

## **Celebrating Nelson Mandela Day**

Host: Ted Hart

Guest: Karolina Mzyk Callias - UNDP Istanbul Center for Private Sector Development

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Through its industry-leading grants management programs and philanthropic advisory services, CAF America helps donors amplify their impact. This show is dedicated to these donors and the charities they support. CAF America is uniquely positioned to serve as the bridge between this important partners and transforms vision into meaningful action.

Guests on the *CAF America Radio Network* are leaders in their field who share tips for success and stories that inspire. Our host is Ted Hart the CEO of the Charities Aid Foundation of America. This is a live call-in show. Add your voice by calling 914-338-0855. After the show, you can find all of our podcast at [cafamerica.org](http://cafamerica.org). Don't forget to dial 914-338-0855. Now, welcome the host of the *CAF America Radio Network*, Ted Hart.

**Ted Hart:** Welcome here to the latest edition of the *CAF America Radio Network*. Very exciting here to celebrate Nelson Mandela day. Carolina Mzyk is the UNDP project manager for the post-2015 platform for philanthropy and is a CAF America strategic partner. It's my pleasure to welcome her here live on the show today. Carolina, welcome to the *CAF America Radio Network*. How are you?

**Karolina Mzyk:** Hi, Ted. Think you and hello to everyone and to you.

**Ted Hart:** It is terrific to have you here on the show. Now you facilitate the conversation between philanthropic foundations and UNDP about global sustainable developments and poverty reduction. Very important work. I want to jump right into the topic of the day though. Why does the United Nations mark July 18th as Nelson Mandela international day?

**Karolina:** The UNDP set the occasion of Nelson Mandela birthday to commemorate his achievements and contribution as a freedom fighter and human rights lawyer on the 18th of July.

**Ted Hart:** Without a doubt, I think all of us listening today consider Nelson Mandela to be one of our greatest human icons. What he endured and how he was able to lead his nation with such a strong spirit of collaboration to bring his country out of apartheid. Really quite an amazing story and the work that you're doing to bring about a global initiative to engage foundations and civil society partners in a dialogue and global development. How is your work in the initiative that you are involved with inspired by the spirit of Nelson Mandela?

**Karolina:** Well, Nelson Mandela was, I would say, not only the citizen of South Africa but he was the citizen of the whole world. He has been the role model for all of us. Not just as a freedom

fighter but as a humanitarian and human rights lawyer as I said. How contributed a great deal in conflict resolution in race relationships but also in promoting rights of vulnerable especially of women and children. He inspired people not just in South Africa but around the world.

This is the reason why the UN has agreed to recognize his contribution and call the 18th of July, the international day for Nelson Mandela. Now, these values that I have mentioned; freedom, democracy, human rights, poverty reduction, fighting for the poor and those who are vulnerable is really what UN stands for.

Our work here at UN development program, works with philanthropic foundations whose role as international ground-maker has been ground-maker to be increasing stability over the last years is very important not just as development partners in the United States but around the world.

What we have been doing within my initiative is to bring philanthropic foundations to a global initiative which is called Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Goals will replace Millennium Development Goals by the end of this year when this expires and they define what are the big global development challenges for the next 15 years until 2030.

They are extremely important not just for the UN and for government but for all of us including foundation, civil society organizations and generally people around the world because the global challenges are so big and complex but we can only really effectively address them if we work together. My initiative is about working and bringing philanthropic foundations to work with the UN and government in achieving Sustainable Development Goals and we are doing it in a number of countries around the world.

**Ted Hart:** Well, we certainly are inspired by the energy that you and your team bring to these goals. CAF America as the leader in international grantmaking here in the United States takes very seriously the values that are brought forward by the United Nations and certainly in celebration of the international Nelson Mandela day. I love the fact that you place him in the category of the global citizen because I think there is a growing number of global citizens. People who think of the world as a whole and creating a better world.

Certainly, you are one of those people who are looking to bridge what might have been seen as very separate approaches or engagements by bringing foundations and civil society partners and others together around the dialogue on global development. Early on as we move, as you said, from the millennium goals to the Sustainable Development Goals, how would you say that dialogue is succeeding or is there still a lot of work to be done?

**Karolina:** Well, there is definitely still a lot of work to be done but I think we have achieved the great progress. For those that work in development community not just the UN but civil society organizations and social activists and so forth and are familiar with the Millennium Development Goals, I think would agree with me and with us that the MDGs have been a great success. Because for the first time ever, the world leaders very effectively put together a

framework that talks and create actions around poverty reduction around the world and actually created big global coalition against poverty alleviation.

This happened 15 years ago in 2000. Eight Millennium Development Goals was not just about poverty reduction and hunger but also about gender empowerment, about maternal health and child mortality. These eight goals have been picked up not just by the government but also a huge group and drawing people from civil society organizations.

We have learned a lot from this experience. The Millennium Development Goals has progressed a lot in terms of its progress and indicators but we have not achieved all the goals. When we right now are debating the Sustainable Development Goals which will replace the MDGs, we promised ourselves that we need to complete and finish the job of the Millennium Development Goals as well as bring new challenges or address new challenges which are there today, for example, promoting peace and freedom. This is what connects us very closely with what we are talking about today, about Nelson Mandela.

Actually, the Millennium Development Goals has not really addressed the issue of conflict resolution effectively. This is what Sustainable Development Goals is about. Sustainable Development Goals, there are 17 goals. One of them, goal number 16, is about conflict resolution and promotion of peace. There are other goals within the MDGs such as, for example, addressing domestic violence as well as, for example, looking at the quality of education that has not been addressing the MDGs.

Today, 16 years down the road, we know that these issues are critical to actually effectively deal with the still stomp of poverty. Not just the symptomatic problem, but the root of why poverty happens in the first place.

**Ted Hart:** I think one of the biggest challenges here, of course, is as you mentioned, these are very big goals, they're global goals. It's going to take a lot working together to be able to effect any of the goals leave alone all 17 goals. I think one of the biggest challenges is the work that again you're engaged with, that CAF America supports and so many others are engaged in. That is creating the capacity for collaboration, unprecedented global collaboration in search of solutions and in search of a better life for human beings on this planet.

**Karolina:** Yes. Absolutely. I think it's not just about Sustainable Development Goals but we acknowledge that issues such as poverty, the issues such as domestic violence against women. So far, the women or gender inequality cannot just be solved by government. They can be solved only if we worked together. The government's business, society organizations as well as just people on the streets. We all have to be engaged because these issues are very interconnected and because of the globalization, they're becoming even more interconnected than ever before in history.

That's why we try in this unprecedented manner to bring philanthropic organizations and grantmakers because essentially we know that they have not really been very much involved in the Millennium Development Goals. Although many foundations around the world worked on

issues such as welfare or women, or poverty as such. They have not really been connected to this conversation about the MDG.

There are a lot of opportunities and benefits from being involved and engaged with the government and multilateral organizations such as UN in working on sustainable development. We're trying as they are initiated to communicate to foundations what are benefits from collaboration and working with us together and how can the foundation effectively engage with us.

**Ted Hart:** What are the challenges that you are learning in the dialogue that you've had and the work that you've done in this area so far in terms of push-back from foundations, concerns about foundations? What're you hearing from the philanthropic side in terms of their willingness to be engaged or their concerns about being engaged or their feeling of being disengaged?

**Karolina:** Well, philanthropic growth is very, very vast and very, very, very vast not just in the United States but around the world. We know the philanthropic sector in the US probably is the best from all the countries. It tends to a very good data which exists in the US and data banks but we know very little about philanthropy in the emerging countries beyond the fact that the philanthropy sectors is growing very fast. There is not very much value around what philanthropy does because, again, there is no information about who does what in philanthropy.

We work with those who enthusiastically engage with us and say, "Yes, we want to be involved and we want to be part of this initiative." We also have discussions with skeptics and there are lots of them. It's I think quite generally accepted that the UN is perceived not just by foundations but many organizations around the world that they're bureaucratic organizations sometimes even an Ivory tower. This kind of perception where we fight for them we would like to address.

Because the UN, what we need to do and what we have been doing for the last few years is trying to really, seriously open up to partnerships and all the other organizations and see how we can effectively forge these partnerships. Which will not just benefit the UN but which will be a win-win for all the partners involved. In order to have these partnerships which will work for all the sides in all the partners, we really need to understand what is it that philanthropy would want from us? Why is it that they see UN as a valuable partner? How these partnerships can work.

As an intergovernmental organization, the UN, it has a very broad mandate. We address many issues ranging from human rights to conflict intervention, to women and climate change. Foundations for start work on the very typically narrow path on the selected themes and selected under automatic basis. Being able to come together with such different mandates and such different operating models is a challenge, that's true, but if we do manage to find common objectives and find ways of working together, the benefits can be huge. We have already seen the first results.

**Ted Hart:** We're going to just take a very quick break. When we come back we want to hear about some of those results and if you can also share with us some concrete opportunities for philanthropic engagement and collaboration as we move towards the Sustainable Goals. We're live here with Carolina Mzyk who is the UNDP project manager for the post-2015 platform for Philanthropy and even more importantly for us here, CAF America, a strategic partner of CAF America. We will be right back.

**Announcer:** Remember our podcast and archives are always available 24 hours a day at [cafamerica.org](http://cafamerica.org). If you're listening today, our phone lines are open. Call in and ask a question by dialing 914-338-0855. Now, back to the *CAF America Radio Network* and our host, Ted Hart.

**Ted Hart:** We're back here live and really thrilled to have Karolina with us here today. Just before we went on that brief break you were starting to move towards sharing with us some concrete examples of how philanthropy can be engaged and even a case study.

**Karolina:** Yes. Thank you. Let me just start by saying that at the UN some time ago we have perceived foundations, philanthropic foundations as pretty much sources of money and funds. This was a big mistake because when I actually started working on this project four, five years ago, I came, I joined the team, and I noticed that all these projects which just treated foundations as check writers, they didn't really yield much results or they didn't really have long-lasting impact. They were just small initiative which didn't create any results.

Then we had a lot of discussions, the dialogue and the number of foundations about how can we change this approach to really come up with meaningful partnerships for results. What we see today and we recognized is that foundations are a source of many other aspects than just capital. Foundations foremost are very innovative. They are fast movers compared to the UN. They are very flexible. Their funding is not tied to this, very often would be called Multi-year Funding Framework which is very inflexible and static.

They are very good networkers, they are very well-connected at various levels. At committee level with various types of grassroots organizations and we have this connection very often at the UN. Partnering with the Foundation really brings us a lot of new opportunities. With this in mind, we started working in five countries in Kenya, in Colombia, Indonesia and we are actually just about to start a relationship with foundations in Ghana next week in Accra.

What we have done already, for example in Kenya, is that we brought the government together with foundations and civil society organizations around the table and asked the government what are their plans with regards to implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals? What are the national policies that address the issue of inclusive growth jobs, and environmental protections and so forth?

This was important to have foundations in the room because they have heard what the government of Kenya is planning within the next five and 10 years. This long-term perspective is very important for achieving scale and for understanding of actually who is who in this field

because what foundations appreciate is to see how their very innovative, however small-scale project, can actually be leveraged and replicated at the national scale.

This is what's happening in Kenya, we have been, for example, working specifically with the Ministry of Education that now is trying to see how can they forge a national partnership with the civil society and other organizations to improve or to inform its sectoral plans and become and have the education at the primary level. Not looking at just enrollment ratio, but the quality of education. What we have found out is that actually philanthropic education, including national Kenya foundations already have some excellent experiences about this from the field.

There was a very dynamic conversation that took place in November last year in Nairobi, between the government of Kenya and particular foundations there. How could they work together to make sure that in the next round of the next reform of education, the indicators which evaluate quality of the education, including at the national level in primary schools will be featured them at these gaps. As a result, both the government is very pleased with this partnership and foundations as well because their invaluable experience has been now or is being replicated at the policy level.

**Ted Hart:** Well, this sounds like a true partnership in that there are multiple levels of expertise that are brought together. It's not just, as you said, it's not just the funding, it's not just the checkbook. Of course, CAF America, being the leader in international grantmaking protocols and helping philanthropists and corporations and others support projects around the world. It's that kind of partnership that we really value.

We know that the hundreds of donors that we represent who are looking to make a difference around the world and looking to be engaged in important philanthropic works of all sorts, that is a very positive advance. Again, I'm going to say I think the work that you're doing is extremely important, but I think that the very dialogue that you're creating, the new platforms for collaboration that you're creating are unprecedented.

It's only through that work that the new Sustainable Development Goals have any chance of showing progress as we move into the future for a better planet for more human beings to be successful. I wanted to wrap up. We only have a couple minutes left here on the show, but CAF America and UNDP, our strategic partners on the SDG platform, what role do you feel going forward beyond what we've discussed today will be the identifying factor of international grantmaking in the success of the SDGs?

**Karolina:** Yes. Like you mentioned, Ted, CAF and UNDP have a strategic partnership not just using this opportunity, what we'll do like to see is taking this dialogue from the global level which can be slightly abstract into national level. This is where all the action happens. We've been talking about possibly working in a number of countries where both CAF and UNDP have that presence and see how we can bring your partners and our partners together around specific goals that also relates to the SDGs. We already mentioned that the SDGs are possible thanks to partnerships but SDGs will be also successful only if the action is actually created at the national and sub-national levels. This will be [crosstalk]

**Ted Hart:** Well, Carolina, I'm going to have to wrap things up there and agree with you. That it is at multiple levels, but it is that to that local level that foundations and philanthropists can be so helpful working in partnership with people like you, Carolina. It's wonderful to celebrate today, national International Nelson Mandela Day and to celebrate the very important work that you and the UNDP are doing in this post-millennial world and trying to move forward towards a brighter future.

Thank you for being our partner. Thank you for building a brighter a platform for philanthropists to be successful. Today this is the *CAF America Radio Network*. Carolina, thank you for being my guest here today.

**Karolina:** Thank you very much.

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