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Fireside Chat  
(Pre-Recorded)

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Webinar

Keynote Speaker: Ruth Porat  
CFO, Alphabet, Inc.

Moderator: Marie-Josée Kravis  
Vice Chair and Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute  
Chair Emerita, The Economic Club of New York

## Introduction

President Barbara Van Allen

Well, good afternoon. We've had a wonderful set of conversations today, and I hope everyone is taking away a lot of great insights from the robust lineup of speakers that have shared their expertise with us. I'm Barbara Van Allen, President and CEO of The Economic Club of New York.

It's my honor to next introduce our Keynote Speaker this afternoon, Ruth Porat, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Alphabet. Ruth joined Google as Senior VP and Chief Financial Officer in May of 2015 and has also held the same title at Alphabet since it was created in October of 2015. She's responsible for finance, business operations, real estate, and workplace services. Prior to joining Google, Ruth was Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at Morgan Stanley and actually held various senior roles there before that time.

She's a member of the Board of Directors of Blackstone, Inc. and the Stanford Management Company and the Board of Trustees of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. She previously spent ten years on Stanford University's Board of Trustees. She holds a B.A. from Stanford, a master's in science from the London School of Economics, and an MBA from The Wharton School.

Our interviewer for this session is Marie-Josée Kravis, Vice Chair and Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute and Chair Emerita of The Economic Club of New York. Due to a schedule conflict, the interview was pre-taped just a few days ago and we're going to now turn to that recording. Thank you.

### Conversation with Ruth Porat

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: So, Ruth, it's wonderful to have you, and thank you for taking the time. And as we've had these women's forums every year to mark Women's Month, the month of March, there has been one recurring issue and it's recurring again today, and it's the access of women to capital. So before we talk about...Ruth's at Google and technology and so on, maybe we could look back and talk about your role at Morgan Stanley, your role in investment banking and maybe share with us your views on this whole issue of access to capital, for example.

RUTH PORAT: Well, first, it's great to be with you. I'm only sorry we're not physically in the same place, but it's wonderful to be with you, so thank you, and with the whole group. So, look, reflecting on my career, I started at Morgan Stanley about 35 years ago, and I would say everything has changed and nothing has changed, in a certain sense. When I look across industries, I look at access to capital, I look at roles, there's been improvement. No question about it. More women have a seat at the table, a bigger seat at the table. But at the end of the day, very much to your question, you look at the

data. CEOs, Chairmen, leaders of asset management firms, venture firms, private equity firms, and it's still disproportionately held by men, those senior roles. So I think one of the key elements is we just need to continue to press forward as we have been.

In contrast to when I started, we are having these conversations. In contrast to when I started, there's data that underscores the diverse leadership, diverse groups actually results in more robust conversations, better outcomes, better financial performance. And so we are on a journey and we have continued to see progress, just not at a fast enough pace. No question about it.

I would say when I was at Morgan Stanley, one of the most important conversations I had was when I actually moved to the equity capital markets floor to take on the role of leading technology equity capital markets. And at the time, the head of Institutional Equities called me to his office and he said, I think you're going to soar, but I want to be your senior air cover. I will backstop you if there's an issue and I would like to see you soar, and I will be your senior air cover.

And what really struck me about this senior air cover point is I was so grateful to know if there was ever an instance in which I had an issue, whether that was a business issue or meeting, kind of the blockages that you have as women going through the industry, there was somebody I could turn to. And I think we all need senior air cover and we all need to be senior air cover. And these kinds of conversations and the roles we all play,

the role of men as allies, the role of these kinds of conversations are what give me optimism that we'll continue to see progress.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: So did you use that senior air cover often? I don't want to pry into specific issues, but it might be interesting to see how that worked.

RUTH PORAT: You know, whenever there were areas where I was wrestling with a question, an issue, a substantive business issue, it was great to have a place that I thought was both a safe place but also a place to get great judgment. And one of the things that I credit with my career and career choices is having terrific sponsors, people who took a risk on me and who were really direct with me on issues. Those were both business issues and career issues, and so I viewed him as one of the many people who I credit as being a sponsor along the way.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: So many of the women who participate in this women's symposium have encountered great skepticism and many of them are running or starting companies and so in the startup world, in the venture capital world or private equity, they find that they encounter what seems to be much more skepticism than their male colleagues. And I don't know if that's accurate or not or if there are other biases that are involved. But other women have said to me that they feel also that women don't show the same confidence as men in selling themselves and in selling their ideas. And I wonder, in your experience, if you've encountered, I think both sides

of that, both the skepticism and maybe the more modest approach that the women take.

RUTH PORAT: I think probably yes to both, but if I would go instead to, and so what do we do about it? I've already said the importance of sponsors. I think actually having that senior air cover, having that confirmation, affirmation, both opens doors and also reinforces confidence around the ask.

The other critically important point, in my view, is anchor anything you're doing in data because it is harder to argue the merits around data. Anchor in data and the rest will follow is a phrase I use all the time. And I don't think data necessarily, when I say data what I'm looking for is a way to help people think through issues. I often say I'm much more interested in sensitivity analysis than I am a flat presentation about what is the answer.

Because what you're trying to do is engage people who come at issues with a different set of expectations or bias, and so how do you get someone to engage in a discussion about the art of the possible. Where is my business going to go? What is the potential for long-term growth? Let's dimension what are the key variables. And if you can anchor it in data, one, I find it's easier to drive the conversation. And two, you're coming from a position where you can argue a lot of different elements of it but help me understand which parameters are important.

And so, for me, that builds the confidence to say I know I've got a point of view that you should listen to. Just engage with it because I'm not coming with an answer, I'm coming with a way of thinking that's anchored in data. Both of those, I think help bust through what might otherwise be discomfort in the ask or resistance from the...

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: I'd like to go back to the dot.com boom in the late 90s and how the explosion of support for a number of dot.com companies, many of which, a large part, a proportion of which, don't exist today, and the world today where the focus is less on, and much more on products or services and new ideas. And I'm sure you're right in the midst of that. Are you really feeling a big difference? Or is it just something that we seem to perceive from the outside?

RUTH PORAT: Well, if you go back to that 2000 period, I think there's always a risk when capital is free and people can just do whatever they want and it was very concerning. I was running technology banking at the time. And I'll never forget, everyone who had anything that went online thought they had the next great thing. And my point consistently was if you're not doing anything transformative with technology, there's nothing that's durable, so how are you building something? How do you connect the dots to the future for a business that is durable, transformative, and truly is not just an extension of the real world?

And so it wasn't surprising, in fact, Mary Meeker was my partner at the time as the

research analyst and kept very clearly saying the overwhelming majority of these will fail. There is nothing differentiated. There is nothing here.

Now, if you fast-forward, most certainly I think one of the key lessons that we see time and time again is that if you're not focused on quality growth, if it's growth for growth's sake, it doesn't end well. And there are plenty of companies where the focus has just been grow fast and then figure it out later. I think the problem with that is, one, you inculcate a culture, which is more about growth at all costs rather than quality growth, and that is hard to reposition. And you don't end up with a durable, sustainable business model.

So when I'm looking at, the way we look at businesses is it goes right back to the earliest days in finance. What is the value of a business? It's the net present value of future cash flow. So, yes, you may not know what that is in those earliest days when you're in technology, but you want to connect the dots to the future and focus on quality growth at all times. I think that's one of the most important lessons in every volatile environment.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: That was one of the attractions that Google had towards you when they brought you in. You had a real challenge about financial issues and also that quality growth. Talk to us about coming from Wall Street to Silicon Valley and the challenges of cost cutting or financial responsibilities, fiscal

responsibilities within a corporation that has grown that quickly.

RUTH PORAT: Well, you know, I think to me there are a number of lessons that I got at Morgan Stanley that were so relevant when I came here. One of the first ones was if you don't invest for long-term growth, you are sowing the seeds of your long-term destruction. And I learned that in one of my first deals. I was on the hostile takeover attempt of Gillette. And the CEO at the time said do whatever you need to do to defend me, but you cannot touch my R&D budget, and I will not tell you what it is. And it was frustrating but his comment was I would rather not be an independent company, I'd rather actually die than to see, than try and run this without this R&D budget. We were able to keep the company independent and years later learned that that R&D budget was about the sensor razor. The case study was written up in the book, *From Good to Great*. Because he knew that if you don't invest for long-term growth, he didn't need to be independent.

And I saw that firsthand as a young associate at Morgan Stanley and it's really colored the way I've looked ever since then, if you're not investing for long-term growth, you will pay for it later. And too often, as a banker, I saw companies that would come basically when they were out of runway and it was like, now what do I do? Now what do I sell? Well, it's too late at that point. So investing in long-term growth is critical.

To me, if you're doing it, in any company where you're trying to do something

transformative, you must reach. And if you're reaching, by definition not everything works. So I think the flip side of investing for long-term growth is actually pruning, stack ranking, exiting certain things, deprecating, whatever word you want to use, they go together.

And so your question is a really important one that I'm often asked about how do you get into the mindset, the notion of choices? Well, if you are taking risk, by definition everything doesn't work, or you're not taking enough risk, or you're not being honest enough with yourself about it. So, to me, the narrative very much was it's about the two together. And Google has always been about investing in long-term growth and so what we're looking to do is make sure that where things aren't working, we're reinvesting those in the highest priorities.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: But how does stack ranking work in an organization like Google, which as you say it's always been strong on investing in long-term growth but also taking risks and experimenting and exploring new ideas, but also new products and so on?

RUTH PORAT: Yes, there are a couple of different things. One is an approach I used at Morgan Stanley, which is if you make the resource envelope for any business leader tight enough, by definition, the leaders need to stack rank what they're doing. And I consistently said everybody's got a bottom 10%, but you as the business leader are

going to be in a better position to know where you want to put your priorities. And so it starts with an envelope as we call it, a resource envelope that is tight enough that it forces the stack ranking.

Second, you want to make sure that you don't miss those breakthrough opportunities so you do want to make it safe to have sort of a sandbox, an area where you can explore. At Google, they started years ago with a concept of 20% time. If you're an engineer and you have a great product idea and you want to go explore it, you can either do it here with 20% time where you can go off and do what you want, or you will go do it elsewhere and get funded. And so things like Gmail came out of 20% time.

We then concluded that actually you need more than 20% time for something so we created an entity called X. It is our moonshot factory. And the entire approach there is fail fast and try and iterate and come out with what are the big 10X, as we call them, moonshots. So there are two parts to it, which is, one, the rigor in annual capital planning. Two is structural. Create opportunities to actually explore.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: So, I mean it's a wonderful structure and it works at Google obviously if we look at the results of what you've achieved. But what advice would you give in that sense and with that rigor, a combination of rigor and risk-taking, to smaller companies or just startups?

RUTH PORAT: Yes, there are a host of things from all the questions that we've gone through. So when you're starting, you know, and much, I'm making it almost sound like everything is formulaic. We start, we know exactly where things are going to go. One of the most important elements at Google today is all of our investment in AI.

And years ago, our CEO, Sundar Pichai, said we are AI first. It is enabling us to enrich every element of our products – the way we relate to consumers, to advertisers, to merchants, the way we find efficiency. And in many of these things, you just don't know when you start what the application may be. And we talk about natural language translation. When that project started, it's just a small thing, no one knew where it was going to go. And so there is an element of experimentation. No question. I don't want to suggest that everything has a clear financial model from day one. So there's an element of experimentation.

But I think this question that I always asked as a banker in technology, what is your vision? How do I connect the dots to the future? Where do you think this can go? It's still a fair question, A. B, for a small company, I think one of the very important elements fairly early on in one's life, the cycle, is ensuring that you're building that operational base to deliver quality.

So, as an example, as a finance person, I think every manual process is an accident waiting to happen. I think being able to have a solid IT base on which to rest is

absolutely critical and enables you to go faster. It's not the sexiest thing to invest in, but if you're growing at the pace at which technology, strong technology companies do, by the time you realize what you need to build in excellence, you've gone so quickly, it's hard to catch up. So getting someone on your team who has pattern recognition, because they've scaled things in the past, I think is invaluable.

When I got here that was one of the things that I added to the team, a lot of amazing talent, but I wanted to bring in people who had pattern recognition from having been in good times and bad times, who had seen a lot of different kind of growth elements and requirements. And I think that diversity of experience also is really valuable as you're going through a growth curve.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: So you use the word diversity but in a different context of experience. Tell us about women and technology, your experience.

RUTH PORAT: So I think that at the highest level, there's more impatience here than there was in finance. I met, as I'm sure many on this call, as you, met many issues along the way, if that's a polite way to put the problems being a woman in finance. And yet I found out here there's a level of impatience, which I attribute to the fact that everything that is touched is so transformative. So if you can teach a car to self-drive, why can't we solve this faster?

And so there's an urgency, which I think is extraordinary and actually would encourage women in all industry to have because it forces the dialogue around what more now.

We've all heard tone from the top is important. That's table stakes. But if you don't put rigor and process and data around it, you're not going to accelerate the pace of change.

And, to me, that's one of the biggest elements so all of the rigor and process that comes out of this urgency and sense of accountability is heightened out here, in my view, relative to what I experienced in New York.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: Well, we often hear, we used to hear it in the economic and financial world, well, I just can't find women. They're not there. And, you know, the argument and we've heard it, I'm sure you've used it also, is, well, maybe you're looking in the wrong places or maybe you're trying to hire yourselves. And it's not quite the way you're going to find women and a more diverse workforce. Is that something you encounter? Is it much deeper than that in terms of really women in science, women doing STEM studies and so on? Is there a dearth of women?

RUTH PORAT: I think the excuse that there aren't enough, I agree with that, I think that's problematic. You know, you put anyone in an underrepresented group in a leadership position and the multiplier effect it has for others who say I can be that person is profound. There's one thing I would want to add, I'm going to circle back to your question, the reality is all of us are actually in technology, every industry. Because when you think about this digital transformation, it truly has accelerated. And what that

means is any industry you're in, you should be embracing technology, whether it's, again about revenues, efficiencies, the ability to deliver. So we're all in tech first of all.

The second point is there are many roles in technology that are not just pure computer science. So anybody who is saying, hey, can I enter that field? I'm not a technologist, I'm having an amazing time in a technology company, but even more broadly. When I think about AI, one of the really important elements of AI is what is called human-centered AI. If you don't want to just program and replicate what's in the world today, much of which, as you've said, your questions, isn't working all that well, you want to bring in multiple disciplines.

So human-centered AI is about bringing computer scientists together with humanists, social scientists. If you're going to, for example, think about how AI can be applied to bank lending, let's make sure we don't replicate the biases of bank lending that have plagued society for decades, if not centuries. So bring in multiple perspectives. So there are lots of different roles.

And then, to your point, I think we can always do more. And so programs that encourage women to get into STEM programs, I think are fantastic. We're doing a lot of that with things like a Techmaker Program, which are ambassadors and reach-outs to younger women in high school. So, yes, increase the funnel, but I think, that's important, but that's not an excuse. There's still amazing talent in a lot of different places and a lot

of different roles out there.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: I was hoping you could tell us a little more about the Techmaker's program because I think that's a very interesting initiative.

RUTH PORAT: Yes, so what we did is we worked to create a host of women who are effectively ambassadors who come in and convene groups of women globally in order to help them understand what's the art of the possible, what's the career, what are some of the openings and options?

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: But you are also reaching out, you're not just bringing them in, you're reaching out to schools and so on to convey that message?

RUTH PORAT: We work through a lot of schools in a number of different programs. We actually even have a program outside of the U.S. called Mine the Gap, which is for younger students. And so the whole objective is to continue to broaden the funnel and to make it really clear what is in the art of the possible and so we do it in a host of different ways. We also have a program I'm really proud of called Grow with Google, which is a digital skills training program, which reaches out to underrepresented, disproportionately underrepresented groups, which is women, but also Black, Latinx and others and it's really about giving people in a short period of time the digital skills they need in areas like data analytics or user experience, project management, so that in

three to six months they can get a certificate that opens doors for them.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: And how do people, people just, they go online and sign up with that? Or is that done through the public school system?

RUTH PORAT: So Grow with Google is a program, you can actually Google it, and I'm really proud that we actually have four certificates. Our view on all of these digital skills training programs is it's wonderful to do them, but if we can do them with a broad consortium of companies – let me step back – what we do is three to eight months, or three to six or eight months you get a certificate in one of these areas. But we want the certificate to be something you can use anywhere. So we built out in the U.S. a consortium of more than 150 companies. Anyone on this call who is interested in joining the consortium, we'd love to have you because basically you get trained people with this credential in a specific area who are up and running.

And what we've further done is we just recently announced a program where we're actually funding any kind of support that is needed. So if you need daycare or other things, there's a certificate support program that we're also doing. The main point is, yes, you can get skills. Go to Grow with Google and you'll see the various programs.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: Wonderful. I'd like you to talk maybe about how the pandemic has also changed work life. And Google has, I think, quite a

sophisticated hybrid model of work. Could you share that with us and how you came to those decisions?

RUTH PORAT: So pretty early on in the pandemic we concluded that people would want to continue working at home post-pandemic. Google lives on Google Workspace. We have Collaborative Docs, Collaborative Tools. Many times, even pre-pandemic, I would do a meeting on video with colleagues who were down the street, down in Sunnyvale and I'm in Mountainview, because it was just efficient. So the transition wasn't that hard.

And then as we went into work-from-home, we said, you know, we think people are going to want to continue to have the productivity lift that comes from being at home but we want people back in the office at least sometimes. There's collaboration. There's serendipity. There's culture. There's a whole host of reasons.

So we settled early on, on a notion of this hybrid 3/2 workweek, but we said we also want to give people more agency. So we added things like four weeks of the year you can work wherever you want, this concept of giving people some more choice. We also massively broadened out the number of locations. And we said, for some roles, if you don't need to come in, you can, let's try remote every day. And so we've got quite a mixture, depending on what the role is. Some it's just not practical to assume you could be remote every day.

And so we're trying to mix it up. We're experimenting both in the structure of the day, but also in how we use our workspace. So refitting our space so that when you come in, it's all about convening. So it's walls that move around. You can be a group of four, a group of eight. We're looking at different things with technology so that, for example, we built these campgrounds outside. We have the privilege of wonderful weather 12 months of the year. And they have screens in the circle so that if you're not here, it makes it easier to still have the conversation. So it's a combination of what's the day like and how do you use technology and how do you use space.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: You mentioned culture. Does that make it difficult, more difficult to create a corporate culture when people, many people have never met one another or people are working from remote spaces, have a different attachment? How do you keep the very, very strong culture in a much more diffused environment like that?

RUTH PORAT: Yes, it's a really important question. I think for all of us as leaders it puts a really important point, how do you make sure you're bringing people together and convening? So I think culture benefits from this hybrid structure in that you're a magnet for talent, people do want to have that flexibility that comes with working at least part of the time from home. You get better talent when you're opening up the number of sites, in particular diverse talent. We're really excited with what we're seeing in New York, Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit. So you can get more talent, which is really exciting.

But to your point, the heart of your point is, okay, but you're not together every day. Like I grew up with the benefit of being in that meeting, pulled in at the last minute. So you just have to be substantially more deliberate about it. And I would say it's our responsibility as leaders to make sure that we're finding ways to convene people. In certain respects, when you're convening them on a video conference call, you've got everyone's name up there and you can make sure you're calling on people.

So you can argue that there are benefits from finding ways to do things online, but you do have to be more deliberate about it. You need to make sure when you're bringing people together you're doing it in a way that's worth their time to come in. Just to say 3-2, but on those days when you're in the office, we're not doing things together, what's the point? I don't need somebody to check the box that they came in. I need to be with them when they're in. So I think that, as leaders, heightened responsibility, but it's going to get us a more dynamic and excited and productive workforce.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: Has it changed also your policies or practices with regard, for example, to childcare?

RUTH PORAT: Well, one of the important things we did is, we, I and the leadership group here, I think like many, are very concerned about wellness issues as a result of the pandemic. And the burden on women, sadly, has been high, very high. And so one of the things that we did very early on is created a Carer's Leave, which is you can take

14 weeks off in whole or in part, a couple hours every day, however you want to do it, if you just need a break because you're trying to juggle kids who aren't in school or parents or something else. So that is one of the important elements is how do you think through programs that make it easy for people to say I want to keep working here. I love what I'm doing. I just can't, I can't figure out a way to get all the pieces of the puzzle to work.

And I think, as leaders, one of the critical elements is make it safe for people to say I need to have this conversation, this isn't working, this is too stressful, because I don't want anyone to conclude I can't handle both and so I need to give up Google. What I want is to help them figure out how they get that mix to work. And so in things like Carer's Leave or the hybrid work approach of the fully remote, you're actually engaging in a dialogue about what people want in their whole life.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: Have you had a similar experience to many other corporations where women have disproportionately left the workforce, who have been more reticent to come back?

RUTH PORAT: Well, I've most certainly seen the industry-wide data, and it's very concerning that women have gone back – I don't know if it's decades, but it's pretty awful, as a result of the pandemic. And so we've been extremely focused on how do we make sure we're providing the right support through things like Carer's Leave or this

flexibility on structure. So I haven't seen that.

I think we're all acutely aware of the concern. And I'm often asked about the question of mom guilt. And, you know, it's an interesting term. I hate to say I most certainly feel it.

It's like shouldn't it be another term. But always feeling like you're not doing enough and this sense I'm not doing enough. And when your kids are there and we've all seen it where you're on a video call and some kids come climbing on a lap, it's wonderful when you see them. It's like we're trying to make this easy.

And so, to me, the way to deal with that is create both process, things like Carer's Leave or flexibility, time out, however you want to do it, but also make it really clear, we want you as a professional long term. We know this is hard. The number of times I say admit to yourself, this is historic. It is hard. We can have the conversation. We can get to the other side. So I think, again, it comes back to, yes, there's no question, I've been hard on myself and my career. My friends, women friends, have said the same thing. I see it all the time. Let's have the conversation. I think that when you do, you're going to find that your company wants you to stay. It takes too long to hire, recruit and train. So that's at least our approach. Make it work. We've got to figure out a way to make it work.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: And what about pay equity?

RUTH PORAT: Well, it goes back to, absolutely critical, it goes back to my comment,

which is you can't just have tone from the top. You need to have data and transparency around it, and you need to have rigor and process around it. And so that whole portfolio of things, there's no one single item that is going to help move things forward. So I talked about the, you know, the transparency report is a critical one that checks in constantly on recruiting, hiring and retention.

But pay equity, every year we go through a rigorous process to make sure that bias hasn't come into either the perf process or comp. And again the rigor around it, I think, is part of just ensuring that there's equity in all that we do when we're trying to create as much opportunity and fairness. And again, we would say that we're not as far along as we would like. Society is not as far along as we would like, but I think this rigor and process around it are critical sort of pillars to getting it right.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: And you feel the needle is moving in the right direction?

RUTH PORAT: I think the needle is moving in the right direction. As I said, conversations like this didn't occur. You know, I remember when I got pregnant with my first child, we didn't even talk about it. You wanted to sort of hide it and just, you didn't have this kind of conversation. And when it got brought into have men in the conversation and the term "allies" which again, when did that, I don't know when that came but it was certainly late in my career. And it's fantastic that collectively we're

saying there has to be a difference. At senior levels, we're holding ourselves accountable to see progress along the way. And so, yes, I am optimistic. I wish it was faster and I think impatience, as I said, is great.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: Now speaking of impatience, or maybe a vision, what are you most excited about when you think of Google in the next five years? I'm not asking you to reveal trade secrets.

RUTH PORAT: No, I think, to me it goes back to something we have already talked about. It's the implications of AI for all of us, in every industry. And, you know, there are areas, for example, around accessibility that are extraordinary with technology, how it can be ever more helpful for people who are hearing-impaired or visual and what technology can do.

Small/medium businesses, how we can help small/medium businesses, you know, as I mentioned, one in three said they would have failed without digital skills. But the ability to actually help them where they need, critical. In healthcare, you and I have spoken about it, as an example, through AI we are able to detect early-stage metastatic breast cancer better than doctors can. And I heard doctors say this is not artificial intelligence, it's augmented. It helps us see where we should focus. The same with colonoscopies. So it's on and on and on.

So what am I excited about? The ability to transform what we're doing in ways that

make them ever more helpful, productive through using AI really across industries and working with our Cloud team and their thinking through how do you apply AI in every industry with data analytics to create better products, better solutions. You know, on the very important topic, I keep going on this, so I'll give you just one more – climate change. AI, similarly, we're using as a way to help look at things like what's going on through your supply chain, Scope 3 and deforestation and you combine geospatial data with data analytics. We're looking at flood prediction. So applied in so many ways. You know, responsibly applied can really make a fundamental and exciting difference.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: How do you socialize that concept so that people understand it, not as, you know, the Orwellian future or people being replaced by all these machines, but that, you used the word “complement” existing activities and enrich them and augment them? How do you socialize that? Because I don't think we've done a very good job.

RUTH PORAT: Sadly, you're very right. You know, a couple of years ago our CEO, Sundar Pichai, said that AI, like any technology is like fire, the ability to actually be used for good, to sterilize, to heat, and of course there's destruction and the critical element is how is it used. We created something called our AI principles around the ethical use of AI that we use as a critical set of conversations and guideposts internally.

But I think that the most important element of it is seeing the application in ways that are

responsible, helpful, empowering in the right ways. And so that continues to be the key element. I think this notion that it's, in many respects, augmented intelligence, that it can add to what we do, is very key. But all of us, like with every technology, it needs to be responsibly applied.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: Well, wonderful, Ruth. I can tell that you're having a wonderful time at Google and making a huge difference. Do you have a final message for the women on this call?

RUTH PORAT: Well, first, it's great that we're engaged in this conversation. I would say if there was anything I look back on in my career, it does go back to make sure that you never stop learning. And whenever I got to a point in my career where I felt I was plateauing, I went to someone and said, what's my highest and best use? They helped open doors for me. Many times, doors, I said, you know what, that doesn't sound interesting. And I was told, you know what, you're wrong. Here are the reasons. And we would engage in a debate. You can only have that great debate and conversation if you have sponsor, someone who takes a risk on you, someone you trust. And then finally, have a full life.

You asked some great questions, Marie-Josée, as always, about how do you manage through times like this? But I think that if you don't have a full life, whatever it is, children, community activities, sports, whatever, you will burn out. And it can't be on a

timeline. Just throw yourself in, figure out a way to get that mix to work. As you know well, I had cancer at a young age and at the time I stepped back and I said, well, what do I need to do if I don't have much more time, and the answer was I have no regrets. I had a wonderful husband, three amazing children, a career I loved. Nothing was on hold. You can make it work. And there are substantially more people around who want to see you succeed. So throw yourself into it. It will work. And keep learning and having fun.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: Yes, I think the worst thing you want to say is I wish I had.

RUTH PORAT: Absolutely agree.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: Well, thank you so much, Ruth, for joining us and for sharing your insights and for just being so candid and so good.

RUTH PORAT: Thank you so much. It's always wonderful to be with you. And thanks for your leadership on this important issue. Thank you so much.

CHAIR EMERITA MARIE-JOSÉE KRAVIS: Thank you.

PRESIDENT BARBARA VAN ALLEN: That was an incredible conversation. And many

thanks to Ruth and Marie-Josée for being a part of today's conference. I think these Zoom meetings just keep getting better. That one was so loaded with really great ideas and smart approaches that I think we can all use.

So this wraps up our fourth session of the day. Our next and final session starts at 2:00 Eastern time. And as we've heard from other speakers throughout the day, two years after the onset of Covid-19, women's participation in the workforce has started to recover. This upcoming panel will bring together CEOs from Canada, France, and the United States to discuss access to capital, setting the tone at the top, recruiting, retaining and, of course, equity. And I'm pleased to share that John Williams, the President and CEO of the New York Federal Reserve Bank and our Club Chair, will be joining us to do the closing of the day with his summary remarks right after.

You should have all received the link to join, and we look forward to seeing you after the break, in approximately 30 minutes. If for some reason you don't have your link, please reach out to [events@econclubny.org](mailto:events@econclubny.org). Again, thank you for joining us. See you in a few minutes.