boom right back. Embarrassingly my British colleagues often asked me to be quiet because I was laughing too loudly. Vitalis and I found cultural resonance as kindred spirits. I was surprised because my own expectation was that I would have had more in common with my northern European colleagues who looked more like me and in whose country I lived. What I actually found was that I made stronger connections with my Nigerian colleagues than my British colleagues.

In a globalized world, there are many more opportunities to look for unexpected connections and shared understanding. I challenge each of us to follow in the footsteps of our laureates and do just that. As His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal mentioned, I hope our leaders keep this in mind as they engage in the process of consultations this year to renew the Millennium Development goals for after 2015.

In my own career, I hope that I am mindful of our shared community. In the United States, I am a lawyer for a law firm called Foley Hoag that often brings cases based upon complex legal issues for businesses and corporations. We also have a unique practice representing sovereign states in conflicts both with investors and other countries. My personal passion is representing sovereign states in legal tribunals because it might, one day in a future that seems almost unattainable, provide a solution to war. At the very least, I hope that it alleviates some conflicts.

All of you are involved in work that aspires to the same goal. Be it for women's rights, fostering interfaith connection in a way that ensures religion does not become an excuse for conflict, providing shelter and healthcare to vulnerable populations, or working to protect people that might be caught in the crossfire of conflict. I believe that my great-

grandparents would have saluted all of the laureates for their work to make conflict and suffering things of the past. You ensure that my great-grandfather's vision when he planted the seeds for the United Nations and my great grandmother's work in helping to establish it is born out in the modern day. Laureates, I give you my heartfelt congratulations.