

Mr. Zaslavskiy and Ms. Chayes,

We received your letter of September 18, 2019 regarding the Council on Foreign Relations' acceptance of a charitable contribution from the Blavatnik Family Foundation to endow paid internships here.

You should know that we at CFR take the issue of funding very seriously. We do not accept funding of any sort from foreign governments or government-controlled entities. We do not accept gifts from businesses to support programs where there could be perceived or real conflict of interest. In the case of donations from individuals and foundations, we undertake a rigorous review consistent with best practices for organizations that accept charitable contributions to make sure that acceptance of the gift poses no risk to our reputation for non-partisanship, independence, integrity, and academic freedom.

We are confident that this gift from the Blavatnik Family Foundation to fund the internship program here meets these criteria. I would add that we have received a highly positive response to its announcement from many of our members and others. We are grateful to CFR member Len Blavatnik for his generosity and foresight in endowing this program. As with all such gifts, the donor has no say in the process for selecting individuals who would come to CFR and overall administration of the program, nor any aspect of the greater CFR research agenda.

By providing a competitive hourly wage to all interns, the goal of the Blavatnik Internship Program is to make CFR's highly competitive internships accessible to a broader range of qualified students from all backgrounds, making way for new talent and increasingly diverse perspectives in the field of international relations. The long-term impact of this gift is difficult to overstate. It will further CFR's efforts to develop the next generation of leaders in government, academia, and the private sector.

As I am sure you are aware, the Blavatnik Family Foundation has supported international schools of business and government to educate and inspire the next generation of global leaders. To that end, the Foundation has made transformational gifts to Harvard, Yale, and Tel Aviv Universities, and established the Blavatnik School of Government at Oxford University. We are proud to find ourselves in such distinguished company.

Sincerely,  
Richard Haass

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