Milton Wolf Seminar 2019

This year’s Milton Wolf Seminar entitled “The New Global Media (dis)Order in International Relations: Agonizing Struggles and Elusive Solutions” took place on April 23-25, 2019 at the Diplomatic Academy Vienna.

As we move further into the 21st Century, a seemingly endless array of challenges, e.g. fake news, information warfare, environmental degradation, migration crises, cyber warfare, terrorism, and rising global populism, have upended once safe democracies, destabilized traditional diplomacy, and called into question the future of the international system. The relationship between media and international relations are at the center of many of these crises. Platform empires like Facebook and Google increasingly appear to operate as sovereign states while many traditional “old media” platforms have been starved financially and are unable to cut effectively through the noise of a distorted and dystopian media environment.

While there have been countless conferences that focus on documenting media’s role in the breakdown of the international order, this seminar is traditionally dedicated to solutions. The 2019 Milton Wolf Seminar explored a wide range of proposals for how to ameliorate pressing challenges to international relations, particularly those wrought by a weak and degraded media and communications environment and probe the strengths and weaknesses of conceivable avenues forward. It brought together actors from diverse arenas who conceptualized solutions to today’s acute issues related to media and international relations.

Panellists included Amelia Arsenault, Senior Advisor in the Public Diplomacy Research and Evaluation Unit at the US Department of State; Peter Guschelbauer, spokesperson of the Austrian Foreign Ministry and Head of the Department for Press & Information; Andrey Rikhter, Senior Adviser at the OSCE Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media; Jim Rutenberg from the New York Times; and many more.

The event was jointly organized by the American Austrian Foundation (AAF), The Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, and the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna (DA) with support from The Wolf Family Foundation, The Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation, and the U.S. Embassy, Vienna.

Reception at the US Chargé d’Affaires Residence in Vienna

Pictures of the Milton Wolf Seminar 2019