



November 12, 2019

Today, after an extensive international search, we have announced new leadership for the Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy at the University of Toronto ([see PDAD&C memo #24](#)). I am delighted to welcome Michael Sabia back to the University as the School's new Director. Throughout his career, he has made significant contributions to public policy, to business and to the world of investment. I know he will bring the same kind of engaged thought leadership to the School. Michael's appointment gives me an opportunity to share with the community my thoughts on the evolution of the Munk School and its future.

Reflecting on the complex issues facing our world today, there has never been a time when the role of the School has been more important – both within the University and beyond. We live in a time of substantial global instability and change. The relationship between the world's great powers – China and the United States – is undergoing profound transformation. The social and political consequences of rapid changes in media and digital technology are only just beginning to be understood. The imperatives of innovation, the changing world of work, and the shrinking middle class; the existential issue of climate change; the rise of populism and the future of liberal democracy – these are just a few of the challenges that our societies will face in the coming years. I believe the Munk School has an historic role to play in helping us understand what these changes mean for Canada and our place in a structurally transformed world, and for giving form and voice to made-in-Canada policy solutions to these challenges.

Following an extensive consultation process, the academic communities of the two founding schools agreed to come together in 2018. Thanks to the inaugural leadership of Janice Stein and Mark Stabile, and the outstanding work of Stephen Toope, Peter Loewen, Linda White and Randall Hansen, the Munk School and the University of Toronto have the opportunity to play a leading role in shaping national and global debates on issues high on the public agenda. The world is looking for compelling ideas and practical solutions. With its remarkable faculty and staff, and with students who have the talent and ambition to excel as leaders across the public, not-for-profit, and private sectors, I am confident that the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy is now poised to make an even bigger difference in Canada and the wider world.

In light of this, the Provost and I have given Michael Sabia, as the School's new Director, the mandate to realize the potential of the recent amalgamation – in other words, to build one of the world's best schools of global affairs and public policy. This means continuing to excel in academic research and teaching. But it also means taking further steps to build a school that is widely respected beyond the academy for the impact of its ideas and the engagement of its faculty and students.

I look forward to working closely with Michael on goal setting and strategy for the school as it moves forward to meet this high ambition. The Dean of Arts & Science, the Provost, and I have also asked the Director to lead a consultative process within the University to determine whether establishing the Munk School as a free-standing Faculty would be a constructive step forward. We welcome engaged conversation with all of you about the School's future.

I am immensely proud of everything that has been accomplished at the Munk School so far. With the invaluable financial support and ongoing commitment of the Munk family and other generous donors, and with the dedication of the School's first-class faculty and staff, I am confident of our continued success.

Meric S. Gertler
President