

# Notes from Gro Brundtland Talk

Sioux Falls, SD March 14, 2023

By S. Luschas

- About 2,000 people in attendance, of which about 80% were students. Sioux Falls only has about 200,000 residents.
- Some world leaders are hesitant about the WHO treaty because they think they will lose power. This is not true, they will gain more control over their own resources.
- Understands that AI takes a lot of electricity, but we must find a way around it because AI will help us.
- Kept saying “Believe in the Common Good” and “No one is safe until everyone is safe” and “Common Future”
- This is the first generation where the quality of life will be worse than their parents. This is due to pandemics, war, climate change, racial discrimination, etc.
- Gro is a member of “The Monitoring Board” put together by the World Bank and WHO. The board monitors global pandemics. They ‘knew’ in September 2019 that there would be a global pandemic.
- Gro is a member of “The Elders” and kept talking about “The Elders”. Finally she explained that “Global Elders” is a group of former world leaders from around the globe who meets to promote peace and cooperation. It was founded by Nelson Mandela.
- The UN should have intervened back in 2014 when it was clear Russia was planning to invade Ukraine. Ukraine is fighting for freedom and the rule of international law.
- Recent weather events have succeeded in raising awareness about the need for SDG.
- The Pandemic response was “Panic then Neglect”. Initially we panicked then 2 years later we all forgot about the pandemic. This cannot happen again.
- 60% of Norwegians trust each other and their government. That number is only 10% for Columbia. Vaccine uptake is larger if people have trust. We must increase trust.
- Mentioned Trump several times as starting the “Geopolitical crisis”
- All questions were pre-determined by two students in supervision by Dr. David O’Hara, Director of Sustainability at Augustana University
- Gro received several standing ovations for her remarks.

**THE BOE FORUM: A FAMILY LEGACY**

Having served the citizens of South Dakota as Governor (1965-1969) and the people of the United States as Chief Judge of the U.S. Customs Court (1971-1984), Nils A. Boe (1913-1992) devised a program whereby residents of South Dakota and the neighboring states would be provided access to "singularly knowledgeable" individuals who would address events, issues, or problems of "current worldwide or national concern and of broad public interest." In this idea of a non-partisan lecture series for students and the general public, Governor Boe was joined by his two surviving sisters, Borghild Boe, a social work administrator, and Lois Boe Hyslop, a French literature scholar. To the Board of Directors of the Center for Western Studies, Governor Boe gave the responsibility to "institute and conduct" the Boe Forum on Public Affairs.



**BOE FORUM DIVERSITY**

Throughout the Boe Forum's history, we've been proud to emphasize diversity in gender, race, religion, and nationality, such as hosting the first African American woman United States Secretary of State and first woman National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice; the first African American Director of the Hayden Planetarium Neil deGrasse Tyson; the first African American Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell; the first woman U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights and first woman President of Ireland Mary Robinson; the first woman United States Secretary of State Madeleine Albright; civil rights activist and opponent of Apartheid in South Africa, Archbishop of Cape Town, and Nobel Laureate Desmond Tutu; the first woman Justice of the United States Supreme Court Sandra Day O'Connor, Former President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf; Former Queen of Jordan Noor Al-Husseini; Former President and First Lady of Mexico Vicente and Marta Fox.

**CWS PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMS**

The Boe Forum is the premier public affairs program of the Center for Western Studies, examining national and global issues of interest to the people of the area. Other public affairs programs include the Dakota Conference on the Northern Plains, an annual humanities-based gathering of scholars and the general public, exploring topics specific to the region, and a new Public Affairs book series.

**PREVIOUS SPEAKERS IN THE BOE FORUM SERIES**  
CONTINUED FROM THE INSIDE PANEL

- Mikhail Gorbachev, 1996**  
President of the Soviet Union
- George H.W. Bush, 1995**  
President of the United States
- General Colin Powell, 1995**  
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
- CWS BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
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  - Carolyn Johnson '15
  - Vicky Kilian '75
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  - Michael Mullin
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  - John Simko '61
  - Ann Smith
  - Rebecca Sunde '15
  - Harry Thompson
  - Ronelle Thompson
  - Blair Tremere
  - James Volin
  - Craig Wilbur
  - Charles Wise '82
- STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOE COMMITTEE**  
Marcella Baldwin '23

Thank you to Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland for meeting with Augustana journalism students and area high school student editors; to Director of Journalism De Janet Blank-Libra for coordinating the press conference; to Civitas Honors students, under the leadership of Civitas Director Dr. William Swart, for ushering; and to Dr. David O'Hara for his assistance with the Q&A segment of this evening's forum.

**CWS STAFF**  
Harry Thompson, Executive Director  
Kamryn Miller '18, Education Assistant  
Elizabeth Cisar '06, Collections Assistant  
Kari Mahowald '83, Office Coordinator  
Laurel Trautwein, Office Assistant

The views expressed at the Boe Forum on Public Affairs are those of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Center for Western Studies or Augustana University.

**THE CENTER FOR WESTERN STUDIES**  
Improving the quality of social and cultural life in the Northern Plains, achieving a better understanding of the region, its heritage and its resources, and stimulating interest in the solution to regional problems.

During 2019 and 2020, CWS celebrated 55 years since its founding by writer and professor Herbert Krause and 50 years since its official establishment by the Augustana Board of Trustees.

**AUGUSTANA UNIVERSITY**  
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**THE CENTER FOR WESTERN STUDIES**  
Presents the

**26th BOE FORUM ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

March 14, 2023 • 7:30 P.M.  
Elmen Center • Augustana University



**DR. GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND**

First Female Prime Minister of Norway & "Mother of Sustainability"

*Sustainable Development*

**THE BOE FORUM ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

MARCH 14, 2023  
7:30 PM

**PROGRAM**

**NORTHLANDERS JAZZ BAND**  
*Dr. Brian Hanegan, Director*

**GREETING**

*James Volin*  
Chair, Board of Directors  
The Center for Western Studies

**PRESIDING**

*Stephanie Herseth Sandlin*  
President, Augustana University

**PRESENTATION**

"Sustainable Development"

*Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland*  
First Female Prime Minister of Norway & "Mother of Sustainability"

**QUESTIONS FROM AUGUSTANA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

*Janae Becher '24* *Green President*  
Biochemistry & German Major

*Samantha Kross '25*  
Environmental Studies Major

*Dr. David O'Hara*  
Professor of Philosophy, Classics and Environmental Studies  
Director of Sustainability

**ADJOURNMENT**

This event may not be filmed or taped.

**D**r. Gro Harlem Brundtland earned a medical degree at the University of Oslo and Master of Public Health degree at the Harvard School of Public Health.

From 1966-69, she worked as a physician at the Norwegian Directorate for Health and Social Affairs, and then as a doctor at the Ministry of Health in Oslo, where she focused on children's health issues. In 1974, Brundtland was asked to serve as Norway's minister of the environment, focusing on the links between public health and the environment.

In 1981, at the age of 41, Brundtland became the first woman prime minister of Norway — the youngest person ever appointed. Serving three terms, Brundtland was head of the Norwegian government for more than 10 years.

Brundtland was invited by the United Nations (U.N.) secretary-general to establish and chair the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1983 — leading to the Earth Summit, the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

In 1998, Brundtland was elected director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO) and served until 2003 — the same year she was recognized as *Scientific American's* World Leader of the Year. Under her forward-thinking leadership, WHO confronted the global threat of the SARS virus. Her rapid response and information networking are largely credited with helping prevent the widespread growth of the disease.

In 2007, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon chose Brundtland to serve as one of the U.N. Special Envoys for Climate Change. That same year, she became a founding member of "The Elders" — a group of leaders called together by Nelson Mandela and chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who contribute their wisdom, independent leadership and integrity to tackling the world's toughest problems with the goal of conflict resolution and making the world a better place.

Brundtland's numerous awards include the 1988 Third World Prize for leadership on sustainable development, 1989 Indira Gandhi Prize, 1994 der Internationaler Karlspreis zu Achen, International Environment Prize from the City of Göteborg in Sweden, Blue Planet Prize from the Asahi Glass Foundation in Japan and Geneva Forum for Health Award.



**PREVIOUS SPEAKERS IN THE BOE FORUM SERIES**

- Michael McFaul, 2022**  
U.S. Ambassador to the Russian Federation
- Robert C. Green and Jamie Metzler, 2021**  
Harvard Geneticist and Futurist
- Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, 2019**  
Pulitzer Prize Investigative Journalists
- Condoleezza Rice, 2018**  
United States Secretary of State and National Security Advisor
- Neil deGrasse Tyson, 2017**  
Frederick P. Rose Director, Hayden Planetarium
- Antonin Scalia, 2016**  
Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court  
\*Speaker passed away prior to event
- Robbie Bach, 2014**  
Microsoft Corporation Executive
- Jon M. Huntsman, Jr., 2013**  
U.S. Ambassador to China and Singapore and Governor of Utah
- Jared Cohen, 2012**  
Advisor to the Secretary of State and Member of the Council on Foreign Relations
- Mary Robinson, 2011**  
President of Ireland and U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Madeleine K. Albright, 2010**  
United States Secretary of State
- Pervez Musharraf, 2009**  
President of Pakistan
- Sandra Day O'Connor, 2008**  
Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court
- Vicente and Marta Fox, 2007**  
President and First Lady of Mexico
- Al Gore, 2007**  
Vice President of the United States and 2007 Nobel Laureate
- L. Paul Bremer, 2006**  
Presidential Envoy to Iraq
- Rudy Giuliani, 2004**  
Mayor of New York City
- Newt Gingrich, 2003**  
Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and  
and  
Susan Dentzer, 2003  
PBS NewsHour Correspondent
- Noor Al-Husseini, 2001**  
Queen of Jordan
- Desmond Tutu, 1999**  
Archbishop of Cape Town, South Africa, and 1984 Nobel Laureate
- Barbara Bush, 1998**  
First Lady of the United States
- John Major, 1998**  
Prime Minister of Great Britain

Speaker list continues on the back panel.

