

## Charles Kenny: Speaker

### Biography

Charles is the author of *Getting Better: Why Global Development is Succeeding and How We Can Improve the World Even More* (Basic Books: 2011) and *The Upside of Down: Why the Rise of the Rest is Great for the West* (Basic Books: 2014). He spent fifteen years as an economist in the World Bank, travelling the planet from Baghdad and Kabul to Brasilia and Beijing. He now works at a Washington DC think tank, the Center for Global Development, where he researches and advocates for policies governing investment, trade, technology and migration that would be good for both developing and industrialized countries alike. In addition, he is a widely cited researcher on the economics of happiness. He has a history degree from Cambridge University and Masters degrees from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

Charles is a contributing editor at *Foreign Policy* magazine and was a columnist for *Bloomberg Businessweek*. He writes on global development and its impact on the US. He has also written for outlets including the *Wall Street Journal*, *Politico*, the *Washington Post*, the *Atlantic*, *Time*, the *Guardian*, *Vox*, *Salon* and *CNN*.

He has published academic articles, chapters and books on issues including what we know about the causes of economic growth, the link between economic growth and broader development, the causes of improvements in global health, the link between economic growth and happiness, the end of the Malthusian trap, the role of communications technologies in development, and the 'digital divide.'

### Speaking topics:

Charles can speak on a range of topics related to globalization and global progress and its impact on America, as well as global health and the economics of happiness, including:

- Why the rise of the Rest is great for the West: China's economy is now as big as America's and the developing world is the same size as Europe and North America put together. That is simply fantastic news for the US and Europe. A richer developing world imports more of our products, invents and produces goods and services we want and provides educated manpower that we need. And as it gets richer, happier, healthier and more stable, it is more peaceful and less of a source of potential threats.
- Stunning global progress in the quality of life: The average quality of life of humanity has never been higher. The chance of dying in young childhood is half the level of twenty years ago, the number of people educated, the proportion living in a democracy, the number living in a country at peace, even average beer consumption --all are at their highest ever in history. That's great news for them --but it is also great news for us, and speaks to a positive global future.
- Why Americans should get out more: Americans are some of the most stay-at-home people in the industrial world --that's bad for us and the rest of the planet. The rest of the world is increasingly rich, peaceful, educated and interesting. It offers fantastic opportunities for tourism, learning, jobs, investment, healthcare and elder services for those willing to travel.
- The future of global economic and social progress: The last twenty years have been the best in human history when it comes to global progress. The next twenty years could be as good. We have the capacity to wipe out a number of diseases and massively

improve global health, extend rapid economic growth, further reduce global violence and spread human rights. And America has a selfish (and central) role to play in making that possibility a reality.

- Progress against global infection and how to stop the next plague. In the last few decades we've wiped out smallpox and brought polio to the edge of extinction. Measles and malaria could follow. For the first time since the dawn of history, most people are dying of non-infectious conditions. But if we aren't careful, infection could come back as the most common cause of death worldwide.
- Happiness in the workplace and economic performance: Happy people are more outgoing, optimistic and cooperative. It isn't surprising that they do better at work. That can be good for a company's -and a country's- bottom line. So, how do you make people happy? It isn't easy (a lot of it is in the genes). But there are things you can do. Limit the spread between high and low- paid employees, use promotions as well as pay for rewards, keep commutes short and holidays long, and make sure people have time to spend with family.

### **Testimonials:**

"It was great to see this longer term more positive perspective to properly balance the negatives in the news and many presentations."

*Scott Muldavin Senior Advisor at Delos*

"We loved your presentation to our group. Your presence at our conference was so beneficial."

*Gwen Woodbury, Buttonwood Investments*

"Much appreciation for that dynamic and surprisingly humorous keynote at the symposium. I'm glad we can laugh on a positive, while talking about the developing world.... Everyone I talked to enjoyed the symposium."

*Jack Randolph, Oklahoma University*

" Thanks so much for your speech back in April -- the audience feedback was tremendous, and I found it fascinating."

*Megan Greenwell Zocalo Public Square*

"I thought your seminar was terrific... thoughtful and informative"

*Melissa Ingber, Aspen Institute*

### **Videos of recent speeches:**

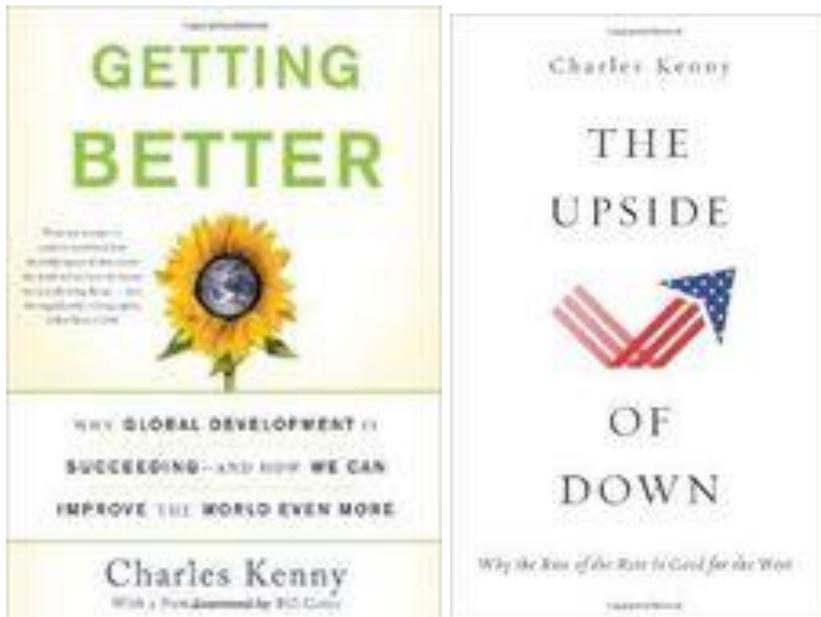
*VeerStichting Leiden:* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r\\_NqSZeF5VI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_NqSZeF5VI)

*Urban Land Institute, San Francisco:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ie0eb1mYD1Q&feature=youtu.be&a>

*Zocalo Public Square, Los Angeles:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rhP8z0zzaME>

## Cover art of recent books:



## Press:

Regarding *Getting Better*, Bill Gates penned a positive [Wall Street Journal](#) review of the book which became the preface to the paperback. David Leonhardt wrote about the book in the [New York Times](#). There were positive reviews of the book in [Time](#), the [Financial Times](#), the [Nation](#), [National Review Online](#), the [London Evening Standard](#), the [Daily Mail](#), [Daily Kos](#), the [China Post](#), and [Kirkus Reviews](#). Bjorn Lomborg and Steven Pinker both [recommended](#) it to *Foreign Policy* as a best book of 2011 and *Foreign Affairs* [picked](#) it as one of the [best international relations books](#) of 2011. *The Upside of Down* was reviewed [in the Financial Times](#), [Kirkus Reviews](#), [Publishers Weekly](#), the [Globe and Mail](#), [The Guardian](#), [ESPN](#), the [Boston Review](#), and [Reuters Blogs](#). It appears (briefly) in [this New York Times article](#).

## High resolution photograph:

[http://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/media/images/experts/hi-res/C\\_kenny\\_hr.jpg](http://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/media/images/experts/hi-res/C_kenny_hr.jpg)

## Engagements:

Charles' current number of speaking engagements per year ranges between three and six, he would hope for between six and twelve.