



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 19, 2019

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**Mayor Emanuel Interviews Venture Capitalist and Peres Center for Peace and Innovation
Chairman Chemi Peres on "Chicago Stories" Podcast**

On this week's episode of "[Chicago Stories](#)" podcast, Mayor Emanuel was joined by Chemi Peres, Israeli venture capitalist and chairman of the Peres Center for Peace and Innovation, to talk about impact investing and peace through technology, as well as Israel and its recent elections, and his work in advancing his father's legacy of visionary leadership.

Purpose is the line that runs across Peres's work and vision. He embarked on his hugely successful venture capital career nearly 30 years ago, and over that time he said he found the best companies are the ones that seek to create a positive, global impact.

As Peres told Mayor Emanuel, the future of innovation won't be found in any particular space like artificial intelligence or blockchain, but "impact investing," which looks beyond the product and at the moral power of the innovation itself.

That's not to say that companies and start-ups *need* to have a "mission" in order to make money—the money's certainly there—it's that the best are the ones that go hand-in-hand.

"Those companies that are doing both—in my view—are going to be the more resilient, the more successful ones, the more desired ones," Peres said, "and when you have competition and human talent, especially on the young generation, I think they will turn to those companies that are doing something with a purpose."

It's that same sense of purpose that drives Peres's global work as chairman of the Peres Center for Peace and Innovation, which was founded in 1996 by his father, statesman and Nobel Laureate Shimon Peres.

As he told Mayor Emanuel, thanks to the advances in innovation, for the first time in its history, humanity has an opportunity to achieve new heights without being at the expense of others.

"The empires of yesterday were nations expanding with military force—with the sword. The new empires are going to use computers, are going to use data, are going use scientists," Peres told Mayor Emanuel. "This is why peace and innovation are coming together."

The key to humanity's success though, Peres said, lies in leaders who are willing to move the world forward. But as Peres noted, he didn't just mean leaders of nations, but also leaders of universities and innovation centers, and leaders of cities like Chicago, where Peres came to sign a memorandum of cooperation with Mayor Emanuel for stronger ties through innovation.

"I believe that with the right leadership, with the right set of mind, with the right regulation maybe in some cases, we can have technology and science as a driving force for a better tomorrow," Peres said. "It's up to the leaders, and I'd like to see leaders that are doing exactly that. Bringing all those moral values and innovations together in order to make a better world."

Be sure to listen to the entire episode as Peres and Mayor Emanuel also talk about the impact of Israel's recent elections, living the values of tikkun olam, the innovative potential of the Middle East, and understanding the "empires of tomorrow."

###