Science and Diplomacy at SAIS Europe

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Introduction:

*My name is Michael Plummer and I am Director of SAIS Europe, the European campus of the Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, located in Bologna. I am truly honored to participate in this prestigious conference.

*I would to thank President Prodi for having included our institution in this highly-productive series of conferences that I know will lead to great things. We were proud to host the first of these conferences at Johns Hopkins SAIS Europe this past January. The topic was the SESAME project, which will be discussed in the next session. We all learned a great deal from this meeting which underscored how international cooperation among scientists to further scientific discovery is a win-win prospect: it is not only the *end* result leading to breakthrough scientific discoveries that counts, but rather the *process* as well.

*Since 1876, the Johns Hopkins University has had a long tradition of making contributions to science. Many of you are probably familiar with our School of Medicine. You may not know that we are considered the first research university in the United States and throughout our history, we have had ties to 31 Nobel Prize winners in the sciences, including 5 in economics. I wasn't sure if I should include economics in the sciences, but as an economist myself I guess I assume that I can!

*Our university, under the leadership of President Ronald J. Daniels, is embracing greater interdisciplinary approaches to tackling the world's challenges, encouraging ever-closer collaboration across our nine schools, from Engineering to Arts & Sciences, from Business to Public Health, from Music to Medicine to Applied Physics. We at the School of Advanced International Studies are particularly interested in the intersection of science and international affairs, offering graduate courses on science and technology policy, cybersecurity and big data, as well as range of courses on energy, resources and the environment. My predecessor as Director at SAIS Europe, Professor Kenneth H. Keller, is actually a Chemical Engineer by training. Hence, the theme of today's conference is very much consistent with the vision of our institution.

*I appreciate being seated among representatives of the United Nations, the Vatican and the European Union institutions that all pride themselves on action and effectiveness. I think that in academia we are too often more concerned with the theory than how ideas work in practice. Johns Hopkins SAIS strives to offer a combination of graduate education and

professional training, such that our students are prepared to grapple with real world challenges. We call this "problem-centered research".

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*As many of you may know, Johns Hopkins University has been present in Bologna for the past 62 years, making us the oldest American graduate school in Europe. I realize that the University of Bologna is older by about 870 years, but at least we've shared much of the post-War period together.

* The SAIS Bologna Center was established to bolster transatlantic ties in the aftermath of two tragically destructive global conflicts and in the context of the Cold War.

- ✓ Then, our mission was to train the world's top students—in those days, primarily from the US and Europe—for international careers as leaders in diplomacy, government, and the private sector. The vision was to offer these students the experience of living and studying together under a multinational faculty in an international environment, thereby encouraging cross-cultural communication and fostering collaboration among future world leaders.
- ✓ Today, we have the same mission but the type of students we bring together has changed with the times—for example, many more students now hail from outside of the United States and Europe; our student body is comprised of young people from more than forty countries. Next year we will even welcome our first student from the Kingdom of Bhutan. The issues we cover have also evolved to include every region of the world as well as policy areas from international finance to strategic studies to conflict management. But the goal of producing global citizens prepared to affront the world's evolving challenges remains at the core of what we do.
- ✓ Compared to the past, we now focus more on shared leadership in addressing development and emerging market issues across the world. While the Europe-US partnership in leading global institutions continues to be of the essence, we know this transatlantic dominance will continue to diminish over time.
- ✓ For example, when I started graduate school in the early 1980s, Europe and the US together constituted one half of the global economy, Asia about one-fifth; by the time I retire, the EU and US together will have about the same share as Asia (a little over one third). And my retirement shouldn't be that far in the future, depending on how my investments go.
- ✓ With these rapid and dynamic changes comes the need to understand, analyze, and ultimately manage the associated risks. This is why we have recently launched a new Master of Arts in Global Risk, a 13-month program that introduces students to the theoretical concepts, tools and frameworks from the social sciences that will allow them to undertake sophisticated political and economic risk analysis. The MAGR prepares students to look at, *inter alia*, how political developments move markets, how financial insecurity can lead to new opportunities, how new social movements can transform or revitalize societies and how environmental policies can affect regional stability.

*A key area of rising importance in this new context regards science policy and international affairs.

- ✓ Increasing inter-connectivity and globalization allow the world to function beyond borders and facilitate new means of cooperation to solve the world's most pressing problems.
- ✓ But the connectivity of the 21st century also has opened up potential risks, from cybersecurity to technology transfer in deadly weapons of mass destruction.
- ✓ Hence, it is important for us to manage this trend, rather than resist it. Nesting science policy in international affairs is one way of doing this.
- ✓ As Thomas Friedman has observed, the advent of the nuclear age suggested than one country could reap massive destruction on humanity. Today, we are moving rapidly toward an era in which it could be possible for a single person to do so.
- ✓ International diplomacy has never been more important in helping reduce the risks posed by new technologies.
- ✓ One should always be wary of a neoclassical economist who philosophizes. But we do like to forecast trends. And it would seem as though we are rapidly approaching an era in which we either learn to work together in addressing the world's challenges, or we will work against each other, to everyone's detriment.

*It strikes me that this is the essence of this series on Science Diplomacy for Development and Peace.

*Like in science, there are no quick fixes to our most daunting challenges in promoting global peace. The road toward promoting the type of international and intercultural understanding and respect that an enduring peace requires in many parts of the world is a long one.

*But as the Chinese philosopher Laozi once quipped, the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

*I firmly believe that this Science Diplomacy for Development and Peace initiative is helping us begin this journey on the right foot.

*I am very much looking forward to today's deliberations and I thank you for your attention.