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9-11 MARCH, 2023
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Welcome letter to the 10th Global Baku Forum

This is the tenth anniversary of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center (NGIC) and the tenth time we shall meet for the Global Baku Forum...

This year, the global scene is deeply troubling. The international order with its multilateral rules-based system is broken. In terms of the architecture of peace and security, we are witnessing the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by Russia, which is now prosecuting the biggest war since World War II on Ukrainian soil, killing hundreds of thousands and destroying the country’s infrastructure with a systematic indifference to the casualties and hardships it is imposing upon the Ukrainians. On a much smaller scale, other conflicts have also erupted into wars in many parts of the world.

The major powers are drifting into a new cold war with a return to the “spheres of influence” concepts. Many countries are trying to reposition themselves in the light of these shifting alignments. The global commitment to free trade has been reduced as more and more national security perspectives shape government trade policy. On the commercial side, a concern with the robustness of supply chains and not just reducing the overall cost is refashioning the integrating power of trade.

More importantly, Humanity is facing a number of major global existential issues that should be a prime area for global cooperation. We are not doing enough to address the challenges of Climate Change. We are not doing enough to ensure health for all. And as we move beyond the pandemic, we are not adequately preparing for a proper global response to the next possible pandemic. Education has suffered. Hunger and malnutrition are rampant, and our vaunted commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is proving harder to achieve than the declarations of country leaders would lead us to expect. Food security is a problem as the poorest countries suffer from combinations of climate and conflict, and as the world population transcends eight billion, going towards nine billion souls. Water is increasingly a problem, and so is pollution deforestation, and biodiversity loss.

More focused and unpredictable catastrophes, such as the February earthquake that devastated Türkiye and Syria, remind us of the power of natural phenomena and their
destructiveness, and the need for human solidarity and mutual assistance.

On top of these challenges, we also face issues relating to democracy versus authoritarianism, even within the well-established democracies of the West. Human rights are facing setbacks in a number of places around the planet.

These and other challenges are facing us, as we gather in Baku to call upon the experience and wisdom of the eminent participants to reflect on the state of affairs and identify promising paths to a better future for all. We are confident that such reflection will help nurture the hopes that humanity has so often expressed at the UN and in the international forums of the International Specialized Agencies of the UN and at many eminent intellectual gatherings.

We have thus prepared a rich program that fits under the overall heading of “the World of Today: Challenges and Hopes” and it also includes a structured interaction between youth leaders and eminent elders.

So welcome to Baku. Welcome to the tenth Global Baku Forum. We look forward to your active participation in what promises to be an important discussion around our theme for 2023, namely “The World of Today: Challenges and Hopes”.

Vaira Vike-Freiberga
Co-Chair, NGIC; President of Latvia 1999-2007

Ismail Serageldin
Co-Chair, NGIC; Vice President of World Bank 1992-2000
“The World of Today: Challenges and Hopes” was the central theme of the 10th Global Baku Forum held under the auspices of the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and assembling world leaders to review critical global, regional and national issues of the day at times when the post-Cold War era is under severe stress.

The Nizami Ganjavi International Center has become a significant international center, which explores ways of solution to global problems and informs the world community. It is because of this mission that interest in the events organized by the Center increases from year to year.

Representatives of more than 50 countries and reputable international organizations took part in the Global Baku Forum which saw productive discussions on such important topics as building resilience in a divided world and its impact on world peace; the age of mega threats including climate, food and nuclear securities; reinventing multilateralism in the new era of non-alignment; building a renewed global health architecture; migration as a symptom of world poverty, inequality, climate stress and conflict; the role of new energy and transport corridors in the Eurasian zone; China’s role for global development and security; the Western Balkans in the EU context; the search for peace, stability and development in the Middle East and beyond; the geostrategic importance of Africa.

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev hosted the opening ceremony of the Forum at Gulustan Palace and declared open the 10th Global Baku Forum with his following address:

I welcome you all in Baku. Thank you for participating in the 10th Global Baku Forum. First of all, I would like to congratulate the members of the Board of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center for their achievements. Especially, I want to express gratitude to the co-chairs of NGIC, Madame Vike-Freiberga and Mr. Serageldin, for their leadership and contribution to the development of NGIC and outstanding achievements with respect to the transformation of the Global Baku Forum into one of the leading international forums globally.
This year, I participated in Davos World Economic Forum in January, Munich Security Conference in February, and now here in March at the Global Baku Forum.

And just I can say that the level of participants and the intellectual potential of the Global Baku Forum is in line with the leading international conferences. And, of course, this is a reflection of the very thoughtful and productive activity of the co-chairs and the whole Board. We have more than 350 participants from more than 60 countries, including 50 acting and former presidents and prime ministers. So, the level of discussions will be very high. And, of course, the most important recommendations about the new approaches to international affairs will be most valuable. I looked at the program of the forum. As usual, it is very comprehensive.

It covers issues related to the regions of the Middle East, Africa, and Western Balkans. At the same time, issues today are on top of the international agenda are the subject of discussions.

I also want to express gratitude to the Nizami Ganjavi International Center for the great respect for the memory and legacy of the great Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi, whose name the Center carries. Nizami Ganjavi was born, lived, died and was buried in his native city of Ganja, one of the ancient cities of Azerbaijan. His wisdom and talent symbolize the wisdom and talent of the people of Azerbaijan.

I want to share my views and some information regarding some of the topics of the discussions you will have.
I was very happy to see one panel on multilateralism, especially considering that Azerbaijan completes its chairmanship in the Non-Aligned Movement this year, which started in 2019 and was extended by a unanimous decision of 120 member states for one more year until the end of 2023. We tried to, if I may use this word, revitalize the Non-Aligned Movement, which had great traditions, but, unfortunately, it was a little bit passive during some period. And for that, we organized international events and three summits. We initiated a Special Session of the UN General Assembly on COVID. We worked hard and created a database for the fight against the pandemic, which the World Health Organization later used. We dedicated one of the summits to the fight against the pandemic. We were very vocal against vaccine nationalism and the unequal distribution of vaccines in the first months of the pandemic. We address the issue of post-COVID development. In the meantime, we provided financial and humanitarian assistance to more than 80 countries, most of them members of the Non-Aligned Movement. We provided 10 million US dollars in direct donations to the World Health Organization to help them to fight the coronavirus.

At the same time, we tried to develop the Non-Aligned Movement institutionally. For that purpose, the Parliamentary Network was created based on our initiative for the first time ever - in more than 60 years of the history of the Non-Aligned Movement. An inaugural meeting took place in Baku, and a Youth Network was created. The Secretariat for Youth Network also is based in Baku. We will continue our efforts even after our chairmanship comes to an end by the end of this year because we see that there is a significant need for such a Movement in today’s divided world. We witness perhaps the most serious confrontation between the East and West since the end of the Cold War. The Non-Aligned Movement can play and should play an important role in building bridges, in creating new approaches to the resolution of conflicts and, of course, the basic principles of the Non-Aligned Movement – the Bandung Principles. They advocate for peace, cooperation, respect for territorial integrity, sovereignty, and inviolability of borders.
With respect to conflict resolution, of course, it will be broadly discussed based on the program of the Forum. I can share our experience. Conflict resolutions have two ways - peaceful and not peaceful. We were trying hard to resolve the conflict with Armenia peacefully, despite the Armenian occupation creating a humanitarian crisis in Azerbaijan. As a result of the Armenian occupation, more than 1 million Azerbaijanis became homeless and refugees and IDPs.

Armenia conducted a policy of ethnic cleansing against Azerbaijanis and expelled them from Karabakh and created sufferings for a million of Azerbaijanis. Despite our attempts to resolve it peacefully and to persuade Armenia to comply with the UN Security Council resolutions, which demanded the immediate, complete, unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from Azerbaijani territories, Armenia just ignored the UN Security Council resolutions. It demonstrated disrespect to international law and the international community. In 1992, after the conflict started, the OSCE created the Minsk Group. But, unfortunately, for 28 years, Minsk Group did not produce any results. And it seemed to us at the end of the negotiation process that they just wanted to freeze the situation. They wanted to make this conflict frozen forever. But we did not agree with that. We did what we considered proper to do, using our right to self-defence, the UN Charter, particularly Article 51. We liberated our territories by force. This was our legitimate right.

So, we tried to do it peacefully, and we failed because there was no constructive approach from the Armenian side. And we did it by force, and we liberated our territory. And now, for almost two and a half years, we are rebuilding the vast territory of 10,000 square kilometres,
which is totally devastated. And by the way, the representatives of NGIC visited Shusha and had a panel discussion in Shusha. They have seen the destruction in Fuzuli, in Shusha, and it is really a sign of barbarism; it is urbicide, culturicide, and ecocide. And that was done by our neighbours. The people of Azerbaijan have a moral right to demand revenge, and I can understand it. But my message is that we took revenge on the battlefield.

We did not commit any war crimes, unlike Armenians. We did not commit genocide, unlike the Armenians. They did that against us, and we took revenge on the battlefield. So, now it is time for peace. Therefore, right after the war ended in November 2020, we launched an initiative to start peace negotiations and presented the known five principles, which could be a basis for a peace agreement with Armenia. We hope that international actors who try to facilitate will persuade Armenia not to miss this chance. They lost the chance to become an independent country. They became totally dependent, kind of a colony of another country, and maybe some other countries. So, they lost their chance to become truly independent and to build their future because of aggression against us.

Now it is a chance for them to start behaving as a neighbour to their neighbours. We want peace, and we do not want another war. And we think that peace is achievable. And what
was agreed between Azerbaijan and Armenia last October, particularly concerning each other’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, demonstrates that there are no obstacles to achieving peace.

With respect to the Armenian minority in Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan is a multi-confessional, multi-ethnic country. Our constitution protects the rights of minorities in Azerbaijan. And anyone who knows the actual situation in Azerbaijan can say that Azerbaijan is a country with a high level of religious and ethnic tolerance, where representatives of different ethnic groups and different confessions live in peace and dignity. So, I am sure that the lives of Armenians living in the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan will be much better than during the occupation. Every conflict has its history, dynamics, and end, but it is important that disputes between countries are resolved on the basis of international law; territorial integrity and sovereignty cannot be changed by force. This is a position of Azerbaijan. This position applies not only to our case but to all conflicts worldwide. We publicly articulate this position.

One of the panels is devoted to energy, transportation corridors, and energy transition. I just want to inform our guests that since we met last time in last June, there have been many events taking place. First, Azerbaijan and the European Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Strategic Partnership
in the Field of Energy, signed in Baku by Ma-
dame Ursula von der Leyen, President of the
European Commission, and myself. This Mem-
orandum is now being implemented. Azerbai-
jan substantially increased its natural gas sup-
ply to Europe and the total natural gas export.
We exported 19 billion cubic meters in 2021,
in total. This year it will be more than 24 billion
cubic meters and at least half of that will go to
Europe.

And that definitely helped and will continue to
help European consumers get access to na-
tural gas, considering the current geopolitical
situation. We increased our investments in our
gas fields. And now we’re not only seeing but
are also working on expanding the export pipe-
lines. The Southern Gas Corridor was commis-
sioned. The final segment of the pipeline was
commissioned on 31 December 2020. But now,
a little more than two years have passed, and
we need to expand the system - TANAP from
16 to 32 billion cubic meters and TAP from 10
to 20 billion cubic meters. And that is only be-
cause of the growing demand in Europe. Ot-
wise, we wouldn’t have invested. Since the
Russia-Ukraine War started, we got requests
from more than 10 European countries with
respect to gas supplies or to increase the gas
supply, and we’re working on that. And it’s not
by chance that the European Commission calls
Azerbaijan a reliable partner. This is the case.
We’ve always been a reliable partner.

We export oil, oil products, natural gas, elec-
tricity, and petrochemicals to international
markets, including European markets. Last
December, a remarkable event took place in
Bucharest when Azerbaijan, Georgia, Hungary
and Romania signed an Agreement on green
energy and transmission, which the President
of the European Commission witnessed. And
based on that, we will build a transmission line
from offshore wind farms in Azerbaijan to Eu-
rope. Part of this transmission line will go under
the Black Sea. And now, we are in the process
of a feasibility study.

The first Steering Committee of this project
took place in Baku this February, and it will
be a massive change in the European energy
map. We have already changed the European
energy map by building oil pipelines, gas pipe-
lines, and now electric lines, which will deli-
ver green energy. I just want to inform you that
since we held the last 9th Global Baku Forum,
Azerbaijan signed contracts and MOUs with
several leading energy companies worldwide,
which will create 25 gigawatts of green energy
in Azerbaijan, solar and wind. So, this is a re-
markable achievement, transforming Azerbai-
jan into a very important supplier and player
in the international green energy market. We
are planning to export green hydrogen. The
IFC already approved the final assessment of
our offshore wind potential in the Caspian Sea,
which is 157 gigawatts, not to mention about
40 onshore. So, this is the future for world ener-
gy; this is the future for Azerbaijan. The energy
transition here is developing very rapidly.

As I said, we have done what I said since we
met last in June. And also, there’ll be discus-
sions on transportation corridors. I just want to
inform you that last year transits through Azer-
baijan grew by more than 75%. Our modern
transportation infrastructure is needed more
than ever - with the railroad connections, high-
way connections, the most extensive Caspian shipping fleet, and the region’s biggest air cargo fleet. We really contributed a lot to transportation security because many countries now need transportation security. They are looking for new routes, and one of these routes is through Azerbaijan. I’m sure there’ll be very interesting discussions around this and other topics, which are in the program and as usual, valuable ideas and recommendations of our guests will help to plan our future, will be good recommendations to the governments, to world leaders.

Thus, I think we will try to make our world safer and more secure. I wish you exciting discussions. Thank you for your attention.

Then, President of the Republic of Latvia Egils Levits gave a speech and stated that the topic of the Forum was highly important. Speaking about the development of relations between Latvia and Azerbaijan, President Levits emphasized the vital role Azerbaijan played in international relations in recent years and declared: “After President Aliyev’s speech, Azerbaijan plays a leading role in the Non-Aligned Movement. It is a truly good platform with 120 member states, most of which are UN members. The important role played by Azerbaijan in recent years has actually been reflected in international relations. In fact, Azerbaijan has inspired many players from a political point of view, that is how to maintain peace and solve global issues. Azerbaijan is leading a global debate after the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, I would mention the recent Summit-level Meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement Contact Group in response to COVID-19. Regarding cooperation with Azerbaijan, especially its cooperation with the UN, it is also important for Latvia. Because respect for international law
and territorial integrity is a very important issue, this is an important part of Latvian foreign policy. In general, this is an important part of the overall policy of Azerbaijan. Of course, this also stems from the good relations between our countries”.

President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste José Ramos-Horta emphasized the importance of discussing the pressing problems that threaten the global world order, including the prospects for ensuring security and peace in the world. Expressing his gratitude to President Ilham Aliyev for the invitation to participate in the forum, High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations Miguel Ángel Moratinos expressed his satisfaction with participating in this event, which the Nizami Ganjavi International Center has turned into a tradition. Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS Winnie Byanyima stressed the importance of strengthening integration and expanding international cooperation in the post-pandemic era expressing her delight at participation in such a platform and discussions. Then, a video address by Director-General of the World Health Organization Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus was screened. Letters of President of the Italian Republic Sergio Mattarella and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Rishi Sunak were read out.

In conclusion, the former President of Latvia, co-chair of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center Vaira Vike-Freiberga, spoke about the current geopolitical situation in the world and stated that wars and threats were causing a number of serious problems at the international level. The co-chair appreciated the work of the Forum in terms of finding solutions to many conflicts and said: “It is the tenth time that the Baku Forum has been convened, and every year we are pleased to see that its importance is growing in terms of its persuasive power, diversity, exceptional experience and intellectual potential. The Baku Forum, of course, could not have taken place without the support of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, who gave us his support from the very first days. We consider the Global Baku Forum important in terms of exchanging ideas on finding solutions to the challenges that concern the world”.
PANEL 1
BUILDING RESILIENCE IN A DIVIDED WORLD: ITS IMPACT ON WORLD PEACE
There is little doubt about the primacy of the topic of war and peace in our collective perception of what the global order needs: a capacity to limit the ravages of war and promote peace and its outcomes for the benefit of humanity. But given the world we live in, it may be useful to be reminded of the words of the UN Charter as it sets forth the overarching goals of the United Nations: “We The Peoples Of The United Nations Determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom”. Yet the Ukraine war has challenged every aspect of our collective global enterprise. It is a war waged in the heart of Europe with a brutality and on a scale not seen since World War II. The Russian invaders – having broken their own treaty obligations vis-a-vis Ukraine – show no respect for human rights or any of the Geneva accords (that cover from 1864 to 1949 with two additional protocols to the 1949 agreement approved in 1977.) which defined the minimum rules of war, banning categories of weapons, insisting on the protection of civilians, respect for hospitals and humanitarian facilities, treatment of prisoners of war, etc. In addition, they seem to have committed atrocities that would bring them under the purview of the Rome Statute of 1998 (which established the International Criminal Court or ICC). Furthermore, this war is about annexing the territory of another independent sovereign state of the UN. The only time this happened in recent memory, it was Iraq’s annexation of Kuwait, which resulted in the armed liberation of Kuwait in 1991. But Iraq did not have nuclear weapons to threaten the world with. Any conclusion to the current conflict in Ukraine, that leaves Russia in possession of parts of Ukraine is an invitation to every large country to attack its smaller neighbour and annex some of its
Having shredded its international obligations, and unaffected by an overwhelming condemnation in the UN, even brandishing the spectre of nuclear war, Russia has clearly stated that it does not care about a global World Order in which it is not treated as a superpower. It has thrown down a challenge to the world, which requires thoughtful answers to a number of questions, if an effective International World Order is to be designed.

- How will the Ukraine war end?
- Who will pay for the reconstruction of Ukraine?
- How will the parties guilty of war crimes be brought to justice?
- What lessons can be learned for the prevention of future such extraordinary disregard for the international order starting from the UN Charter to the various pertinent conventions and protocols?
- Given that there are more nuclear powers today, and that many more powers have the capability of acquiring or are on the verge of declaring that they have acquired, nuclear weapons in their arsenals. What sorts of new arrangements should be put in place to limit the potential use of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) – in addition to the nuclear weapons related Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the other existing protocols and agreements?
- Furthermore, the theatres of war today include everything from militarizing space to launching cyber-attacks, domains that are not subject to any formal treaties or global understandings. What additional measures and agreements should be pursued to reduce the risks of conflict and war?
The President of Latvia, **Egils Levits**, delivered an opening special address by asking how resilience can be built in times of poly-crises. Existential threats to states both external and internal, and to individuals are manifold and increasing. Statelessness devoid individuals of an effective and carrying state protection to its citizens. The international community is at last responding forcefully to Russia’s most recent war of aggression against its neighbour, after weak responses in 2008 and 2014. Russia must be tried before an international tribunal if only for justice for Ukraine and to demonstrate that international law rules and that impunity does not prevail worldwide. Climate change is an additional and urgent threat to states. Individual rights and the rule of law are currently under threat and need also to be addressed to sustain a resilient society and become the basis of world peace.

The moderator, **Jaffar Hasnain**, then opened the panel by inviting the speakers to focus on the unprovoked war in Ukraine launched by Russia’s aggression and gave the floor to former Ukrainian President **Viktor Yushchenko** who wondered at the outset on how this war could end if only by Ukraine’s victory. But firstly, how did this war begin in order to learn the lessons? **Iveta Radicova** from Slovakia noted positively that 91 percent of EU citizens totally agree on humanitarian support for Ukraine as well as three fourths of Europeans on military assistance. **Kjell Magne Bondevik** from Norway stressed that after European unity had led to ending the Cold War, it is unfortuna-
tely again divided, compounded by increasing tensions between the U.S. and China. Leaders and people must be brought together in the framework of the UN, albeit with a dysfunctional Security Council, in order to build resilience. Stronger regional cooperation is also required with a united NATO Alliance, the EU and NGOs, and the role of religions as a source of reconciliation and peace strengthening democracy worldwide. Micheline Calmy-Rey from Switzerland underlined that the world is living a period of profound change, fragmentation, instability, and uncertainty with certain states challenging the international order at times when the world is becoming multipolar. How to help Ukraine on the one hand and at the same time avoid direct conflict with Russia is the conundrum to be solved. The time of a peace treaty is too early, but a settlement needs to be sought bringing long-term stability to a Helsinki II framework. Kerry Kennedy from the U.S. highlighted a letter forwarded to the UN Secretary General requesting the establishment of international tribunal on the crime of aggression committed by Russia with over 65,000 war crimes cases compiled so far. NGIC Co-Chair Vaira Vike-Freiberga underlined that the greatness that Russia sees for herself is at the expense of those countries that surround it. The absurd claim that NATO is encircling Russia when in reality it only represents six per cent of its land borders is all the more ludicrous!
A video message was delivered by Nobel Laureate Shirin Ebadi from Iran highlighting the regime’s oppression at home and abroad in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Lebanon, a policy rejected by the Iranians as witnessed by the uprising of women since September 2022 which will lead to its downfall. The revolution towards a democratic and secular Iran will prevail and foster peace in the region.

The discussion then opened with Iveta Radičova on the complex of uncertainty as a consequence of financial, health, inflation, food, water and other crises: the elites must respond to these challenges lest they lead to polarisation, anger and fear among the citizens who strive for security. For Micheline Calmy-Rey the precondition for restoring peace is multilateralism with full respect of the UN Charter including the rules of international humanitarian law in conflict situations (the Geneva Conventions) including the crime of aggression which requires recognition by all parties. Kjell Magne Bondevik agreed on the setup of a special tribunal on the crime of aggression by Russia, but the UNSC is weakened by the veto countries. Today’s tragedy is the onslaught of new Cold War in Europe with the impossibility to foresee an end to the war in Ukraine.

For Viktor Yushchenko, when talking about “victory” one must remain convinced that Ukraine and its allies will prevail. As a prerequisite, solidarity is essential. On the format of victory, Ukraine’s preconditions are liberation of all occupied territories; rebuilding Russian destructions; a vision of a new world security architecture with a single European security arrangement to avoid a repetition of the 2008 mistakes; the setting up of an international tribunal to put Putin and his acolytes on trial including “Putinism”: no peace will come about with such a regime at our borders. Ukraine is united and consolidated as never before with the spirit to win. Weapons, equipment, and resources are needed. On NATO enlargement, it is the East going to NATO and not vice-versa. NATO is the only answer to the future security agreements for Ukraine: it should not suffer under a “Macron syndrome”. To conclude with Kjell Magne Bondevik, China remains a key to find a peaceful outcome.
We live in an age where the result of human invention and human activity has exposed humanity to existential threats that transcend the boundaries of any single nation. These are threats that may wreak damage and loss on communities and nations that have not contributed in any significant way to unleashing the threats in question. Climate change is affecting most those who contributed least to the emissions that caused it. Food and nutrition security is most severe in the poorest nations in the world where cycles of drought and flood are leaving the most vulnerable groups at risk of famine. Pandemics and disease strike those who do not have access to the vaccines, the therapeutics and the tests that are needed to bring basic public health measures to the community level in the poor countries (a topic which we explore under the heading “Health for all”). But conflicts and war have become more dangerous through the fear of uncontrolled escalation. Indeed, nuclear weapons have proliferated, and it is very unlikely that if a nuclear war were to start, its consequences may not be easily contained...We need the world to find the means to bring together the nations of the world through various mechanisms, like the Conferences of the Parties, COP, for such challenges as climate change and biodiversity, and maybe the need for new agreements like a Global Pandemic Treaty. Maybe we should also look to certain informal assemblies like the G-7 or the G-20 to help prepare the ground for more detailed and formal agreements for action that could be formalized at the UN... For in the end, the UN remains the only globally legitimate and inclusive body that the world has.
Nobel Laureate and President of East Timor José Ramos Horta delivered the opening address with a recent surprise he witnessed when in Davos: the only crisis in the world seems to be Ukraine! The disparity of attention to other crises at WEF is disconcerting with no references either to Yemen, Syria, Afghanistan, Myanmar nor to climate change, water scarcity, LDC debt or the COVID pandemic. The Ukraine war led to commodity crises shooting up in Timor Leste prices such as for 5 litres cooking oil from 4 US$ before the war to 14 US$ thereafter! Moreover, commercial banks have not written off LDC debts nor has any consideration been given to increasing ODA. During the 2008 financial crisis, the rich and powerful countries found hundreds of billion dollars for rescue packages to PIGS banks to rescue British, French and German banks: this is the gravest moral and ethical threat ever faced!

Moderator Benedetto Zacchirolì from Italy opened the panel discussion with Ismahane Elouafi from the UN FAO who highlighted at the outset the tremendous global risks of climate change and food security: over the last two years 150 million additional people went hungry. Agri-food systems must be urgently transformed. Beyond SDG 2 eliminating hunger, SDG 10 also requires implementation i.e., reducing North/South inequalities with the lowest return on investment with the produc-
ing farmers, and supermarkets at the highest! FAO’s “four betters” are better production, better nutrition, better environment and better livelihood for all. Science, technology and innovation can help finding solutions to the crisis. 828 million people go to bed hungry and 3 billion cannot afford nutritious food. There are solutions to climate change. Agriculture representing more than 70 percent of world population contributes to 30 per cent of GHGs but with technological innovation, carbon can be sequestered. Giveback time has come to North which has the financial clout to do so whilst changing radically the global economic system. Hakima El Haite from Morocco recalled the 2016 Paris commitment on climate change that developed countries must reduce their CO2 emissions to reach a temperature increase to below 2 degrees C which was lowered by IPCC in 2018 to 1.5 lest small islands disappear. An additional commitment was to bring 100 $ billion to the South in climate finance and to finance damages and disasters caused by climate change but COP 26 in 2020 was postponed due to COVID-19. Hence, no commitments were tabled but that year CO2 emissions increased albeit the world economy having stalled. Since Paris, CO2 emissions increase regularly leading to 1,2 billion peoples with no access to water with 38 water-related conflicts raging in Africa! No advancement nor commitments were signed at COP 27 in Sharm El Sheik. No SDG objective can be reached in the absence of peace and without a strong multilateral system.

Darkhan Kydyrali from Kazakhstan said that since the day of Independence, Kazakhstan has been involved in nuclear issues. In 1996, 31 August marked as World Nuclear Safety Day and it was decided on the initiaive of the current President, then former Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. Minister emphasized that Kazakhstan has become food safety center within the framework
of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Every year Kazakhstan exports 7 million tons of wheat and helps countries in need. Darkhan Kydyrali also highlighted many problems like gender inequality, youth unemployment, and also climate change. It is predicted that Caspian Sea will decrease by 30 meters and it is dangerous for 5 countries around it so these countries should solve this problem together. He also accented that Global Baku Forum is an opportunity to seek answer to our common questions. Also, the Non-Aligned Movement in Azerbaijan is bringing us closer to peace, and platforms like this will make us look to the future with hope.

Mukhtar Babayev from Azerbaijan stressed that climate change risks are increasing rapidly and impact daily life including their impact on food security, land degradation and water scarcity. Cooperation at the regional level is required with neighbouring countries particularly in transborder water resources. Green growth is a main government policy including in the liberated areas in Karabakh. Laszlo Borbely from Romania stressed that all issues faced by the world are interlinked and Igor Luksic from Montenegro highlighted climate security as the most urgent challenge but the Paris Agreement remains problematic inasmuch as if all countries complied to voluntary pledged commitments (NDICs), global temperature rise will still reach 2,7 degrees C. Immense efforts on mitigation and adaptation will be required by all countries. Nuclear proliferation has also increased recently with programmes in DPRK and Iran, and Russia’s suspension on New START agreement. In conclusion, the world is witnessing an age of uncertainty, but regional food banks and a reorganisation of agricultural markets could be envisaged to mitigate food insecurity.
PANEL 3

REINVENTING MULTILATERALISM: A NEW ERA OF NON-ALIGNMENT?
REINVENTING MULTILATERALISM:
A NEW ERA OF NON-ALIGNMENT?

As we watch the movement of the tectonic plates of the global world order, can we move towards producing a strong new Rules-based Multilateralism for our times. The legacy of the past must be modified to avoid the possible drift towards a new “spheres of influence” paradigm, which would raise the need to find new interpretations of “Non-Alignment”. This panel calls for imaginative views on how a defensive Pact such as NATO does not become the justification for creating an opposing Organization, an heir to the Warsaw Pact in the Cold War days. Or because of NATO’s resilience and success it could become an inspiration for the U.S. to seek the creation of variations on NATO in the Middle East, to contain Iran, and in the far East to constrain China.
Can the UN system’s limitations be overcome after 75 years of its existence?

How would such “A New Multilateralism” fit into the existing institutional structures we inherited in the UN and the international organizations and the complex network of agreements, treaties, protocols and statute that should be limiting conflict, and expanding the opportunities for peace, security and prosperity?

How can we design a more effective global security architecture that brings to life the vaunted “New Rules-based Multilateralism”?

Is the “New Multilateralism” effectively dead and we are back to a multi-polar world with each of the giants exercising control over a number of smaller countries in their “spheres of influence”?

What sort of framework can we imagine that would not only avoid war and destruction, but also advance well-being and the human rights of citizens all over the world?

What role can/should regional organizations play?

Do we need a new set of arms agreements dealing with nuclear weapons in a time of proliferation?

What do we need to do to limit the risks of the militarization of space?

Will we still adhere to “non-interference in the domestic affairs of individual sovereign states” or is there a duty to respond to humanitarian challenges and to protect human rights?

How do we deal with terrorism? How about state sponsored terrorism? How about when designated terrorist groups become the official government of a recognized country, such as the Taliban in Afghanistan? There is still much to think about as we develop the new security architecture for the 21st century.
The moderator Yves Leterme recalled the three major challenges facing the world addressed in the former panel and recognised the weaknesses in the current multilateral system, and invited Hikmat Hajiyev from Azerbaijan currently chairing the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Multilateralism allows small and medium-sized countries the same chance as big countries to act and voice their messages in the international arena. Multilateralism is about fairness and justice in the international system and about dialogue and consultation, but these days they are at stake and challenged. When Azerbaijan took the helm of the NAM, it noted division and fragmentation in its midst and the absence of a single purpose. Azerbaijan therefore returned to the fundamental principles embedded in the Bandung Principles and to review the commonality of interests to build consensus on fundamental issues through transparency, predictability and honesty between its members. The COVID pandemic was an occasion to show Azerbaijan’s successful handling of crisis including on fighting vaccine nationalism. Unfortunately, the East-West confrontation returning to the international frontline leads the NAM to avoid bloc policies and foster greater South-South cooperation. NAM calls for the reform of the UN system and notably its Security Council where no voice of either Africa nor NAM are present!
Volkan Bozkir from Turkey asked that the UN be divided into two parts: the many sectorial field Agencies are successful but not in the political and security areas. The problem is how to change the Security Council, including its veto system, which reflects today’s standing of nations. The solution rests within the General Assembly representing the only democratic platform where each country has one vote and where no veto rights are present. Some progress is underway: today, if a veto is cast in the UNSC, this country must come before the UNGA to explain itself. Vuk Jeremic from Serbia noted past successes of multilateralism such as with the SDGs but now the world is witnessing a geopolitical recession which last longer than economic recessions as witness the war in Ukraine. Small countries can either join one of the blocs or try to pursue their interests and remain non-aligned. Serbia was aggressed by the West impinging on its territorial integrity, as later Georgia by Russia. Finding solutions to a diplomatic end of the war is urgent if only to address the mega threats facing the world, and calling for peace by NAM should be the proper way ahead.
Nino Burjanadze from Georgia questioned the effective mechanisms of the UN and notably the P5 veto rights in the Security Council which are paralysing the system. As to the UNGA, their Resolutions often are not implemented such as on Abkhazia and South Ossetia supporting Georgia’s territorial integrity. Here the role of multilateralism specifically at the regional level can be effective: regional organisations must be strengthened. Mladen Ivanić from Bosnia and Herzegovina recalled the similarities between the wars in Bosnia and Ukraine where four years of death and destruction lead all sides to recognising neither winners nor losers. Ukraine is more worrisome since the major players are on one or the other side of the conflict. New conflicts abound in the world requiring a renewed NAM representing the third voice between extreme positions. The EU could have played that potential role but is now losing it.

Joseph Muscat from Malta underlined that strong leadership acts to avoid crisis whilst weak leadership is made to act by crisis. Currently the world has no leadership so change comes about with crises. Malta, a former NAM member, joined the EU as its smallest country. NAM.2 should become the third bloc and not simply not take sides. The world is shifting from the politics of persuasion to the politics of coercion. Optimism should prevail on the EU project: over eight years when sitting in European Council meetings only once had a vote taken place which all member states later regretted: reaching a consensus is the European way forward. Whilst the UN was born out of a world war, the EU project was built under the template of peace which explains its success today. Jan Kubis from Slovakia stressed that the European project is successful in prevent-
ing wars and building peace with common objectives, shared values, and strict peer review. The war in Ukraine has destroyed security and cooperation in broader Europe as shown by the ineffectiveness of OSCE. If the EU aspires to be a global player, it should step up to its principles and norms, avoid double standards, and deliver results worldwide. As to the UN, despite its paralysis, it should not be written off including its Security Council which delivers man-

dates, and the General Assembly which caters for the right moral direction in practical partnership with different regional organisations.

David Chikvaidze from the UN focused on terminology: when defining “multilateralism” in the UN context, two aspects should be distinguished: one as embodied in the organisation and structure, and the other in the mindset which requires urgent change. Most major changes in the international system from Westphalia, Vienna Congress, Paris Treaties, San Francisco to Helsinki and the Charter of Paris happened because of new mindset settling in after a cataclysm, but we cannot let a cataclysm occur in order to develop the mindset for multilateralism. A new mindset on how to implement multilateralism should see the day reforming the existing structures and retrieve the mindset on arms control without ushering a new Cuban crisis. The UN changed dramatically after the end of the Cold War. The biggest disservice to multilateralism occurred in the mid-1990s by denying UNSG Boutros-Ghali a second term signalling to the world that the UN carries no strong role. 1991-92 was not the end but the beginning in the transition for over thirty years winding into a third stage today with the question “What to build after the war in Ukraine?”. The UNSC requires reform by not adding permanent veto power members but by making the G20 and the African Union as permanent members and adding 14 members for a total of 35 to be non-permanent members and abandoning the veto system. Antonio Zanardi Landi from Italy noted an unfortunate message coming from the Munich Security Conference which is characterised by its homogeneity in only defending Ukraine without
any framework on future talks when compared to here in Baku with diverse opinions and a mention of NAM as well as frequent references to the Global South which does not recognise itself in Ukrainian war. The vote in the UN was hardly a success because the UNGA Resolution condemning Russia’s aggression and to withdraw got only 141 votes with many abstentions and absentees representing 56.4 per cent of the global population. Also, Ukraine has been the latest blow to the European project as a global player because of NATO’s increased role therein.

The moderator the opened the discussion with the floor and invited a participant from Senegal who noted that the African countries within UNGA had been bullied for having abstained on the Ukrainian war issue. But it is well to recall that many African countries had to go through liberation wars during decolonisation with the help of outside powers such as the USSR which explains South Africa’s abstention. Most urgently, a ceasefire must be sought to end the war. Another participation wondered how effectively the UNSC could be reformed such as via the abolition of the veto. Another highlighted that the UN Charter had not been revised since 1971 which is long overdue. On the veto, Art. 27 Paragraph 3 of the Charter stipulates that a party to a conflict cannot exercise the veto and UNGA has passed six resolutions to no effect. The SDGs are now in dire straits because of the war and the Human Development Index has dropped for the first time over the past thirty years to the level of 2016. At the IMF, the SDR system needs also to be more equitable to the world showing most flows going to the developed world.

In conclusion and returning to the panel, Hikmat Hajiyev reminded the audience that discussions are held since the last twenty years on reform of UNSC! The P5 does not want to relinquish its rights and monopoly. A solution would be majority voting at UNGA reforming the UNSC. Critics of the UN are manifold, but it remains composed of member states. NAM is no longer a neutrality movement standing on the fence but is now actively seeking for solutions on global issues. Finally, double standards need to be shed such as on territorial integrity which was not respected for Azerbaijan although confirmed by UNSC resolutions. Volkan Bozkir stressed the need to wait for a political opportunity for UNSC to proceed successfully but that this day must come about. However, practical reforms can start as of now such as on a 20th century geographic distribution among member states groups to be prepared for the 21st century.
PANEL 4
BUILDING A RENEWED GLOBAL HEALTH ARCHITECTURE: PROMOTING, PROTECTING, POWERING, AND PERFORMING FOR HEALTH
As we emerge from confronting the worst pandemic in a century, we all recognize the importance of ensuring health for all, a desirable and oft repeated goal, but which the pandemic exposed how far we are from the needed and the possible responses. We hope that we will learn the lessons of that sad experience, strengthen the WHO, and promote the kind of global coordinated responses that will ensure that actions are taken now to be better prepared to cope with future challenges. In particular we need to first, strengthen the WHO, to help it ensure global overview and coordination, and endow it with a Global Health Fund for supporting health strategies (such as vaccination) that are sustainable and not just reactive, with the goal of protecting populations, especially among the poor and the vulnerable; Second, promote realistic, feasible, and necessary investments to improve public health systems, especially community health, and widening universal health coverage; Third, ensure the access of the needy to essential tests, therapeutics and vaccines, which should reach all those who need such help, not just those who can afford to buy it; Fourth, ensure that significant efforts at Scientific Research and Development continue so that our arsenal of effective weapons against the next viral or bacterial pandemic are promptly available and deployable. This must include serious attention to the ethical and safety guidelines of govern such risky research as “Gain of Function” research on pathogens; Fifth, mount a systematic and global effort at ensuring Trusted sources of information can effectively confront the expanding forces of disinformation and misinformation about public health issues. The global response to the risk of future pandemics and the promotion of Health for all also needs to be linked to actions that try to address the climate crisis and reversals in sustainable development, which invariably weaken the institutional structures that promote public health, especially in the poor and vulnerable countries.
If all the suggestions described above are to be implemented, to ensure timely action on a range of these issues, and that such action is taken at the appropriate level: International, regional, national, and local, the governance structure for “Health for All”, needs to be developed. What could be the main pillars of such a governance structure?

How do we cope with the breakouts of diseases that tend to follow climate disasters from floods to droughts to other extreme weather events?

How should ethical and safety guidelines be enacted in such a way so that they can prevent possible terrible outcomes – by accident or design – without stifling the creative aspects of new research?
The panel opened with a special message delivered by WHO DG Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, celebrating its 75th anniversary, who stressed that the health-related issues of the SDGs targets need implementation although well off-track particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic. WHO is proposing five priorities: promoting, providing, protecting, powering, and performing for health. Health is promoted at home, in streets, markets and communities. Providing primary health care is essential where 90 per cent of services can be delivered and where early outbreaks can be detected. Preparedness and resilience protect: WHO has set up a cohesive framework for a cohesive architecture for health emergency, preparedness and response with stronger governance, finances and tools. Powering health by science and research and partnerships will also be built through its performance leading to a stronger and more agile WHO.

The moderator Rosen Plevneliev then opened the panel with Winnie Byanyima from the UN stressing that vaccines should be treated as global public goods and not for pharmaceutical companies to only focus on rich countries in their search of profits. Technology transfers to the Global South must happen and world leaders and governments must prevent global inequalities in structural trade problems resulting in deaths. Current negotiations in preventing a future pandemic are key such as amending health regulations, but East-West tensions
are politicising these talks. The critical pandemic preparedness, prevention and response treaty including on universal health coverage must conclude in June 2024 at the World Health Assembly. Najat Mokhtar from IAEA recalled that the agency is technical in nature but addressing also human health, agriculture or water monitoring. Regarding non-communicable diseases, cancer is a focus for IAEA on radiation medicine and access to medical energy with 30 percent of the world bereft of radiological medicine. R&D is not funded in developing countries which IAEA is enhancing. Filip Vujanovic from Montenegro noted that up to ten million died from the pandemic whilst over the past three years the pharmaceutical industry reaped the greatest ever economic benefits! Inadequate and unfair distribution of vaccines to LDCs resulted in the loss of 1 300 000 lives: making profits was more important than saving lives! The Western Balkans were neither prepared nor equipped to face the pandemic leading 76 percent of the young wishing to emigrate. The pandemic is not a matter of choice but an obligations to future generations.

Teymur Musayev from Azerbaijan stressed the urgency of building a new global health architecture in the wake of the Covid pandemic. Better emergency preparedness requires a resilient global health infrastructure. A target for Azerbaijan is to ensure a healthy lifestyle for all citizens. Investments in the healthcare sector must become a priority with better use of innovative digitized data for timely and proper care including the role of the private sector which remains crucial. One third of world population has difficult or no access to medical care with medicine unaffordable for LDCs. Since vaccination is essential for preventive health care, expansion of vaccine programmes and new
regional and international programmes must be set up including for emergencies to include disaster training programmes for healthcare workers under WHO auspices. **Zlatko Lagumdžija** from Bosnia Herzegovina recalled the launch of a “European Health Union” during the pandemic and a 2022 EU declaration on “Global responsibility: Think health globally and act locally” linked to the Green Deal and Digital Transformation. In addition, France called on 9 May 2022 for the creation of a European Political Community. Triangulating between health-green-digital is a novelty. If the EU wants to go global, it must start in Europe from 27 countries to 44 in the EPC and “go health” Europe-wide by building a European Health Community to include international financial institutions such as the EIB supporting digital health transformation. **Yoram Weiss** from Israel reminded the effective policies implemented by Israel during the Covid crisis including its vaccine programme. Hadassah Medical Center, beyond breakthroughs in science and technology, is also a community hospital serving one of the most diverse communities in the world working together to address the pandemic. Full transparency of healthcare workers is the prerequisite and trying to prevent their burnout. Importance of communication links to the community is vital without neglecting other medical conditions prevailing that the patients carry. Addressing mental health issues should also remain at the forefront. A final lesson is for the community to support patients not requiring hospitalisation which will decrease mortality and mobility.

**Gordon Brown** from the United Kingdom delivered a message on the continuing global health emergency and, barely three years after the COVID pandemic set in, signs are seen in 2023 that entire countries have failed to learn the lessons of the crisis lapsing into a new complacency. Only one in four peoples have been vaccinated in low-income countries. WHO calculates that 329 million people are in need of urgent medical assistance with fifty-five chronic severe crises worldwide requiring an urgent infusion of funds at both global and national levels. Low-income countries are in high debt distress spending larger public money on debt
interest payments higher than on healthcare. Estimates on global financial losses from the pandemic are at $800 billion annually but securing a fraction for global pandemic preparedness has become difficult. IMF rules for disbursement have been agreed for climate change but not yet on pandemic preparedness. Disease surveillance must be expanded. With 23 million refugees and 80 million displaced people, global health has received a little more than 10 percent of humanitarian aid funding.

Financing is the key issue when developing the WHO Pandemic Accord. Controlling infectious diseases and delivering healthy lives is a global public good which must be equitably financed through fair burden sharing mechanisms.

In the Q&A session, a participant was saddened that “prevention” was absent in the “Five Ps” with medical systems prioritising symptoms rather than going to the roots of the problem such as mental health problems gripping up to 30 percent of world population. Inequity of access to medicines and vaccines between the North and South was also put forward. The panel responded by highlighting trade rules that allow monopolistic trade in lifesaving health technologies which must change in the coming Pandemic Preparedness and Prevention Treaty, after having lost the battle in WTO, and reforming tax rules allowing pharmaceutical to repatriate profits from abroad. A new approach to mental health disabilities in times of digital revolution, Internet and social media must urgently be sought in particular their impact on younger generations. Vaccine nationalism and essential drugs inequities must also be fought. The mindset on healthcare and education must be transformed from simply spending to producing wealth especially in healthcare workers. Inequality in knowledge, beyond vaccines, needs also clearer focus as well as better usage of open sources and greater funding for mental health.
PANEL 5

MIGRATION AS A SYMPTOM OF WORLD POVERTY, INEQUALITY, CLIMATE STRESS AND CONFLICT
Migration and Refugees are now a global problem of enormous magnitude. This year the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) estimated that we will have about 100 million refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and pressure for many countries to deal with Migration is rising. A huge increase in Europe is due to the war in Ukraine which has displaced more people than any time since WW2, but these were more easily welcomed by their European brethren. But generally, many countries have profound problems with accepting refugees from different ethnic or religious backgrounds. While accepting diversity as a principle these countries find that coping with the assimilation of the refugees and the ensuing multi-culturalism is problematic: it helps feed popular anxieties which tends to create a climate favourable to nationalistic right-wing political movements. Yet, all nations are increasingly becoming “Rainbow Nations” to use Mandela’s felicitous expression. We need to celebrate our common humanity, and to promote the kind of tolerant give and take, not only demanding free speech, but also accepting the obligation to listen. If we do, using civility in discourse and rationality in argument, we have the makings of a pluralistic system, a truly democratic system with its Agora or Public Square, and its Aeropagus or forum for self-expression. But it is important to note that the right to free speech is a freedom secured by law, while the obligation to listen – and thereby generate a meaningful dialogue – is a discipline that is developed by education and must become part of the prevailing culture. But the attractiveness of the rich liberal western countries for many of the underprivileged and the oppressed means that migration in search of political asylum and economic opportunity brings ever more persons to seek access to these countries. That reality will be reinforced by the likely impacts of climate change where the poorest nations, who have contributed least to the problem of GHG emissions, are likely to suffer most by its consequences. By some estimates, the size of likely migration seeking access to Europe and the United States may well reach some 200 million persons in the decades to come. It behoves the advanced countries of the West to prepare for this eventuality. Systems of proper processing and programs of adaptation and assimilation
systems for those who will be able to join the western countries target of their migration, all need attention and thoughtful design of procedures and institutions. In addition, the rich countries of the West need to assist the development of programs of expanded opportunities in the home countries of the potential migrants.

- How does one deal with the presumed “Right of Asylum” that persecuted refugees should be able to expect in a civilized world?

- How does one deal with the refugees of environmental disasters from floods to droughts to hurricanes to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions?

- Do they take precedence on the basis of the emergency nature of the suffering they have undergone?

- What sort of programs for the assimilation of migrants and refugees work best, causing the least disruption, while being most effective in facilitating the absorption of these new citizens in their host countries?

- Does it make sense to think in terms of having “guest worker” programs that would allow economic migrants to legally work in the rich countries, even for a limited period, with or without a path to citizenship?

- What sort of assistance should rich (recipients of migrants) give to the poor (exporters of migrants) to expand the economic opportunities in the poor countries and thereby dampen the demands for emigration from these poor countries?

- As the populations of the rich countries become older and their populations decline, can the issue of young and vigorous migrants be also looked at in a demographic and labour force context?
The moderator from Switzerland Walter Fust introduced the panel and invited Laimdota Straujuma from Latvia for her remarks who highlighted the positive and negative perceptions of migration through the prism of her home country with notably recent immigration from war torn Ukraine. Latvia has also a special case: the 10 percent of its inhabitants devoid of its citizenship, former Soviet people from Russia who refused to learn the language. Chiril Gaburici from Moldova underlined his country’s suffering from population exodus having lost 30 percent of its population over the last three decades! Peacebuilding measures must be set up to avoid conflicts worldwide with international cooperation and coordination at the forefront in order to share best practices and build joint policies. Vusal Huseynov from Azerbaijan noted that migration is increasingly at the top of the global agenda as witness international migration statistics including the ninety million climate migrants. Forced displacement impacts directly on IDPs but return must be dignified, resettlement sustainable and reintegration effective. Migration is not a problem per se but carries a huge development potential beneficial to sending and receiving communities such as the role of remittances now at $626 billion, near double the size of global official ODA, favouring consumption and not development. The UN Global Compact for safe and orderly migration was highlighted and the need to adapt national policies such as Azerbaijan’s recent MOU with IOM in setting up a regional training centre tailored to the needs of the region. Maria Angela Holguin from Colombia recalled the experience of her country with Venezuelan immigration since 2015 with eight million refugees to the region of which three million to Colombia. Whilst retaining an open-
door policy for Venezuelans, Columbia must undertake greater efforts in their registration for ensuing more efficient economic integration countrywide as well as to be more reactive since inception of the migration flow.

Abdulaziz Altwajri focused on migration from Africa to Europe when compared to migrants stemming from other parts of the world. Unfortunately double standards prevail here, when compared to the current treatment of Ukrainians, with many African immigrants hailing from former European colonies who emigrate unwillingly due to conflicts, bad governance and absence of economic opportunities at home provoking a brain drain since their independences. Rosalia Arteaga Serrano from Ecuador recalled vast past emigration to the United States and Spain and after dollarisation of the economy in 2000 her country became attractive for labour from Latin America including a million Columbians and two million Venezuelans in transit with 500,000 settling permanently. Ecuador is an open country recognizing universal citizenship, but a negative side-effect is the arrival of narcotraffic cartels. She called the attention to her NGO project providing training and education to migrants. Mohamed Mahmoud Abdelsalam highlighted that gender inequality, climate impacts, poverty, wars, ethnic, religious and racial disparities have caused an unprecedented migration. He said that a few days ago he was at the Wilton Park conference on the responsibility of religious freedom around the world. There were intense talks about these topics and he was careful to use the term “illegal immigration” there because it is something related to the legal and moral aspect, and often exceeds the legal
norms. Unfortunately, the Mediterranean Sea has become a mass graveyard of victims of all ages, especially young people, who attempt to migrate secretly. Violation of civil rights in their own countries and persecution during religious ceremonies in the countries makes them migrate to another country which creates the problem of Islamophobia. Migration is not new in Arab countries. Despite the fact that the population of the Arab region is 5% of the population of the world region, it hosts 32% migrants and 38% of internal refugees. Mohamed Mahmoud Abdelsalam also emphasized that international organizations and institutions should help refugees integrate into society.

The ensuing discussion with the participants opened on the issue of Africa being absent on the panel and on the impact of climate refugees in the growing flow of migrants. The voices of young victims who compose the majority forced to flee are not heard. The panellists concluded by the necessity of linking solidarity to responsibility in cooperation between countries of North and South.
PANEL 6
THE ROLE OF NEW ENERGY ANY TRANSPORT CORRIDORS IN EURASIA
For a generation or more, the South Caucasus was seen as a place of conflict, largely because of the Armenian occupation of parts of Azerbaijan's territory. That the Nagorno Karabakh region is indeed part of Azerbaijan has been supported by at least four UNSC resolutions and one EU-based resolution. Nevertheless, the occupied territories in Nagorno Karabakh remained under Armenian control until they were liberated by the Azerbaijani armed forces in 2020. Now, a new start can be envisioned. This became possible due to the outcome of the Second Karabakh War and the Moscow-brokered trilateral statement of the 10th November 2020 which ended the almost 30-year-long illegal Armenian occupation and restored Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. Now it is the time to move forward with new ideas and a common vision, putting aside past grievances and outdated stereotypes. Such a desirable outcome will require political leaders willing to turn the page on past grievances, and who are prepared to work together in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration for the mutual benefit of all. Such reconciliations are possible, as the dramatic example of post-war France and Germany transcending past enmities to build together the EU. President Aliyev has formally declared that he is willing to sign a peace treaty with Armenia. Should that attitude be reciprocated, it could open the door to formalizing a peace treaty between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and lead to a normalization of their relations. These developments may also have a positive impact on the normalization process between Armenia and Türkiye. Thus, if the processes of normalization between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and between Armenia and Türkiye take place, this could lead not only to the opening of the borders between them and the creation of an enabling environment that could be more conducive for building confidence and starting reconciliation between these societies, but also contribute to prosperity, development, and trans-regional cooperation in the entire South Caucasus and the wider region. However, we should not ignore the currently frozen conflict in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, territories taken from Georgia in the 2008 Russian invasion. It is important to note that despite Russian efforts...
to have these territories recognized as independent states (under Russian protection) only four countries have recognized them as such, with all of the other UN member states still recognizing them as part of Georgia. Skilful diplomacy might achieve at least some, if not all, of these desirable outcomes and create a window of opportunity for the transformation of the South Caucasus region into a fully integrated area at the crossroad of the European and Asian major energy and transport corridors.

- Azerbaijan is at the heart of any scheme for building a cooperative and mutually supportive Caucasus economic development vision. What are the prospects for that?

- Would starting with Georgia and then later combining Armenia, facilitate moving towards such a vision of peace cooperation and prosperity?

- How can energy and transport corridors connecting Azerbaijan to Europe help respond to current needs and lay the foundations for more development in the future?
Moderator **Eka Tkeshelashvili** from Georgia introduced the panel by highlighting the importance of opportunities raised by the issues addressed on the panel and which have been central in all past Global Baku Forums although still lacking implementation. Challenges have been compounded by the COVID pandemic and the war in Ukraine increasing disruptions which have however become catalysts for new projects including green transition in the energy sector. **Parviz Shahbazov** from Azerbaijan was invited to open the discussion. When talking of “corridors”, the ancient Silk Road comes to mind enabling countries on this road to develop and prosper and to build stronger multilateral frameworks: their closure leads unavoidably to economic retrenchment. Azerbaijan’s long-standing policy has been to provide secure, reliable and safe energy resources for itself and countries of the region as well as beyond for the entire European continent such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil project and the Southern Gas Corridor. The current geopolitical situation seriously impacts on the energy transport corridors, but Azerbaijan’s policy will be to continue ensuring energy security for all including building the new EU-Caspian Green Corridor contributing to decarbonisation with the importance given to renewables.

**Jean Baderschneider** from the United States underlined that the South Caucasus and the Caspian countries are in a singular situation to deal with both the energy and climate crises which have caused a dramatic uplift of the region in their strategic importance going forward with Azerbaijan playing a key role therein. Azerbaijan has huge excess capacity...
in oil and gas producing four times more than domestic demand allowing for exports to European markets. Azerbaijan is also creating the first integrated hydrogen hub in the world with renewables such as wind, solar, hydro and thermo which will require transport capabilities and R&D infrastructure. An additional major advantage is its long-take agreement with EU allowing for secure monetized investment. 

Ekaterina Zaharieva from Bulgaria noted that Western Europe took for granted Russian energy supplies without seeing or worrying about the growing tensions on its Eastern frontiers. Over decades, the EU financed Putin’s regime although East European member states were calling incessantly for a diversification of energy supplies: these alarm bells were not heeded. The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine started in 2014 and in 2008 in Georgia. The wakeup call came in 2022, with EU gas imports from Russia amounting to 83 percent before the war and reduced to 20 percent in 2023, and in Bulgaria from 95 percent to zero imports! Azerbaijan played a key role in the Bulgarian strategy for diversification with today a third of gas consumption coming through TAP. Let’s hope the lessons will be learned by Europe! Ana Birchall from Romania has been warning the EU that energy was being weaponised by Putin including Nordstream 2. Azerbaijan played a critical role in saving Europe’s gas supplies. Building corridors and diversification of energy mixes need further enhancement such as with the reconstruction of Susha on green energy as a symbol for the future.
Rashad Nabiyev from Azerbaijan stressed the need for diversification of transit routes in light of growing geopolitical tensions. Azerbaijan was not heard or heeded by Europe over the last decade notably on its proposed Middle Corridor. Albeit, through constant infrastructure upgrading, Azerbaijan was ready to meet today’s call with an increase of transit goods by 75 percent in the last year. A doubling of railway transit cargos is estimated in the coming years and efficiency has drastically reduced time on delivery of goods thanks also to an upgrading of rolling stocks. The Zangezur Corridor currently under construction will add additional capacity to the Middle Corridor to the benefit of the broader region including Armenia and the European partners. Azim Ibrohim from Tajikistan noted its geography at the centre of many routes with an open-door policy to achieve SDGs, energy independence, food security, unhindered communications and accelerated industrialisation. Development of the transport sector is a Tadjik strategic governmental goal with sixty investments plans representing $2 billion. Currently the corridor Tajikistan-Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan-Türkiye-Europe is being upgraded, including environmentally friendly electricity transportation in Tajikistan, to shorten the China-Europe trade link contributing also to the Silk Road project. Djoomart Otorbaev from Kyrgyzstan recalled old emotions of the past Silk Road trade between China and Europe transforming today Central Asia from a land-locked to land-connected region via a Eurasian Rail Revolution as well as a growing Middle Corridor promoted by EU and Türkiye. Bolat Nurgaliyev from Kazakhstan called for a return of international relations to a more predictable and mutually
accommodating state. Kazakhstan plays a key role in the global oil market and its geography binds it to a multi-vector diplomacy which fits into the Chinese BRI, the EU Global Gateway, the U.S. Build Back Better World (B3W) or the G7 Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) initiatives. The new Caspian International Transport Route is launched to become the Eurasian logistic hub.

Lazar Comanescu from Romania noted that global interdependencies are now being questioned and hence the rise of economic protectionism at regional and national levels, but interdependencies will continue to grow. Economic development evolves with competition which should include cooperation when fair such as within the recent G7 Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment and other projects. Multilateral negotiations can change the paradigm within a developing multipolar world with particular importance given to Eurasian interconnectivity including Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation which highlights energy and transport as its core activities although progress is slow. Green and clean energy is at the top of the agenda for future projects in and around the Black Sea basin.

Final remarks from the panel opened with Parviz Shahbazov who underlined the doubling of gas volumes for Europe as of January 2023 and expansion of the TAP upgrading the Southern Gas Corridor for its energy security. For the longer term, huge resources of the Caspian Sea of green energy in electricity and green gases will be delivered to Europe aka Green Corridor. Zangezur will be both a transport and energy corridor creating addi-
tional opportunities. Jean Baderschneider focused, from a private sector perspective, on transport, offtake and manufacturing with transport and logistics the key. On offtake, Azerbaijan is a premium location for investment, and on manufacturing the hydrogen hub that will allow for Azerbaijan to build its turbines at home. For Ekaterina Zaharieva continued further investments are required notably in interconnectors notably between Bulgaria and Serbia and with Greece, and in LNG terminals. Rashad Nabiyev stressed that Azerbaijan will not be opportunistic in its tariff policy and reach out for the longer term in a cooperative spirit with partners. Djoomart Otorbaev hails the coming of a new Great Silk Road with Central Asia as the interconnector with its Middle Corridor adding emotional connectivity to transport and energy moving from the Altai Mountains to the Bosporus.
PANEL 7

CHINA’S ROLE FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY
The rise of China is one of the most notable achievements of this new century. Building on a period of rapid transformation and growth during the last two decades of the 20th century, China again astounded the world with a phenomenal performance in the period of the MDGs and the SDGs. It succeeded in raising hundreds of millions of people out of extreme poverty, in transforming the infrastructural base of the country, and even more, it has become a major force in global trade and in global finance, ranking first, along with Japan, as the major creditor of the U.S. It has also become a major force in global development patterns, partly through its Belt and Road Initiative and its major support of development on many countries, becoming the largest financier of development projects in Sub-Saharan Africa. More importantly, China has also raced forward in its scientific prowess, in almost all fields, from computers and AI to biology and space. Today it matches the U.S. and even surpasses it in scientific research and development on a number of metrics. It is natural that China should translate that economic and scientific power into political and military presence on the international scene. It wants and should have a major say in the design of the emerging global world order. But what would its contribution be like? This panel should seek to clarify China’s objectives in terms of its international role.

CHINA’S ROLE FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY

Would China support a global system where the strong protect the weak and the rich support the poor in implementing the SDGs for the global benefit of all of humanity?

How would China see the role of institutions like the BRICS vis-a-vis the G-20 and the Bretton Woods System?
Moderator Boris Tadic invited Wu Hongbo from China for his opening remarks who underlined grave challenges in the world in the last three years, from the COVID pandemic to war in Europe. There can’t be development without security, and no security without development. Common development figures are strongly represented in China’s foreign policy and notably its “Global Development Initiative” (GDI) proposed by President Xi to the UN in 2021 with results-oriented actions are the forefront. China itself successfully raised 100 million people out of extreme poverty by 2021 – ten years ahead of SDG1 schedule – and since the reform and open policies of 1970s over 800 million were hauled out of poverty impacting the world at large and UN programmes. Unlike in the West, China’s modernisation plan has five distinctive features encompassing a huge population of 1.4 billion: common prosperity for all; combination of material and cultural ethical advancement; harmony between humanity and nature; and peaceful development for the promotion of common prosperity. China is your partner, not your rival. Security for all led China to launch in 2022 its “Global Security Initiative” (GSI) stressing the respect of national sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries and abiding to the UN Charter including the peaceful resolution of disputes. On Ukraine, the position of China is summarised as such: supporting talks for peace in contrast to countries escalating tensions. Taiwan is not comparable to Ukraine as it remains a Chinese domestic affair, whereas Ukraine is an issue between two sovereign powers. Double standards are here applied whereby some countries add fuel to fire by resolutely intervening in China’s domestic affairs.

Khuon Soudary from Cambodia recalled a world moving to multipolarity with China a key global actor although attempts are underway to contain it which will fail due to its deep integration in the international system stabilising peace and security worldwide. China offers an alternative path to global development and promotes a true, open and inclusive multilateralism as witnessed by the BRI, GDI and GSI initiatives. China will continue to exercise strategic patience and focus on domestic issues.
Cambodia and China have upgraded their relationship to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2010 and signed an Action Plan on Building a Cambodia-China Community of Shared Future for Mankind in 2019, exemplifying a strong and equal relationship between a small and a great nation. Peter Medgyessy from Hungary noted as positive China’s rapid development for the world and not be feared by its rise concentrating on poverty alleviation at home and peaceful reintegration of Taiwan in its fold without the wish to export its regime to others contrary to Western policies. Shaukat Aziz from Pakistan stressed the need of new interdependencies to find commonalties in over-

coming growing threats and fractures in the world by creating trust and respect. BRI boosts connectivity across the region and brings development to Pakistan such as Gwadar port as a major gateway to the world. Assistance given by China to Pakistan is user-driven, not lender-driven, a country now Pakistan’s best and trusted friend.

Rashid Alimov from Tajikistan focused on the relationship between China as neighbour and Central Asian countries mirroring China’s glob-

al role in security and development reaching a level of comprehensive strategic partnership covering more than one hundred spheres. Trade relations have increased dramatically due also to improved transport connectivity and the presence of eight thousand Chinese companies operating in Central Asia focused on agriculture and water management, industry and engineering, and building a digital and green economy. For landlocked Central Asia, BRI is vital as an Asia-Europe intercontinental interconnector land bridge opening prospects
in all fields for the future. The strengthened dialogue on security and cooperation in Central Asia with China’s support will here be central in creating a common space based on trust and development. Petre Roman from Romania focused on China’s security role and, to start, on its economic miracle in developing so swiftly to become the world economic superpower on par with the U.S. until the arrival of MAGA Trump which labelled this country as a threat to the free world. Today’s geopolitics is defined by the Russia-Ukraine war and an unfolding possible new Cold War between China and the U.S. although the world is confronted by other global threats. Framing the world in competition between democracies and autocracies is excessively simplistic within today’s multipolarity as shown by varied reactions to the war in Ukraine or concerns about financial crises. Just before the 2022 invasion, Russia and China signed a solid alliance with Chinese leaders trying to balance two irreconcilable ideas, a bolstering of this alliance without provoking coordinated sanctions from the West: China cannot be connected and disconnected at the same time. A credible path to stop the war is needed and China delivered the first proposal
on peace negotiations. We cannot ask China to weigh in on striving for peace in Ukraine and concomitantly menace a new Cold War! Global order is neither inherently robust nor is it fragile: crises are inevitable hence the need for the two superpowers to communicate and coordinate, to anticipate and forestall disruptions in order to defend their shared interests. In 2022, overall trade between both reached new highs, and the U.S. trade deficit with China grew to $390 billion.

The moderator opened the discussion by inviting to the floor Vuk Jeremic from Serbia who recalled that China was the only country that had treated Serbia as a sovereign and equal partner. When serving as UNGA President, the only P5 country who had not reached out with instructions was yet again PRC. But Henry Kissinger and others are warning against a new Cold War exemplified by now a hot war in Ukraine, and actively sought by the U.S. since 2017 with bipartisan consensus on China in Congress. How to avoid this Cold War is the essential question of the day. For Shaukat Aziz, both the U.S. and China are responsible powers which should avoid such an outcome. For Wu Hongbo, reality is that we have entered a Cold War period with China being squeezed including its companies. Slipping into a hot war is in theory a possibility but not likely in practice: the U.S. has never attacked large countries in history and lost wars in China's neighbourhood such as in Vietnam, Cambodia and recently in Afghanistan. If a hot war is imposed on China, it can defend itself. Khuon Soudary underlined the lessons learned by Cambodia's tragic history which survived because the quest for peace was prevalent in both China and the U.S. Kjell Magne Bondevik from Norway concentrated on the ongoing war in Ukraine referring to China's twelve points peace initiative, but China has not condemned Russia's aggression. One of the twelve points is also to respect territorial integrity but are they the borders of Ukraine before or after the war was launched? Ambassador Wu responded by recalling diplomatic relations with both protagonists and China did not create the Ukraine crisis and is not party to it. At the outset, President Xi made
clear the principles of territorial integrity must be respected and abiding to the UN Charter. Legitimate concerns for the security of a country must be taken into consideration and efforts made to promote a peace settlement. This is an integrate whole of China’s position. Each country’s legitimate security concerns on the European continent are ignored and the security umbrella for all collapsed upon the launch of the war. Russia remains a geographic neighbour of Europe and to avoid a World War III a comprehensive umbrella is required by keeping Russia within. Russia survived the sanctions, but Europe suffered: China is against Western unilateral sanctions and military support which only fuels further fighting. Ukraine cannot win militarily without direct NATO support, and this is a war Russia cannot afford to lose leading to the current military deadlock. This explains China’s initiative to promote and find a political settlement.
Boris Tadic, as former President of Serbia, reacted by recalling that NATO had bombed his country with the ensuing violation of its territorial integrity. The West not only violated international law by recognizing Kosovo’s independence but also opened a Pandora Box in terms of global security endangering the world predicting at his 2007 UNGA address next coming cases in Crimea, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Unfortunately, the policy of double standards in persistent in the international arena which must be changed to obtain sustainable peace. Ambassador Wu recalled a precedent on international rules being violated by a P5 member: the invasion of Iraq by the U.S. under false pretexts did not lead to sanctions and furthermore with no apology to the international community thereafter! Russia follows today in America’s footsteps. Abdulaziz Altwaijri highlighted the new accord between Saudi Arabia and Iran engineered by China in its new and effective role as a mediating power. Amre Moussa stressed that two Cold Wars are underway, one between the West and Russia and the other between the U.S. and China. The principle of respecting sovereign territorial integrity is music to the ears in the South but has fallen victim to the policy of double standards which must now be abandoned. The global South must prevent the Cold Wars and carries a role such as played by the NAM in the 20th century: the countries of the South must now be taken into serious consideration.
PANEL 8

THE WESTERN BALKANS IN THE EU CONTEXT
Europe has been the most successful peace project in the last 75 years. The European Union (EU) has brought peace and security to a warring continent and has expanded to take in many new members after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The EU's policies have also brought prosperity and welfare to its people and has developed peaceful intensified relations from the West to the East. All this was done with great diplomatic virtuosity as the reality of “variable architecture” enabled choice among many of the old and new nations that cover Eastern Europe. Thus, the boundaries (and member states) that define the Eurozone, the EU proper, the EFTA, NATO, Schengen, OSCE and the Council of Europe, etc. are not the same. Many hoped that with the end of the Cold War a new globally activist (or at least regionally activist) EU would emerge. But tensions have been on the rise among all these nations. Not only did the citizens of Europe reject the proposed European constitution, but there are still some members that resent the more modest Maastricht treaty provisions. Furthermore, Brexit has dealt a blow to the vision of a united Europe. Today, it is clear that the Western Balkans, having emerged from the terrible wars of the 1990s, they need to shed the stereotypes that still bedevil the image of peace, security and prosperity for all that should be feasible for the Western Balkans and seemed almost within reach. They all clearly belong in the expanding vision of the European project. All these many issues require rethinking the rosy pictures that prevailed in the recent past, and to focus on the role of Europe and how to bring peace and stability to Eastern Europe, as well as to the Southern Caucasus. A better understanding of the future of the Western Balkans and their possible links with the European project would need that this panel address many important and complex issues.
Is there a widely accepted vision for Europe (EU and non-EU) that encompasses more than an economic common market?

Can Europe become the global champion of the fundamental freedoms that the instruments that advance our human rights promise to all citizens everywhere including in all the countries of the Western Balkans?

How does Brexit and the rise of illiberal democracies within Europe affect the role that the EU should play on the latent tensions in the Western Balkans?

What sort of relationships should exist between the EU and the Western Balkans and the Southern Caucasus?
Moderator Zlatko Lagumdžija from Bosnia Herzegovina introduced the panel and invited Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović from Croatia to open the discussions. As premises, the future of the Western Balkans, or more appropriately Southeast Europe, is within the EU and NATO which is a prerequisite for any outstanding bilateral issues. Their incorporation does not represent expansion but consolidation of EU. If the EU wants to become a global player, it must necessarily incorporate these countries. The war in Ukraine has disrupted the security and stability on the continent with the influences of Russia unavoidably filling the vacuum in Southeast Europe, from tensions fuelled in Bosnia to Serbia’s relationship with this outside power attempting to project instability. We strive for pro-European reform governments elected in EU’s neighbourhood. Recent polls show an increase in favour of authoritarian systems, but a majority still see their future within the EU. This region retains two great potentials: progress has been attained in a short period but descending into turmoil is also a possibility which must be prevented. The EU must give greater process to the process of adopting and implementing the Copenhagen political and economic accession criteria. But are the statements of Balkan leaders truly genuine? The younger generations should here be more fully integrated and their voices heard. Jan Fischer from Czechia noted the many years of discussion of enlargement of the EU to the Western Balkans but have yet to fulfil the dream of accession of these countries. When the wakeup call for the EU came after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, it reflected its past economic successes but also looked at its failures on the security front by not heeding the Russian threat after Crimea in 2014 and even building Nordstream 2 a few years later! After Brexit, Europe is fragmenting driven by populist movements due also to a singular focus on institutional reform at the expense of debates on shared values. But after the Russian invasion, the EU displayed surprising resilience and rapid reaction. With the Western Balkans, the EU showed strategic initiatives and favoured trade relations.
now representing two thirds of overall trade for these countries, but the pace to membership is still slow. The initiative raised by President Macron on creating a European Political Community could become an efficient vehicle for the EU to extend its reach and influence on the continent beyond the current member states.

Petar Stoyanov from Bulgaria opened his remarks by setting the Western Balkans within the context of the only two wars on the European continent since World War II: Yugoslavia and Ukraine. West Balkan EU integration was seen as a guarantee for security and development. The novelty is for the EU to commence accession negotiations with a country at war, Ukraine, whilst the Western Balkans become increasingly impatient in their accession quest and disappointment with the West epitomised in “enlargement fatigue”. The war in Ukraine shows today a renewed impetus to future EU enlargement for consolidation of European security. Zlatko Lamgumdzija alerted on the need of speeding up the Western Balkans accession process lest the EU itself be balkanised. Emil Constantinescu from Romania highlight-
ed Putin’s falsification of history would have been impossible had the real history of the fall of communism been correctly presented including in the Balkans. History can become a lesson for future generations. Integration of the Western Balkans is a requirement for Europe to be Milica Pejanovic-Durisic from Montenegro underlined the importance of looking at the deep real problem facing Montenegro and the Western Balkans and avoid politically correct messages. Montenegro succeeded in the 1990s to avoid being drawn into regional conflicts and maintaining peace and civility in the country. Today, society is extremely polarised due to a hybrid war being waged including information warfare and cyber-attacks since the invasion of Ukraine. This exemplifies the cruciality of Montenegro’s NATO membership. With regards to EU integration, once leader Brussels has since blocked her accession process leading people to look away from Europe and at authoritarian models of governance. The general message on Montenegro and the West Balkans belonging to EU is no longer sufficient: added value that the region brings to the EU must be better recognised, articulated and demonstrated as shown through the successful NATO enlargement process.

The discussion then opened to the floor. Croatia has been very active in helping the Western Balkans such as with the Brdo-Brioni political and security process complementing the EU Berlin economic process, both being merit-based, including translation of the “acquis communautaire” and technical assistance to the negotiation teams. The EU is not just an economic space but true to its motto is “unity in diversity” in various and different fields. The moderator summarised that “you (Western Balkans) is us (EU at large)".

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PANEL 9

THE SEARCH FOR PEACE, STABILITY & DEVELOPMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST & BEYOND
THE SEARCH FOR PEACE, STABILITY & DEVELOPMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST & BEYOND

In global politics, the Middle East used to be synonymous with the Arab-Israeli Conflict and the issue of the Palestinians. But the last 20 years or so have seen a broad realignment along a confrontation between the West and radical Islamic terrorism, and between the Sunni and Shia divide among predominantly Muslim majority countries, and widespread instabilities following the “Arab Spring” of 2011. Today tensions, if not outright wars, are in many lands from Morocco and the SADR in the west, on to Libya, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and on beyond the Arab countries to Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan. In the midst of all this, much is changing between Israel and the Arabs. Saudi Arabia and the Houthis have a two-month ceasefire in Yemen, which could lead to ending that war. The non-Arab but regionally involved powers of Türkiye and Iran also have an important presence. The US withdrawal from Afghanistan and Russia’s strong involvement in Syria further highlight the complexities of a proper reading of the lay of the land and the many intersecting lines of interests of many state and non-state actors. But the new accords promoted by the U.S., whereby Israel is aligning with a number of Arab countries who see a primary threat in Iran. The U.S. is pushing that, almost to the point of building a military alliance between the Arabs and Israel, that would “contain” and isolate Iran. It is a complex situation that requires thoughtful analysis and understanding.
With these enormous and widespread tensions all over the map, who are the main actors who can promote a better framework for promoting peace and security and stability in the region?

What might settlements of these disputes look like?

What are the prospects of nuclear proliferation in the region, and how can such prospects be minimized?

The region still represents a very large critical mass in the world energy production and export of oil and gas, and they synchronize much of these discussions with Russia (OPEC+), how does that affect the volatility of the energy markets?

What about the Sunni-Shia split and its impact on the role of both state and non-state actors in the region and beyond?
Moderator Francis O’Donnell from Ireland introduced the panel by referring to the nation-states as no longer being the sole actors on the international stage which explains the vital necessity of having structures of international governance that can cope with global threats incorporating many other increasingly non-governmental and corporate actors creating new dynamics from the civil society promoting change including in the Middle East.

Prince Turki AlFaisal AlSaud from Saudi Arabia opened the discussion on the “rules-based international order” which is in crisis in the Middle East with a necessary revamping of the UN at the centre of concern including reform of its Security Council. Beyond strife, hopes are also present in the Middle East as witness the recent Chinese mediation between Saudi Arabia and Iran impacting positively on security and stability in the region. Amre Moussa from Egypt also referred to the Iran-Saudi agreement which introduces an element of hope in the region including on the nuclear weapons issue: the Middle East must free itself from weapons of mass destruction which includes Israel into the equation. On the Palestinian Question, no progress has been made due to the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem littered by illegal settlements: time of shouting and shooting should come to an end with a return to the 2002 Beirut Arab Peace Initiative. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu called for a new approach in searching for peace in the Middle East relying firstly on an understanding of the genesis of these countries and their better life expectancies and perspectives. Although praising a common history, they cannot see their future in common bringing peace and
prosperity to all in the region. During the Pax Ottomana, boundaries did not exist whereafter Sykes-Picot drew lines in the sand ushering an era of a Westphalian Order balance-of-power order which led to wars until this day. A new vision for the region is required building a better future on a binding commitment that all are bound to live together, and on embracing the spirit of moderation and modernisation, avoiding state disintegration and favouring economic development and ties which will break the vicious cycle of violence. The Middle East must also become a nuclear weapons free zone.

The moderator asked the panel whether the Abraham Accords and the Iran-Saudi resumption of diplomatic relations can lead to peace.

The discussion was opened to the floor and remarks were delivered by Gila Gamliel, Minister of Intelligence of Israel, highlighting the Abraham Accords based on the common agreements of the nations constituting the Middle East with Israel no longer seen as an enemy but as a partner with its neighbours. The real “elephant in the room” is Iran, a threat to the entire Middle East and beyond.

Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert stressed his criticism of the current government endangering democracy but this requires dealing at home and not abroad, contrary to the Palestinian issue which partakes in the

in Yemen with Turki AlFaisal AlSaud, although regretting this sore in the region, saw hopeful signs with the ceasefire. KSA’s view on the Abrahamic Accords is guided by the Arab Peace Initiative including the resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem, but Israel has violated these Accords by further expanding illegal settlements in the OPT. UNSC resolutions need also to be respected by Israel but are prevented from application due to the P5 veto system. Impunity becomes the rules rather than the exception as shown by violations of the rules-based international order by leading global powers whether in Iraq or Libya and now in Ukraine.
stability of the Middle East. The government of Israel does not want to care about this issue and to create a platform of negotiation with the Palestinians. Certainly, Palestinian terror has and continues to exist such as during suicide attacks at times of his mayorship of Jerusalem but over the last twelve years no single government has done anything to help put back a negotiation process between Israel and the Palestinians. The speaker, when Prime Minister, recalled 36 meetings with the leader of the Palestinians and had tabled an agreement which was rejected, a tragic and historical mistake which will come to haunt Abu Mazen and his legacy. When today Cabinet ministers hope “wiping out” Palestinian townships and villages, this is shameful, including when the minister in charge of the territories talks likewise: Israelis will never be in favour of pogroms perpetuated on our neighbours and friends on the other side, neither tolerate anyone presenting the State of Israel for saying this. Israel’s talks about the danger of Iran as a common concern, but this issue has nothing to do with the Palestinian case: the more Israel is distant to coming closer on this issue, the stronger Iran becomes. The reluctance of the Palestinians to accept his peace proposal was a historic error which will continue to shake the foundations of the Middle East which included a two state solution based on the 1967 borders with minor swaps of territories; East Jerusalem as capital of the Palestine state and its Holy Basin including the old city and the Temple Mount not to carry exclusive sovereignty rights by any nation and to be administered by Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the Palestinians, Israel and the United States under the auspices of the UN Security Council. On refugees, negotiations would be held with the Palestinians on their resolution within the framework of the Beirut Arab Peace Initiative reconfirmed in Riyadh. Additional technical discussions were held within the Annapolis framework. Ehud Olmert had pleaded Abu Mazen to sign but although having never said “no”, never said “yes”. Decency, honesty and integrity compels him to state that the current government of Israel is not prepared to establish a process bringing closer a resolution to the Palestinian conflict ushering peace into the region.

Amre Moussa reacted by underlining that Palestinians are under military occupation but a core of Israelis wants to end the conflict, so possibilities do exist to move forward such as on Jerusalem and the refugees, impossible under a current extremist government in Israel.
PANEL 10

THE GEO-STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF AFRICA
On the whole, the continent of Africa is the poorest and most vulnerable in the world, even as the population of Africa is set to grow more than anywhere else in the world. If we leave the Arab countries of North Africa out of this picture, Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is home to more than 1 billion people, half of whom will be under 25 years old by 2050. SSA is a very diverse sub-continent, but on the whole it is a group of countries that possesses human and natural resources that could produce inclusive growth and with the capacity to eradicate poverty. Africa as a whole has the world’s largest free trade area and a 1.2 billion-person market, the continent is creating an entirely new development path, harnessing the potential of its resources and people. But current realities are problematic. The World Bank notes:

“At present, economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is set to decelerate from 4.1% in 2021 to 3.3% in 2022, as a result of a slowdown in global growth, rising inflation exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, adverse weather conditions, a tightening in global financial conditions, and the rising risk of debt distress. These trends compromise poverty reduction, already set back by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Rising inflation is weighing on economic activity in SSA [...] and Debt is projected to stay elevated at 59.5% of GDP in 2022 in SSA. Eight out of 38 IDA-eligible countries in the region are in debt distress, and 14 are in high risk of joining them. African governments spent 16.5% of their revenues servicing external debt in 2021, up from less than 5% in 2010”.

Many of the poorest countries are also beset by conflicts, with severe wars with extremist elements from the Sahel to Somalia. Many of the countries have weak institutions and inadequate infrastructure and are suffering acute food shortages, which are likely to get exacerbated by the vagaries of climate change. Yet despite these fragilities, it is amazing
to note that Africa is home to the fastest-growing agricultural economy globally. Over the past two decades (2000-20), it witnessed a 4.1% growth compared to 2.7% worldwide, 3.5% in East Asia, 3.0% in South Asia, and 2.6% in Latin America (World Bank Figures). The economic prospects for continued growth are also good, as continent is projected to become a $1 trillion food market by 2030, and the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) holds significant potential for economic integration and growth. Furthermore, the continent is also home to some fast-growing economies; The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Niger, Rwanda and South Sudan, along with the island nations of Seychelles and Mauritius, are set to be sub-Saharan Africa’s fastest growing economies this year, with each expected to record GDP growth of 6% or higher, according to the latest International Monetary Fund forecasts. But against these positive potentialities the spectre of hunger continues, driven by climate change, the cycles of drought and floods, and the various conflicts that the region must endure. Will the positive potential overcome the negative factors and will political stability help peace and food security and overall development as the continent continues to be a very rapidly urbanizing region?

- Is there a risk of a return of Da’ish (ISIS) and its ilk among extremist elements, especially after the victory of the Taliban in Afghanistan?

- What about the rise of al-Qaeda and other extremist groups from the Sahel to Somalia?

- How can food security be improved in these fragile and vulnerable lands?
The moderator from Mauritius Ameenah Gurib-Fakim introduced the panel by underlining that Africa, the sleeping giant, is slowly awakening and becoming more assertive on the world stage although not represented in major international fora such as the UNSC and the G20.

Aminata Touré from Senegal stressed that Africa has been the most aggressed continent in the world but remains standing and thriving today even after the twenty million slaves, colonisation and neo-colonisation with a middle class of 350 million today. The first challenge is to eradicate poverty. The future of humanity will be in Africa with 60 percent of the world’s arable lands. Another challenge is corruption requiring laws and regulations to act in common with the West where stolen money is banked. More inclusive governance must come about with free and fair elections as well as massive job creation. The 54 African countries must speak with a single voice on the world stage. Rapid industrialisation of Africa is a final challenge to address having missed past Industrial Revolutions. Joyce Banda from Malawi underlined that Africa is rich and has a future, gender equality and the fastest growing economies.

Food security and climate change are at the top of the agenda raised by women leaders. Truth must prevail with regards to the impact of seventy years of colonisation and look at the past without playing the blame game whilst the West was concomitantly industrialising. Illicit financial outflows from Africa represented $50 billion per year in 2011 reaching $90 billion in 2020! UNCTAD also found that carbon illicit financial flows could generate enough capital by 2030 to finance half of the $2.4 trillion required for sub-Saharan climate change, ad-
aptation and mitigation. $836 billion in capital flight compared to Africa's total external debt of $770 billion should also be put into perspective making Africa a net creditor to the world. COVID-19 impacted heavily on the continent. Young Africans are migrating to Europe and drowning in the Mediterranean and travelling across the continent fuelling xenophobia: African leaders must create opportunities to stay at home. Climate change is real, but climate justice must top the agenda. The north emits while the south suffers from this injustice, a situation which must be corrected such as via NGOs empowering directly the powerless in their communities through the creation of “smart villages” – 85 percent of Africa is rural-based --with the help of the private sector and bypassing governments.

Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah noted that “The Economist” had titled “Africa the hopeless continent” in 2000 and in 2010 “Africa rising”. At the time of the African wars of independence, the only means of communication was the radio which was a mobilisation force and followed under Egypt's leadership the Soviet model to create the African Union. The new leaders of the continent should not look backwards and address today's major challenges including youth employment with 66 percent of the population under 30 years old and mismanagement including corruption. Hakima El Haite
from Morocco stressed the greatest damage in history which befell Africa including huge losses in human and natural resources which explains the huge gap in its development. This has changed today with its tremendous natural resources available becoming the reservoir for northern technologies and innovations but the continent still has to deal with 200 million in hunger, 350 million without drinking water and 620 million devoid of energy whilst migration flows continue to grow. Africa’s demands are that the continent be talked to and be full-fledged members of the multilateral system; refusing two weights-two measures such in climate change and energy: for example, gas is green energy in transition in Europe whereas in Africa it is considered a fossil fuel and thus bereft of investments. Western sanctions on Russia’s war in themselves justifiable are however impacting directly on world food security particularly in Africa with two million people now suffering from hunger; peace and security should be for all parts of the world and not just a priority for the West in Ukraine. Africa does not seek tutors but fair and free partners and not the continent representing $85 billion in tax evasion. The last point is climate change which is the biggest issue faced by humanity. The February 2022 IPCC report stressed that within twenty years decisions will be irreversible with CO2 emissions increasing since the Paris Agreement. The paradigm must change with “trade, not aid” and “partners not tutors” Aichatou Mindaoudou from Niger noted that only one percent of African youth is emigrating to the North whereas 64 percent of migrants remain within the continent. Also, contrary to perception, Africa is underpopulated. Africa remains under direct or indirect aggression and its security is volatile as witness the Sahel region where its destabilisation has deteriorated due to the NATO intervention in Libya. The Sahel accounts for 30 percent of all Islamist violence on the continent and has displaced 2,5 million refugees incurring 15 000 deaths. The situation has worsened over the last decade jeopardising directly the security of Europe now within range of ballistic missiles. The responsibility of this situation lies squarely with NATO and its coalition countries. Sahel coun-
tries requested $12 billion for development aid but no funding was forthcoming except for $400 million in security assistance with led to stalling the G5 Sahel initiative. Double standards and Western hypocrisy including diplomatic pressures lead today youth in the Sahel to reject European presence.

The discussion with the floor focused on the importance of implementing a true continental free trade agreement which will create a single African market at scale. Responding, only 18 percent of trade is intra-African whereas it is more than 70 percent in the EU although after many decades. It is in the interest of Europe to invest in Africa if only to stem young people emigrating and empower them through education to innovate and contribute to the internal market and industrialise, in partnership with Europe, in order to be less dependent on the outside world including in agricultural production.
PANEL 11

YOUTH SPEAK, WE LISTEN
Young Leaders address their vision of what the Global Gaps are from their perspective. They share their insights with the participants of the Forum, followed by a Q&A session. In today’s volatile political and social environment — what can be described as both the best of times and the worst of times — we must be cognizant that the issues we discuss and the policies we recommend will form the environment in which the next generation will live and work. It is essential that we listen to the views of youth when we make our decisions. There is much we can learn from them about new trends, new values, new outlooks and new technologies that can inspire us to make better decisions and recommend more viable policies. The young leaders at the Global Baku Forum represent the best and brightest of the next generation. While they can benefit from our extensive knowledge and experience, we can benefit from their fresh, innovative and enlightening discussions on issues important to them. Together we can help to create an environment that will be secure and productive for them, a world where they can create and thrive.

"YOUTH SPEAK, WE LISTEN"
The moderators, **Kateryna Yushchenko** from Ukraine and **Valdis Zatlers** from Latvia introduced the Young Leaders.

The first panel focussed on **international peace and security** with the initial issue linked to the world calling understandably for an immediate cease fire in Ukraine, but Ukraine likewise longs for peace however not under brutal Russian occupation as has been revealed. Peace would only entail a freezing of the status quo which explains the need for a total Ukrainian victory leading to proper peace negotiations thereafter, and the creation of a new European security architecture and beyond a new world order. Arms control issues were addressed with treaties failing under the onslaught of Russia: trust is missing compounded by the suspension of START. The intergenerational impact of aggression is undeniable. Myanmar’s ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya and their flight to Bangladesh highlights the importance of respecting international treaties. Diplomacy should come to the forefront to save lives and reduce arms trade. The role of NGOs is also vital in searching for peace, security and prosperity but these are underfunded and underappreciated although Latvian NGOs have contributed highly to Ukrainian refugees: financial support should come about from government and public sources. NGO Day on February 27th is an opportunity to honour their contribution to society. Young volunteers promote peace and security in their communities and encourage dialogue and trust towards peaceful resolutions such as in Timor Leste, Sri Lanka or Kenya and likewise historically embraced in Azerbaijan. The peaceful protest of volunteers in the Lachin Corridor is linked to the illegal ecological exploitation of miner-
als on Azerbaijan territory where the Russian contingent is deployed, but free movement for humanitarian purposes is guaranteed.

Returning to the war in Ukraine, it started in 2014, not in 2022. The former ceasefire with Minsk I and II processes failed with Russian propaganda talking of “separatists” in the Donbass pervasive. Accountability and justice are important to attain sustainable peace: a special tribunal should be set up to put on trial grave Russian human rights violations in the occupied territories. Support and guidance from the international community is important to achieve this goal. The Western world is divided on the resolution of the war and on how a victory of Ukraine is envisaged: a lack of vision is holding back any resolution. For Ukrainians such resolution should comprise military support and victory of its armed forces: spoon feeding bargaining in the West must halt. With regards to the future security architecture, it must be based on trust and shared values and not on slogans such as a “Europe from Vancouver/Lisbon to Vladivostok”. The aggressor must also be brought to justice within and outside the ICC and must pay for its destructions: the $300 billion assets resting in the West should be confiscated. A proper functioning of the UN must see the day punishing their members violating international rules and standards including within the pitiful state of its Security Council. Finally on nuclear non-proliferation, Ukraine voluntarily gave up the world’s third largest nuclear arsenal in exchange for security guarantees which were breached which explains its quest for NATO membership after the end of the war.

Ismail Serageldin invited 2014 Nobel Peace laureate Kailash Satyarthi from India to deliver his keynote address. No voice can be more compelling, strong, loud and honest than the voice of young people. When hundreds of million children are sold into slavery, their childhood and future are robbed, change can only come about with leadership of the young. Up to 1999, there were no international laws
abolishing child labour and slavery but due to a successful 1998 global campaign led by youth to the first universally ratified Convention in UN history. From 250 million the number decreased to 152 million and the issue of children is now incorporated in the SDGs but the number of child labourers has grown since 2016 pre-pandemic to 160 million without justification! Laws against child and forced labour are now implemented in Germany under youth pressure including in overcoming differences between India and Pakistan under the “Cricket for Peace” movement. In conclusion, every young people must dream big and for others; discover the power within and outside and do it now – the three “Ds”.

The second panel was devoted to the environment and technology and opened on the issue of secure sustainable and reliable connectivity links and on how platforms can help. The examples given were the Three Seas Initiative launched in 2016 by Croatia and Poland with eleven Eastern European member states and the 2021 EU Global Gateway initiative focussing on the three pillars of energy, digital and transport serving as a template on how Europe can forge infrastructure ties with the outside world such as via the Adriatic ports close to the Middle East and allowing a small country like Croatia to become the entry point to the European market. A quarter of venture capital investments went into climate technologies representing $70 billion and fuelled by the ingenuity of young climate tech entrepreneurs worldwide who presenting distributive projects creating local resilient economies. This trillion-dollar industry can do business in a different way impacting lives everywhere and every day allowing for upward economic mobility through innovative solutions. The role of the private sector in battling climate change is essential but criticism has arisen on companies greenwashing their products. One of the main problems in these marketing strategies lead to products appearing greener than they are which leads to increase scepticism by consumers who ask for greater transparency and cooperation between the public and private sectors. The mindset must change. Investing in mitigation climate change should not be seen as charitable work but rather as an actual investment. An example of this mindset change is not to preserve the environment: U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt established five national parks at the beginning of the century which has grown to 230 million acres which breaks five hundred treaties with various native American tribes. In the African savannahs, Bantu tribes have been migrating throughout the continent for centuries, but this has been
interrupted by safari tourism closing off vast areas. Preserving nature has led to de-humanising the land.

Regarding technological change, “legal tech” should be highlighted as providing solutions to legal proficiency. Many are still denied access to justice and legal professionals can no longer rely on outdated working methods. Legal tech allows for smarter working and affordability, but challenges continue such as data protection and cybersecurity, job losses and ethics with unintended biases when using AI in the legal sector. A proper balance must be sought between innovation and regulation, but can regulatory bodies adapt to the tremendous pace of innovative technologies such as AI? Blended finance combining private and public investment in tackling climate change is a way ahead with new financial tools coming on the market.

The third panel addressed education and opened on the role of international communities in transforming education in zones of conflict. The reality on the ground in Afghanistan is dramatic for children, and for girls banned from schools in the last 536 days by the Taliban. The situation has been normalised by political leaders, the UN and NGOs and nobody is hearing which is a frustrating experience. “Peace” is not the absence of war in Afghanistan. Real peace is access to education and freedom of movement for women. Child labour is pervasive since the 1950s, but selective activism is underway without any mention of Afghanistan. Startups play an increasing role in education technologies, but 70 percent of the world has no access to quality STEM education. A low-cost kit such as “chopstick robots” is now available with a new tool for children to open their eyes to the world and to solve problems. A free, safe and educated world for children is a constitutional right that must be asserted and protected by governments and by the UN: to start, child labour must be fully eliminated. Compassionate feelings must be changed into action. Improving the quality of youth educa-
tion is essential but in many parts of the world it is either considered a huge privilege or is inaccessible: how can one talk of freedom of speech when one doesn’t know what to say? If Russia ever changes, it will be due to a new generation with a new collective mindset, applied also to other countries like Afghanistan and Iran suffering likewise from their political regimes. Education is an investment in the future, not an expense, and must become the priority in addressing global and local challenges. There is a huge gap between the technology-driven exponentially rising rate of change and human historic adaptation leaving behind a huge portion of humanity. Learning faster and governing smarter can close this gap and allow for catch up. The importance of lifelong and non-formal education is emphasised in SDG 4 and provides flexible learning options which are cost effective and accessible also to girls and women worldwide. The Youth Foundation in Azerbaijan is a good example. Experiencing overwhelming social media pressure creates tremendous mental health problems for large portions of younger people leading to high lethal cases. The importance of mental health must be taught and brought to the fore in the curriculum of every school in the world. Social media use must be regulated, and big media companies must step up and be responsible about mental health issues through funding and research providing accessible health: companies must be made accountable. Finally, a child-friendly world must be created with no child marriages, child labour, cast and gender discrimination in schools such as through the creation of child friendly villages in India.

CLOSING DINNER

**Bajram Begay**, President of Albania, opened the session by delivering his speech which highlighted that war had returned on the European continent and on the retreat of democracy and human rights in many countries with energy, food and health security threats on the rise. Albania is a target with increasing cyber-attacks. The Southern Gas Corridor allows for a connection between the Adriatic and Caspian seas increasing energy security for South-eastern Europe. **HRH Prince Turki Elfaisal AlSaud** underlined his strong desire to be present every year at the Global Baku Forum due to the excellence of both its hospitality and issues addressed such as on the Palestinian conflict and the vision of former Israel Prime Minister Olmert: no to aggression, no to occupation, no to enslavement and any actions that downgrade the values of humanity. **Miguel Angel Moratinos** from the UN highlighted each year’s opening fora in Davos on the global economic agenda, and in Munich on international security. But the Baku discussions addressing common challenges and on how to resolve them in a practical way is a far better gathering for reasons of a multifaceted interconnected approach with participants from all quarters of the world with plural respectful views expressed. A call for diplomacy was heralded although it failed in halting Russian aggression of Ukraine. Whilst supporting
Ukrainians, an end to the war must be pursued as no preconditions to negotiations should be tabled. A globalisation of compassion and solidarity must be sought.

Kailash Satyarthi from India feels hope irradiating from the Global Baku Forum representing a community of humanity and compassion, of resolve and a sense of urgency. Enough knowledge is available to find solutions to global problems but what is lacking is truthfulness with barriers lifted to act on promises delivered. The gap between thinking and talking and actions implemented is growing which requires globalised compassion in actions particularly for children such as spelt out in Baku. A video message from Chau Chak Wing in China was viewed by which the Global Baku Forum showed vision and presented policy recommendations promoting world peace and development and invited NGIC to the 2023 Imperial Springs International Forum in Guangzhou.

Vaira Vike-Freiberga closed the 10th Global Baku Forum by recalling the incipient steps of NGIC in close collaboration with the Club of Madrid and the active role played by the international board of trustees of the Forum in choosing its programmes and activities. Deep appreciation was rendered to each and all participant noting that the Forum has achieved its global status of reputation and quality. Totalitarian and ideological “isms” put labels on people marking some as pluses and others as minuses. This applies also to generational differences such as young or old. A world without hyphenation is the world NGIC is looking for.

Rovshan Muradov thereupon introduced the concluding event of the conference with the award ceremony on the conferring by the European University of Albania of an honorary degree of doctor honoris causa to Vaira Vike-Freiberga which was gratefully accepted. The lifting of the Iron Curtain and fall of the Berlin Wall were a high point in history so let’s beware the building of new walls were the concluding remarks of the co-chair of NGIC.

The earthquake tragedy in Türkiye and Syria was recognised by Eka Tkeshelashvili and notably to the plight of children in the presence of the Ambassador of Türkiye. The interfaith and intercultural sculpture “Tree of Peace” was handed by its artist Hedva Ser from UNESCO to Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi and to Miguel Angel Moratinos from the UN Alliance of Civilisations. Last but not the least, Rosen Plevneliev thanked Rovshan Muradov and his NGIC team for the true success of the 10th Global Baku Forum.
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Prime Minister of Serbia 2008-2012

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Special address:
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Remarks:
• Egils Levits - President of the Republic of Latvia
• Jose Ramos Horta - President of East Timor; Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 1996
• Miguel Angel Moratinos - Under-Secretary General UN, High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations
• Winnie Byanyima - Executive Director UNAIDS, Under-Secretary-General of UN
• Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus - Director-General, WHO (video message)
• Sergio Mattarella - President of the Republic of Italy (message)
• Rishi Sunak - Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (message)
• Vaira Vike-Freiberga - Co-Chair, NGIC; President of Latvia 1999-2007

PANEL 1: BUILDING RESILIENCE IN A DIVIDED WORLD:
ITS IMPACT ON WORLD PEACE

Special Address:
Egils Levits - President of the Republic of Latvia

Moderator:
Jaffar Hasnain - TRT World Presenter and Correspondent

Speakers:
• Iveta Radicova - Prime Minister of Slovakia 2010-2012
• Kjell Magne Bondevik - Prime Minister of Norway 1997-2000, 2001-2005
• Kerry Kennedy - President, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
• Micheline Calmy-Rey - President of the Swiss Confederation 2007-2011
• Viktor Yushchenko - President of Ukraine 2005-2010
• Shirin Ebadi - Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 2003 (video message)
• Vaira Vike-Freiberga - Co-Chair, NGIC; President of Latvia 1999-2007
LUNCHEON SESSION 1
“THE RESILIENCE OF THE NATO ALLIANCE”

Moderator:
Paul Revay - Former Director, Trilateral Europe, member of the Board of Trustees of Friends of Europe

Speakers:
• Raimonds Vejonis - President of Latvia 2015-2019
• Ivan Korcok - Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia 2020-2021; 2021-2022
• Ehud Olmert - Prime Minister of Israel 2006-2009
• Mats Karlsson - Vice-President of the World Bank 1999-2002
• Volkan Bozkır - 75th President of the UN General Assembly; Minister of European Union Affairs of Turkey 2014-2015, 2015-2016; Member of the Turkish Parliament

LUNCHEON SESSION 2
“CLIMATE JUSTICE: CHALLENGING FOR A FAIR EQUITABLE ENERGY TRANSITION”

Moderator:
Rosen Plevneliev - President of Bulgaria 2012-2017

Speakers:
• Walter Fust - Director-General Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation 1993-2008, Member of the UNICT Task force, Chair UNESCO Intergovernmental council for the Development of Communication 2008-2010, President Globethics.net
• Nathalie de Gaulle - Strategic Committee Member & Senior Advisor, TNEO
• Benjamina Karic - Mayor of Sarajevo
PANEL 2: THE AGE OF MEGA THREATS: CLIMATE, FOOD, AND NUCLEAR SECURITY

Moderator:
Benedetto Zacchiroli - President of the European Coalition of Cities against Racism

Special address:
Jose Ramos Horta - President of East Timor, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 1996

Speakers:
• Ismahane Elouafi - Chief Scientist at the Food and Agriculture Organization of UN
• Hakima El Haite - President of the Liberal International; Minister of Environment of Morocco 2013-2017; Special Envoy for Climate Change of Morocco 2015-2017
• Darkhan Kydyrali - Minister of Information and Social Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan
• Mukhtar Babayev - Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan
• Laszlo Borbely - State Counsellor to the Prime Minister of Romania
• Igor Luksic - Prime Minister of Montenegro 2010-2012

PANEL 3: REINVENTING MULTILATERALISM: A NEW ERA OF NON-ALIGNMENT?

Moderator:
Yves Leterme - Prime Minister of Belgium 2008, 2009-2011

Speakers:
• Hikmat Hajiyev - Assistant to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Head of the Department of Foreign Policy Affairs of the Presidential Administration of the Republic of Azerbaijan
• Volkan Bozkır - 75th President of the UN General Assembly; Minister of European Union Affairs of Turkey 2014-2015, 2015-2016; Member of the Turkish Parliament
• Joseph Muscat - Prime Minister of Malta 2013-2020
• Vuk Jeremic - President of the United Nations General Assembly 2012-2013; Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia 2007-2012
• Antonio Zanardi Landi - Former Diplomatic Adviser to the Italian President; Ambassador of the Military Order of Malta to Vatican
• Mladen Ivanić - President of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2014-2018
• Jan Kubis - Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovakia 2006-2009; Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission of Europe 2009-2011
• David Chikvaidze - Chef de Cabinet to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva
Remarks:
• Tatiana Valovaya - Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva (video message)
• Milo Dukanovic - President of Montenegro (video message)
• Marianna Vardinoyannis - Goodwill Ambassador of UNESCO (message)

“PRESENTATION OF THE NIZAMI GANJAVI INTERNATIONAL AWARD 2023”
by Vaira Vike-Freiberga and Ismail Serageldin

• Jose Ramos Horta - President of East Timor; Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 1996 in recognition of his devotion and service to his people and to the personification of his high ideals of achieving self-determination and independence and establishing themselves as a land of freedom, peace and democracy
• the People of Ukraine for their exceptional courage in defending their land, their cities and their cultural identity and their right to existence as a nation received by Viktor and Kateryna Yushchenko

10 MARCH, FRIDAY

PANEL 4: BUILDING A RENEWED GLOBAL HEALTH ARCHITECTURE:
PROMOTING, PROVIDING, PROTECTING, POWERING AND PERFORMING
FOR HEALTH

Moderator:
Rosen Plevneliev - President of Bulgaria 2012-2017

Special Address:
Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus - Director-General WHO (video message)

Speakers:
• Winnie Byanyima - Executive Director UNAIDS, UnderSecretary-General of UN
• Najat Mokhtar - Deputy Director General, International Atomic Energy Agency
• Filip Vujanovic - President of Montenegro 2003-2018
• Teymur Musayev - Minister of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan
• Zlatko Lagumdzija - Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2001-2002; deputy Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2012-2015
• Yoram Weiss - Director General of the Hadassah Medical Center
• Gordon Brown - Prime Minister of the UK 2007-2010, Special Envoy of UN on Global Education; WHO Ambassador for Global Health Financing (video message)
PANEL 5: MIGRATION AS A SYMPTOM OF WORLD POVERTY, INEQUALITY, CLIMATE STRESS AND CONFLICT

Moderator:
Walter Fust, Director - General Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation 1993-2008, Member of the UN-ICT Task force, Chair UNESCO Intergovernmental council for the Development of Communication 2008-2010, President Globethics.net

Speakers:
• Laimdota Straujuma - Prime Minister of Latvia 2014-2016
• Chiril Gaburici - Prime Minister of Moldova 2015
• Vusal Huseynov - Chief of State Migration Service of the Republic of Azerbaijan
• Maria Angela Holguin - Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia 2010-2018; Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations 2004-2006
• Abdulaziz Altwaijri - Former Director-General of ISESCO
• Rosalia Arteaga Serrano - President of Ecuador 1997
• Mohamed Mahmoud Abdelsalam - Secretary-General of Muslim Council of Elders; Co-President, Religions for Peace

LUNCHEON SESSION 3
“IMAGINING THE FUTURE of EUROPE”

Moderator:
Valdis Zatlers - President of Latvia 2007-2011

Speakers:
• Yves Leterme - Prime Minister of Belgium 2008, 2009-2011
• Ivo Josipovic - President of Croatia 2010-2015
• Artis Pabriks - Minister of Defence of Latvia 2019-2022; Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia 2004-2007
LUNCHEON SESSION 4
“WHAT’S DRIVING POPULISM AND EXTREMISM AND HOW TO PUSH BACK?”

Moderator:
Susan Ness - Distinguished Fellow and Project Director, Annenberg Public Policy Center, University of Pennsylvania

Speakers:
• Kateryna Yushchenko - First Lady of Ukraine 2005-2010
• Giorgi Margvelashvili - President of Georgia 2013-2018
• Ana Birchall - Deputy Prime Minister of Romania 2018-2019; Minister of Justice 2019; Member of the Parliament of Romania

PANEL 6: THE ROLE OF NEW ENERGY AND TRANSPORT CORRIDORS IN EURASIAN ZONE

Moderator:
Eka Tkeshelashvili - Deputy Prime Minister of Georgia 2010-2012

Speakers:
• Parviz Shahbazov - Minister of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan
• Jean Baderschneider - Board of Directors, Fortescue Metals and Fortescue Future Industries; Chair of the Board, The Global Fund to End Modern Slavery; former Vice-President, ExxonMobil
• Ekaterina Zaharieva - Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bulgaria 2017-2021, Minister of Justice 2015-2017
• Lazar Comanescu - Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania 2008, 2015-2017; Secretary General of the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation
• Rashad Nabiyev - Minister of Digital Development and Transport of the Republic of Azerbaijan
• Djoomart Otorbaev - Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan 2014-2015
• Azim Ibrohim - Minister of Transport of the Republic of Tajikistan
• Ana Birchall - Deputy Prime Minister of Romania 2018-2019; Minister of Justice 2019; Member of the Parliament of Romania
• Bolat Nurgaliyev - Director of the Institute for Foreign Policy Studies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan; Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for protracted conflicts; Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation 2007-2009
PANEL 7: “CHINA’S ROLE FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY”

Moderator:

Boris Tadic - President of Serbia 2004-2012

Speakers:

• Wu Hongbo - Special Representative of the Chinese Government for European Affairs, former Under Secretary-General of United Nations; former Chinese Ambassador to Germany

• Khuon Soudary - Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Cambodia

• Peter Medgyessy - Prime Minister of Hungary 2002-2004

• Shaukat Aziz - Prime Minister of Pakistan 2004-2007

• Rashid Alimov - Secretary-General, SCO 2016-2018, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan 1992-1994

• Petre Roman - Prime Minister of Romania 1989-1991

NIGHT OWL SESSION 2

“HUMAN RIGHTS: DEMOCRACY AND THE CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES”

Moderator:

Zlatko Lagumdzija - Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2001-2002; deputy Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2012-2015

Speakers:

• Kailash Satyarthi - Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 2014

• Hikmet Cetin - Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey 1991-1994
PANEL 8: WESTERN BALKANS IN THE EU CONTEXT

Moderator:
Zlatko Lagumdzija - Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2001-2002; deputy Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2012-2015

Speakers:
• Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic - President of Croatia 2015-2020
• Jan Fischer - Prime Minister of the Czech Republic 2009-2010
• Petar Stoyanov - President of Bulgaria 1997-2002
• Emil Constantinescu - President of Romania 1996-2000
• Milica Pejanovic-Durisic - Minister of Defense of Montenegro 2012-2016

PANEL 9: THE SEARCH FOR PEACE, STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND BEYOND

Moderator:
Francis O'Donnell - Ambassador (ret., SMOM) and UN Resident Coordinator for Ukraine 2004-2009

Speakers:
• HRH Prince Turki AlFaisal AlSaud - Chairman of the Board of Directors, King Faisal Center for Research & Islamic Studies
• Amre Moussa - Secretary-General, Arab League 2001-2011; Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt 1991-2001
• Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu - Secretary-General, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation 2004-2014
Moderator:
Ameenah Gurib-Fakim - President of Mauritius 2015-2018

Speakers:
- Aminata Touré - Prime Minister of Senegal 2013-2014
- Joyce Banda - President of Malawi 2012-2014
- Hakima El Haite - President of the Liberal International; Minister of Environment of Morocco 2013-2017; Special Envoy for Climate Change of Morocco 2015-2017
- Aichatou Mindaoudou - Foreign Minister of Niger 1999-2010; Joint Special Representative UN/AU in Darfur 2011-2013; UN Special Representative in Côte d'Ivoire 2013-2017; Current CEO of IPITI Consulting

LUNCHEON SESSION 5
“THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION”

Moderator:
Ismail Serageldin - Co-Chair NGIC; Vice-President of the World Bank 1992-2000

Speakers:
- Friedbert Pfluger - Head of the European Cluster for Climate, Energy and Resource Security, University of Bonn; Founding Partner of Strategic Minds Company GmbH, Berlin; former Deputy Minister of Defense of Germany
- Ismahane Elouafi - Chief Scientist at the Food and Agriculture Organization of UN
- Najat Mokhtar - Deputy Director General, International Atomic Energy Agency Consulting
PANEL 11: YOUTH SPEAK, WE LISTEN

Moderator:
Kateryna Yushchenko - First Lady of Ukraine 2005-2010
Valdis Zatlers - President of Latvia 2007-2011

CLOSING DINNER

Moderator:
Rovshan Muradov - Secretary-General, Nizami Ganjavi International Center

Speakers:
• Bajram Begaj - President of the Republic of Albania
• Jose Ramos Horta - President of East Timor; Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 1996
• HRH Prince Turki AlFaisal AlSaud - Chairman of the Board of Directors, King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies
• Miguel Angel Moratinos - Under-Secretary General UN, High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations
• Kailash Satyarthi - Nobel Peace Prize Laureate 2014
• Chau Chak Wing - Co-Chair of the Global Circle, NGIC (video message)
• Ismail Serageldin - Co-Chair NGIC; Vice-President of the World Bank 1992-2000
• Vaira Vike-Freiberga - Co-Chair NGIC; President of Latvia 1999-2007