

Speech of H.M. Queen Silvia of Sweden during Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting at Mainau Castle on August 23, 2014

Dear Nobel Laureates,
Dear members of the Lindau Nobel Laureate Foundation,
Dear students,
Dear family Bernadotte,
Ladies and gentlemen!

I am very happy to be here among you today, enjoying this beautiful scenery at Mainau.

Being among the brightest minds of the world – I do remember some of you very well from the Nobel Ceremony in Stockholm - and being among the brightest young economic students from all over the world is just very special: you are the future leaders of the corporate world, of the public sector, of non-governmental organizations or in the Academic field.

No matter where you will be, your influence in making a difference in the world will be very important. I specially mean the difference you can make for children, in protecting them from exploitation, to making sure that violence against children is a crime and that there is an end to child abuse. When I started the World Childhood Foundation 15 years ago, it was and still is my vision that every child should have the right to a happy childhood – to thrive and to succeed. In spite of the 25 years of The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child this year, the global Unicef Report 2014 shows a very serious and depressing reality:

- Throughout the world, every third girl under the age of 18 – some of them are not even 7, are facing a forced marriage
- In the territories of war and refugee areas more than 150 million girls and 73 million boys are subject to sexual abuse.
- 100 million children are estimated living in the streets
- Fifteen per cent of the world's children are forced into child labor, which infringes on their right to develop
- The other day "Save the Children" handed over a world map to me ... I saw only water! There were some few islands, 35 to be exact! It was a map showing the 35 countries who have signed the anti-corporal punishment-law ... That means that only 5 % of all children in the world are protected against corporal punishment!

Dear Laureates,
Dear Members of the Lindau Nobel Laureate Foundation,
Dear students,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Family

For the first time, Childhood sent out the invitation to join the global student challenge. This was made possible through the wonderful support of the Lindau Young Research Foundation team who was very helpful in collaborating for the joint initiative. And let me express my sincere Thank You especially to Nikolaus Turner who applauded the idea right from the start and who – together with his wonderful team provided on-going support until today. So the challenge was not an easy one.

Talking about thanking you all for your engagement...

Allow me to express one wish: on your way home tomorrow, if you have a few minutes with your mobile phones, go to ThankYou.org. You can send a song to someone who made a difference in your childhood, to whom you want to say thank you. This will be your first action and it takes less than 5 minutes. ThankYou.org

It is time to act and give children a safe and happy childhood!

I am confident that you, the next generation, will have a more holistic view and that your business decisions are not merely driven by the return on investment measured in €€, Yen or Dollars but that a return on "social investment" will be on the top of your private and corporate agendas. Increasing economic value is fine, but it can equally be paired by the underlying business ethics which will be leading to a more sustainable world.

I am grounding this vision by a new known fact:

The number of young volunteers is increasing at global level, when selecting your future employer, you are more engaged in finding opportunities where you can actively contribute with your skills, your creativity and your passion. And finally, your response to our call for "your big idea will help small people" makes me confident that there is a high potential – among you, right here.

We asked you to come up with a cause-related marketing plan which illustrates how many companies could collaborate with Childhood in fighting child abuse in the sector of your choice. After the Judges made their selection for who is on the short-list, I heard there was an energetic final presentation round last evening. 6 very interesting and useful ideas were presented and voted by the Judging committee alongside with 100 students in the session.

Thanks to live-voting technology which was generously developed and sponsored by DIMA technologies, you all selected the winner. The team briefed me right after the session last night and they shared the results: the clear winner is Bing Wan whose idea convinced strongly in all 3 criteria dimensions: innovation, impact and sustainability. It is my pleasure to ask Mr. Bing Wan from China to meet me here on stage. Please join me in a warm and heartfelt applause for an outstanding idea.

So the Global Childhood Award 2014 goes to Bing Wan. From your work, we saw that you really engaged in this issue and that you truly care. So we would like to welcome you to our next Global Child Forum which will be held at the Royal palace in Sweden in 2015.

Thank you all and I look forward to the upcoming panel discussion.