

Ruth K. and Shepard Broad Distinguished Lecture Series

School of International and Public Affairs



Celebrating 10 Years in the EU: Poland and the Czech Republic Conversations Between Václav Havel & Adam Michnik Lecture by Adam Michnik and Elzbieta Matynia

Wednesday, October 15, 2014 | 6:30 PM | FIU Modesto A. Maidique Campus | GC 243

The 1978 meeting between Czech playwright Václav Havel and Polish historian Adam Michnik—two extraordinary thinkers who “plotted” democracy, and designed an effective peaceful strategy for dismantling authoritarian regimes in Central and Eastern Europe—resulted in a lifelong friendship and an extraordinary set of bold conversations conducted over the next two post-revolutionary decades. Ultimately, their shared vision guided democratic transition and successful EU accession for the vast majority of former Warsaw Pact members.

Havel, president of Czechoslovakia and later the Czech Republic, and Michnik, editor-in-chief of the largest daily newspaper in the region, provide rare insights into the post-1989 challenges to building new democratic institutions and new habits in the context of an increasingly unsettling political culture. With both dismay and humor, their fascinating exchanges wrestle with the essential question of post-revolutionary life: How does one preserve the revolution’s ideals in the real world?

Adam Michnik is editor-in-chief of the Warsaw daily newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza*. Writer and dramatist Václav Havel (1936–2011) was the last president of Czechoslovakia and the first president of the Czech Republic.

Elzbieta Matynia, author of *An Uncanny Era: Conversations between Václav Havel and Adam Michnik*, is professor of sociology and liberal studies and Director of the Transregional Center for Democratic Studies at the New School for Social Research in New York City and professor at the University of Lower Silesia in Wrocław, Poland.

There will be a book signing following the lecture by author Elzbieta Matynia.

Co-sponsored by **Václav Havel Initiative for Human Rights and Diplomacy**, the **European Studies Program** and the **Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence**.

This event is free and open to the public. To RSVP, please [click here](#).
For more information, please call 305-348-7266.