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12 November 2009

Good evening everyone, it's a real pleasure. To be with you. Thank you very much for having me and I hope that you will bear with me as I try to speak holding this microphone because I am Italian and I tend to like moving my hands when, when I speak. Um so, this evening I would like to touch on three things ah with you err. First, why do we work on peace, and why do we measure it. Then how do we do it, and finally what are some of, of the results from our work.

Now um some of you I understand have met Steve Killelea, our, our founder and Steve ah is a very successful um Sydney based Businessman and about ten years ago he decided he wanted to do something with ah all the money that he had earned and ah decided that he wanted to help the poor in the developing world.

After many years spending with the poorest of the poor in the most, most difficult conditions, Steve started asking himself, what is peace? What does peace look like, which are the most peaceful countries in the world? What can I learn from them, that I can bring to these other parts of the world and help them in their development towards peace? And he went around asking these questions and didn't get many answers; he um came to see us. At that time I was at the United Nations a major organization in the world working for peace asking those questions. And I was stunned that we didn't have an answer. I'm working for peace, but really, all I talk about everyday is conflict. All we study is conflict, how can we avoid it? How can we come out of conflict?

From that, Steve decided that he wanted to create an index to measure peace. As a businessman, he believes that you can't get what you can't measure. You can't understand what you can't measure, and if you don't measure something, how do you know that the actions you are taking are actually helping or on the other hand hindering the achievement of your goals.

So the World Peace Index was created umm first difficulty we need to define peace, in order to measure it we need to know what we are

measuring and peace means very different things to different people. But we did come to a definition we defined it as the absence of violence not the absence of war but the absence of violence. Ah a definition that we found most people could agree with and a definition that allowed for measurement both inside a country and outside.

We partnered with a columnist intelligence unit. A team of hundreds of analysts that collect and collate the data for us and we created a panel of experts with ah ah some of the most renowned ah of peace experts and statisticians in the world to help guide the development of the index. So the index is now in its third year it ranks 144 countries according to the relative states of peace, it uses twenty-three indicators and it's tested against thirty-three potential drivers of peace. What we're trying to do is really understand what drives peace, what is the fabric of peace. What we calculate? Well externally we look at things like the number of conflicts fought in the past five years, the levels of military expenditure and the support a country provides to the United Nations peacekeeping operations. Internally we look at the number of deaths from organized conflict, the number of displaced people in the country, the percentage of people in jail and the availability of small weapons. Then there's a whole complex way of calculating the index waving the indicator etc, etc which I would not want to bore you with tonight but its all explained on our website if anybody is interested.

Now the results. This year the world was slightly less peaceful than it was the year before and we have determined that was due in part to the sharp increase in um the prices of fuel and food at the beginning of 2008 and due to the economic crisis that started towards the end of 2008. Giving us yet again an argument ah for we had been um looking at for quite a while which is the linkages between economics and peace. How economic fluctuations impact peace?

Um what about the scores the country most at peace in 2008 was New Zealand closely followed by Denmark and Norway. Ah what is interesting is that the most um err most of mm the countries in the top 20 are the western and central ah European countries, all 5 Scandinavian countries top ah rank in the top 10 are a small, stable, democratic countries consistently ranked highest.

Um, I mention who's at the top because that's really what's we're really focused on. We're really trying to understand what drives

countries to be the most ah most peaceful. You might be interested to know where Australia ranked this year, its number 19 um on the index. The truth is that the top 20 countries on the index are very close. There's very little variance between the scores, which is on the other hand very different if we look at the bottom of the index. Iraq for the 3rd year um ranked on the bottom preceeded by Afghanistan and Somalia.

Now. While these results are what makes the headlines, this is what the journalists write about and this is what we look at to see whether our country is going better or worst than our neighboring countries; the real value of our work is in the research we carry out around the data of the index. Which is really helping understand what drives peacefulness.

Now, based on the last 3 years of research; peaceful societies are those societies that are characterized as countries with well functioning governments, providing efficient and accountable governments, they have good relations with neighboring countries, they show low levels of corruption, they have high participation rates in primary and secondary schooling here its quite interesting that, the number of years students are kept in school correlates very well with peacefulness. So the more years your students are kept in school, the more peaceful your country is. Again, the amount of money spent on education doesn't.

Um, some of the other correlates of peace are improving economic conditions in the country, respect for human rights and high levels of freedom of information. We have found NO significant correlation between religion and peacefulness. And the data we have looked is the level of importance of religion in national life. But, through some econometric analysis we have found that in the absence of some of the structures of peace that I just mentioned were good governance, low levels of corruption, etc, there are 3 elements that by themselves would not really impact the peacefulness of a country, but when those other elements are absent make the country more violent.

On of those is the levels by which religion is intertwined with politics. So when we don't have a well functioning government with good relations with neighbouring countries, low levels of corruption and religion and politics are intertwined; that might lead to more violence. The other two factors are electoral process. So we cant go to a country and bring free and fair elections unless we have the

other structures of peace. That's going to lead to more violence. And high GDP per capita, when a country becomes rich but doesn't have the structure of peace; it's likely that money is going to make the country more violent because it's going to possibly spent upon military expenditure.

And now I'm going to come to my last point, which is some research, which we started for the first time this year to really start understanding what are the social attitudes in the countries most at peace. What do people think and believe in the countries most at peace. We currently live with the ah 'PIPA, which is the Program of International Public Attitudes at the University of Maryland. um to re-look at global polling and correlate that against the results of the index. And we found that um citizens in the more peaceful countries are less likely to see their culture as superior to others. They more likely to respect human rights and more likely to perceive the media as having a lot of freedom. They reject the use of torture, in terms of the military; they support military action when sanctioned by the United Nations and are more likely to disagree with the need to use of military force to maintain order.

Concerning economic attitudes, people in the more peaceful countries are likely to believe that anyone can work in their country and they're less likely to believe that globalization is growing too quickly. Finally, and I will leave you with this point; concerning moral and religious aspects we found that in the most peaceful countries, citizens are more likely to think that their politicians do not need to believe in God, they believe that good and evil are contingent and not absolute. And they're more likely to believe that is not necessary to believe in God to be more...

Thank you very much.