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PM HARPER MODERATED DISCUSSION WITH BILL GATES

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(Applause)

SUSAN JOHNSON (Director General for International Operations, Canadian Red Cross): Thank you Dr. Hibou for that very warm welcome and introduction. And thank you also for hosting this very important conversation we're going to have here this afternoon in this lovely building. It's really a pleasure to be here. Thank you so much.

In the past 15 years, we know we've made tremendous progress and the good news is, more women are surviving childbirth and more children are celebrating their fifth birthday. But we know many are not. And we know that there are many challenges ahead and that this is not the time to let up. It is the time to double down, invest more, in smart ways.

As global leaders you both have spoken out on these issues many, many times. And I know we're going to have a very engaging conversation this afternoon. But before jumping to the questions I have I would really like to ask you also just to open up with a few just opening remarks to sort of set the stage in terms of your interests, your concerns, and ... before we get into some of the details that we want to get into. And Mr. Prime Minister please, yourself first.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE STEPHEN HARPER (Prime Minister of Canada): Well, thank you very much Susan. First I just want to begin by thanking everyone for being here today. I am looking around the crowd and I actually can't believe the number of people I recognize in this room. I think it's just about everybody. And many of you lead organizations or are involved in organizations that have been very committed to the causes we're talking about today. And that is really appreciated.

And as I've told Bill and others, it's really unique in this country, the way we've really been able to penetrate this movement down to the

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grassroots level and get lots of people contributing in... small people contributing in small ways and big people contributing in big ways, and I think it says a lot about our country.

I do though want to just spend a moment drawing attention, notwithstanding all the great organizations we have represented today, to three really tremendous organizations that are represented on this stage. First of all, the International Red Cross by Susan. I don't have to say that much about what it does. Everybody knows one of the longest-standing and most effective organizations in the world. A great partner for us, particularly I think during my times as Prime Minister on so many interventions of a humanitarian emergency nature, whether it's been in the Philippines, or Sri Lanka, or anywhere else, Haiti, the International Red Cross is always one of the leading organizations for our government in terms of partners.

Secondly, Doctor Hibou, Kalil, all the people who represent this organization, not just the Imamat, but the Aga Khan Development Network and the entire Ismaili community, which has shown in Canada and around the world, how people can live by faith and make a tremendous contribution to humanity at large, and we are really honored that you are hosting us here today.

And finally of course our special guest of honor, Bill Gates. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, as I've told people everywhere in my even limited experience I've just seen the transformational effect that it has had in the entire international development area. It obviously brings enormous financial capacity that is has dedicated to the whole range of capabilities all the way from research to delivery on the ground. And just a fantastic partner for Canada in all the things we're going to be talking about today.

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So these are three tremendous, tremendous international organizations of a superb caliber, so give them ... give them a big hand, all of them, before I go on.

(Applause)

And I'll just try and be brief. Obviously our kind of big adventure – and this starts in 2010 with the Muskoka Summit and our attempt to get the world to focus on achieving Millennium Development Goals Four and Five and getting some big donations out of that particular conference. That was followed by the engagement of the Secretary-General and the engagement of the World Health Organization on accountability. And I think we've come a long way since then. We've made some real progress.

Last year was a landmark year. We had the Every Woman Every Child Summit in Toronto where Melinda was there and will be a very hard act to follow Bill. Let me assure you she did a great job on behalf of the foundation. That was followed by the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon doing his own event at UNGA in September with the World Bank moving forward with the global financing facility, hoping to leverage funding particularly for statistics and civil registries that we're going to talk a little bit about.

And, of course, then we had the GAVI Conference, International Vaccine Alliance, the Replenishment Conference in Germany in which I guess a rare recent international conference where we actually achieved our replenishment goals and we were pleased to kick that off by an announcement I made at the Francophonie in Senegal.

Look, I'd say in the year coming up, what's important is to keep momentum going. We have a G7 meeting once again and we'll obviously press our G7 partners to continue their own engagement, their own leadership, their own

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commitment to accountability. We also have this year where we are working on the post-2015 development agenda goals. And I've... You've heard me ...All of you have heard me say this before and I'll say it again. We obviously have to keep these things at the forefront. I'm...

You know, I don't want to beat a dead horse. There is a tendency – Bill and I were talking about this at lunch – there is a tendency for the goals and the targets to begin to widen. There's probably only so much we can do about that but I go back to the... to our fundamental message which is, of all the great things we could be doing there's very few things we could be doing like this where we can be with, you know, relatively modest interventions in terms of cost, making an enormous difference to the survival rates for young mothers and their children. And that is the fundamental building block of everything else that will happen in those societies for the generation to come.

And so notwithstanding how many priorities or targets we end up with, we who are really committed to this need to keep this near the top and need to make it happen. And I think the goal for the year... Look, I think, we'll talk a bit about that later, but when we set these goals I hope what we do is the following - this is what I try to do in government - that we set ambitious goals but our goals are always not so ambitious that they're unachievable. That we set ambitious, achievable goals, and then we go out and actually achieve them. And so I think that's our task, this being really year zero for the next phase.

SUSAN JOHNSON: Very good. Thank you very much. And certainly I hope we get to have a bit of a conversation about accountability and measurement for results, which is part of what you were speaking to there.

Mr. Gates?

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BILL GATES: Great. Well I think it's fantastic that the last 15 years have seen more progress than ever before. And I think we can set even more ambitious goals for the next 15 years. And I want to explain how Canada really has played a critical role in both of those phases. 15 years ago we didn't have GAVI, which raises money for vaccines. We didn't have Global Fund that goes out and gets AIDS drugs. And I'd say that foreign aid in general was fairly confused in terms of the mixed goals of having friends versus having human impact. We still had the habits of the Cold War where a lot of it was funding the same governments no matter what they did with the money, and not really tracking it down to see what went on.

So the Millennium Development Goals really did make a difference. They took a few very measurable things, childhood death being among the most important, and allowed us to look at different countries and say: who are the exemplars and what are they doing? The answer wasn't that surprising. They had good primary health care systems. They got the vaccines out to all the children. And even at very low levels of income, some countries did that incredibly well. And so the fact that the world picked a few metrics and got behind them, really spread best practices.

I know whenever I would meet with an African leader I would tell him here's where you rank in terms of vaccine coverage and childhood death, here's the countries you ought to aspire to learn from to get yourself up at the very top, or, if it was Rwanda or Ethiopia that were the most improved, talk to them about how they spread those practices out to other countries.

And so this journey of taking foreign aid, picking a priority, so that you can develop expertise and know what you're doing, it's a journey that our foundation and the Canadian government have been on, both together and in

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parallel with each other, sometimes independently coming up with the same ideas, sometimes collaborating to say, okay, let's get behind for example, nutrition, which we all know has a big impact but we still have a lot to learn about ... beyond vitamin A, what kinds of things can we do that make a big difference.

Being able to talk about foreign aid is something other than this amorphous set of checks that goes out, to be able to take the stories of mothers, the stories of children, the story of helping a woman grow more on her farm so she can afford the school fees, the focus that you've had, which really I'd say the Muskoka initiative in 2010 was a milestone. Things were moving in that direction but that is where the clarity really came in.

That's been very helpful to the field and just before I came up, we did a survey of the Canadian public and said how do you think about foreign aid? And the majority were actually quite positive and saying that they feel good about it and they'd even like to see the government over time do even more. And that's pretty unusual because the connection people feel is often very weak, and that really goes back to the history of foreign aid. It's not surprising they would feel that way because they didn't have an image of what it is, and neither did the actual people picking the programs. So here we are in 2015. Childhood deaths are half of what they were in 1990. That was 25 years. We want to cut it in half again.

I want to thank the Prime Minister for his leadership on this. The clarity really has been fantastic. I want to thank civil society who has helped execute these things look at the individual programs. And of course, the voters themselves. They're the ones who said, hey, we're willing to take these resources and have it go to these places that are far away, knowing that the impact per dollar is dramatically higher than anything else that can be done to improve equality.

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SUSAN JOHNSON: Very good. Thank you very much. And I think in your remarks there you touched on a number of different issues, all very important. But the one I'm going to pick up on is the whole question of vaccination. Because we know that we've made tremendous progress on the question of immunization and vaccinations, but still there are more than 22 million children a year, or now, remaining unvaccinated. And interestingly enough, here in Canada and the United States, this has re-emerged as a significant issue we see in terms of the outbreak of measles here in North America, somewhat contradictorily.

So Mr. Prime Minister I wanted to start with you though and ask about immunization because of course it's been a core part of Canada's investment and a very important part. And it's part of where I think Canadians see the very practical results of the investments we're making.

But what do you think we need to be doing to ensure that this priority actually reaches all the children that we need to be reaching around the world?

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: Well, look, I think we've got a good start on what we need to do, and that is fulfilling the... replenishing the GAVI ask. We made it. We were pleased to kick that off and I know Bill was in Germany and that's a great achievement moving forward. I just... If you don't mind, Susan, I have a particular announcement I want to make on that today.

J'ai le plaisir d'annoncer deux investissements que notre gouvernement va faire pour les vaccins. Nous investirons avec l'OMS dans une nouvelle initiative d'éradication de la polio. Et aussi j'annonce un investissement destiné à UNICEF Canada et à l'initiative contre le tétanos de la Fondation Kiwanis.

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So just if I can repeat those two things we are doing today. One is announcing support to--another round of support--to the polio eradication initiative of the World Health Organization, and also some funds for UNICEF Canada and Kiwanis on tetanus. So those are two things we're going to move forward with in Canada.

(Applause)

And maybe just one thing to say on both of those, because it's important. I obviously mentioned we are working with some big international organizations, the World Health Organization and UNICEF, but also didn't mention Rotary on polio, Kiwanis...

(Applause)

... on tetanus. And this is an example of what I was talking about earlier how we don't just partner at the top but we partner with those organizations that are out there in the civil society getting people excited about this and... Rotary just gave me an award last fall but actually it was really an award for Canada because Canada has been partnering with Rotary since the late 1980s on polio eradication – and you and I were talking about this earlier. We are down to a couple of small parts in the world where we can actually eradicate this disease when we finish the process, so let's do our best to do that.

You asked... I'm glad you asked the question about what's happening here. We're going to push, obviously push hard through GAVI, through these other mechanisms, to vaccinate the people in the developing world to fight these important... these dangerous ailments.

But, friends, I have to say the following – and my wife would kill me if I didn't say this because she's really, really... really exercised about this. We in the educated, advanced, medically advanced, sophisticated part of the world,

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we have a responsibility when it comes to this. Not just the responsibility to vaccinate our children – which I think every parent has a responsibility to do. And not just the responsibility to encourage that widespread vaccination so we're not putting other kids at risk. But we have a responsibility to set an example, for God's sake. We know these medical interventions work. And as an advanced, educated society it is completely irresponsible for people in this society to communicate anything other than that, anywhere else in the world. So get...

(Applause)

Get your kids vaccinated. Get the facts from the medical and scientific community. And if you're not a doctor or scientist yourself, listen to the people who are. It's that simple.

(Applause)

SUSAN JOHNSON: Well that was very clear.

(Laughter)

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: Yeah. That's my wife speaking.

(Laughter)

SUSAN JOHNSON: Mr. Gates, vaccines at one point were in fact an innovation. And your foundation, very importantly I think, continues to invest in innovation in a number of different aspects. And I'm wondering how you see, you know, the future on vaccination and the role continued innovation can play in terms of ensuring that we continue to achieve what we need to in the area of vaccinations?

GATES: Yeah, there's three big areas we need to invest in in vaccination. The first is the upstream research so that we get an HIV vaccine, a tuberculosis vaccine, a malaria vaccine. Still a lot to do there.

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Second is we need to take the vaccines that have been invented which get to countries like the United States and Canada early and make sure that the delay for them getting out to the poorest countries, that that's very short. There's a certain irony there which is that, for example rotavirus, that's a vaccine for diarrhea, kids in the US and Canada absolutely need that vaccine that prevents you from getting sick. But the risk of dying from rotavirus is very high in the poor countries. And so we absolutely want to get the vaccines to them.

And GAVI, that Minister Paradis and I were...had fun being at this very successful Berlin event that raised the money, that's the first time we've had enough money that now it's fully funded to get rotavirus vaccine, which is over half of diarrheal deaths, to all the children of the world. So within the next five years that dream – which is one of the reasons Melinda and I started the foundation, seeing that inequity for that specific vaccine – we will achieve the final goal there.

There's another vaccine for respiratory disease, the pneumococcus vaccine that likewise was funded with the very generous commitments that Canada and others made at that event. So getting the new vaccines out.

And then finally: coverage. And as you said there's a lot of kids who don't get coverage. That means getting these health systems in some tough places to work well. India has raised its vaccination rates. Ethiopia, Rwanda have very high vaccination rates. But places like Nigeria and Pakistan don't. If we get vaccination rates high enough we can actually eradicate diseases. And so polio with the great leadership of Rotary, we are very, very close on that one. In the same five-year period, with any luck at all, we'll see the declaration of the eradication of polio. And that's only the second disease that we've ever eradicated.

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So vaccination is a top priority. There's nothing that's more effective in terms of... The prices that we pay to buy the vaccines for the poor countries are very, very low because we're getting just the marginal cost, and yet the impact is very high.

SUSAN JOHNSON: Good. Well, thank you for that. I'm going to touch on nutrition which of course we also know is an important aspect of healthy children, good nutrition. And we also know that still, under-nutrition is a contributing factor to, well practically half of the child deaths that are still sadly with us. And Mr. Gates I'm going to stay with you, and I want to ask about some of the projects you've been... your foundation has been investing in on boosting the nutritional value of food. Because again this is an area which the foundation is very much backing innovation, and I'm wondering what you see in terms of the potential for this kind of solution to address under-nutrition?

GATES: Well nutrition is, as you say, this gigantic problem. And it's not just a problem in terms of the deaths that it contributes to. For every kid that dies there are four or five kids, and in Africa that means almost half the kids who, because they haven't had good nutrition, they don't develop physically or mentally. And... So they are simply not able to live up to their potential. And that's a tragedy both for them and for their country. And so it's a necessary thing for these countries to be self-sufficient, which is what the goal of all this work is, that we solve these nutritional problems.

There's a lot that's not known about nutrition, but there's some like vitamin A, the importance of that, that's extremely well-known. One of the great triumphs of nutrition was the recognition that we could put iodine into salt and that iodine deficiency that actually leads to a mental development problem called

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cretinism, that's largely been eliminated because it's so cheap to get it into the salt and we've gotten good compliance.

A similar thing can be done for other vitamins getting into, say, rice or oils or things that are traditionally used. And so this micronutrient movement has made a lot of progress. Now nutrition is very underfunded compared to what it should be. Actually in terms of explicit funding for nutrition, Canada is actually in the lead there. I'm trying to generate more competition for that title so even you'll have to do a tiny bit more to maintain that position. But this is very high-impact stuff although the delivery is tough, particularly as you're getting out to areas of subsistence farming, it's difficult. In some cases we want to breed it into the crops themselves so you don't have to do the supplements. That type of fortification looks like it will work with a number of crops, but a very key area.

SUSAN JOHNSON: Good. Well that's an interesting challenge there.

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: I was just going to say but... Let me just say that we're not jealously guarding this title.

(Laughter)

BILL GATES: All right.

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: We would be satisfied ... I'm glad we're the leader in funding nutrition. We would be happy to be the leader per capita in funding nutrition.

BILL GATES: All right!

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: That would work just fine for us.

SUSAN JOHNSON: Well said. Well said.

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I'm going to move to the questions around accountability because I know this is an area we want to be spending some time on. And certainly as part of the global international community, you know, addressing humanitarian and development needs around the world, I mean we know that we need to get be accountable to our donors. We know we need to be accountable to the people we serve. And we need to be accountable to our partners and have a good partnership relationship. And it also means measuring our results.

Mr. Gates, you're very well known, though, for making bets, taking chances. An important part, I think, of the DNA, if I can use that expression, of the foundation is that you are able to take risks where others may not be so comfortable doing so. But how do you square taking risks and the questions of accountability?

BILL GATES: Well, philanthropy is allowed to take risks that other actors aren't. And so the, you know, say backing a new vaccine research approach, that's a perfect thing for our foundation. We'll probably jump in at the very earliest stage, find that scientist, give him a bit of money. Now if it's beginning to be a high likelihood, then it's required to bring others in then that makes sense. But we should be out there on the cutting edge. We can have a program that takes a very long time. We can have programs that don't work well. Nutrition is a good example where we have funded a lot of research that ended up having negative results. Now that's a contribution to the knowledge but it didn't come out with the magic solution that we'd hoped for.

On HIV vaccines, another example. The US government has been a big funder and Canada funds some of that area. But it's been so tough, that the predictions of 15 years ago proved to be over-optimistic. And... So you want a mix of funders who specialize in different ways. And some pilot program things,

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there you're going to see philanthropy a little bit higher percentage of the money. When you get to the mainstream, now that HIV drugs are very proven, a lot of that money is government money, Global Fund money where Canada gives quite a bit. And then the U.S PEPFAR program, those are the biggest funders there. So we each have our own kind of specialized role, and high risk is where we should be aggressive.

SUSAN JOHNSON: And it's very good that you are. Prime Minister, you are very well known in the international community for having, you know, a strong commitment, and speaking strongly about the importance of accountability. I think I've heard you referred to as the father of accountability.

(Laughter)

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: I don't know about that.

SUSAN JOHNSON: So I want to get your reflections on this in terms of where... I mean I think the investments Canada's made, and your leadership, has built a certain foundation on the accountability questions, but I'd be interested to see how you see this going forward in the next...(inaudible) years...

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: Well, look, I think there's a couple of aspects to accountability. You know, one is just kind of, I would call it basic accountability, and then really what the Gates Foundation and others really specialize in, accountability for results. But on basic accountability you know maybe... I don't want to be too altruistic about this, I... Early in my days as Prime Minister I got kind of tired of going to conferences where I was being pressed to give more to certain causes when the people pressing me I knew hadn't actually fulfilled their last pledge. So, you know, we thought let's start, when we had the Muskoka Summit, of actually producing some accountability reports for the pledges we make.

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At the donor side, what is it we're doing, and are we fulfilling it? Because frankly I think if you're committed to fulfilling it when you make it you're going to be a lot more serious about actually executing it and seeing what happens with it. And that's obviously where organizations like the Gates Foundation have come in and have been so transformational. It isn't just about delivering the money. It isn't just about ticking the contribution boxes and everyone was paid, but what kind of results are we actually getting and where should we put in more, where should we put in less.

But, as I say, we did that coming out of the G8 at Muskoka. I notice it's been continued now by G8 and G7 leaders since, but it was also then picked up very quickly by Margaret Shannon, the World Health Organization, who set up the commission with President Kikwete of Tanzania and myself, where we really wanted to establish a range of accountabilities for all actors in the system to make sure they're doing what they said, and we start to measure these results more broadly.

Look, I will tell you quite honestly, I think this is... This is still to some degree a work in progress. I mean often we're dealing with issues that are not always quantitative. Some of them are qualitative and some of them are hard to judge, and there are risks. But I think we've made great progress on accounting for monies, on trying to ensure result for money.

I think the next... The next big step in terms of maternal and newborn child health, in terms of accountability, really is this stress we want to put on developing systems of vital statistics and civil registration. Because if we are really going to talk about... We know we're saving millions of lives, but as we start to drive these numbers further down we're going to come to some real data quality issues pretty quickly and we're going to actually want to know that there are people

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out there that have been registered, their births, their deaths, and so we actually know what we're talking about in terms of results.

And, of course, as you've heard me say before, we also know that, you know, as soon as we register someone, give them a legal existence that really does put their life on a whole different level of importance to everybody. I think the challenge, as we work with the World Bank and others to develop these systems, they do have to be developed, but let's just make sure – this is my only caution to my own officials and others – let's just make sure that this doesn't become an end in itself just building a vital statistics civil registration bureaucracy. We want to do this because it's essential, but we want the systems to be simple and practical so most of our money can actually be going in delivering the kinds of goods and services that are actually going to change the health outcomes.

SUSAN JOHNSON: Okay, thank you very much. Well I think we can all tell that we've got to very knowledgeable leaders who have a lot of depth in the subject matter, and it's very hard to cover all of the territory that we want to cover this afternoon in the time that we have.

I am going to ask you Mr. Prime Minister just to make a few closing remarks. And if I can ask you to sort of cast yourself forward 15 years, what will we be celebrating in 15 years time, and what will Canadians be able to be proud of as Canada's contribution to that?

RT HON STEPHEN HARPER: I was going to say, in my role it's hard to cast yourself much more than 15 months.

(Laughter)

But... 15 years. Look, as I say, this is the year in which we are going to start to articulate and quantify some of these goals, so I don't want to necessarily prejudge those. But let me just say, put it in this context. There's kind of

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two worlds out there. One of the worlds unfortunately we see every night on the television, and that is the world where we see patterns of growing violence, extremism, social breakdown in large parts of the world. And I don't want to say for second that I think that's an over-reported story or an unimportant story in any way. I think it's vitally important story and one that keeps me up at nights a lot.

But there is another story out there about how, at the most fundamental level of the family, of the community, we are, through organizations such as these, we are seeing things happen, material improvements to the lives of the most deprived people on the planet. And we're seeing progress on these matters... things... in ways that when I was a child were absolutely unimaginable.

The rapidity of them, the literally tens of millions of people being lifted out of those problems through both economic development but also through vital interventions on things like poverty and health and nutrition. I would just say this, that, you know, we are... We are very privileged societies here in Canada and the United States. We value that. We don't want to ever let go of that. But at the same time we do have so much to give to others. And we can actually make a really big difference in their lives in profound ways that frankly we can't do for ourselves because we did those things a long time ago.

So I just hope that all the work that's gone into the network here – I see so many I recognize in the first couple of rows – that we'll continue this focus, notwithstanding coverage on other things, we'll continue to drive these stories about what can be done. We'll get information out about what is being achieved. And we will actually make the kind of transformational differences to the entire planet that have been made in the past 10 or 15 years to certain parts of the world. Because we can do this everywhere, and we should grab the opportunity.

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SUSAN JOHNSON: Good. Well thank you very much. And I really have to say, I think on behalf of everyone, thank you both for the kind of leadership that you continue to demonstrate. Mr. Gates, Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much for sharing this with us this afternoon.

(Applause)

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