
**Speech Given During the Andan Foundation and UNICEF Launch Event
Zurich, 23 May 2019**

**Full Text of Speech by Dr. Christian H. Kälin
Chairman, Henley & Partners**



It is my great pleasure to welcome all of you to this historic venue in the heart of Zurich, and to be with you this evening.

At Henley & Partners we help our clients to seize opportunities that once seemed out of reach. As founders of the investment migration industry, we see every day how we transform the lives of our clients positively. We deal with fundamental human needs: security and mobility, the right to choose.

I do not simply mean that it transforms their ability to travel, or to work or settle in another country. I am also thinking about the way it changes their perception of the world, and dramatically expands their sense of what is possible. Mental barriers are as limiting as physical borders, and we see every day the significant changes that occur in the lives of our clients.

These insights go both ways. An understanding of what these freedoms mean for our clients has led to an awareness of what it means to be denied these freedoms. With that awareness has come a sense of responsibility and a desire to act. It is perhaps inevitable that our humanitarian commitment has always focused on refugees – on people who are forced to move, and whose lives are largely defined by limitation and a lack of options.

Today, conflict- and disaster-induced migration has reached record levels. Nearly 70 million citizens have been displaced by war, of which more than 25 million have been forced to leave their own countries. And these are just the official figures. These global citizens cannot choose where they want to live, or work, or raise their families. Over the years, we have provided support to these most vulnerable people. We have also forged extraordinary collaborations, including the one with UNHCR through which we have for example been able to help with the restoration of identity documents, an absolutely vital link for the protection of refugees.

We have learned a lot and believe we can do even more by joining hands with others —humanitarians, entrepreneurs, and business leaders — who will work with us, contributing both funds and ideas for meaningful and long-term impact on the lives of forcibly displaced people.

It is for this reason that I and many of us at Henley & Partners supported the establishment of the Andan Foundation, a Swiss non-profit and independent foundation. Andan's focus is on creating opportunities for self-sustenance, economic empowerment, and inclusion for forcibly displaced families who have been condemned to long-term exile.

Refugees have an extraordinary wealth of talent and passion to contribute to society – provided they are given the opportunity. The experience of being forcibly displaced can strip people of their sense of independence, and helplessness can lead to hopelessness. We need to make sure people are again empowered, and feel that they can actively contribute, and are given back choices, and their futures. The Andan Foundation is about giving refugees these tools, and restoring their economic self-reliance, restoring their dignity.

Andan works as a convening platform, channelling the private sector's creative power, resources, and entrepreneurial skills towards initiatives that create real solutions for refugees and their host communities. Our focus is on innovative thinking, especially where technology and its application in humanitarian relief is concerned.

As we work on better ways to solve some of the most pressing issues of our time, we are especially focused on helping young people. All refugees are vulnerable, but children are perhaps most the vulnerable of all. They are also the most resilient, most able to adapt, embrace challenges and opportunities, and imagine a different future. All of us at Andan believe that when we help young people, the life-changing benefits extend to their families and to their wider communities.

We are delighted therefore to also partner with UNICEF, an organization that needs no introduction. UNICEF works in 190 countries and territories to save children's lives, to defend their rights, and to help them fulfil their potential.

It is our particular honour therefore that we are joined this evening by a senior representative of UNICEF. Please join me in welcoming Bettina Junker, the Executive Director for UNICEF Switzerland.

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