



## **IPI's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reception**

*Featuring*

**Ban Ki-moon**

**UN Secretary-General  
&  
Honorary Chair of IPI**

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**Terje Rød-Larsen :** Good evening everybody, and thank you all for coming. It is my great pleasure to welcome you here to the Trygve Lie Center and to the celebration of the International Peace Institute's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I am particularly honored that the Secretary-General, who is the Honorary Chair of IPI, took time out of his busy schedule in order to be with us this evening. He will momentarily be introduced by the Master of Ceremonies, the chair of IPI's board of directors, Rita Hauser.

There is something very special about hitting the 40 mark. Some say life begins at 40. Others say that mid-life crises begin at 40, but of course here in New York, everyone says that the 40s are the new 30s. However one describes passing this milestone, I want to express our gratitude to everyone who has supported us throughout the years: To our founders, Ruth Forbes Young of the USA, and General Indar Jit Rikhye of India, who was also the first president of IPI; to his successors, the honorable Olara Otunnu of Uganda, and Ambassador David Malone of Canada. All of them embodied strong vision and strong leadership, and they helped build the foundation that IPI stands on today. I also want to give my personal and warm thanks to the chair of IPI's board of directors, Rita Hauser and thank her for outstanding leadership, and I'd say consistent enthusiasm over many, many years at the helm of IPI. Thank you very much, Rita. You are great.

Our work here at the Institute would not be possible without a generous contribution and support of all our donors and partners among UN member states, many of whom I can see here tonight. We are looking forward to cooperating with you for many, many years to come. Finally, the intellectual work and research would not be possible without the staff of IPI, many of whom are here tonight as well. I would like to thank you all for your dedication and for providing the spark that keeps IPI such a vibrant place. And it is now my great pleasure to give the floor to Rita Hauser who will introduce our guest of honor, the Secretary-General. Rita, the floor is yours.

**Rita Hauser:**

Well, thank you very much, Terje, and thank you one and all for being here with us. It's marvelous to have such a milestone of 40 years. I know many of you may have been married as long as that, or maybe on second rounds. When my husband and I got to that, all we did was lift a glass and say, "on to 50." So that's what I say tonight. On to 50. But each decade for us has shown an enormous growth of interest in IPI's work and the expansion of its activities, and when we saw many of you today here at this seminar, the film about the beginnings of IPI and where we are today, it is truly miraculous for what I call this "little mouse that makes a lot of noise." And one of the great things that has been our pleasure is that from the beginning, the existing Secretary-General has always agreed to serve as our Honorary Chair. And at the very first meeting when I met this Secretary-General, I cornered him before he even knew what we were, and I said, "You *will* be our Honorary Chair!" And he said, "Of course!" And he has been a wonderful honorary chair, and we work very closely with him and with his staff. And I know all of you know Ban Ki-moon, so there's nothing that I have to say to introduce him, our current Secretary-General who is doing a wonderful job, and I invite you to the podium.

**Ban Ki-moon:**

Thank you very much Ms. Hauser, Chair of IPI Board of Directors, Mr. Rød-Larsen , President of IPI, and Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. It's a great pleasure to see you again. This is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of IPI, and I'd like to really congratulate the anniversary.

In the Chinese and Korean tradition, when you become 40 years old, we call it *bulhok*, I don't know if you understand. That means you should have your own beliefs. That means you are mature enough. We regard that when you reach 20 years of age, you can only stand on your feet. Then after 30 years of age, then 40, you become mature, and you are not easily convinced or swayed by other people. So you should stand on your own conviction. That is maturity. When you become 50 years of age, you should know your own destiny. By that time, you are really responsible for your future. After you become 50 years old, if you do not know what will become in the future, how you manage your life, that is your own responsibility. Nobody else is responsible.

Now I'd like to sincerely congratulate that the IPI has become mature and has become a center of all these very important ideas and policy papers. I would like to really thank Ms. Hauser and Mr. Rød-Larsen , and many very able board members as well as researchers and Vice Presidents.

When you become 60 years of age, that's my favorite. You must have heard a lot about all this when I first became Secretary-General. I recently celebrated my 66<sup>th</sup> birthday just two, three days ago. When you become 60 years old, your ears should be soft. That means you should be able to listen to all that other people would say, but you should have your own ears. You should be able to analyze all the things, but when you miss sometimes, you need to have some flexibility, and also know how you need to deal with considering all the situations happening on the ground in real life. So I tried to have soft ears, but let us see how, that always depends upon how you tell me what to do, what not to do!

Anyway, I'm really delighted to be here. I see so many familiar faces, many good friends who are also good friends of the United Nations. Rita Hauser, thank you for being such a great and generous champion of the United Nations and for doing so much to make IPI work possible. You have worked with so many major think tanks over the course of your distinguished career. Your long tenure at the IPI is a real vote of confidence. You are a loyal scholar, philanthropist, one time U.S. Representative on Human Rights Commission, one of the great citizens of

New York, and we are all lucky to have you on our side, and also of course, even though I'm Honorary Chair of this IPI, the real Chair, and President, is Terje Rød-Larsen. I think you should know. Normally, when you have an honorary title, honorary means really honorary. So I leave everything to Terje Rød-Larsen, who is yet another in a line of IPI leaders with just the right combination of ideas and diplomatic skills.

Let me introduce a story behind the stories. When I was running for this job, I was told while working in Seoul that you must come to IPI. You must be interviewed. So it was not a formal interview, but you must have an opportunity of addressing IPI members. Meet the man named Terje Rød-Larsen. I didn't know his name and what the IPI was doing. Anyway, I came to New York only for that purpose. I didn't realize that all the members of IPI were just interviewing me secretly, internally in their minds. I thought I did well at that time. That was an informal interview. I have been working very closely with IPI since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 until now, and I really thank you for all your support, the members of this IPI, and thank you Mr. Rød-Larsen for doing double duty as IPI president and as one of my special envoys. As you know well, they are each in their own way very challenging portfolios.

Ladies and gentlemen, few know more about the United Nations than you share today. And few care more deeply for our shared causes and noble work. You all grasp the high stakes involved from the Middle East, to Haiti, to Kyrgyzstan with peacekeeping operations in Sudan and TOC reaching critical junctures, and in our efforts to combat extremism and empower the world's women. You know how much more difficult these situations and challenges would be without the United Nations.

As you know, I'm just off the plane from my trip to Africa. This was my second African trip this month, and after about 10 days, I'm going to embark on a third African trip, so that means three times I visit Africa only this month. That means I'm paying highest priority to African challenges.

There is a great enthusiasm on the African continent, not just because of the World Cup. Of course, I attended this World Cup opening ceremony, and there I could see expressive dynamism and energy generated among African people on the African continent. It's not only South Africans, but all Africans, they *all* having a sense of great pride and sense of achievement, big achievement. People were wondering whether this World Cup would be able to take place in South Africa, on the African Continent. Not a single such world event like the Olympics or the World Cup has ever been held on the African continent. Now we have seen such a pride and such a capacity, one of the most spectacular scenes I have ever seen that, I think, African people should be proud. And if that kind of energy and dynamism and commitment and sense of unity would be there, there is nothing which cannot be overcome in overcoming these African challenges.

In Sierra Leone, I watched another World Cup. That was, I think, the most moving and at the same time sad. I was crying in my heart. Those soccer games were played by young men, young men whose limbs were amputated. There were about 30-40 people. They were competing against each other, kicking balls, with just one foot, just with two sticks. They were running very fast. This goalkeeper was having only one arm, and I have never seen such a moving and sad scene. They were doing even better than FIFA World Cup soccer players in South Africa. They were resilient, courageous. I'm sure that with that kind of resilience and courage and fortitude, I think they could overcome again all these challenges they are facing in Sierra Leone.

I have seen so many moving things. Millennium Development Village in Malawi. And out of the Songhai Center in Cameroon, this is Benin. It was sort of integrated system of doing everything there. Green economy. Green agriculture. And green energy. It was quite moving, and I could see that Africans are united in meeting and scoring the goals. It's not only football scores. Of course, you have to kick the ball to score the goals. But we have important goals, Millennium Development goals. They were trying to score the goals. That's what I felt while traveling to Africa. I'm really trying to travel more and ask and urge African leaders to come out with a much, much stronger voice out of this forthcoming AU summit meeting in the lead-up to the Millennium Development Goal summit meeting in September. Their voice should be heard clear and loud. And without a successful meeting in September on these Millennium Development Goals, by 2015, what do you expect the world leaders will say when they have made such a strong commitment in 2000 at the time of celebration of arrival of a new millennium, that we must keep these promises? That's what I'm working very hard on, and I thank member states for their strong commitment. This is the message I'm going to deliver to the G-20 summit meeting in Canada, and I have already dispatched my letter to all the leaders of the G-20, and I know that many countries, member states who are not participating directly by their leaders in person, but they have supported the United Nations, and their support has been very, very effective, and heard by the leaders of the G20. That's what I'm going to do again.

Now in all these places, IPI has been playing a very important role. The overarching truth, the art of history, is that we have come a long way in the 40 years since the IPI was founded. A long, painful way at times, but a long way in life expectancy, literacy, freedom, and peace. Throughout that time, IPI has supported our efforts to make progress possible. I thank Ms. Rita Hauser, Terje Rød-Larsen, Warren Hoge, and all other distinguished colleagues here, and your staff who possess remarkable experience and expertise. Time and again, you have been a source of sound advice and state-of-the-art knowledge. Your workshops, seminars and policy papers have brought us together in ways that have enriched and enabled our mission. At times, it seems as if you are an official part of the United Nations, but of course, it is precisely the unofficial nature of many of the discussions and roundtables that makes the IPI so valuable. And I myself have been a participant of all of those unofficial discussions as the Secretary-General, for it is in those informal settings where we get the chance to step back and step out of uniform and look at the issues and challenges on the international agenda with some broader and longer vision beyond all these difficult party lines, country lines or group positions.

The United Nations looks forward to benefiting from your work for many, many years to come. Still, you have 10 more years to know your own destiny, and another 10 more years to have soft ears. Maybe until then, you may still need support from member states and I may need still support from IPI and from many of you. Again, thank you very much. Thank you.

**Rita Hauser:**

Thank you very much, Secretary-General. I think that you might like to know that in this vast audience, many people who are working for you worked for us, and we are sort of a training ground for lots of young people who are interested in the United Nations. They come, they work for us, and then every Secretary-General steals them away, you included, and I regard that as a very, very high mark for IPI. We lose them, but we gain. So I thank you all again for coming. It's wonderful to see you. Enjoy the party.