

Thriving Together: Responsibilities, Actions and Solutions

8 - 9 December, 2023 | Istanbul

TRT
world
forum
2023



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8 - 9 D e c e m b e r , 2 0 2 3 | I s t a n b u l

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TÜRKİYE
CENTURY



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EDITOR

H. N. KESKİN

CONTRIBUTORS

DR. TAREK CHERKAOUİ

POLAT ÜRÜNDÜL

DESIGNER

ERHAN AĞIRGÖL

TRT TRAINING AND RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

AHMET ADNAN SAYGUN STREET NO:83 34347

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This book includes summaries and highlights of keynote speeches, 9 public and 8 expert roundtable sessions of TRT World Forum 2023.

The views, themes and discussion points expressed in the TRT World Forum 2023 book are strictly those of the speakers and participants present at the Forum, and do not reflect the official view of TRT World Research Centre.

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Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The global landscape faces unprecedented challenges, including geopolitical shifts, technological advancements, and trade dynamics. Great power rivalries threaten to divide the world, while national conflicts are influenced by regional and international interests. Despite these challenges, interconnectedness persists, necessitating proactive engagement, holistic thinking, and focused dialogue. Innovative approaches are required to adapt existing institutions and norms to meet present and future needs, fostering cooperation amidst diversity. The TRT World Forum in its 2023 edition held under the slogan “Thriving Together: Responsibilities, Actions and Solutions” aims to stimulate diverse perspectives, advocating for constructive dialogue as an essential component for sustainable global peace, justice, and freedom.

In this year’s forum, more than 150 speakers from all continents and more than 1000 participants from about 100 countries attended, including politicians, academics, journalists and members of civil society, who engaged in stimulating discussions on the challenges that lay before our world. During the two-day Forum, nine public sessions and eight closed sessions as well as several keynote speeches were delivered.

Under the auspices of H.E. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the 2023 TRT World Forum started its proceedings. President Erdoğan delivered an opening speech that emphasised several key points: the importance of reflecting on global events, the need for a free and just press, condemnation of violence in Gaza, and criticism of international inaction. The president has stressed the trajectory of Turkish media which was

muzzled by the repressive military region before 2002. Since then, the state of Turkish media has progressed tremendously but comes routinely under flak by Western media for politicised reasons. However, the situation in Gaza has exposed the hypocrisy and double standards of the Western journalistic discourse. As thousands of innocent civilians and about a hundred journalists were killed by the Israeli military machine, the Western media remained silent. On the other hand, Turkish media outlets remained committed to spreading the truth and uncovering the atrocities, highlighting Türkiye’s multifaceted diplomatic efforts, media landscape, and commitment to justice. In this context, President Erdoğan commended TRT for addressing significant issues and praised its role as a trustworthy international news source as well as its expansion into the digital realm, aiming to offer an alternative to biased media.

Afterwards, Prof. Fahrettin Altun, Communications Director for the Republic of Türkiye, delivered a speech that acknowledged the importance of the TRT World Forum and emphasised the theme of “Thriving Together,” as the World must face its common responsibilities and act together to produce collective solutions. He also discussed the necessity of tackling disinformation, highlighting Türkiye’s efforts to combat it under President Erdoğan’s leadership. Prof. Altun underscored that in today’s uncertain times, strategic communication has transitioned from a mere policy tool to a critical component of national security. Türkiye has faced intense disinformation assaults due to its evolving global role, with numerous chapters ranging from the Gezi Park riots to the FETO coup attempt. However, President Erdoğan’s truth-centric approach has countered these attacks

effectively, bringing truthful information to the centre of Türkiye's public sphere. Prof. Altun went on to stress the significance of truth in the media coverage amidst global challenges.

Subsequently, Prof. Mehmet Zahid Sobacı, Director General of TRT, offered his insights, stressing the role of TRT World Forum in gathering global movers and shakers to discuss the most pressing issues of our time. In his speech, Prof. Sobacı emphasised the importance of the forum's current edition as 2023 coincides with the 100th anniversary of the Turkish Republic. He underscored the fact that the first public session discusses the achievements of Türkiye in every field under the leadership of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, ranging from the defence industry to the humanitarian field, highlighting the long-term presidential vision for a fairer world for everyone. Prof. Sobacı, then, drew attention to the special session on Gaza, a landmark session, given the unprecedented atrocities taking place in the Palestinian territories. Finally, TRT's Director General invited the participants to join the insightful discussions and offer solutions while promoting fairness and justice.

Following the opening speeches, the 2023 TRT World Forum's proceedings officially started. The first public session, "Vision for Türkiye's Century: Türkiye as a System-building Actor," brought to light Türkiye's strategic stance in shaping global affairs. In his keynote speech, H.E. Dr. Cevdet Yılmaz, Vice President of the Republic of Türkiye, outlined Türkiye's vision for the next century, emphasising its role as a problem-solving and system-building actor. He stressed the need for a fairer global system, highlighted Türkiye's diplomatic efforts in conflict resolution, and called for collective action to address global challenges. The first speaker, Prof. Haluk Görgün, President of the Defence Industry Agency, emphasised Türkiye's commitment to reforming international systems to tackle contemporary challenges. Dr. Valeria Giannotta, Director of the CeSPI Observatory on Türkiye, highlighted Türkiye's balanced approach, prioritising regional integration while navigating between multilateralism and multipolarity. Drawing parallels with the keynote speech, Prof. Burhanettin Duran, General Coordinator of SETA, echoed sentiments on the importance of embracing diversity and

promoting collective action in times of crisis. Former First Minister of Scotland, Alex Salmond, underscored Türkiye's humanitarian perspective in addressing global challenges, exemplified by initiatives such as the Green Deal. The session delved into President Erdoğan's call for reform within the United Nations, symbolised by the slogan "the world is bigger than five," aiming to mitigate the effects of veto power hindering UN action, especially in conflict zones like Gaza. Speakers also emphasised Türkiye's pragmatic and adaptable approach to global challenges, stressing the importance of considering diverse interests for mutual benefit in international affairs.

The second public session was titled "Israel's War in Gaza: Humanitarian Crisis and Prospects for Peace." The session featured very informative interventions, shedding light on the multifaceted failures within the international community and legal institutions. Gideon Levy, a Journalist in Haaretz, underscored how little the Israeli public opinion knows about the atrocities committed in its name. The powerful censorship machine prevents the Israelis from knowing the truth, and hence, prevents them from influencing the policies of the government. Ambassador Hussam S. Zumlot, Head of the Palestinian Mission to the United Kingdom, criticised Israel for making a mockery of the International Law, highlighting at the same time the significant shortcomings of international law and institutions, which have failed to effectively address the atrocities in Palestine and hold perpetrators accountable for war crimes and human rights violations. Prof. John Dugard, Former UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Palestine, criticised leading Western nations for putting obstacles in the face of UNSC and other UN organisations, giving total impunity to Israel. The United States' refusal to recognise the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court undermines accountability efforts and demonstrates a prioritisation of national interests over international justice. The fourth speaker, Evarist Bartolo, Former Minister for Foreign and European Affairs for the Republic of Malta, also criticised the United States for its abject failure to stand for human rights, the rule of law, and democracy, while it pretends to be the champion of these values. Additionally, the European Union was criticised for its inaction in challenging harmful

US policies and advocating for accountability within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The 2nd day of the 2023 TRT World Forum opened with the 3rd public session, titled “The Return of Geopolitics: Rivalries and Re-alignments in the New Century.” Panellists delved into the multifaceted nature of contemporary geopolitics and its challenges to global stability. Dr. Bruno Maçães, Former Secretary of State for Europe in Portugal, highlighted a discernible shift in global power dynamics, transitioning from unipolarity to a mix of bi-polarity and multipolarity, with power moving from the West to the East and from the North to the South. While the United States has revealed its lack of abidance to international law by blindly supporting Israel’s war on Gaza, China is overtaking the US and strategically engaging in a long-term endeavour to reshape the global system from within. The second speaker, Prof. Vali Nasr, who is Professor of International Affairs and Middle East Studies at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), underscored the fact that the era of globalisation is waning, marking the end of American unipolar dominance in the world order. The rise of China as a challenge to American hegemony has prompted a shift in strategic focus from the US towards further geopolitical competition among major powers. Prof. Charles A. Kupchan, Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, the peak of Globalization has passed, evident in economic decoupling, supply chain repatriation, and the gradual fragmentation of the global economic system. He also expressed his concerns over a potential reversal of the historical trend towards greater freedom within liberal democratic societies, posing challenges to liberal democratic values and institutions. Prof. Kupchan underscored the significance of regional actors like Türkiye in various conflicts, emphasising the importance of maintaining strong ties with the West.

The 4th public session, titled “Public Broadcasting in the Digital Era: Challenges and Opportunities,” brought to light the challenges and accomplishments of public service broadcasters amidst the digital age’s turbulence. In his keynote speech, Prof. Fahrettin Altun, Communications Director of the Republic of Türkiye, emphasised the pressing issue of combating disinformation, a topic that

has gained immense importance in recent years. Noel Curran, Director General of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), emphasised the decline in trust in news outlets that was the direct result of digitization. For him, the key struggle is to regain that trust in today’s media landscape, and the need to embrace technological advancements to remain relevant and accessible to audiences. Alex Stuart Aiken, Executive Director of the Government Communications for the UK, highlighted the importance of governmental Strategic communication for public service broadcasters to communicate their value proposition effectively and garner support, especially to younger generations. For him, amidst tumultuous events, government leadership in storytelling has been indispensable, as disinformation thrives in the absence of coherent narratives from public institutions and broadcasters. Ahmed Nadeem, Secretary-General of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) focused on the need to update policies and procedures that hinder the progress of public broadcasters. These aspects must be tackled to facilitate the inclusion and use of digital tools for audience interaction and feedback, which is crucial for tailoring content and services that meet audience preferences effectively. The fifth panellist, Dana Al Suyyagh, CEO of Al Mamlaka TV in Jordan, highlighted the importance of narrative and contextualization emerged as central themes in the discussions. According to her, Public service broadcasters must focus on crafting compelling narratives and providing context to enhance audience understanding and engagement.

The 5th public session, titled “Remaking The Global Economy,” underscored the complexities and interdependencies inherent in remaking the global economy. In his keynote speech, Mehmet Şimşek, the Turkish Minister of Finance highlighted several significant challenges facing both the Turkish economy and the global economy at large. However, Türkiye is emerging as a significant investment destination due to its strong fundamentals, including robust public finances, favourable demographics, strategic location, and a vibrant manufacturing sector, positioning Türkiye as a promising business hub in 2024. Dr. Pornchai Danvivathana, Secretary-General of the Asian Cooperation Dialogue

(ACD), emphasised hope despite economic fragmentation. For him, Asian countries, particularly in the East, have made strides towards OECD membership, offering a potential model for further exploration and economic development. Challenges present opportunities for leveraging regional cooperation. Mirek Dušek, Managing Director of the World Economic Forum, highlighted the need to build a new system for the current era amidst fragility. Stakeholders are actively seeking solutions, emphasising inclusive dialogue and addressing global divides, while also navigating challenges posed by emerging technologies like generative AI. The third panellist, Umberto Del Panta, The Head of the European Investment Bank to Türkiye, underscored the fact that the activity of the European Investment Bank was limited in the last four years due to an EU council decision. However, post-Earthquake, a £400 million earthquake reconstruction agreement was signed, signalling a potential resumption of engagement with Türkiye. The fourth speaker, Dr. Çetin Nazikkol, Chief Strategy Officer of Decarbon Technologies at thyssenKrupp, highlighted the fact that the past 40-50 years have brought unprecedented global challenges, particularly in climate change. Disruptions like floods and droughts impact supply chains, emphasising the need for affordable, decarbonized energy, where Türkiye holds potential. The final panellist, Timothy Ash, Senior Sovereign Strategist at RBC Bluebay Asset Management, stated that Türkiye is positioned as a prime investment hub with strong public finances, favourable demographics, and strategic location. He also added that Minister Simsek's policies generate enthusiasm among investors, marking Türkiye as a standout story for 2024.

The 6th public session, titled "All-Knowing AI: Creative Potential or Disruptive Evil?", delved into the complex dynamics surrounding the emergence of AI technology, exploring both its promising possibilities and concerning implications. The Keynote Speaker, H.E. Mehmet Fath Kacı, Minister of Industry and Technology of the Republic of Türkiye, stated that the advancement of AI brings transformative opportunities and challenges. Türkiye's AI Strategy aims to harness AI's potential, fostering innovation, collaboration, and ethical use to ensure societal benefit and global competitiveness. The first

speaker, Dr Ali Taha Koç, CEO of Turkcell, acknowledged that AI mimics human behaviour but lacks consciousness. It won't replace humans but those who use it will excel. According to him, Governments face challenges regulating AI due to rapid technological advancements and data abundance. Data quality, transparency, and human oversight are crucial for ethical AI use. The second speaker, Dr Kalev Hannes Leetaru, Founder of the GDELT Project, highlighted the fact that AI transforms tasks and generates new content, now accessible to consumers. It aids in tasks like media analysis but brings risks like misinformation and job displacement. Governments must address disparities and regulate AI's societal impact. The third speaker, Elena Contioso-Fleming, Interim Regional Director South at EIT Digital, underscored that AI holds promise to improve lives across sectors like healthcare and transportation. However, Europe faces a digital skills gap, hindering widespread adoption. Despite leading in research, lagging investment raises concerns about data ownership.

The 7th public session, titled "Dis/United Nations: Working Towards Effective Multilateralism," delved into critical questions surrounding the effectiveness and relevance of the United Nations (UN). The first speaker, H.E. Awn Al-Khasawneh, Former Prime Minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, emphasised that criticism towards the UN reflects global complexities. The Security Council, influenced by powerful states, faces scrutiny, especially in conflicts like Palestine. Reforming the UN is challenging due to power dynamics, not just academic ideals. For him, amidst fear-driven responses, upholding international law remains crucial. The second speaker, H.E. Dr. Jorge Castaneda, Former Foreign Minister of Mexico, stated that the UN's necessity is evident, but its efficacy depends on member states' will. The P5's influence is notable, yet the UN's crucial role, especially through agencies like UNHCR and IOM, is often overlooked. Reform debates ponder Mexico's position in a shifting global landscape, questioning Security Council reforms' feasibility. Despite hopes for change, scepticism persists about major shifts or universalizing bodies like the Human Rights Council. The third speaker, Hans von Sponeck, Former UN Assistant Secretary-General, highlighted that

The UN encompasses political, judicial, and executive dimensions. Reform challenges differ across these, with political reform, especially regarding the Security Council, deemed most crucial. Imbalances demand rectification for fair representation. For him, engaging civil society is vital for optimistic change. The final speaker, Gwi-Yeop Son, Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia at the United Nations Development Coordination Office, underscored the UN Secretary-General's emphasis on urgent reform of the UN in his General Assembly address. Efforts focus on Security Council and General Assembly reforms, aiming for inclusivity and consensus-based decision-making.

The 8th public session, titled "Empowering Humanity: Addressing Social Crises and Inequalities," highlighted various humanitarian crises and the responses required to address them. In her keynote speech, H.E. Mahinur Özdemir Göktaş, Minister of Family and Social Services of the Republic of Türkiye, delved into the role of governments, NGOs, and innovative strategies in humanitarian response, emphasising the need for empathy and humane responsibility, especially in light of the tragedy unfolding in Gaza, urging UN reform for justice and equality, highlighting the role that Türkiye plays in providing humanitarian aid and multifaceted solutions. The first speaker, Daniela Carmela Cicchella Representative a.i. of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Türkiye, highlighted the global refugee crisis, urging attention beyond Gaza and Russia to other displaced populations worldwide. She also emphasised collective action, innovation, and involving diverse stakeholders in finding solutions. The second speaker, Chris Lockyear, Secretary General of Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), stated that the crisis in Gaza exposed vulnerabilities in healthcare, the economy, and job market. Despite efforts, humanitarian aid falls short due to limited resources and immense needs. Political solutions are crucial for lasting change. The third speaker, Dr Fatma Meriç Yılmaz, President of the Turkish Red Crescent, stated that the world faces increasing challenges from natural and man-made disasters due to environmental degradation and globalisation. Collective efforts, exemplified by the IFRC Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, are crucial for effective humanitarian

response. The fourth speaker, Michael Spindelegger, Director General of the International Center for Migration Policy Development, observed that efforts to address inequalities persist amid emerging solutions. Involving the private sector in creating sustainable workplaces curbs irregular migration, with legal pathways offering alternatives. Partnerships along migration routes signal progress, while proactive measures in vulnerable regions mitigate climate-induced displacement. The fifth speaker, Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh, a Former member of the SNP (Scotland), delved into the power of personal narratives, and that the media must focus on human stories to foster connection amidst political discord. For her, Scotland's vote for a ceasefire in Gaza offers hope, as all sorts of policies, ranging from immigration to climate justice demand global collaboration and principled leadership.

The final public session, "The Critical Nexus of Food, Water and Energy Security," highlighted how issues in one area, such as water scarcity or energy instability, can significantly impact the availability and access to other essential resources. Thus, addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that considers the nexus between food, water, and energy. The first speaker, Stephen Cahill, United Nations World Food Program (WFP) Türkiye Director and Country Representative, stated that Climate change and conflict pose significant challenges for organisations like WFP, with 80% of their budget directed to conflict-affected areas. Preparedness is crucial, with a \$1 investment yielding a \$7 return during emergencies, but lack of resources exacerbates disparities. The second speaker, Dr Naji Abi Aad, Chief Operating Officer at Petroleb, highlighted the fact that unequal energy distribution led to the idea of interconnecting countries for stability, but reality shows mixed results. Europe's link to Russian gas, for instance, hasn't always eased tensions. Political stability is crucial for energy security, especially in volatile regions like the Middle East. The third speaker, Prof. Dr. Ayşegül Kibaroglu, Chair of the Department of Political Science and International Relations at MEF University, stated that the water-energy-food nexus concept illustrates the complex relationships between these resources, influenced by global politics. It offers a framework for policymakers to

address challenges collaboratively, promoting sustainable resource management despite political instability. The fourth speaker, Dr Asit K. Biswas, Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Glasgow, observed that the world has abundant food and energy, but managing them effectively is lacking. Water is crucial for both energy and food production. Despite global food surplus, distribution and resource management are key issues. Economic growth hasn't translated into sufficient job creation, exacerbating challenges. Water scarcity, though local, demands innovative local solutions.

During the two-day event, eight expert roundtable sessions (invitation-only) were also conducted, serving as exclusive platforms for deep engagement with prominent figures in politics, policy-making, academia, journalism, and civil society across various fields. Adhering to the Chatham House Rule, participants engaged in frank discussions on pressing issues such as multilateralism, challenges to the liberal order, humanitarian crises, and conflict transformation efforts. These sessions also delved into specific regional concerns, including Africa, the Israel-Palestine conflict, Türkiye's historical trajectory, the Eastern Mediterranean, Europe's challenges, the Middle East's dynamics, the Balkans' tensions, and Central Asia's cooperative endeavours.

Following the success of previous forums, the 2023 edition affirmed the TRT World Forum's status as a global platform for constructive discourse on critical global issues. Gratitude is extended to all esteemed speakers and guests for their invaluable contributions in charting paths for global peace and prosperity.

Keynote Speeches



President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's Keynote Speech

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan

President, Republic of Türkiye

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has served as the President of Türkiye since August 10, 2014, and is the first President of the Republic of Türkiye elected by popular vote. He is also the founder and Chairman of the Justice and Development Party. The first breakthrough in Mr. Erdoğan's career was his election to the office of the Mayor of Metropolitan İstanbul. There, he addressed chronic problems facing the city, such as access to clean water, sanitation and traffic congestion. Prior to his presidency, he served as Prime Minister from 2003 to 2014. During his tenure, he addressed many issues ranging from democratisation to the economy; expanding the democratic rights of Kurds, Alawites and minorities in the country, as well as overseeing an increase in per capita income from \$3,500 to almost \$11,000. Leading a country in one of the most volatile regions of the world, he has been a staunch supporter of regional initiatives and reform in international institutions. President Erdoğan was sworn in on July 9, 2018, as the first President of the new Presidential System, which Türkiye adopted following a constitutional amendment approved by a referendum on April 16, 2017.

I am very pleased to be with you at TRT World Forum, which is organised for the seventh time this year. I would like to welcome you, our esteemed guests from all over the world.

We are fortunate to host you in our beautiful İstanbul, the meeting point of civilisations, cultures, continents and people. This forum, organised by TRT, the public broadcaster of our country, is a platform that brings together experts from different geographies.

The forum, organised in December, also provides an important opportunity to reflect on the past year. I believe that the meetings to be held with distinguished names in the Forum will lead to a comprehensive, fair and objective evaluation of 2023. I thank all our guests in advance for enriching the content of the forum with their valuable ideas.

Firstly, I would like to draw your attention to one thing. We are going through an extremely painful period on a global scale,

especially with the ongoing massacre in Gaza. Although the war between Russia and Ukraine has slipped down the agenda, it still continues with all its destructiveness. The value of the peace plan put forward by the efforts of our country in the first months of the war is better understood every day. It is now clear what harm those who fanned the flames instead of extinguishing them before they grew have done to our region and the whole world. Today, we better understand that international organisations tasked with maintaining global peace and security are not capable of problem-solving. The fact that there will be no losers in a fair peace is indisputable. We hope that all parties will realise this truth, which we have desperately and persistently expressed, as soon as possible. Türkiye is ready to shoulder the responsibility to prevent more bloodshed, more destruction and more tears. Indeed, we are living in days when we need peace, especially just peace, more than ever.

Sadly, it's the innocent people who suffer the consequences of conflict every day and every moment, while those who contribute to the turmoil, particularly in the Western world, don't. It is high time to put a stop to this. We view it as necessary for our relationship with neighbours to help them break free from the cycle of loss-loss they are currently trapped in. With your efforts, our region will hopefully regain the peaceful and stable atmosphere it has been longing for.

Distinguished guests,

The press, especially a free press that does not hire its pen and screen to global powers, is an irreplaceable necessity for democracies. It is not for nothing that the press is regarded as the fourth power in addition to the legislative, executive and judicial powers for a well-functioning and vital democracy. A controlled press, on the other hand, poses a clear threat to democracy as well as the public's right to information. As a country, in our struggle for multi-party democracy for more than 70 years, we have experienced this reality in all its dimensions many times. I regret to say that for a while, we were faced with a media structure that, instead of defending democracy, aligned

itself with the tutelage, applauded the coup and called for an intervention in the national will. The controlled media organisation, whose headlines were written by the tutelage, was a bitter reality of Türkiye, especially before 2002. Of course, during these difficult times, there were also brave media organisations and media members who stood by the national will despite all kinds of threats. Although their number was limited, these journalists, who fulfilled their responsibilities towards the public, inscribed their names in golden letters in the history of democracy. And we have always remembered and will always remember these brave writers with gratitude.

We will never forget the members of the Postalist Media, who are always on the trigger of the tutelage whenever Turkish democracy is at risk. As a matter of fact, we have been repeatedly subjected to the attacks of those who put their pens, columns and screens at the disposal of power centres since we became the Mayor of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality.

From the headline "He can't even be a mayor" to the provocation "411 Hands Raised to Chaos" we were made the target of many media operations. But we did not succumb to any of them. We never backed down in the face of intimidation attempts. As I have always said, we have come to this day by battling with the headlines. We established true democracy at great cost, with all its institutions and rules, in our country. When evaluated according to objective criteria, the fact that everyone accepts is this: Türkiye, with its economy, democracy, press and the silent revolutions it has implemented, is at a much more advanced point than it was 21 years ago. Today, the media has a richer, more diverse and pluralistic structure in which different segments of society are represented more than in 2002. As long as they do not engage in terrorism, glorify violence or insult others, they can write whatever they want. Regardless of whether they are in favour or against, nothing is preventing our media members from freely expressing their opinions. Do we have shortcomings? Of course we do. We realise that we, like every country in the world, have problems to solve. Currently, in Gaza, more than seventy journalists have been killed. Where is the world? Where are the world's famous press organs? Why are they silent? Why don't they make headlines about these murdered journalists? Where are those famous American newspapers? Where are the famous newspapers and magazines of England? Where

are those famous French newspapers? Where are those famous German newspapers? None of them are making a sound. Hopefully, we will overcome these difficulties together with the steps we will take in the coming period.

Dear friends,

The massacres in Gaza since 7 October have reminded us of the importance of not only a free but also a just and conscientious press. Most of them women and children, the massacre of nearly 180 thousand innocents has not received as much coverage as a paper cut in the media blackout. Israel has killed and continues to kill not only women and children in Gaza, but also press members trying to do their job under very difficult conditions.

The number of journalists killed in Israeli attacks is more than 70. What is worse is the acceptance of this situation by international press organisations. Can you imagine every day a journalist is murdered, but none of the organisations that keep telling us about freedom of the press for years do not utter a word? The global media cartels are trying to hide the atrocities in Gaza and legitimise the massacre of journalists under the pretext of Hamas. Beyond press freedom and media ethics, we reject this heartlessness that violates human dignity. Those who do not speak out against the deaths of journalists in Gaza today will not have the right

We are going through an extremely painful period on a global scale, especially with the ongoing massacre in Gaza. Although the war between Russia and Ukraine has slipped down the agenda, it still continues with all its destructiveness. The value of the peace plan put forward by the efforts of our country in the first months of the war is better understood every day. It is now clear what harm those who fanned the flames instead of extinguishing them before they grew have done to our region and the whole world.

to speak out on other issues tomorrow. The main thing is to speak today, to write today, to tell the truth today. The main thing is to be able to hear the cries of the oppressed and victims today. Turkish press organs are endeavouring to do this, to achieve this. I sincerely congratulate TRT, Anadolu Agency and other press organisations that have opened a vital communication corridor from Gaza to the world by taking all kinds of risks. I appreciate their efforts to combat disinformation against Israel's propaganda machine of lies.

Right now we have a martyr from the Anadolu Agency. There's our Wounded Veteran Camera, as seen here. Where? In Gaza. The fact that our Centre has exposed over one hundred and thirty Israeli lies through its work has shown how valuable these efforts are. Although the Israeli forces broke our press members' cameras tuned to the truth, they could not prevent the truth from coming out. One camera goes out, and a thousand cameras return. The whole point is to bring the lies and slanders about Gaza to light and to announce them to all humanity, especially to Türkiye. Despite all its barbarity, Israel, unable to break the determination of the Gazans' resistance, is also losing the propaganda war in the media. I would like to express my gratitude to the press members who showed extraordinary

effort and sacrifice and announced the humanitarian tragedy in Gaza to the world. I express my condolences to the journalists who were killed in the Israeli attacks.

Dear friends, I would like to share an observation with you. Do you know what lies behind this silence that wounds consciences? There's guilt. Israel, including its head Netanyahu and those who support him, are guilty. They are the terrorist enablers of terrorism and they will be prosecuted at the Hague Court of Justice. We're following up on this. Just as Milosevic was tried and convicted, I believe that Netanyahu and his accomplices will be tried and convicted in the same way. Some Western countries act with a sense of shame even though they know full well the crimes committed by Israel. Using the Holocaust victimisation as an excuse, the current Israeli administration is unfortunately trying to silence the world with this.

Antisemitism, which we have always said is inhumane, is fuelled by Netanyahu and his associates for political gain. However, neither the tragedy of the Holocaust nor the accusation of anti-Semitism can be an excuse for silence on Israel's crimes. The future of Gaza, and the Palestinian people in general, is not a compensation that can be



given to Israel by those who are in a psychological state of indebtedness. We do not accept that the media is being used to legitimise such a dirty, bloody and immoral scenario. I appeal to the media organisations that are trying to be made partners in the crimes against humanity perpetrated recklessly here. Get rid of this whitewashing endeavour, this blood-fuelled rhetoric, this cruel claim, this immoral imposition, which has no connection with reason, conscience, sensibility, logic or press ethics. Christian, Muslim, Jew, it doesn't matter. Together, all of us have a responsibility from which no one can exclude themselves. Wherever they are in the world, all people of conscience, especially press members, must be courageous, stand tall and speak the truth with an open heart. This massacre may be taking place in Gaza today. If we cannot prevent this cruelty beyond reason and conscience, no one can feel safe anywhere in the world. Because Pandora's box has been opened. The ugly and brutal face of oppression can appear anywhere and anytime. The real danger of the distorted view of Gaza is that it throws the hopes for the future of the world into a sinkhole. No one has the right to drag humanity into such a dead end. By turning a deaf ear to the plight of the Palestinian people and especially the oppressed people in Gaza, the American and European governments are actually doing themselves the greatest harm. The West does not yet realise that it is undergoing a test that will radically shake the security and welfare order on which it depends.

As Türkiye, we see the approaching danger and we express it openly in line with the principle of "a friend's eye is a good mirror. Even if some people are uncomfortable, we will not stop shouting for justice and truth. But with this understanding, we endeavour to fulfil both our duty of vigilance and our duty to stand by the oppressed. We will continue our intensive diplomatic traffic and humanitarian aid for Gaza. Likewise, we will continue the communication corridor, being the voice of conscience for Palestine and Gaza, which we see as a part of these efforts.

Dear friends

I see TRT World Forum, which we are together at the opening programme, as an event that will contribute to the realisation of our dream of a fairer world. I invite everyone who has something to say to the world to take the initiative for the common future of humanity by using such opportunities.

Each incident we go through serves as a clear indication of the validity of our long-standing objection that the world is bigger than five. I am sure that the impotence of the United Nations Security Council, the most important global cooperation and security mechanism, on the issue of Gaza has broken your hearts as well as ours. Unfortunately, the efforts of Secretary-General Mr Guterres, who is the voice of the common conscience of humanity, are sabotaged by the members of the Council. We appreciate the letter sent by Mr Guterres under Article 99 of the United Nations Charter and congratulate him on this move. We can no longer stand by and watch the innocent pay the price for the inability of the existing mechanisms to produce the solutions that the world and humanity need. We must act now. Otherwise, we will inevitably fall into the grip of chaos that will make the world uninhabitable. I congratulate TRT for bringing such a vital issue to the agenda.

TRT, which has become a reliable source of news on an international scale, fulfils its duty of making the voices of the voiceless heard and conveying issues in a multidimensional way.

As it is known, TRT, the national broadcasting organisation of our country, with its 19 television and 17 radio channels and the Voice of Türkiye radio broadcasting in 41 foreign languages and dialects, has a very important experience in traditional broadcasting. This extensive know-how is now being transferred to the field of digital publishing. Having launched Türkiye's international digital platform tabii last May, TRT has added a new layer to its long-standing broadcasting journey. Hopefully, this platform will provide a strong alternative to all those who are disturbed by the media dominated by heretical movements and their ulterior motives. In addition to TRT World and TRT Arabi international news channels, TRT German, TRT Russian, TRT French, TRT Balkan and TRT Africa digital news platforms are also successfully operating. TRT World Forum, which will be held for the eighth time next year, has become one of the important brands of this institution. I congratulate those who contributed to this process and wish TRT World Forum to be auspicious.

I would like to thank the participants of the forum, who came from all over the country and the world and showed the will to take matters into their own hands. I welcome you all once again with love and respect.

Fahrettin Altun's Keynote Speech

Fahrettin Altun

Professor; Communications Director, Republic of Türkiye

Prof. Fahrettin Altun has been the Turkish Presidency's Director of Communications since July 2018. He has lectured in the Faculties of Communication at numerous institutions in Türkiye; he was also the General Coordinator of SETA İstanbul between 2014 and 2018. Prof. Altun has been the editor-in-chief for the magazine Kriter, contributed to the television programmes Enine Boyuna and Dışa Bakış as a commentator, and written for the Sabah and Daily Sabah papers as a columnist. Prof. Altun was also an editor for Yöneliş and Küre publishing houses, a production director for Anlayış magazine, and a columnist for Akşam newspaper. He is the editor of the book Modernleşme Kuramı and is among the authors of the books Millet'in Zaferi: 15 Temmuz, Terörün Kökenleri ve Terörle Mücadele Stratejisi; Türkiye'de Basın Özgürlüğü: Mitler ve Gerçekler; and 15 Temmuz'da Medya, published by SETA. Prof. Altun graduated from Istanbul University's Department of Sociology. He received his Master's Degree in Sociology at Mimar Sinan University and his Ph.D. at Istanbul University.

Esteemed President, I would like to greet Your Excellency and the distinguished audience with respect and goodwill and wish that the TRT World Forum, which is being organised for the seventh time this year, will be conducive towards prosperity. I welcome and honour you all.

This year, our forum is organised under the theme of Thriving Together. World communities have to act together in this process to produce collective solutions and put forward common responsibilities. There are steps we need to take. There are common solutions that we need to produce against global problems. Today, the most fundamental motive that brings us together in this international platform, TRT World Forum in Istanbul, is the pursuit and endeavour to produce common solutions to our common problems. Because today we recognise that we are being tested with global injustice on the one hand and global helplessness on the other.

Honourable President, distinguished guests,

In this era of uncertainty, strategic communication has ceased to be an essential element of public policy and international relations, and an effective foreign policy instrument while at the same time becoming one of the most important elements of national security. Today, the deformative atmosphere that has emerged across the world has reached a point where it threatens the countries' political stability, democracies, public health and economic environment. Türkiye is one of the countries that experienced this situation the hardest and the earliest. Actors who are uncomfortable with Türkiye's transformation into an effective regional power and a global player have intensively used the weapon of disinformation against Türkiye in the past decade. The Gezi uprising, the 17-25 December FETO operations, again the 15 July invasion attempt disguised as a coup. During all these events, Türkiye was subjected to severe disinformation assaults from both inside and outside. Fortunately, these disinformation attacks were thwarted and defeated through Mr President's truth-oriented politics.

Since the very first years of his entry into politics, our President has shown a very clear rebellion against the antidemocratic, monophonic and tutelary media order of the period and fought against it. In this context, he worked to democratise the media and to ensure plurality of voices and accountability in the mass media. The political consciousness developed by our President in this process has led to a political awareness that enables the development of rational and feasible resistance strategies against the disinformation campaigns that have deepened with the digital media order in our country. This has been one of Türkiye's important achievements, and thanks to this, Türkiye has not succumbed to the disinformation campaigns that we have encountered in different forms and contents in the last decade. Moreover, in these 10 years, Türkiye has not only established a line of resistance against disinformation campaigns and social media operations against itself but also exported a consciousness to the



international public opinion. In this process, Türkiye has introduced legal regulations and a public policy against the deliberate dissemination of fake news through structures such as the Centre for Countering Disinformation and Teyit Hattı (Confirmation Hotline). On the other hand, Türkiye has implemented successful national and international collaborations and developed new models in the field of social media literacy and individual struggle against disinformation through training programmes. Thanks to these efforts, we were able to carry out an effective struggle against disinformation campaigns aimed at triggering social life and disrupting our social unity and integrity during the forest fires, the February 6 earthquakes and the May 14 elections. Fortunately, we exposed the disinformative content produced through conventional media tools and digital media environments with accurate information, promptly and by using the most effective communication channels, sharing accurate and real information with the public instead of false and fake content. Of course, in this struggle for the truth, our President's efforts to regress

the antidemocratic cultural hegemony in the media and to weaken the attitude against the nation will have paved the way for us. Instead, his efforts to build a media ecosystem based on cultural pluralism and professional diversity that reflects our socio-political reality have cleared our path.

Mr President, today we are struggling for a new generation democracy in the scope of your vision in the competitive field that has emerged with the new media technologies and social media reality. Day by day, we are increasing our capabilities and capacities in the field of combating disinformation. We can transfer the knowledge, technology and capabilities that we develop to our friend and ally countries under your leadership. In this context, we can carry out highly productive activities on international platforms, particularly the Organisation of Turkic States and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. During the recent global pandemic, the Karabakh war, the Russia-Ukraine war and the systematic atrocities, massacres and genocide committed by Israel in Gaza since 7 October, we have seen that with the right strategic communication

steps, we can prevent disinformation from turning into a poisonous instrument in global and regional power struggles. Today, Israel seeks to slaughter not only babies, children, women, the elderly and the oppressed, but also the truth in Gaza. Israel systematically fabricates and disseminates false and misleading news to conceal its atrocities and genocidal massacres. As you know, this is one of the usual methods of Israel's propaganda machine. However, this time Israel cannot easily manipulate the world public opinion with its lies, and it finds the struggle for the truth led by our President against us. As soon as Israel's illegitimate and cruel attacks began, our President instructed us to establish a task force to combat Israel's

disinformation attacks under the umbrella of the Centre for Countering Disinformation. And in line with this instruction, we have formed a task force working on a 24/7 basis. And thank God, we have exposed hundreds of lies of Israel. We exposed Israel's lies both nationally and internationally. Instead, we shared what the truth is. Each revelation has deepened Israel's crisis of legitimacy. On the one hand, our President fought for the establishment of an independent, strong Palestinian state with geographical integrity. And again, whilst struggling to stop the bloodshed in the region, on the other hand, with his vision and leadership, he was instrumental in preventing the attempts of the oppressors who shed this blood to justify themselves with false news. In the coming period, we will continue to fight for the truth in line with the objectives set for us by our President.

Honourable President, distinguished guests,

In this era of uncertainty, strategic communication has ceased to be an essential element of public policy and international relations, and an effective foreign policy instrument while at the same time becoming one of the most important elements of national security. Today, the deformative atmosphere that has emerged across the world has reached a point where it threatens the countries' political stability, democracies, public health and economic environment. Türkiye is one of the countries that experienced this situation the hardest and the earliest.

We realise that as humanity we are going through difficult times. For this reason, we have determined the theme of our forum as Thriving Together. In my speech, I highlighted the importance of addressing disinformation because I think it's crucial to focus on combating misinformation, especially during challenging times. This is because disinformation is no longer a situation, but an attitude. We must wage a scientific, organised and international struggle against this attitude. We must not allow perceptions to take priority over facts, and we must not allow lies to take the place of truth. At a time when information is weaponised through hybrid wars, international corporations are trying to create a news monopoly, media barons are trying to screen the truth through selective censorship, and the truth is under attack like never before, we must shout Long Live the Truth and adopt policies accordingly. We are trying to fight this struggle under the leadership of our President Mr Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. I conclude my remarks with these feelings and thoughts. I wish that our forum will be instrumental for good, and I would like to express my gratitude to our esteemed President for his presence at our forum.

Mehmet Zahid Sobacı's Keynote Speech

Mehmet Zahid Sobacı

Professor; Director General, TRT

Prof. Dr. Mehmet Zahid Sobacı graduated from Uludağ University's Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences in the Department of Public Administration in 2001. He completed his Master's (2005) and Doctorate (2009) in Education at Uludağ University Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Political Science and Public Administration. He became an associate professor in 2013 and a professor in 2020.

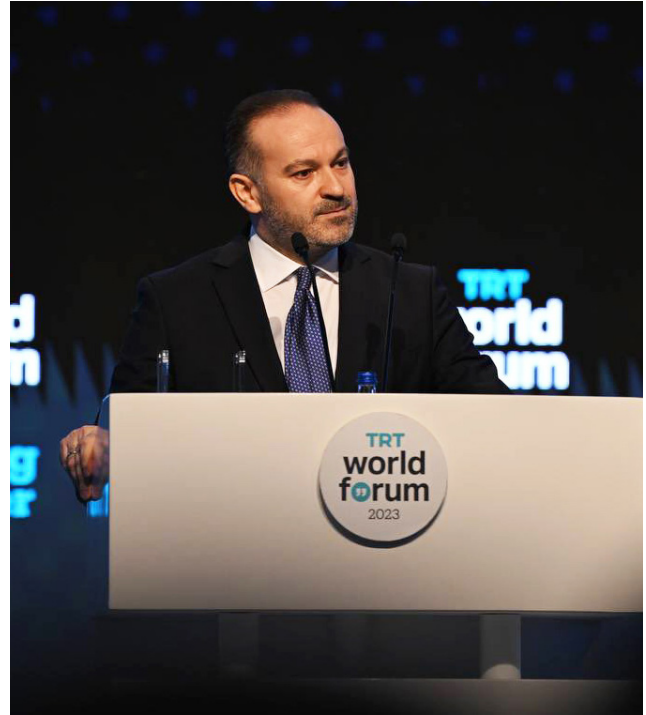
His areas of expertise are reform in public administration, public policy and the relationship between social media and politics. The books "Administrative Reform and Policy Transfer," "Public Administration in Theory and Practice," "Social Media and Local Governments: Theory and Practice," "Sub-National Democracy and Politics through Social Media," and "E-Parliament and ICT-Based Legislation: Concept, Experiences and Lessons," are among his main works. He has also published articles in multiple national and international journals in his areas of expertise.

In 2014, he received the TÜBA (Turkish Academy of Sciences) Notable Work (Honourable Mention) Award in the field of Social Sciences with his editorial work titled "Public Policy: Theory and Practice".

Between 2015-2018, he carried out studies in the field of Internal Politics at the think tank SETA. He served as the Vice Director of the Directorate of Communications of Presidency for the Republic of Türkiye between 2018 and 2021. At the same time, he served as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Press Advertising Agency between 2019-2021.

Mr President, Distinguished guests,

Welcome to TRT World Forum, which we are organising for the seventh time this year with the theme of "Thriving Together: Responsibilities, Actions and Solutions". I wish that our forum, which is honoured by the presence of our President, with more than 150 speakers from very different geographies and more than 1000 participants from nearly 100 countries, will be auspicious. TRT World Forum is an international platform where global and regional issues are



discussed in depth with politicians, journalists, academics, experts in their fields, and public and private sector representatives, solutions are presented to attention, and the basis of comprehension is strengthened.

Since this year is the 100th anniversary of our Republic, our event will start with a special session in which we will explain our vision of the century of Türkiye, our values and our struggle for a great Türkiye. In this first session, we will discuss the achievements of our country in every field under the leadership of our President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, especially in the defence industry, the humanitarian and moral stance it has exhibited, the personal policies it has pursued and the vision of a fairer world for everyone. Because understanding Türkiye means understanding the pathways to a just, humane and moral solution of regional and global issues. In our forum, we will evaluate many issues ranging from food, water and energy security to artificial intelligence, from humanitarian crises to the global economy for the next two days, and we will put forward determinations and road maps. From Africa to America, from Asia to the Middle East, we will capture the

current state of affairs at the regional and global levels. Of course, our special session on Gaza has a very important place in our forum this year. We will once again present the atrocities committed by Israel and the atrocities that have been going on in the Palestinian territories for decades to the conscience of the international community. Because we are witnessing that the world is again failing a bitter humanitarian ordeal. Since 7 October, Israel has been carrying out an all-out genocide against the people of Gaza. It commits crimes against humanity without recognising babies, children, women and patients by destroying holy places, hospitals, schools and refugee camps. And in the midst of this reality, we witness the international media unscrupulously trying to legitimise Israel's massacres. In this context, I must express that the so-called universal values and concepts behind which the countries taking a stand in favour of oppression are hiding are dripping with blood. Those who try to fabricate consent for such a massacre should not forget that one cannot produce a victim from a murderer and a murderer from a victim.

Mr President, distinguished guests,

As Türkiye's public broadcaster, we are striving for a fairer representation in the field of international broadcasting and production with our international events such as TRT World Forum, which has become a global brand. We observe the world, the whole world, not through filters, but through a just visor, and we make reporting and broadcasting based on the principle of fairness, without discriminating between the strong and the weak. In all our national and international channels, digital platforms and content, we prioritise our goal of being the voice of billions of people who are neglected in the world. We reach all over the world with our vision of strong broadcasting and strong impact to announce the rights and claims of the oppressed. Because we think that it is time to lift the blockades in the minds of the world. In fact, people from many countries are watching TRT and Türkiye's broadcasts to learn the realities of Gaza. Conscientious people, who refuse to take their place on the dark page of history, draw strength from Türkiye's voice and stance. While the West is trying to prevent and silence the people of conscience taking to the streets for Gaza, our President is out in the squares with his nation, shouting for justice, struggling with all means for the establishment of peace and protecting the honour of humanity with his stance. In this context, we are organising this event in

Türkiye, which is the voice of conscience of the world. You should know that the place where you share your ideas is Türkiye, a country that is renowned the world over for its humanitarian endeavours.

One and half months ago, Türkiye celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Türkiye, and it is a country that has endeavoured for peace in this geography for a thousand years, and has always used its power, technology and will in favour of the oppressed. Because, under the leadership of His Excellency, there is a Türkiye that always protects the oppressed and supports the oppressed. There is a Türkiye that confronts the hypocrisy of those who consume the gods they market as universal values with their own hands when it touches them and their interests. We believe in the principle expressed by Cemil Meriç that neutrality in the face of oppression is dishonour. With this understanding, as TRT, we will not hesitate for a moment to explain the Israeli cruelty in Palestine through our television, digital channels and international platforms such as TRT World Forum. And ultimately, if we can broadcast with our conscientious voice if we can freely share this painful reality with the world, it is because of the fair and compassionate stance of our country under the leadership of His Excellency. With these thoughts, I would like to express my gratitude to our President for honouring our event and wish TRT World Forum to be a beneficial occasion. I would like to thank you, our esteemed guests, for your contributions to our forum and the future of the world. I congratulate all my colleagues who worked with great devotion in our event which strengthens our international work.

TRT World and all our international channels in foreign languages are steadfastly continuing their journey, expanding their sphere of influence. As we progress on this path, we are continually broadening our international publication portfolio with each passing day.



THRIVING TOGETHER



THE
world
forum
2023



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BİRLİK



Exclusive Talk



Exclusive Talk

Regional Resilience: Strengthening Relations Among Balkan Countries for a Better Future

Key Takeaways

- Kosovo's President highlights Serbia's history of training terrorist groups, providing them with weapons, and using warmongering rhetoric. This indicates a concerning pattern of behaviour from Serbia, reminiscent of past conflicts.
- The attack on Kosovo on September 24th underscores the fragility of the region, with the potential for conflicts to escalate rapidly. The interconnectedness of Balkan countries means that instability in one nation can have ripple effects across the entire region.
- To prevent further aggression from Serbia, there is a call for strong deterrence measures, including NATO intervention and EU sanctions. This highlights the urgency of addressing Serbia's actions to maintain peace and stability in the region.
- Kosovo relies on its historical allies, including the United States, Türkiye, and EU member states, for support and security assistance. These alliances are crucial for countering threats and ensuring Kosovo's sovereignty.
- While Kosovo seeks EU integration, there is frustration over the lack of progress and Serbia's non-compliance with EU policies. This underscores the need for tangible actions and alignment with EU standards to move forward.
- Kosovo continues to push for international recognition, emphasising its independence and the need for countries to acknowledge its sovereignty. Diplomatic efforts are underway to garner support and expand Kosovo's recognition globally.

Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu

PhD; President of the Republic of Kosovo

Dr. Vjosa Osmani Sadriu is the sixth President of the Republic of Kosovo. President Osmani was elected on 4 April 2021, having previously served as the Speaker of Parliament and after being elected as a Member of Parliament (MP) of the Republic of Kosovo in five consecutive mandates. She graduated from the Faculty of Law of the University of Prishtina, and received her Masters and Doctorate degrees in international law from the University of Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania, United States.

The President of the Republic of Kosovo is also the Commander-in-Chief of the Kosovo Security Force and leads the country's foreign policy, as per Kosovo's constitution. As a staunch advocate for an impartial and professional justice system, President Osmani has strongly supported extensive rule of law reforms in Kosovo.

As President, Vjosa Osmani has relentlessly championed women's rights, in particular with regards to their participation in processes of peace and security as well as their economic and political empowerment. The President is devoted to raising awareness for and supporting children with special needs. She is also committed to the empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalised groups in Kosovo. The President's work has also focused on ensuring that action on climate change starts from the individual and gains further support at the highest political levels. In addition, the empowerment of youth in different areas, from information technology to political decision-making, has been an important part of the work of the President.

In the February 2021 elections, she achieved a historic level of popular support, becoming the most-voted politician in the history of elections in the Republic of Kosovo. Prior to that, Vjosa Osmani was the first woman to have served as the Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Kosovo having been elected to the post on 3 February 2020, and has also served as Acting President of the Republic of Kosovo between November 2020 – March 2021. In previous terms as an MP, she chaired the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Committee on European Integration and was the Deputy Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Reform.

From 2006 to 2010 Vjosa Osmani served as Chief of Staff to President Fatmir Sejdiu and Senior Advisor on Legal and



International Affairs and represented the President in the Commission which drafted the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo. She also served in the team that represented Kosovo before the International Court of Justice in the historic case regarding Kosovo's declaration of independence.

Since 2006, President Osmani taught at the Faculty of Law of the University of Prishtina, and later she also joined the faculty of the American University in Kosovo (RIT). Moreover, she taught at the University of Pittsburgh in the U.S. as a visiting professor. In 2017, she was awarded the Sheth International Award by the University of Pittsburgh. During her political career, she has also received many other recognitions.

President Osmani previously served as a member of the Board of the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and a member of the Steering Committee of the Global Young MP's Initiative of the World Bank and the IMF.

Vjosa Osmani was born on May 17, 1982 in Mitrovica, and also completed her studies in elementary and high school in her hometown. Apart from her mother tongue Albanian, President Osmani speaks English and a few other foreign languages. She is married to Prindon Sadriu and they have two twin daughters, Anda Elisa Sadriu and Dua Tiara Sadriu. President Osmani and her family live in Prishtina.

Exclusive Talk with Dr. Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu, *President of the Republic of Kosovo*

Moderator Madam president, we've heard the previous session. A lot has happened since the last time we spoke. And just a couple of days before Hamas's attack. Kosovo was exactly in the centre of international attention. On September 24th, a very quiet village in the northern part of your country turned into a war zone in just a couple of hours. The world was in shock. I remember the headlines. I remember the shock in the eyes of my colleagues who covered the story. But, Madam President, you warned about these types of attacks, but it seems to me that no one was listening. Would you agree with me?

Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu We've been really warning because the signs of a potential attack were there. Serbia has been training terrorist groups, and paramilitary groups for quite some time. They have been giving them military-grade weapons for quite some time. They have been offering all of the political support for these terrorist empowerment and literary groups for a very long time. And finally, if you listen to the rhetoric of the leaders of Serbia, it's warmongering rhetoric. They want to bring us all back to the 90s when all of our regions suffered from that kind of mindset, where they want to see all of the countries around them as temporary states that they want to destroy. And for that reason, of course, we did warn because we know Serbia very well. We, unfortunately, had to learn it the very hard way, even as we speak, thousands of our people, including women and children, are in massive graves in Serbia and Serbia does not even accept to tell us the locations to tell us or the international community the locations of these massive graves where little kids had been killed and now are there so that mothers can have a place where to lay a flower after 25 years after the war. So of course we're still facing a Serbia that is a continuation of the Milosevic mentality. We heard President Erdogan today speak about Milosevic and the atrocities that he committed. But of course, it is precisely Milosevic's minister of propaganda that is still leading Serbia, not just him, physically speaking, but also as a mentality, talking about the Greater Serbia idea, where he constantly attacks Kosovo, Bosnia Herzegovina and other countries in the region. Many, of course, among our partners believed that because Vucic was just speaking about peace

he would not resort to war. But as we all know, he never walks the talk. In the leadership of Serbia, they do talk about peace. But every single action that they undertake is to destroy the hard-won peace which we have achieved with the support of so many. So what happened on the 24th of September was the culmination of a policy that existed in Serbia for quite some time, especially in the past decade or so, where they didn't give up on a hegemonic idea that the rest of the region belongs to them. Of course, it does not. And Kosovo is independent, it's sovereign, it's a democratic republic and will forever remain so no matter how much Serbia wants to destabilise it.

Moderator It is, but still remains one of the region's hotspots. Especially, as I mentioned, that attack in the northern part of the country. We've heard throughout the day how the political landscape is fast-changing, and how new alliances have been created in the last couple of months. What danger does that represent to the Balkans, as this is the region that is often compared to the Middle East as one of the possible frozen conflicts that could just escalate at any time?

Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu If an active appeasement policy towards Serbia continues, if a Serbia-centred policy continues, obviously, there's a big danger for escalation in the entire region because, look, you're talking about a



small village. But in fact, the intention of those paramilitary groups was never the village. It was to annex the entire north of Kosovo. And as we know, if they would go forward, we would respond. And when we would respond, as you know, the region has such a response, because it never ends only with Kosovo. Our region is so connected that instability in one country means instability in all of us. And it never ends only with one country. And that's exactly what Serbia wants. But for way too long there's been this active appeasement policy just ignoring what Vucic does and just listening to what he says. And for that reason, I think we're in an extremely dangerous situation. And right now, the focus of everyone, be it ours in the region or of our allies and partners, should be prevention and deterrence. How do we deter Serbia? How do we prevent Serbia from attacking again and from spiralling up violence, which will not, of course, spare anyone in the region? And the answer is very clear. Serbia understands only NATO power. They need to understand that NATO's power will be used if they go crazy again. And secondly, there must be specific measures from the European Union, more precisely from

Right now, the focus of everyone, be it ours in the region or of our allies and partners, should be prevention and deterrence. How do we deter Serbia? How do we prevent Serbia from attacking again and from spiralling up violence, which will not, of course, spare anyone in the region? And the answer is very clear. Serbia understands only NATO power.

the European Commission, because it doesn't allow for the veto power of anyone from the member states that are financial in nature otherwise, Vucic brags about how, despite everything he does, still he gets over 60% of the EU support that is dedicated to the Western Balkans. As long as he uses violence, destroys good neighbourly relations, is not aligned with EU foreign and security policy, but still gets the EU money, of course, the message that he understands is that he should do it again and again.

Moderator Who are Kosovo's allies in all this? We know that NATO sent hundreds of additional troops to the border between Kosovo and Serbia, among them also Turkish reinforcements. Who were your main allies following that attack?

Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu It was the exact same countries that were our allies back in 1999 when we were endangered to get exterminated. But helped us get our freedom. It was exactly the same allies that helped us get independence. Exactly those same countries. It was the United States of America. It was Türkiye. It was members of the European Union. It was democratic countries all around the world. Immediately after that attack, we worked very closely with K4, with Eulex and countries, big and small, from different continents to make sure that we can control the borders so that they can not repeat the attacks. And as you rightly pointed out, there have been reinforcements, including from Türkiye, that are doing an excellent job led by a Turkish commander now, to make sure that these attacks don't happen again. So we are working with our allies to make sure, as I said, that prevention and deterrence happen because we need to make sure that we do not only talk or undertake measures after the attack actually happens. This time we were lucky enough because our police, which is the most professional in our region, reacted immediately in the very first few minutes of the attack and were able to thwart it. But that doesn't mean that Vucic is not going to go even bigger and stronger in terms of the next attack, unless there are measures undertaken against him. And of course, we're working with partners to make sure that this does not happen.

Moderator Serbia is heading towards elections in just a couple of days. Those are snap elections called right after the talks between Pristina and Belgrade have failed. Polls have been showing that Vucic is not likely to be challenged on the presidential level. Does this mean that while he is in

office, there will not be progress when it comes to peace in the region, especially when it comes to the talks between Kosovo and Serbia?

Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu We have very little hope that with Vucic in power, peace can become a long-lasting reality in our region, and we base it on his actions rather than his words. His actions in the past decade or so have shown that he has brought the region more turmoil and more de-stability. And while he does talk about European integration he has brought the country from a 96% alignment to a 40-something percent alignment in terms of the EU. So it doesn't seem like EU integration is interesting for him any longer. He is growing closer to Russia and of course, that is making him more aggressive towards neighbours in the region. That doesn't mean that we will not continue to actively engage in the dialogue, or that we will not be constructive. Quite the opposite. We will continue to be the only constructive party in this dialogue because we see that as the only way to resolve any dispute. Nevertheless, that doesn't mean that we should stay quiet whenever Serbia violates every single principle and, and criteria of good neighbour relations.

Moderator Serbia denies any involvement in the attack. Madam President, but you and the Prime Minister, Kurti, have been very vocal when it comes to this. Just yesterday, Interpol issued a warrant for a Kosovar Serb who is in connection with that attack. What proof do you have that Belgrade was involved in creating this unrest in the north of your country?

Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu There's enormous proof and it's not just the investigation of our country that has come to this conclusion, but also the investigation of some NATO member countries, which has been shared with the rest, shows that there's only one address from which this attack came, and that is the state of Serbia. These were not just a bunch of men that decided one beautiful morning to attack a neighbouring country. Quite the opposite. There was plenty of training happening for a couple of months before the attack on Serbia's army. Secondly, all of the weapons that were confiscated were produced by Serbia's army. Thirdly, they have been financing, and they don't even hide it. So there are official decisions through which Serbia pays these terrorist and paramilitary groups. And finally, it's all of the political support that they have been giving to this

group, before, during the attack and also after the attack, the terrorists that committed the attack against Kosovo are free men in Serbia, and quite the opposite. Instead of being arrested, they are hailed as heroes. So there is, of course, an abundance of extremely strong evidence about Serbia, carrying out this attack. So I don't think anyone in their sane mind actually believes Serbia, that they have nothing to do with it because the evidence is really there and is very strong.

Moderator When you gave your first interview for Across the Balkans, it was quoted that you have said that you wish that NATO and the EU, you urged NATO and the EU to speed up the process for Bosnia and Kosovo as well in the wake of the war in Ukraine. I remember we had this similar conversation a couple of weeks after the war in Ukraine started. Not much has changed, Madam President since the last time we spoke. Unfortunately for my own home country, Bosnia. Or for your country, Kosovo. Are you optimistic for the future of the region and specifically for those two countries, as we haven't seen many positive messages coming from Brussels in the last couple of weeks, except promises about investments, economy, which is all fine. But we are dealing with a massive political deadlock, especially in Bosnia, and then Kosovo is dealing with the massive issues at its border with Serbia.

Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu Look, we have no other choice but to be optimistic. We must be optimistic. No matter the challenges, both Kosovo and Bosnia Herzegovina went through immense hurdles on their way towards independence. And then after independence, in our state-



building efforts, in strengthening our statehood and in our Euro-Atlantic path. But you are right. We haven't really seen real progress. When I talk to partners, I try to make the case for the geostrategic urgency of making both Kosovo and Bosnia Herzegovina members of NATO, because while the EU is really a complex and long process, NATO can move faster and it is more urgent for NATO to move faster. Because I think it is deeply in Russia's interest to make sure that they open a new front against the West. And they, of course, will try to do this in the Western Balkans as well. And where would they try to do it? They would try to do it in countries that are not NATO member states. Because then Article Five would not be invoked. So, for that reason, the bigger the urgency of making Kosovo and Bosnia Herzegovina members of NATO, the more stability and security there will be in our region, with Albania, North Macedonia and Montenegro joining NATO, all of us have become more secure and safer. So I think this is the way forward for anyone who wants stability and long-term peace in the Western Balkans. They need to make important steps to bring our countries closer to NATO, and we are very grateful for the support of Türkiye in this

regard. President Erdogan has been very vocal since day one about the necessity for both our countries to join.

Moderator Madam president, I was recently in the region. And whenever I mention your name, they say they admire how much you work to put Kosovo always in the spotlight. Not just after the September attack, but even before. You're really working hard to get more and more countries to recognise Kosovo. Any progress when it comes to that? Can we expect more countries to recognise Pristina?

Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu We are certainly getting some important promises. But of course, this is an individual and sovereign decision of each country and we are trying to respect their internal processes and procedures. We are offering them all of the arguments they need. We're doing all of the necessary paperwork. Some need additional information. We're visiting these countries. Many of the leaders that I meet, many from non-recognisers, we don't even make them public at first because we don't want to put them in a position of pressure from other factors. So, we really respect these countries. But it is about time that they recognise the irreversible reality of Kosovo's independence. Look, no one has lost anything from recognising Kosovo. Has Türkiye lost anything from recognising Kosovo's independence? Quite the opposite. We are close friends, close partners, close allies. We support each other. So what they would be losing is nothing. What they would be gaining is a committed partner, a country that, no matter our small size, actually has an important story to tell and an important contribution to make to global peace and security. So there is an enormous potential for cooperation with many of these countries, whether in economy or culture or other areas. And we are seeking to explore these opportunities. But of course, the first step is recognising this is not just about recognising our independence, it's about recognising a people's struggle to be free. We were occupied for centuries, but we never lost our language, our identity. We never stopped fighting for our freedom because there's nothing that can stand in the way of a people that wants to be free. So by recognising the independence of Kosovo, they would be recognising this centuries long struggle and sacrifice of the people of Kosovo. And I do hope that as many countries as possible will do that.

Moderator You mentioned briefly your cooperation with Türkiye. I want to go back to that as we are here in beautiful

Around the world, there are now famine-like conditions in six countries. The Greater Horn of Africa, one of the worst-hit regions, is facing its worst drought in decades. WHO and our partners are on the ground providing basic health services, treating severe malnutrition, and helping countries prevent and respond to outbreaks. Over the long term, we need a profound change in food systems. We need to end unsustainable production and consumption practices that lead to environmental degradation and increase the likelihood of unsafe and unhealthy food, antimicrobial resistance and zoonotic diseases.

Istanbul. You've met President Erdogan today. Türkiye has great relations with Belgrade and with Pristina both. We have seen and I've mentioned it, EU talks have failed several times despite the massive effort from, I would say, both sides. Can Türkiye mediate between Belgrade and Pristina? Would you be open to that type of cooperation or possible talks?

Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu The president of Türkiye has been playing an important role for peace and security in our region. And as I have stated many times before, I think the fact that he has good relations with every country in the Western Balkans and has a positive influence in each and every country, can help. So I do hope that, whenever he has talks, with Serbia, the issue of long-term stability and peace in our region, will be brought up and I know it will because it is in Türkiye's deep interest, given their contribution, to make sure that peace endures because everyone has contributed for this peace, including Türkiye. We have Turkish soldiers serving in Kosovo for so long. Türkiye was involved in the NATO bombings of 1999, which saved our lives and saved our country from extermination. And for that reason, I think, to save this peace, to safeguard this peace that was achieved with so much sacrifice, is the duty of us all. So I think Türkiye can play an important role in encouraging Serbia to stop attacking its neighbours and simply accepting a reality that is not going to change. Kosovo is there to stay as an independent country. Bosnia Herzegovina is there to stay as an independent country. Montenegro is there to stay as an independent country and so are the rest of the republic. So I think Serbia should choose to move forward rather than trying to drag everyone in the region backwards.

Moderator I want to ask you at the end and I want to finish. On a positive note this interview. It's been a long day. We've discussed many of the pressing issues talking about the Balkans this time of the night. I think it's really challenging as it's one of the most complicated parts of Europe. Madam President, what keeps you going and what do you want your legacy to be? You've done amazing work when it comes to your diplomatic activities and promoting Kosovo. Since I've become a journalist, since you came to power, I have gotten to know more about Kosovo, about Kosovo's women, about Kosovo's men, young people. And to be honest, it was mostly because of you. What keeps you going?

Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu It's the young people of Kosovo. I don't want them to go through what we had to go through. You know, we grew up as children of war. We grew up as children of war. And we know very much how that is, like every single day. You know, watching the news about the war in Bosnia and thinking, Will we be next? What will we do when they come in and take us out of our place, our home? What will we do when they come to kill us? What will we do when they come to bomb us? What will we do when they burn down our house? I don't want the kids of Kosovo, the young people of Kosovo, to grow up thinking every day how to survive because your neighbour wants to kill you. And because of them, every piece of work, every single effort, every sacrifice is worth it. Just to make sure that no one living in Kosovo or in the region, no matter their nationality, no matter their religion, has to go through what we have to go through. And, and, you know, working on maintaining peace when you have such challenges from your neighbour is extremely difficult work. But despite that, every bit of our effort needs to be concentrated into that because the rest can come. Economic development, creating new jobs, better education system, better health services, all of that is possible when you live in peace. But none of that is possible when you don't have peace. And for that reason, that's what keeps us all going, I would say in Kosovo and anyone else that has known the opposite of peace, which is destruction, it's suffering, it's war. So because we have known the opposite of peace, we need to make sure that we never stop working for it and working to maintain it.

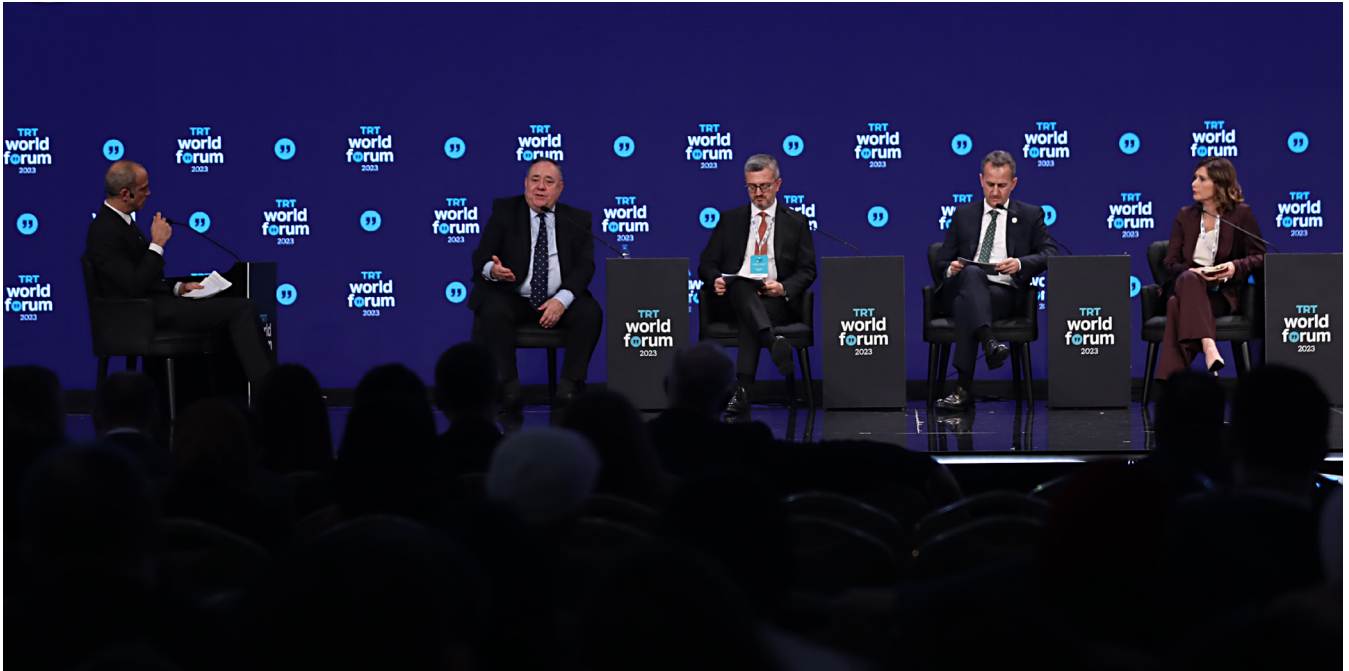


Public Sessions



Session 1

Vision of Türkiye's Century: Türkiye as a System-Building Actor



Keynote Speaker

Dr. Cevdet Yılmaz, Vice President of the Republic of Türkiye

Moderator

Alican Ayanlar, Presenter, TRT World

Speakers

Prof. Haluk Görgün, President, Defence Industry Agency, Republic of Türkiye

Dr. Valeria Giannotta, Director, CeSPI Observatory on Türkiye

Prof. Burhanettin Duran, General Coordinator, SETA

Alex Salmond, Former First Minister of Scotland

Key Takeaways

- Türkiye's foreign policy is characterised by a philosophy of reformism, emphasising the need for restructuring international systems and institutions to better address contemporary challenges.
- Türkiye demonstrates a nuanced understanding of global dynamics, balancing between multilateralism and multipolarity while advocating for regional integration and economic cooperation.
- President Erdogan's call for reform within the United Nations, encapsulated in the slogan "the world is bigger than five," seeks to address the issue of veto power immobilising the UN, particularly evident in recent crises like Gaza.
- Türkiye's foreign policy is guided by a humanitarian approach, focusing on revisiting fundamental values and promoting collective action in times of crisis, as seen in initiatives like the Green Deal and efforts towards a two-state solution in Gaza.
- Türkiye's approach to global challenges is pragmatic, flexible, and adaptable, acknowledging the necessity of considering diverse interests while pursuing common goals. This pragmatic stance underscores the importance of achieving a win-win outcome in international affairs.

Summary of the Session

The session explored the foundational principles guiding Turkish foreign policy, notably centred around revisioning, reformism, and rebuilding. Speakers highlighted the breakdown of the post-World War II international system, leading to a state of potential chaos in global affairs.

President Erdogan's assertion at the United Nations, "The world is bigger than five," signified a pivotal moment in reshaping global perceptions of Türkiye's leadership, particularly within Europe. The discussion underscored Türkiye's advancements in the defence industry, spotlighting achievements in drone technology, autonomous planes, and satellite communications.

As global power dynamics shift and multilateralism's impact becomes more pronounced, the session delved into Türkiye's future trajectory and its evolving role on the world stage. Questions were raised regarding Europe's role and Türkiye's ability to assert its message amid perceived European hesitation.

The session concluded with a brief reflection on the Turkish defence industry's contribution to diplomatic objectives, encompassing both soft and hard power dynamics. Despite the vast scope of Turkish policy over the century, the session provided valuable insights into Türkiye's aspirations and its emergence as a significant global actor.

Keynote Speech by Dr. Cevdet Yılmaz

Vice President of the Republic of Türkiye

As we have marked the centenary of our Republic this year, we are eagerly anticipating the next century with great enthusiasm. In the words of President Erdogan. The century of Türkiye is a comprehensive roadmap that will raise our country above the level of contemporary civilisations. An important dimension of this comprehensive roadmap is to consolidate Türkiye's global role as a problem-solving, transforming and system-building actor in pursuit of a more effective international system. The current global climate is characterised by a multitude of uncertainties, unpredictability, crises and conflicts. Unfortunately, the escalation of competition among great powers and the erosion of multilateralism alongside universal values has aggravated political, economic, social and cultural polarisation globally and regionally. With its political determination and growing capabilities.

Türkiye is certainly well-positioned to be one of the architects of balance in the coming future. With 261 diplomatic and consular missions, Türkiye has the fifth-largest diplomatic network globally. Our Century of Türkiye Vision entails the use of this extensive network effectively for the resolution of global and regional problems. With the strong and visionary leadership of President Erdogan. Prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts is the number one priority for Turkish foreign policy. As a result of our solution-oriented and proactive approach, we have a leading role in conflict resolution and mediation. Since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war, we have been striving to keep both our Russian and Ukrainian friends at the table by emphasising that there are no winners in war and no losers in peace. Mr. Erdogan is a rare leader who can speak both with President Putin and President Zelensky, and we believe that this is not a liability but an asset for our friends all over the world. We maintain our efforts to end the war through diplomacy and dialogue, on the basis of Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity. Through the Black Sea Initiative, which we launched together with the United Nations, we contributed to global food security.

On the other hand, Israel's indiscriminate attacks on Gaza that have claimed the lives of more than 15,000 people have once again exposed the shortcomings of the global system.



Collective punishment of Palestinian people, Bombing of civilians, children, refugee camps, hospitals, and, the mosque, church and all the rest. All these actually, erode the moral ground of the international system. And also, we firmly believe that these actions are against humanity, they are humanitarian crimes as well as war crimes. And we believe that the Netanyahu government, with all its collaborators, should be accountable for these crimes before international courts. To address this crisis, we mobilise the international community from the outside.

As a voice of conscience and justice, we took an active stance in cooperation and consultation with our regional and global partners and led the efforts with the Organisation of Islamic Communities, as well as the United Nations. Türkiye relentlessly continues its efforts for a lasting ceasefire, unhindered and scaled-up humanitarian access to Gaza and a lasting peace. What we need is not a humanitarian pose or anything like that. We need a real ceasefire that will lead to a political process for a permanent solution to this problem. The extraordinary joint OIC Arab League Summit of 11th November 2023 mandated a group of foreign ministers, including our Foreign Minister, to take international action to stop the war in Gaza and achieve lasting peace. And lasting peace cannot be possible without a just peace. Without

a deal that is fair and equitable between Palestinians and Israelis. The lasting and just solution to the conflict is the true embodiment of an independent, sovereign and geographically contiguous state of Palestine on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital. In order to contribute to such a deal, Türkiye has suggested the establishment of a guarantee mechanism and announced its readiness to assume responsibility in this regard, along with other relevant countries.

While striving for a lasting solution to the conflict, Türkiye is also working round the clock to alleviate the ongoing suffering of the Palestinian people. We have not only responded to the flash appeal of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, but we have also mobilised our own means to send humanitarian aid. Upon the bombing of hospitals in Gaza, we brought some patients to Türkiye for treatment, and we will continue to spare no effort to assist Palestinians in need. Türkiye will maintain all these efforts for a fairer global system in the period ahead. We believe that Gaza is a testing ground for countries that will show their stands for humanitarian criteria as well as for their approach to the international multilateral system. And unfortunately, some of the countries so far have not passed this test. Distinguished guest. The central location of Türkiye offers promising possibilities for deepening regional cooperation in terms of energy, transport and logistics connectivity. We have developed an extensive global network of cooperation through high-level cooperation councils, inter-governmental summits and other multilateral regional formations. These mechanisms are instrumental in developing all aspects of our external affairs, including political, economic, cultural, security, transportation, energy, health, and so forth. Türkiye supports regional ownership and solutions for regional problems. It is also our experience that sometimes powers outside the regions affect negatively rather than positively. The developments in the regions. It is better to leave some problems to the actors in the region rather than interfere from outside. Therefore while developing our bilateral relations, we also prioritise regional multilateral platforms. We are a founding member of several regional organisations and initiatives such as the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation, the Southeast European Cooperation Process and the European Cooperation Organisation. We played an important role in the organisation of Turkic states to make the Turkic world stronger together and to promote

Turkic cooperation. However, our foreign policy vision is not limited to our vicinity. Türkiye maintains close ties with the countries in the Balkans, the Middle East and North Africa, South Caucasus, and South and Central Asia. Türkiye's global outreach extends beyond our immediate geography encompassing various regions with the African Partnership Policy, the opening to Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia in a new initiative. In the context of regional and global peace and security. We have always actively contributed to UN, NATO and EU missions. Türkiye is among the top five allies that have made the most significant contributions to NATO missions in various regions. The latest example is the NATO key for the command that we assumed in October 2023.

Türkiye plays a pivotal role also in combating terrorism. Terrorists constitute the most pressing threat to peace and security in our region. Whether their name is FETÖ PKK, YPG or DAESH, we have been effectively countering terrorism in all of its manifestations. We continue to encourage our allies and partners around the world to adopt a resolute position in this urgent matter. Unfortunately, we also observed that some of our allies prefer to work with some terrorist organisations against others. And we believe that this is the wrong policy, the wrong way to go. Rather than collaborating with terrorist organisations against each other. What we need to do is to collaborate as states against all terrorist organisations.

Humanity is plagued by various scourges, including ethnic and religious hatred, discrimination, extremism, xenophobia, islamophobia, antisemitism and other forms of exclusion are also causes of concern. In addressing such widespread menaces, we stressed the need for transparency, diversity dialogue and inclusive policies. With this perspective, Türkiye has assumed a leading role in initiatives to foster mutual respect and common values among different cultures and religions. We believe that Jerusalem historically has these characteristics. Unfortunately, some of the groups try to homogenise Jerusalem with one single faith dominating and excluding others. This is not the true character of Jerusalem. Jerusalem should cover Muslims, Christians and Jews living together. In history, we achieved this and in future, I believe, we can also achieve this, with all relevant different groups, regions, religions and communities. The solution to all global challenges depends on collective efforts through cooperation and effective multilateralism.

Türkiye collaborates with other nations in defending our shared values and fulfilling our shared responsibilities in establishing an inclusive, equitable and effective international system based on solidarity. Such a system places a high priority on human welfare whilst tackling economic disparities and promoting global peace, security, stability and prosperity. With this understanding, we contribute to the work of G20, which provides a platform for advanced and emerging economies to seek solutions to global economic problems. Supporting the least developed countries is a priority for Türkiye as a pioneer in global humanitarian assistance, and we are proud to be one of the leading countries in development assistance.

Our president coined the motto 'A fairer world is possible and the world is bigger than five', under which Türkiye has been advocating for the reform of the UN Security Council, the UN and other multilateral organisations. Indeed, these mottos are not just a call for the reform of institutions, they are a call for a fairer world in terms of economy, social balances, environmental concerns and so forth. The aim is to make them fit for today's purposes and necessities. The world has changed, the institutions are old and we have to make them overlap. These calls have already resonated in many countries. Strengthening international institutions is an important aspect of this agenda. The UN must fulfil its global role to serve humanity.

Türkiye, with the impact of growth-supporting policies and measures, has differentiated itself positively and proven as a resilient player in global value chains. This year, our GDP will be around \$1.1 trillion, and with this magnitude, Türkiye will be the 17th largest economy in the world. In purchasing power parity terms we are the 11th largest economy and we continue with our growth perspective as a developing country. We are pleased to observe that confidence in our economic stability has strengthened after the elections this year. Political uncertainties are gone. Policy uncertainties have been eliminated with our medium-term programmes and 12 development programmes, and we continue with our development process. But of course, we do not define development just as economic growth. Economic growth is just part of this process. Development alongside economic growth requires social justice as well as environmental, of course, concerns. Our plan covers the 2023 vision and aspires to create a strong, prosperous, environment friendly and disaster-resistant Türkiye producing high-added value

based on advanced technology and sustaining fair income distribution in the century of Türkiye. With the new plan, the priority will be macroeconomic and financial stability as well as balanced growth, along with a permanent improvement in the current account balance and a strong public finance balance. The primary focus will be on the disaster-resilient living areas, leveraging Türkiye's economic and social gains, especially in the face of potential disasters.

We believe that the world should not spend its resources on conflicts, wars or unnecessary confrontations. What we need to do is to spend more resources on economic development, social justice and environmental improvements. Our policies will continue to be conducted on a rule-based and predictable basis. Strengthening coordination and harmony between monetary, fiscal and income policies as well as structural reforms. We continue to follow a roadmap that will ensure sustainable economic growth on the basis of investment, production, employment and exports. With its rising capability via a diplomatic network, institutionalised relations and political determination, Türkiye remains well suited as a problem solver, system improver and transformer actor in the region and international affairs at the turn of the century of Türkiye. And we expect our friends and allies to recognise Türkiye's new position as such. The world may be fragmented, but Türkiye's position is crystal clear in working actively towards peace at home and peace in the world. Distinguished guests. To conclude, I sincerely hope that this forum will contribute to the security, welfare and social justice of people and also the well-being of the planet all over the world under the motto Thriving Together.

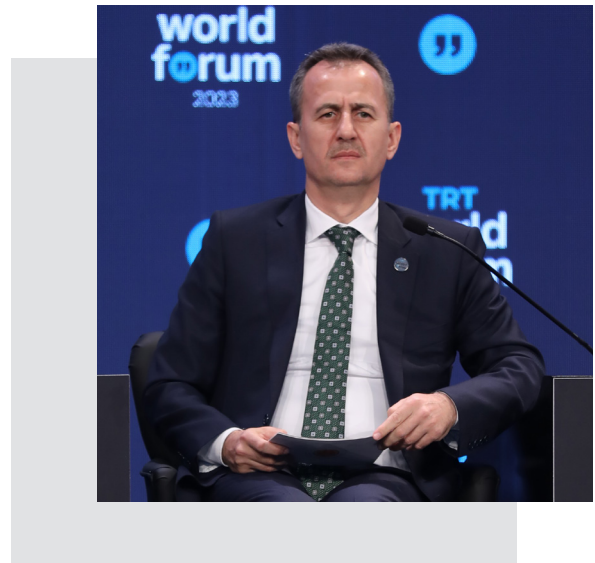


Haluk Görgün

Professor; President, Defence Industry Agency, Republic of Türkiye

Prof. Haluk Görgün completed his undergraduate and graduate education in Electrical Engineering Department of Yıldız Technical University and his Ph.D. in Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York, USA in 2003. As the founder and chairman of the Control and Automation Engineering Department, he established postgraduate programs and chaired the department (2009-2013). His influence extended to international roles, such as being Türkiye's Delegate to the EU 7th Framework Program (2007-2010). Prof. Görgün held key positions at UNIDO, Yıldız Technical University, and served as Editor of YTÜ Sigma Journal of Engineering and Science (2010-2013). Elected to Türkiye Academy of Sciences in 2013, he later became Rector at Gebze Technical University (2014-2018). Known for fostering university-industry cooperation, he received awards during his tenure. His diverse contributions led to his appointment as a Member of YÖK in 2023. Prof. Görgün's leadership extended to ASELSAN, where he served as Chairman of the Board (2018-2023). His distinguished career culminated in his appointment as the President of Defence Industries in 2023.

- Türkiye's primary objective is to establish a robust national defence industry to effectively meet the needs of our armed forces, security operations, and organisations. This entails modernising equipment and resources, utilising our national resources to their fullest potential. In the subsequent stage, spanning approximately 10 to 20 years, starting from the late 1990s to the early 2000s, our approach shifted from relying solely on ready-made procurements to embracing joint production and collaboration at a coal production level.
- When assessing the success of our endeavours and examining the processes and agendas within the defence sector, we adopt a comprehensive approach, considering strategic perspectives. We move away from traditional methods, aligning functions and progress accordingly, while also introducing new projects and platforms. In determining our strategic objectives, we prioritise meeting the needs of our defence and security forces, alongside considerations such as exports, financial resource management, digital transformation, and the dual use of defence and civil applications. Emphasising groundbreaking technologies, our focus remains primarily on sustainability.



- It's crucial to adopt a holistic approach and develop a comprehensive strategy for the defence sector. This involves establishing a normative structure where stakeholders are empowered to deliver services with a focus on high efficiency, guided by a shared vision. By mobilising their potential and capabilities towards common goals, we foster motivation and collective effort. Additionally, we prioritise the involvement of SMEs not only in equipment provision but also as integral parts of the system. Human capacity building is paramount, and we collaborate closely with universities and institutes, offering various courses and engaging with technical high schools to nurture talent and expertise.
- We place our confidence in the capabilities of our young and dynamic resources, which we perceive as Türkiye's greatest asset. Through their contributions, we remain steadfast in our pursuit of ensuring Türkiye's complete independence and solidifying its position as a global power. Aligned with President Erdogan's leadership, we are committed to taking bold steps towards achieving these objectives, and we hold unwavering faith in our success.

Valeria Giannotta

PhD; Director, CeSPI Observatory on Türkiye

Valeria Giannotta is the academic and scientific director of the Observatory on Türkiye, CeSPI (Centre Studies of International Politics), based in Rome. She studied in Milan at Catholic University where she obtained her PhD in Institution and Politics. Since 2009 she has been active as an academic in Istanbul, Gaziantep and Ankara. As an expert in Türkiye, she engages in high-level strategic meetings and contributes regularly to media and think tanks. In 2017 she was awarded 'Cavaliere della Stella d'Italia' by the Presidency of the Republic of Italy for her analytical objectivity and efforts in supporting Italian diplomacy in Türkiye.

- Türkiye's journey towards Europe traces back to the 1960s with the Ankara agreements marking the beginning. Subsequently, in 1999, the creation of the customs union further cemented this path, followed by the allocation of candidate membership and the initiation of negotiation processes in 2005. However, these negotiations were hindered from the outset by the Cyprus issue, which remains a critical challenge in Türkiye's foreign policy efforts to attain full recognition within the European framework.
- Türkiye demonstrates a heightened awareness of the evolving dynamics within the international system compared to other global actors. The recent significant meeting underscores Türkiye's recognition of shifting regional dynamics. Additionally, Türkiye's efforts towards normalisation with previously contentious partners, such as Egypt and Israel, further exemplify this awareness. However, despite these strides, setbacks reminiscent of past tensions have arisen once more, albeit not due to Türkiye's actions this time.
- Türkiye has emerged as a significant international donor of humanitarian aid in recent times. If my memory serves me right, the amount of humanitarian aid provided globally amounted to \$8 billion or more. Notably, Türkiye's humanitarian aid is impartial, devoid of any religious or cultural preferences. Following the pandemic, Türkiye extended assistance to over 100 countries, with Italy being the recipient of the first shipment of medical equipment. This aid was particularly crucial for Italy during its darkest hours, as Europe's support seemed lacking. Türkiye's swift response provided a beacon of hope during a time of despair.



- In Europe and the wider Western sphere, there is a glaring absence of leadership and vision, which has reached a critical level, especially in light of the recent Israel-Palestine conflict. Despite some positive signals from certain European offices regarding finding a resolution, the perception of Türkiye as a negotiator in this specific issue may not be as favourable as it was during the Ukraine-Russia conflict. Unlike the situation with Russia and Ukraine, where both sides accepted Türkiye's role as a mediator, the classification of Hamas as a terrorist organisation by many European and Western countries complicates Türkiye's perceived neutrality in negotiations between Hamas and Israel. This difference in perception may hinder Türkiye's acceptance as a mediator in the Israel-Palestine conflict.
- The Turkish state and political elite demonstrate a keen awareness of international dynamics, with President Erdogan notably vocal about the imperative of reforming the UN security system. Erdogan highlights the discrepancy between the current power distribution and the evolving international landscape. Türkiye actively engages in proposing initiatives and raising awareness within the UN system. A prime example is the advocacy efforts of First Lady Emine Erdoğan, whose resolution on the zero waste initiative was successfully passed on December 14, 2022. This underscores Türkiye's proactive stance, as it strives to promote global awareness and share best practices on an international platform.

Burhanettin Duran

Professor; General Coordinator, SETA

Prof. Dr. Burhanettin Duran received his BA in Political Science and International Relations from Bogazici University in 1993 and his PhD in Political Science from Bilkent University in 2001. He was a visiting scholar at George Mason University in 2010-2011. He worked for Bilkent University and Sakarya University as a research assistant and assistant professor between 1993 and 2009. Prof. Duran has been focusing on transforming Islamism, Turkish political thought, Turkish domestic politics, Turkish foreign policy and Middle Eastern politics. Currently Prof. Duran is a professor at Ibn Haldun University and General Coordinator of the SETA Foundation. On October 9th, 2018, Prof. Dr. Duran was appointed as a Turkish Presidency Security and Foreign Policies Council member.

- Türkiye's foreign policy approach is often subject to debate, with some characterising it as revisionist or revolutionary. However, I advocate for a stance of reformism. Reformism entails actively contributing to the reconstruction of the international system to establish a new world order. While Türkiye is supportive of certain aspects of the status quo, such as the need for effective international and regional mechanisms to address issues ranging from climate change to conflict prevention, there is a call for reform within these institutions. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan frequently advocates for a fairer world order, emphasising that "the world is bigger than five," signifying a push for reformism. Additionally, Türkiye remains open to cooperation, inclusiveness, and multilateralism in various matters, guided by the principle of advancing mutual interests, which is imperative for Türkiye's strategic goals.
- The world currently faces the looming spectre of chaos, with the potential for new wars and conflicts, compounded by the challenges of addressing pressing issues like climate change. The inadequacies of world leaders in effectively resolving such problems have become evident, as seen during the pandemics, the war in Ukraine, and conflicts in Gaza. In response, Türkiye's foreign policy adopts a humanitarian approach that emphasises the importance of revisiting and prioritising fundamental values as the cornerstone of our collective future. This approach is grounded in pragmatism, flexibility, and the ability to adapt to global changes. While ideals are important, pragmatic considerations acknowledge the necessity of addressing the diverse interests of all stakeholders. Hence, Türkiye advocates



for a win-win approach that seeks to reconcile differing interests while pursuing common goals.

- Two conflicting trends dominate world politics: the push towards multilateralism and inclusiveness, driven by the necessity for humanity as a whole, and the trend towards multipolarity, fuelled by great power rivalry. In light of this reality, it is imperative to identify mutual interests among diverse nation-states. Türkiye recognises and acknowledges this dynamic, positioning itself as one of the leading nations adept at adapting to the evolving global landscape.
- In addition to navigating global power dynamics, Türkiye actively promotes regional integration, economic cooperation, and connectivity. Initiatives such as positioning itself as an energy hub and addressing supply chain issues underscore Türkiye's commitment to fostering regional stability and prosperity. Moreover, Türkiye endeavours to enhance existing international institutions and regional mechanisms, advocating for reforms that would bolster their effectiveness in resolving global challenges.
- Türkiye's commitment to addressing the Green Deal issue exemplifies the potential for collaborative action in times of crisis, echoing the motto of the TRT World Forum: "Thriving Together." This ethos underscores the belief that collective efforts can yield positive outcomes. Similarly, in addressing the crisis in Gaza, Türkiye advocates for a solution that promotes a two-state framework, ensuring security for both Israel and Palestine. President Erdogan employs leader-to-leader diplomacy in his efforts to facilitate dialogue and resolution.

Alex Salmond

Former First Minister of Scotland

Alex Salmond is the former First Minister of Scotland (2007-2014) who, after winning a landslide in the Scottish Parliamentary election of 2011, introduced the first referendum on Scottish independence in 2014. Mr Salmond led the SNP for 20 years, taking it from the political fringes to replace the Labour Party as the dominant force in Scottish politics, and made history by becoming the first SNP Scottish First Minister in 2007.

More recently he has concentrated on broadcast journalism on television and radio while his political memoir *The Dream Shall Never Die* topped the Sunday Times best seller. His many awards include Scottish Politician of the Year on multiple occasions, Spectator Politician of the Year, Pink Politician of the Year, Coppieters Award for service to Scotland and Europe and the top international Green Politician. Mr Salmond's alma mater is the University of St Andrews and he is a visiting Professor of Economics at Strathclyde University and also holds an honorary Doctorate from the University of Glasgow.

- Calls for reforming the United Nations have echoed since its inception in 1945, often revolving around bureaucratic changes and streamlining processes. However, the mantra “the world is bigger than five,” epitomises a powerful, politically charged slogan that transcends mere rhetoric. Türkiye's President Erdoğan's approach goes beyond mere inclusion in the Security Council, instead addressing the issue of veto power immobilising the United Nations. This was starkly evident in the recent Gaza crisis, where despite the overwhelming support from two-thirds or more of the General Council, effective action was stymied by the veto power wielded by a single nation.
- I believe that the phrase “the world is bigger than five” hints at a potential solution, namely, reaching a point where the veto power within the United Nations can be circumvented. This would entail establishing a threshold of support within the General Council, beyond which certain resolutions—such as those addressing critical issues like Gaza—could not be vetoed, regardless of individual nations' objections.



- This forum boasts high-profile media executives and distinguished individuals, yet we mustn't forget that we are all human beings. It's undeniably uplifting for us, as individuals, to wake up each morning and be greeted with news of progress—be it through radio, television, or social media. In a world often overshadowed by disaster and suffering, witnessing progressive developments is truly heartening.



Session 2

Israel's War in Gaza: Humanitarian Crisis and Prospects for Peace?



Moderator

Imran Garda, Presenter, TRT World

Speakers

Gideon Levy, Journalist, Haaretz

Ambassador Dr. Husam Zomlot, Head, Palestinian Mission to the United Kingdom

John Dugard, Professor of Law; Former UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Palestine

Evarist Bartolo, Former Minister for Foreign and European Affairs, Republic of Malta

Key Takeaways

- International law and institutions, including the International Criminal Court, have failed to effectively address the atrocities in Palestine and hold perpetrators accountable for war crimes and human rights violations.
- The United States, along with some European states, tends to prioritise its interpretation of a “rules-based international order” over adherence to established international law, particularly concerning Israel’s actions in Gaza.
- The narrative of self-defence used by Israel is challenged, with emphasis placed on the enforcement of occupation rather than genuine self-defence against Hamas.
- The United States’ refusal to recognise the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court undermines accountability efforts and demonstrates a prioritisation of national interests over international justice.
- Criticism is directed towards the lack of meaningful action by the European Union in challenging harmful US policies and advocating for accountability regarding the atrocities in Palestine.
- Despite international efforts and legal mechanisms, the prospects for significant change or compliance from the United States and Israel remain uncertain, highlighting ongoing challenges in achieving justice and peace in the region.

Summary of the Session

The session titled “Israel’s War in Gaza: Humanitarian Crisis and Prospects for Peace?” engaged in a thorough examination of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, shedding light on the multifaceted failures within the international community and legal institutions. Participants articulated the significant shortcomings of international law and institutions, notably the International Criminal Court, in effectively addressing and holding accountable those responsible for war crimes and egregious human rights violations in the context of the conflict. Criticism was levied against the United States and certain European states for prioritising their interpretation of a “rules-based international order” over the established norms of international law, particularly evident in their responses to Israel’s actions in Gaza.

Moreover, the narrative of self-defence employed by Israel faced scrutiny, as participants underscored the perceived emphasis on the enforcement of occupation rather than genuine

self-defence against Hamas. The United States’ refusal to recognise the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court was highlighted as a significant obstacle to accountability efforts, signalling a prioritisation of national interests over international justice. Additionally, the European Union was criticised for its perceived inaction in challenging harmful US policies and advocating for accountability within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

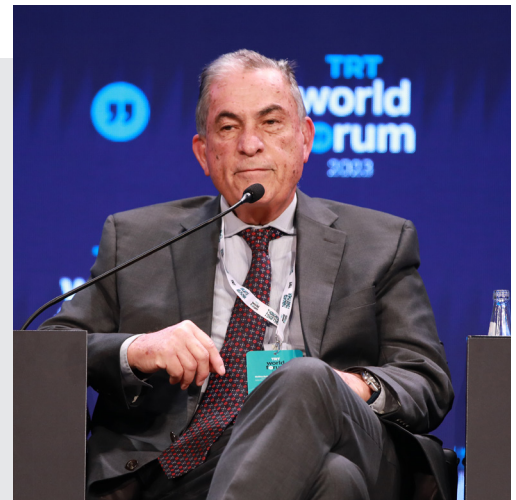
Despite concerted international efforts and legal mechanisms, achieving justice and sustainable peace in the region remains elusive, with ongoing challenges persisting. The session underscored the urgent need for a re-evaluation of international responses and a renewed commitment to upholding the principles of justice, accountability, and human rights in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and advancing prospects for lasting peace in the region.

Gideon Levy

Journalist, Haaretz

Gideon Levy is an Israeli journalist and author in the newspaper Haaretz. Levy has received awards for his articles on human rights in the occupied areas, including Israel's prestigious Sokolov Award in 2021. Levy started his career in 1974 when he was drafted into the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) and served as a reporter for Israel Army Radio. From 1978 to 1982, he worked as an aide and spokesman for Shimon Peres, the leader of the Israeli Labour Party at the time. In 1982, he began writing for the Israeli daily Haaretz, becoming a deputy editor from 1983 to 1987. Since 1988, he has written a column called "Twilight Zone," focusing on the hardships faced by Palestinians. In 2004, Levy published a compilation of articles titled "Twilight Zone – Life and Death under the Israeli Occupation." He also co-edited the documentary series "Whispering Embers" with Haim Yavin, exploring Russian Jewry after the fall of communism. In addition to his written work, Levy hosted a weekly talk show called "A Personal Meeting with Gideon Levy," broadcast on Israeli cable TV channel 3. He has also made periodic appearances on other television talk shows.

- This session is about to take an hour. In this hour, four Palestinian children will be killed in Gaza. Every 15 minutes there's a child killed in the last two months. In this hour, at least ten Palestinians will be killed in Gaza. At least 20 or 30 or 40 will lose their homes forever. It is now 6:10 in Gaza. Children, adults, old people, and sick people are looking for shelter for the night. We have to face it emotionally before anything else because all those political analyses, appreciations and legal questions are very important. But we have to remember that by the time that we are sitting here, a catastrophe is taking place.
- The Israeli public opinion is not exposed to most of the atrocities. You'll be amazed to see the Israeli agenda, the Israeli discourse now. TV, all commercials and private newspapers, no censorship, almost no censorship. They are showing day and night but only the Israeli agony and there is an Israeli agony. There are hostages, 1200 people were murdered, there were most probably rapes. There were horrible things with horrible victims who lived among us or in Gaza or in cemeteries. But Israel is concentrated only in them. None of the images from Gaza are exposed to an Israeli average to an average Israeli, nothing. For 55 years, they never showed the occupation and now they don't



show the Bloodbaths in Gaza, which enabled us again, Israelis, to feel what we usually feel. First, we are the victims and the only victims. Secondly, the Israeli army is the most moral army in the world.

- At the end of the day, it's crucial to recognise that Israeli society largely aligns when it comes to issues of occupation and apartheid. This consensus transcends traditional left-right divides, encompassing figures like Smotrich, Ben-Gvir, Lapid, Netanyahu, and others. Regardless of political affiliations, most Israelis endorse the continuation of governing over others, albeit with variations in rhetoric and future projections. Ultimately, there's little deviation in this fundamental stance. Therefore, it's unrealistic to anticipate significant shifts from Israeli society on these matters.
- Don't expect the Israelis to wake up one morning, look out the window, and suddenly realise that apartheid and occupation are unjust. This epiphany won't occur spontaneously. Change will only come when Israelis are held accountable for their actions, when they face consequences for their crimes, and when they understand the connection between their policies, dehumanisation, brutality, and their comfortable lives in Israel. Only then might there be a chance for meaningful progress toward ending these injustices.

Husam S. Zomlot

Ambassador, PhD; Head, Palestinian Mission to the United Kingdom

Ambassador Dr Husam S. Zomlot is the Head of the Palestinian Mission to the United Kingdom. Prior to his appointment to the UK, Dr Zomlot served as Ambassador to the United States (Head of the PLO General Delegation to the United States), and Strategic Affairs Advisor to the Palestinian President. Dr Zomlot's previous official roles include serving as Ambassador-at-large for the Palestinian Presidency and Director of the Fatah Foreign Relations Commission.

Dr Zomlot holds a PhD in economics from the University of London, was a professor of strategy and Public Policy at Birzeit University, where he co-founded and chaired Birzeit School of Government, and held a number of teaching and research positions at Harvard University and University of London. His professional experiences include working as an economist at the United Nations and an Economic Researcher with the London School of Economics and the Palestine Policy Research Institute.

- The world has failed because the essence of the rules-based post-World War Two international order is premised on three things. Firstly, war should never be the first option. Secondly, hence comes the Security Council. Thirdly, if war becomes an option, there are rules for these conflicts. Number three, these conflicts and their rules should be followed by accountability, i.e. the ICC and the ICJ. However, Israel has made an absolute mockery of these three main provisions of international law. Not only has Israel violated international provisions, but it has also bombed the UN. More UN workers have been killed in Gaza over the last few weeks than in the entire history of the United Nations.
- You are all witnessing this global movement, a massive movement for Palestine and against Israel, calling for a ceasefire in London, New York, all over Brussels, Asia, Africa. Because people worldwide have seen in the last eight weeks or so that this is not just about oppressing the Palestinian people. It's affecting the security and stability of the entire region. It's undermining the very order we built together to sustain global peace and security. This is impacting the very principle of liberal democracies because now Israel is dragging the West into its immoral orbit.



- This is the only military occupation, a repressive colonial occupation, that believes they are the victims in a way, in a way, the Israeli mindset. And I don't mean the entire people. It's the establishment, the government, and the military. "Oh, we have to occupy them. These Palestinians, they make us kill them." This sentiment is echoed in various statements.
- People are being slaughtered, primarily families, children, women, and grandparents. They are being starved and displaced, with nowhere to go and nowhere to return to. Israel has made it clear that this is a deliberate strategy to render Gaza uninhabitable. Our priority should be an immediate, permanent ceasefire to halt these atrocities. We must mobilise international will and pressure towards this goal. Additionally, we must unequivocally condemn the ethnic cleansing occurring on a large scale in Gaza and to a lesser extent in the West Bank.
- We need to redefine peace now. Peace cannot mean security for one side or the continuation of the status quo. Peace is challenging—it requires justice and political will. We need figures like De Clercq, not just Mandela, to achieve peace. But I believe peace is possible if it's based on justice. When I see the global movement rallying around the Palestinian flag's colours—red, white, green, black—as symbols of fighting injustice, and when I see Palestinian cultural symbols like coffee and scarves uniting people in the pursuit of justice, I feel hopeful. We have many sources of hope to turn this struggle towards justice.

John Dugard

Professor of Law; Former UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Palestine

John Dugard is a professor of law who lived in South Africa during the apartheid era where he actively opposed apartheid. He now lives in The Netherlands. He was a member of the UN International Law Commission and has served as a Judge ad-hoc of the International Court of Justice. He chaired international fact-finding missions into the violation of human rights by Israel in the Second Intifada and in its attack on Gaza in 2008-9. From 2001 to 2008 he was UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Palestine. Today he provides legal advice and publishes on Palestine.



- We should acknowledge that international law has also failed the international community. Firstly, the Security Council has failed significantly, and for this, we must hold the United States and to some extent, the United Kingdom accountable. Additionally, the General Assembly shares some responsibility, as it could have utilised its recommendation powers more effectively and broadly. When comparing resolutions and recommendations on apartheid South Africa with those on Israel, the disparity is evident. For instance, the General Assembly has yet to pass a resolution recommending an arms embargo against Israel, which should be a fundamental step forward.
- Another institution that has significantly failed the international community is the International Criminal Court (ICC). In 2014, Palestine attained non-member observer state status at the United Nations and became a party to the ICC. Subsequently, in 2018, Palestine filed a complaint against Israel before the ICC. In 2021, the court ruled that it has jurisdiction to consider the matter and should initiate an investigation. However, since then, the ICC has deliberately and regrettably failed to address the issue of Palestine, despite its legal obligations.
- Without hesitation, Israel has committed multiple war crimes and crimes against humanity. Furthermore, one must seriously consider the issue of genocide.

The statements made by Israeli officials and cabinet ministers indicate an incitement to genocide, demonstrating evidence of an intention to destroy a people in whole or in part. When examining the facts of the Gaza war, one can infer an intention to destroy a substantial part of the Palestinian population, constituting the crime of genocide. Therefore, it is imperative to start considering the crime of genocide more seriously in this context.

- We do face a problem today in that the United States and, to a lesser extent, the United Kingdom and some other European states no longer talk about international law. They say they are bound by something called the rules-based international order, which is essentially the American interpretation of international law. So, you find the Americans and the usual suspects saying Israel was entitled to use self-defence against Hamas and against the people of Gaza. But this is not a case of self-defence; it is simply an enforcement of the occupation. Hamas is a resistance movement in an occupied state. It is not entitled to use all means of force to pursue that resistance. So, Hamas has committed crimes in the process. Nevertheless, Hamas must be seen as a resistance movement. Israel is enforcing the occupation by suppressing that movement. It is not engaged in self-defence.

Evarist Bartolo

Former Minister for Foreign and European Affairs, Republic of Malta

Evarist Bartolo is a Maltese politician within the Labour Party, and until very recently, he has served as the Minister for Foreign and European Affairs. He previously served as Malta's Minister for Education and Employment.

In 1975 Bartolo graduated from the University of Malta with a B.A.(Hons) degree in English Literature. In 1984 he was awarded a scholarship for a diploma course in journalism at Stanford University. He read for a Master's in Education at the University of Cardiff, which he completed in 1986. Over the years, Evarist Bartolo has championed civil liberties as well as civil and social rights.



- What is happening now is that the United States, which often presents itself as a champion of human rights, the rule of law, and democracy, is being revealed for what it truly is. The emperor has no clothes. Similarly, the EU, whose acronym interestingly begins with "EU" as well, has been completely impotent in challenging the harmful policies of the United States.
- We must remember that the United States does not recognise the authority of the International Criminal Court, and neither does Israel. Hence, the Dutch joke about an act called the "Evade the Hague Act," referring to a US law that allows intervention to free any American brought before the International Criminal Court. Therefore, we should not expect the United States or Israel to comply with whatever decisions the International Criminal Court makes.

It's evident that the tone changes significantly when discussing Israel compared to Türkiye. For instance, when a matter concerning a UN resolution on Cyprus arises, the European Union is swift to adopt an aggressive stance, including sanctions and condemnation. However, when the focus shifts to Israel, there is a notable difference in approach. This contrast struck me profoundly.

Session 3

The Return of Geopolitics: Rivalries and Re-alignments in the New Century



Moderator

Yusuf Erim, Presenter, TRT World

Speakers

Dr. Bruno Maçães, Former Secretary of State for Europe in Portugal

Dr. Vali Nasr, Majid Khadduri Professor of International Affairs and Middle East Studies, Johns Hopkins-SAIS; Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Atlantic Council's South Asia Center

Dr. Charles A. Kupchan, Professor of International Affairs, Georgetown University; Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations

Key Takeaways

- There's a discernible shift in global power dynamics, moving from unipolarity to a mix of bi-polarity and multipolarity, with power transitioning from the West to the East and from the North to the South.
- The transition from the industrial age to the digital age is reshaping power dynamics, accelerating redistribution while challenging established social contracts, particularly in leading industrialised nations.
- Globalisation appears to have reached a peak, evidenced by economic decoupling, supply chain repatriation, and the gradual fragmentation of the global economic system.
- Concerns arise over a potential reversal in the historical trend towards greater freedom within liberal democratic societies, signalling challenges to liberal democratic values and institutions.
- Regional actors like Türkiye demonstrate significant capabilities in various conflicts, emphasising the importance of maintaining strong ties with the West to sustain their bridging role between East and West.
- NATO grapples with pressing issues such as determining next steps in regional conflicts, developing a cohesive transatlantic strategy towards emerging powers like China, and ensuring political stability within member states.

Summary of the Session

The session titled “The Return of Geopolitics: Rivalries and Re-alignments in the New Century” delved into the multifaceted nature of the contemporary geopolitical landscape and the challenges it presents to global stability. The moderator initiated thought-provoking discussions by prompting panellists to reflect on their initial thoughts regarding the resurgence of geopolitics and the potential implications for global order. This led to insightful exchanges highlighting the complexities of contemporary geopolitics.

The panellists explored various dimensions of this resurgence, addressing issues such as the redefinition of shared values on regional levels, the blurring of borders leading to potential territorial disputes, and the evolving role of international law, which some perceive as becoming optional. There was also a deep dive into the shifting dynamics of

power, particularly the United States' transition from a leading role to one of following or playing alongside other global actors, as well as the phenomenon of democratic backsliding within the U.S. and its repercussions on international perceptions and reactions.

Of particular focus was the ascent of China as a major economic powerhouse and its impact on the global economic and political landscape. Questions were raised about how the international community, including U.S. allies, may respond as China's influence continues to grow, potentially surpassing that of the United States. This discussion underscored the intricacies of managing relationships between major powers in an increasingly interconnected world.

Furthermore, the session delved into the strain on resources that may be contributing to the

resurgence of geopolitics, as well as the emergence of new trade corridors and initiatives reshaping global commerce. The role and future trajectory of NATO in response to these geopolitical shifts were also examined, particularly regarding its adaptability and effectiveness in navigating the complexities of the current geopolitical landscape.

The session concluded with a hypothetical scenario, prompting reflections on advisories for

leaders in navigating the return of geopolitics. If advising Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, panellists contemplated strategies to prepare for and navigate the challenges posed by this evolving geopolitical landscape. Overall, the session provided valuable insights into the complexities and challenges of the contemporary geopolitical landscape and the need for adaptive and forward-thinking approaches to global governance and diplomacy.

Highlights

Bruno Maçães

PhD; Former Secretary of State for Europe in Portugal

Bruno Maçães is a senior advisor at Flint Global and a columnist for the New Statesman. The author of 'Belt and Road'; 'History Has Begun'; and 'The Dawn of Eurasia', he advises some of the world's leading companies on geopolitics and technology. His latest book is *Geopolitics for the End Time*.



- We're undergoing a transformation where normal rules no longer apply. When I reflect on this notion of the disappearance of normal rules, the pandemic comes to mind. It marked a moment of profound change, where everything seemed to shift into an extraordinary state. While there may not be an apparent link between geopolitics and the pandemic, leaders like Putin and Xi Jinping have drawn connections between the pandemic and a heightened sense of geopolitical competition. Post-pandemic, we witnessed the resurgence of conflicts in regions like Ukraine, the

resurgence of genocidal rhetoric, and significant refugee movements towards Europe. Events such as those in Gaza underscore the feeling that anything is possible, and the unimaginable or unthinkable could become tomorrow's reality. For those of us who strive for a more detached perspective beyond daily headlines, it signifies the unravelling of the existing order.

- When the existing order unravels, we regress to a state akin to the natural order, where physical force holds

greater significance than any other factor. Military conflict becomes a constant presence. Geopolitics, as understood traditionally, is a term coined about a century ago to denote the struggle for control over territory, a contest between distinct ethnic groups or nations vying to assert dominance over one another, potentially leading to their mutual destruction. It appears that this is the world in which we currently reside.

- What I find striking about this moment [in Gaza] is that it appears to mark the end of hypocrisy. The statements from US officials no longer carry a veneer of hypocrisy; instead, they offer a straightforward, unabashed alignment with Israel, pledging unwavering support regardless of its actions. For instance, in a recent interview, spokesman John Kirby was asked whether the US would cease its support for Israel if it violated international law. His response was unequivocal: the US will continue to support Israel regardless. While expressing a preference for Israel to adhere to international law, Kirby's statement underscores an extraordinary shift in policy.
- It's not merely a return to a world where military force reigns supreme. Behind the scenes, another game is unfolding—one centred on technology, the economy, and trade, with China at its forefront. From my recent experiences in China, it's evident to me that China is strategically engaged in a long-term endeavour to reshape the global system from within. This involves not only establishing key structures governing the world economy, trade patterns, and routes but also asserting dominance in technological innovation. China aims to supplant the United States as the primary technological trailblazer, consistently leading the way in advancements. This pursuit of technological preeminence serves as a significant source of power on the global stage.
- There's a common misconception that the Belt and Road Initiative primarily revolves around physical infrastructure like trains, but this perception is misguided. The essence of the initiative lies in more intangible processes such as technology transfer, development, and the intricate networks of supply and value chains that span the globe. It's about identifying strategic nodes within these chains where significant

power can be exerted. Therefore, we shouldn't become overly fixated on geography. Recent events in Ukraine and Gaza haven't disproven the notion that we've largely transcended geographical constraints. China appears to be acutely aware of this paradigm shift.

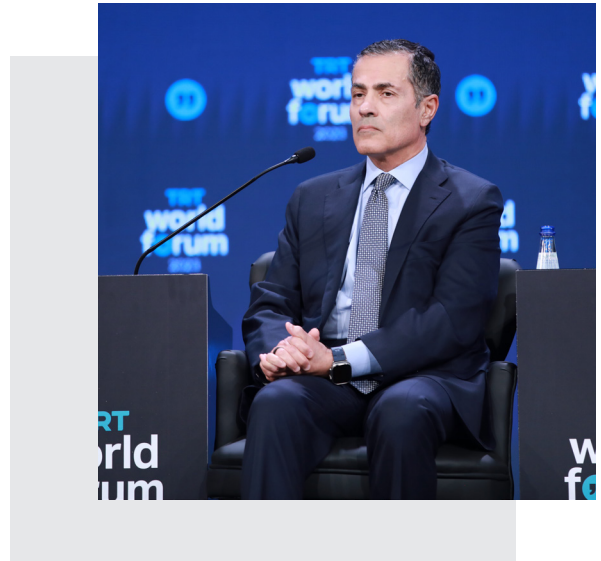


Vali Nasr

Majid Khaddouri Professor of International Affairs and Middle East Studies, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS)

Vali Nasr is a Professor of International Affairs and Middle East Studies at Johns Hopkins-SAIS, and a Non-Resident Senior Fellow at Atlantic Council's South Asia Center. He served as the Dean of the school, and as Senior Advisor to the US Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke. He is the author of several books and articles, notably *The Dispensable Nation: American Foreign Policy in Retreat*; *Forces of Fortune: The Rise of a New Muslim Middle Class and How it Will Change Our World*. Nasr is a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Action Council and has been the recipient of grants from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, and the Social Science Research Council. He earned his masters from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in international economics and Middle East studies in 1984, and his PhD from MIT in political science in 1991.

- The resurgence of geopolitics is evident not only on a global scale but also within the Middle East in new and unexpected ways. Globally, there has been a recognition since the era of three American presidents, starting with President Obama, that the era of globalisation is waning, marking the end of American unipolar dominance in the world order. The rise of China, particularly as a non-democratic, nationalistic power challenging American hegemony, has underscored this shift. This realisation has prompted a shift in focus from combating Islamic militants to geopolitical competition among major powers. It's now evident that economic factors alone will not unify nations into a cohesive global entity. Instead, the primary concern is the rivalry between these emerging great powers.
- The rise of China in the Middle East is not merely speculative; it's a palpable reality. Chinese economic interests, particularly in energy, have significantly expanded in the region. Moreover, China's presence in trade, technology, and economic development has become increasingly vital for Middle Eastern countries. Despite their substantial purchases from the West, the region relies on China for essential technologies and manufacturing capabilities necessary for their



economic growth. Without forging connections with China, achieving their developmental goals would be unattainable.

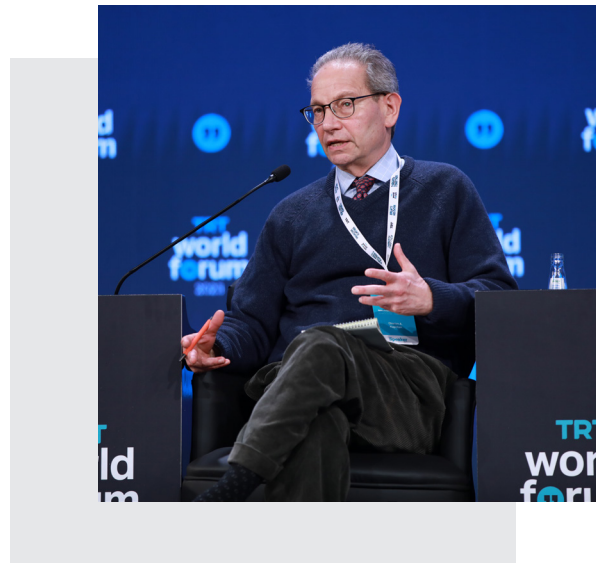
- For a considerable duration, the credibility of the United States' rules-based order in the Middle East has been questionable. Many in the region do not believe that the United States consistently upheld its professed values, as evidenced by its support for authoritarian regimes and controversial military interventions, such as the invasion of Iraq. Additionally, its unwavering support for Israel has been a source of contention in the Arab world. However, despite these discrepancies, the Middle East still looked to the United States for maintaining order. There was a belief that the US possessed the capability to establish and safeguard an order in the region, irrespective of its adherence to a rules-based international order.
- Türkiye has skillfully navigated the geopolitical landscape, positioning itself as a significant power bridging East and West. Its strategic positioning in the Middle East, coupled with its engagement in Europe and its relationship with EU and NATO, exemplifies its multifaceted approach. While Türkiye's actions may not always align with NATO's expectations, particularly from the perspective of Washington, it epitomises the emerging powers striving to assert their influence and great power status in the evolving global environment.

Charles A. Kupchan

Professor of International Affairs, Georgetown University;
Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations

Charles A. Kupchan is a Professor of International Affairs in the School of Foreign Service and Government Department at Georgetown University and a Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. From 2014 to 2017, Kupchan served as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for European Affairs on the National Security Council in the Obama White House. He was also Director for European Affairs on the National Security Council during the first Clinton administration. His most recent books are *Anchoring the World: International Order in the Twenty-First Century* (2021), *Isolationism: A History of America's Efforts to Shield Itself from the World* (2020), *No One's World: The West, the Rising Rest, and the Coming Global Turn* (2012), and *How Enemies Become Friends: The Sources of Stable Peace* (2010).

- Firstly, there's a notable shift in the global distribution of power, transitioning from west to east and from north to south, marking a move from uni-polarity to a mix of bi-polarity (particularly between the US and China) and multi-polarity. Secondly, there's a transition from the industrial age to the digital age, accelerating the redistribution of power while also challenging the social contracts established during the industrial era, particularly in leading industrialised nations. Thirdly, there's evidence suggesting a peak in globalisation has been surpassed, with signs of economic decoupling, supply chain repatriation, and restrictions on technology exports to China, leading to the gradual fragmentation of the global economic system. Finally, there's a concerning trend of stumbling within liberal democratic societies, which have historically seen progress towards greater freedom since the French and American revolutions until around 2005, but now face a reversal in this trend, posing unexpected challenges to liberal democratic values and institutions.
- I believe there still exists a rules-based order, albeit not universally applicable. As we observe daily, even hourly, this order is subject to ongoing contestation. Throughout history, the United States has endeavoured to navigate a world where it seeks to uphold a set of rules, yet at times, these rules may encroach upon sovereignty or impede the pursuit of its national interests. This perpetual tension persists to this day.
- Ultimately, it all boils down to economics. The advent of the digital age has significantly reduced the earning



power of many working Americans, leading to widespread economic insecurity. This insecurity creates fertile ground for identity politics and grievances. Therefore, my top priority is ensuring our own houses are in order. I firmly believe that the world would benefit from the existence of models of liberal democracies that effectively serve their citizens. In the ongoing competition between democracy and autocracy, democracy will ultimately prevail due to its superior performance. However, at present, democracy is failing to demonstrate its historical capacity to deliver.

- Firstly, the situation in Ukraine demands careful deliberation. With a military stalemate in the East, NATO must contemplate the next steps. Is it prudent for Ukraine to persist in fighting, or should efforts be redirected towards rebuilding the regions under Kiev's control and facilitating diplomatic negotiations? Secondly, there's a pressing need for a cohesive transatlantic strategy towards China. While some alignment exists, significant disparities remain between the two sides of the Atlantic. Thirdly, we must prioritise the task of getting our own houses in order, particularly concerning my own country. However, concerns also extend to the political stability of the centre in France and Germany. The longevity of the political centre in these nations is a matter of concern.
- Türkiye has demonstrated its capabilities in Libya, Nagorno-Karabakh, and Syria, underscoring its importance in regional dynamics. However, if Türkiye intends to maintain its role as a bridge between East and West, it should prioritise maintaining strong ties with the West. This not only ensures Türkiye's voice in Western forums but also provides the leverage necessary for its future endeavours.

Session 4

Public Broadcasting in the Digital Era: Challenges and Opportunities



Moderator

Maria Ramos, Presenter, TRT World

Keynote Speaker

Fahrettin Altun, Communications Director, Republic of Türkiye

Speakers

Noel Curran, Director General, European Broadcasting Union (EBU)

Alex Stuart Aiken, Executive Director, Government Communications for the UK

Ahmed Nadeem, Secretary-General, Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)

Dana Al Suyyagh, CEO, Al Mamlaka TV

Key Takeaways

- The importance of narrative and contextualization emerged as central themes in the discussions. Public service broadcasters must focus on crafting compelling narratives and providing context to enhance audience understanding and engagement.
- Acknowledgment of the need for public service broadcasters to adapt to the digital age was emphasised. This includes being present on mobile phones, social media platforms, and embracing technological advancements to remain relevant and accessible to audiences.
- Understanding and engaging with the audience were highlighted as essential. Leveraging digital tools for audience interaction and feedback is crucial for tailoring content and services to meet audience preferences effectively.
- Public service broadcasters have a vital educational role, particularly in addressing issues such as media literacy, misinformation, and cyberbullying. They serve as platforms for informing and educating the public, fostering critical thinking and informed citizenship.
- Strategic communication is essential for public service broadcasters to communicate their value proposition effectively and garner support. Articulating their role in society and the benefits they provide, especially to younger generations, is crucial for sustaining their relevance and impact.
- Rather than viewing public service broadcasting as outdated, there's a need to embrace evolution and actively engage with ongoing conversations. By staying responsive to audience needs and evolving with the media landscape, public service broadcasters can continue to fulfil their mission effectively.

Summary of the Session

The session on “Public Broadcasting in the Digital Era: Challenges and Opportunities” delved into several crucial aspects of the current media landscape after a Keynote Speech delivered by Prof. Fahrettin Altun, Communications Director of the Republic of Türkiye, in which he emphasised the pressing issue of combating disinformation, a topic that has gained immense importance in recent years.

The moderator engaged with speakers to explore various dimensions of the challenges faced by public service broadcasters. They addressed the expansive reach and influence of organisations like the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) and the critical battlegrounds for public broadcasters amidst the digital age's turbulence. Moreover, they touched upon the significance of trust in media, reminiscing about past relationships with news outlets and anchors, and highlighting the

current struggle to regain that trust in today's media landscape.

The discussion also delved into the impact of technology, particularly AI, on media dynamics. Concerns were raised about AI exacerbating misinformation issues, further complicating the already challenging task of fact-checking and navigating digital spaces. Additionally, the session touched upon the phenomenon of digital bullying, which has intensified alongside the proliferation of misinformation and disinformation, affecting journalists and social media users alike.

Overall, the session provided valuable insights into the evolving challenges and opportunities confronting public broadcasters in the digital era, emphasising the critical need for adaptation, trust-building, and ethical considerations amidst the changing media landscape.

Keynote Speech by Fahrettin Altun

Communications Director, Republic of Türkiye

It is my pleasure and honour to participate in this panel. We are gathered here to discuss a very important topic “Public Broadcasting in the Digital Era: Challenges and Opportunities” Today’s world is characterised influence of rapid technological developments and ever ever-increasing pace of digitalisation in all spheres of life. Journalism in general has been under intense pressure from these developments. The news business has also been impacted in a way that has fundamentally reshaped this sector. Public broadcasters are no exception as they confront a host of new challenges, but also opportunities. Vast amounts of digital information and viral content aimed at maximising the profits of private broadcasting entities pervade our lives. However, these are often geared toward engaging viewers rather than cultivating a more knowledgeable audience. Public broadcasters have an advantage as they are not immediately motivated by big ratings. Although we want the best ratings, to be frank, and large audiences. Public broadcasters cannot produce and push content just to increase engagement for the sake of engagement. While this might seem like a disadvantage, I believe it’s an advantage that can distinguish us if we can build trust and credibility with our audiences through meaningful engagement.

The evolving media environment has profoundly influenced audience behaviour. Audiences around the world rely on a variety of sources for information, including social media, which is often open to misinformation, disinformation, fake news, etc. Conventional media channels which have difficulties due to financial problems finding issues face immense competition from technology giants. I believe these challenges not only impact public broadcasting, but also present unique opportunities. The question is whether public broadcasting can adapt to these conditions and reinvent itself through flexible approaches. The pervasive nature of digitalisation has long been a fact of life for news professionals for a while now. We are already in a phase where we need to address the challenges emanating from the potential consequences of artificial intelligence, which is gradually eroding human agency in media and journalism, even in all social spheres. We must be concerned about its



implications for journalism, as audiences around the world cannot even distinguish the work of humans and robots. Public broadcasters have an opportunity to distinguish their work from that of algorithms by showing the audiences the value and depth of authentic content.

AI also enables organised groups with dubious motives to attempt to manipulate the masses through disinformation. AI systems deepen the disinformation problem by rapidly amplifying specific messages. They can search the internet for information in seconds, and produce content that is virtually impossible for the public to distinguish from human-created content. Yet again, public broadcasters can expose misinformation and disinformation by leveraging their journalistic training, using the same digital technologies, and employing adaptive strategies. Facing all these challenges and countering their detrimental effects is absolutely no easy task. However, we have no choice but to embrace digitalisation in such a way as to create opportunities for public broadcasters. As public broadcasters, we need to leverage digital tools to provide high-quality content that has staying power and qualitative longevity. We need to maintain our commitment to fulfilling the public’s right to accurate and speedy information, while educating them about contextual knowledge. We cannot leave the public

at the mercy of so-called journalists who are not trained properly, not working ethically, and who are only seeking the next viral content, and sensation. Nor can we allow AI to aggregate information using prejudice and suspicious algorithms, only to feed it back to us as content.

As indispensable sources of information, public broadcasters play a crucial role in combating disinformation and the lack of context. They must effectively serve as an agent, relaying accurate information free of private interest and manipulation for commercial aims. Public broadcasters are navigating the complex terrain created by the impact of digital transformations in all aspects of our lives. The opportunity here, I see for them, is to transform their approach to content production and consumption within the broader media ecosystem by utilising their uniquely human qualities.

Knowledge and expertise still matter and will continue to matter in the future. The digital world continues to push the boundaries of human knowledge and expertise in ways we cannot even imagine today. However, it is still the job of humans to educate one another and connect at a level that only they can truly, truly comprehend and feel.

Ladies and gentlemen, as we navigate these turbulent digital waters, it is important that we recognise the dual nature of our journey. Of course, challenges are great and they often appear insurmountable. The easy way out is to just join the crowds and search for the next big viral content. It is the easy way out. However, it's clear to me that this kind of journalism has no impact. It will not serve humanity in the long run. Through understanding, adapting and innovating new modes of connecting with audiences, public broadcasters can make a crucial difference in this digital era. In the era of hybrid threats. Safeguarding the integrity of information, accumulating true knowledge and expanding our understanding are difficult yet uniquely human activities. When public broadcasters are truly committed to these values, they will be perfectly positioned as the standard defenders of truth. We must not forget that our efforts are meant to serve the public interest. The tools and capabilities available to us will continue to change, but our goal will remain the same. If we remain clear-eyed about the challenges and pitfalls of the digital age, public broadcasting will continue to be relevant, functional and beneficial for the public. In fact, we must recognise that public broadcasters are the last castles of the news business, of the news

industry, free from private and commercial interests. As opposed to private broadcasters who seek revenues by engaging large audiences and attracting advertisers, we have an educational, informational and cultural mandate to inform the public. National and international audiences are increasingly bombarded by sensationalist and algorithm-driven content, which mainly spread disinformational content. Public broadcasters must remain relevant to fast-changing interests and pleasures while maintaining high standards of quality at the same time. It is not an easy task. They must do this while also adapting the new broadcasting formats, which are becoming increasingly fragmented. We are talking about narrowcasting today, not broadcasting.

We, as the directorate of communications, have been well aware of these trends and set out to invest heavily in our flagship public broadcaster, TRT. We believe it is possible and necessary for us to remain relevant at home, but also

As we navigate these turbulent digital waters, it is important that we recognise the dual nature of our journey. Of course, challenges are great and they often appear insurmountable. The easy way out is to just join the crowds and search for the next big viral content. It is the easy way out. However, it's clear to me that this kind of journalism has no impact. It will not serve humanity in the long run. Through understanding, adapting and innovating new modes of connecting with audiences, public broadcasters can make a crucial difference in this digital era.

abroad. Our commitment to delivering the truth to both national and international audiences, combined with our investments in digital tools and platforms, will ensure our collective success. We must always remember that we have a mandate to provide educational, informative and enriching content to audiences. We can achieve this only through acquiring new digital skills and training our workforce. We need to develop our digital content creation, data analytics and digital marketing skills. We need to remain competitive with other broadcasters by attracting new talents. The only way to do that is through investment in capacity buildings. This is exactly what we have set out to do over the past several years. Our investments in TRT have already yielded great results. Domestically, our content is often superior to that of private broadcasters, and our programs are always at the top of the ratings charts. Our international programs in English, Arabic, and other regional languages often compete with well-established broadcasters. We are proud to have received so much international recognition thanks to our breaking news and other unique programs. All this success is just the beginning of our journey to thrive in the digital age.

As the Directorate of Communications, we will continue to work to innovate and keep up with these emerging trends in broadcasting. Indeed, we aspire to not only keep up, but also lead at multiple fronts. We have confidence in our capacity and support of our President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Without his unique vision and leadership, we wouldn't be able to push the boundaries that we have. The digital age has presented us with a seemingly much more complex world, yet this complexity has presented unique opportunities for us to take advantage of. We just must be brave and daring enough to change, adapt, and transform ourselves along the way. If we do so, we will not only succeed, but also lead the way in the digital age.

Finally let me touch upon another issue which is very much important to us I believe. Public broadcasters should invest in strategic communications. The field of strategic communication is an area in which those who want to defend truth and accurate news against the virtual terrorism and anarchism produced by social media should invest. The field of strategic communication is not limited to constructive efforts such as public diplomacy, public relations, informative communication campaigns and investigative

journalism. Today, the field of strategic communications also includes combating disruptive elements such as hybrid threats, disinformation, cyber-attacks, and other systematic smear campaigns. In fact, today, a significant part of strategic communication efforts all over the world consists of combating destructive activities that are escalating with new communication technologies with new social media realities. These destructive activities, on the one hand, try to directly activate social faultlines and on the other hand, fuel polarisation and conflicts in the international arena. Especially in times of crisis, where destructive activities, especially disinformation, gain a quality that triggers violence and fights hate crimes.

Today, we all discuss hybrid threats, lies becoming commonplace, the hegemony of fake news, truth becoming unimportant, and manipulations of democracies along with new media technologies. As we realise that disinformation directly threatens human life, public health, democracies and economies, we are trying to develop national combat strategies and campaigns. It should be the responsibility of public broadcasters to protect these valuable efforts and to defend the truth. In the post-truth era we live with, the main actors who will fight for the truth, I believe, are public broadcasters, and so they should do. I hope this panel will contribute to the fight for truth among public broadcasters.



Highlights

Noel Curran

Director General, European Broadcasting Union (EBU)

Noel became Director General of the EBU in September 2017. He was formerly the Director General, Managing Director of Television and Editor of Current Affairs of RTÉ. A strong and long-time advocate of public service media, Noel's investigative documentaries won numerous awards in Ireland and internationally. He was Executive Producer on a range of live television events, including General Elections, European Elections and the Eurovision Song Contest in 1997. Noel graduated from Dublin City University with a degree in Communication Studies and later attended a postgraduate course at Trinity College Dublin in European Studies, where his research was specifically on European Broadcasting Policy.

- In the digital realm, the sheer magnitude of competition posed by technology conglomerates is staggering. The top ten technology companies boast a turnover that surpasses that of all public service organisations in Europe by a staggering 47-fold. Their influence extends to smart TVs, where they embed subsidiary apps, further solidifying their dominance. The unprecedented scale of this competition presents a formidable challenge unlike anything we've encountered before.
- The persistent challenges of disinformation and misinformation remain significant, with no sign of abating. As a member of the European Commission expert group on fake news, I can attest to the minimal cooperation and genuine engagement from tech companies during our efforts. Their involvement only seemed to materialise under the looming threat of regulation. Moreover, the proliferation of AI further complicates the battle against falsehoods. However, despite these obstacles, there are proactive steps, which we can discuss later, that we, especially as public media entities, must undertake. These include investing in robust fact-checking mechanisms, bolstering journalism, and promoting media literacy to empower the public and counter misinformation effectively.
- Let's face reality—trust in institutions worldwide is on the decline, and this includes the media. Political polarisation and the proliferation of sophisticated disinformation and misinformation have only



exacerbated this trend. So how do we restore trust? Public media, fortunately, remains the most trusted form of media globally, surpassing commercial and social media platforms by a significant margin, particularly in Europe. However, this trust is not invulnerable and is currently under strain. To rebuild it, we must prioritise investments in journalism, fact-checking, and fostering stronger connections with our audience. Additionally, we must address broader societal issues, such as ensuring diversity and representation within our workforce, encompassing various social classes, genders, and age groups. It's imperative that our media organisations reflect the communities they serve, fostering a reciprocal relationship of trust and understanding.

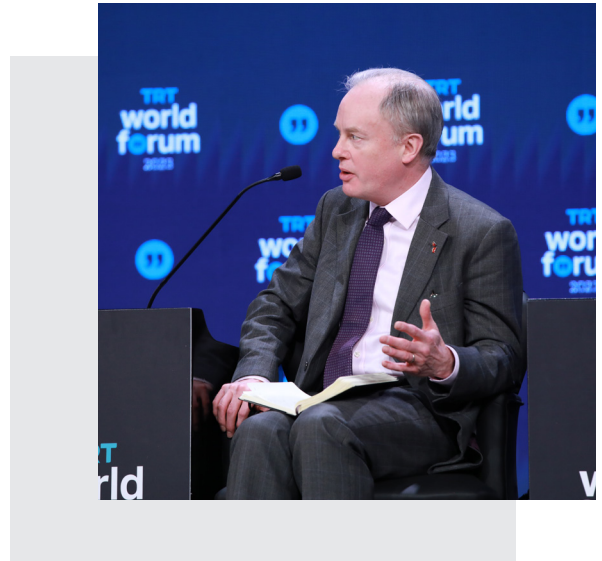
- The landscape of journalism is undergoing significant transformations, with AI poised to play a substantial role in content generation. Rupert Murdoch's recent announcement regarding News Corporation's utilisation of more AI in response to poor results underscores the increasing importance of cost efficiency. While this trend presents challenges, there are also numerous positives to consider. However, it's crucial to prioritise ethics, regulation, and maintaining human editorial control. Without proper oversight and safeguards, there are legitimate concerns about the ethical implications and potential loss of human interaction in the editorial process. Despite these apprehensions, there's undeniable potential for innovation and efficiency within our industry if we navigate these challenges prudently.

Alex Stuart Aiken

Executive Director, Government Communications for the UK

Alex Stuart Aiken is an Executive Director for Government Communication. He is part of the senior leadership team in the Cabinet Office, responsible for developing communication capability and campaigns in international and national security, and the nations and regions. His role supports the Chief Executive in leading and managing the GCS including, advising on the development of the service, undertaking professional development activities for the profession, training, speaking and advising at events and writing on matters of communication practice domestically and overseas. He has trained and advised politicians and officials in countries and states around the world on communication strategy and practice.

- Upholding the truth is paramount regarding platform accountability and the necessity for platforms to fulfil their responsibilities. In the UK, the introduction of the Internet Safety Act underscores this commitment. Donna also highlighted the significance of narrative, echoing the sentiments of leading sociologists who stress the importance of social capital and shared narratives for societal success. Establishing a collective understanding through shared stories is crucial for fostering cohesion and comprehension of societal dynamics. Throughout tumultuous events such as the COVID-19 pandemic and conflicts like those in Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Gaza, government leadership in storytelling has been indispensable. Disinformation thrives in the absence of coherent narratives from public institutions and broadcasters. Therefore, it is imperative for governments to provide guidance and articulate the story behind events, elucidating the reasons and motivations, to counter the spread of misinformation effectively.
- Reflecting on my experience during the Libya crisis in 2012, I recall relying on newspaper headlines for insights during government crisis meetings. However, today, I entered the room armed with sophisticated data analytics, including digital metrics and social media sentiment analysis, which offer invaluable insights to decision-makers and inform public service broadcasting with prevailing trends and opinions. This wealth of data underscores the evolving landscape and the need for adaptability. As Noel aptly questioned,



it prompts us to consider whether public service broadcasting has a viable future.

- There are concerns about the viability of public service broadcasting, with GPT outlining eight potential obstacles to its success, including digital transformation, fundraising challenges, and shifting audience behaviours. However, as a member of the UK Government Communications Service, I remain optimistic about collaborating with our counterparts in Türkiye. While AI is utilised for initial drafts of press releases and speeches, it's essential to maintain human oversight. Discussions are ongoing between the UK government and entities like the BBC to address risks and capitalise on opportunities presented by AI in public service broadcasting.

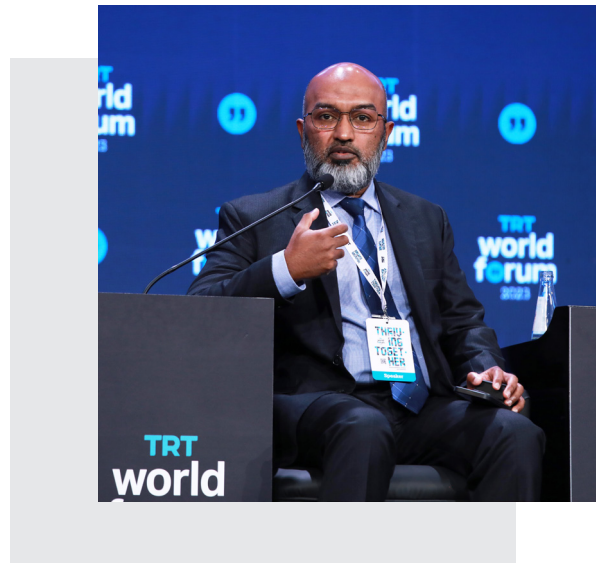


Ahmed Nadeem

Secretary-General Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)

Mr Nadeem's tenure with the ABU Technology Department began in 2008. Before his appointment to the post of Secretary-General, he served as the Director of Technology and Innovation at ABU from May 2018 until March 2023. With a career spanning over 25 years in broadcasting and telecommunications, Mr Nadeem is an accomplished engineer specialising in electronic and information technology. From 2007 to 2008, Mr Nadeem lent his expertise to LSV Enterprises in Singapore, fulfilling the role of Project Engineer. Before this, he was the Head of Engineering at Television Maldives, a position he held from 1996 to 2007. Born in K. Malé, Maldives, in April 1974, Mr Nadeem's academic credentials include a BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) in Electrical and Electronic Engineering from Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom, as well as an Honours Degree in Electrical and Electronic Engineering from the University of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom.

- Our primary challenge as broadcast members is the erosion of our connection with the public. Despite identifying as public service broadcasters, the intensifying competition, particularly in the digital realm, has led to a disproportionate focus on rivalries, overshadowing our obligation to serve the public interest. What the public truly desires from us is authenticity and truth. In this era inundated with information from myriad sources, our responsibility is to navigate this landscape and guide our audience with accurate and reliable journalism.
- The proliferation of news sources through social media has exacerbated the prevalence of echo chambers, where individuals selectively consume information aligned with their beliefs. This phenomenon amplifies the threat of disinformation and misinformation, underscoring the critical role of public service broadcasters in guiding the public towards truth and accuracy. A compelling illustration of this occurred during the recent pandemic, particularly in our region, where the public gravitated towards public service broadcasters for reliable information. This surge in trust and viewership reaffirmed the indispensable role of public service media, as people sought out trustworthy sources amid the deluge of misinformation.
- Public broadcasters have been sluggish in adapting and innovating to compete with digital platforms, prompting inquiry into the underlying reasons for this inertia. Primarily,



this hesitancy stems from the constraints imposed by policies governing national and state broadcasters in our region. These policies, often shaped by decision-makers, hinder the agility and responsiveness needed to navigate the rapidly evolving digital landscape effectively. Consequently, public broadcasters find themselves constrained by bureaucratic hurdles that impede their ability to evolve and remain competitive in the digital sphere.

- It's imperative that we undergo a transformative process, awakening to the necessity of reaching out to the people where they are. If the public demands our presence on mobile phones or social media platforms, we must respond promptly and proactively, positioning ourselves as pioneers in these spaces. By adopting such an approach, traditional media can not only survive but thrive, harnessing newfound strength and resilience. Our legacy as compelling storytellers remains intact, providing us with a foundation upon which to reinvent ourselves and continue crafting captivating narratives in the digital age.

Dana Al Suyyagh

CEO, Al Mamlaka TV

Dana Suyyagh is the CEO of Al Mamlaka TV, Jordan's first 24-hour public service news channel launched in 2018. Before joining Al Mamlaka TV, she was the Executive Editor of AL Arab News Channel in Bahrain. Suyyagh graduated from the University of Toronto and started her career in journalism at Al Jazeera, she left in 2003 to join the launch team of Al-Arabiya where she set up and launched several of the channel's flagship shows. In 2005, she joined ATV, Jordan's first privately-owned TV station, as Head of News and Current Affairs. She was also Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah's Director of Media and Communication until 2012.



- Reflecting on our recent coverage of events like Gaza, it's crucial to acknowledge the lessons learned, particularly regarding narrative. As broadcasters and journalists, we've come to realise the paramount importance of shaping and conveying narratives effectively. However, despite this awareness, we've been remiss in taking concrete actions to strengthen our narratives. It's disheartening to witness how easily our narratives can be co-opted or marginalised, highlighting the urgent need for us to assert our narrative presence more assertively.
- Another crucial lesson drawn from our coverage of Gaza pertains to the significance of context. As public service broadcasters, we often fall short in providing adequate contextualization for our audiences. It's essential to recognise that our audience demographics vary, encompassing diverse generational perspectives and historical understandings. Where educational systems may have faltered in conveying this context, public service broadcasting assumes a vital role in filling these gaps and fostering a deeper comprehension of events and issues.
- It's essential to acknowledge that understanding your audience has evolved significantly in the digital age. While traditional methods like audience panels and patterns remain valuable, the accessibility of engagement tools has revolutionised audience interaction. Actively listening to and incorporating feedback from our target audience is paramount, ensuring that their voices are heard and represented accurately. With the ease of engagement facilitated by digital platforms, grasping audience preferences and sentiments has become more accessible than ever before—provided we are attentive and responsive.
- Strategic communication is imperative for public service broadcasters to effectively convey their mission and contributions. As Noel highlighted, the potential loss of public service broadcasters underscores the need to articulate their value proposition more effectively. This is particularly crucial in engaging younger generations and addressing challenges such as media literacy and misinformation. Public service broadcasters have a unique opportunity to not only inform but also educate the public, playing a vital role in shaping critical thinking and informed citizenship. The disappearance of public service broadcasters would not only be a loss of a vital institution but also a potential loss of an entire generation's access to reliable and educational content.
- Cyberbullying has emerged as a significant challenge in our increasingly interconnected online world, catching many off guard with its prevalence and impact. Unlike face-to-face interactions where disagreements can be addressed with time and patience, navigating online discourse, especially as public figures, presents unique challenges. Handling a barrage of comments and expectations to respond swiftly while also verifying information within the confines of limited characters can be overwhelming. However, we have an opportunity now to better equip ourselves to deal with these issues. By educating ourselves on effective strategies to address cyberbullying, we can mitigate its harmful effects and foster healthier online interactions.

Session 5

Remaking the Global Economy



Moderator

Auskar Surbakti, Presenter, TRT World

Keynote Speaker

Mehmet Şimşek, Minister of Treasury and Finance, Republic of Türkiye

Speakers

Dr. Pornchai Danvivathana, Secretary-General, Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)

Mirek Dušek, Managing Director, World Economic Forum

Umberto Del Panta, The Head of European Investment Bank to Türkiye

Dr. Çetin Nazikkol, Chief Strategy Officer Decarbon Technologies, thyssenKrupp

Timothy Ash, Senior Sovereign Strategist, RBC Bluebay Asset Management

Key Takeaways

- There is a notable shift in global economic power dynamics, with emerging economies such as China, India, Türkiye, Brazil, and Russia gaining prominence. This shift indicates a potential rebalancing of the global economic order.
- It's essential to foster inclusive dialogue, particularly concerning the divide between the global North and South. Addressing this divide is crucial for constructing a new, functioning system for the global economy.
- The rapid advancement of technologies like generative AI poses governance challenges that need to be addressed with foresight and agility. Understanding and governing these technologies are essential for navigating the new economic landscape.
- Climate change poses significant risks to the global economy, affecting supply chains and necessitating urgent decarbonization efforts. Countries like Türkiye have immense potential for energy transition, presenting both opportunities and responsibilities.
- Türkiye is emerging as a significant investment destination due to its strong fundamentals, including robust public finances, favourable demographics, strategic location, and a vibrant manufacturing sector. Minister Simsek's policies are generating excitement among institutional investors, positioning Türkiye as a promising business hub in 2024.

Summary of the Session

The session on "Remaking the Global Economy" delved into various pressing issues impacting economic growth worldwide. The Turkish Minister of Finance highlighted several significant challenges facing both the Turkish economy and the global economy at large, including ongoing conflicts in regions like Gaza and Ukraine, the climate crisis, and the economic recovery from the pandemic. A key question raised was the identification of major pressures on global economic growth at present.

Moreover, the discussion touched upon the shifting dynamics between the global North and South, with an emphasis on the emergence of economies like China, India, Türkiye, Brazil, and Russia as formidable forces. There was contemplation on when these emerging economies might achieve parity with traditional Western economic powers, signifying a potential rebalancing of the global economic order.

Additionally, the session addressed the critical issue of climate change and the urgent need for action, especially in light of events like the Dubai Cop 28 Climate Summit. Concerns were raised about the efficacy of measures taken by private companies and world leaders, particularly those from major carbon-polluting nations like the United States, where attendance at such summits was questioned.

Overall, the session underscored the complexities and interdependencies inherent in remaking the global economy, highlighting the importance of addressing geopolitical tensions, climate change, and disparities between nations for sustainable and equitable growth.

Keynote Speech by Mehmet Şimşek

Minister of Treasury and Finance, Republic of Türkiye

I'm delighted to be at TRT World Forum and the subject is a pretty exciting and relevant one. I do have a presentation because a picture sometimes is worth a thousand words. We are actually at the beginning of a new era, and I'm going to talk about that a little bit. In terms of global, big global trends and challenges, we see risks, but also opportunities for Türkiye. And I also would like to tell you a little bit about whether or not our program is working. If you look at the big picture, we have geopolitical tensions driven by geostrategic competition, mainly between China and the United States. But we know that this has already led to some fragmentation, as well as trade protectionism post-global financial crisis. So this is a big headwind for global growth. Secondly, we have ageing populations, we have high global indebtedness. These two factors are also speed limits to global growth. On top of all this, we have global warming and an impending global climate disaster in the making. So clearly, all of this suggests that the world is faced with significant headwinds in terms of growth and also stability.

There's a lot of uncertainty. First of all, the hyper-globalisation era is behind us. Whether or not we de-globalise going forward is one issue. But clearly, the conditions for high-speed globalisation are behind us. If you look at the past global financial crisis, what you see is increasingly a lot of restrictions and a lot of trade barriers. Now, we know that trade is the engine of growth. This engine right now is sputtering at best. The number of trade restrictions everywhere is quite widespread and that includes emerging markets as well as mature markets. And what you see doesn't only apply to goods, it's beginning to apply to services but also to investments, even to financial flows. So this is not just about trade in goods. This is an important headwind for global growth going forward.

In terms of ageing populations, just to remind you, if you go back to the 50s, the population over 65 years old made up only 5% of the total population. Today it makes up 10%. So it has doubled. But it looks set to almost double by 2050. This is a very fast ageing and this will bring about a lot of complications. Let's face it. Fiscal positions will be under stress. Productivity is going to be impacted. So ageing



Whether or not we de-globalise going forward is one issue. But clearly, the conditions for high-speed globalisation are behind us. If you look at the past global financial crisis, what you see is increasingly a lot of restrictions and a lot of trade barriers. Now, we know that trade is the engine of growth. This engine right now is sputtering at best. The number of trade restrictions everywhere is quite widespread and that includes emerging markets as well as mature markets. And what you see doesn't only apply to goods, it's beginning to apply to services but also to investments, even to financial flows. So this is not just about trade in goods. This is an important headwind for global growth going forward.

populations is a big challenge going forward. Türkiye is doing well in tourism. We think this could be one sector where we could take advantage of going forward in the long run, because our services industry is pretty developed, pretty sophisticated. Global indebtedness; if you go back to 20 years ago, roughly speaking, the debt to GDP ratio was high around 230% of GDP. Today it's gone up by 100 percentage points. So. Globally, we are highly leveraged. This is yet another potential headwind. Why? How do you deal with debt at a time of low growth and potentially high-interest rates? This is going to be the challenge. So if growth is going to be slow and rates are going to stay high for a while or stay higher than what it has been, then clearly it would be very difficult to handle global debt.

Again, global warming. There are no more theoretical discussions here. I think there's plenty of evidence that global temperatures are rising beyond what is tolerable, and this is going to bring about significant problems again. I've seen some studies that argue that global warming at the current speed could reduce global growth by one full percentage point per year. I notice this is probably one of the worst-case scenarios, but even if we reduce it by half a percentage point, this is still huge. Food insecurities, rising inequalities, and mass migration potentially on the back of climate, conflicts. I know I painted a pretty bleak picture, but these are some of the uncertainties that we face going forward. Dealing with potential climate disasters requires a collective response. And in a world that we are in today, that's hardly the case.

We live now in a world that no longer respects the most basic rules. It reminds me of Antonio Gramsci's very famous quote. When he was imprisoned by Mussolini. He wrote extensively in his prison notes. He says the old world is dying, the new world is struggling to be born. Now it is the time of monsters. The Old World, the rule-based post-Second World War is behind us. There's no respect for the most basic rules anymore. Look at what's happening in Gaza. Look at some country's stance. They cannot even call for a ceasefire. They cannot even have the courage to call for a ceasefire. This is the type of world we are in today. We don't have a new rule-based system. We don't have a substitute yet, because of a hegemon power and a rising superpower, and many other players are actually trying to see how this new system is going to be shaped. And that brings about a lot of uncertainty in doing business, but also in general for a global economy.

The IMF sees global growth at 3% for the next five years and global trade growth of about 3.5%. This is meaningfully below what it has been over the past couple of decades, which includes the global financial crisis as well as the pandemic. So two major events and still the outlook for the next five years is worse than what we've had over the past 20 years. So how about Türkiye? We're not an island nation. And even if you are an island nation, of course, you could affect it. But we have plenty of opportunities and risks for Türkiye. When we look at Türkiye. I think one thing that comes to my mind is if the world is going to be the way it is today, meaning more fragmentation, more trade, protectionism, etc. clearly nearshoring and friend-shoring is going to become a dominant theme going forward. Because of the customs union and long standing relations and institutional partnership with the EU, we consider ourselves as near and friends with the Middle East and North Africa, similarly with Central Asia. So if you do a simple, you know, four-hour flight, Türkiye potentially could reach 1.3 billion people and \$28 trillion GDP. So Türkiye could be a major, it is already a major manufacturing base, but it could strengthen that position through nearshoring and friend-shoring. But this requires macro-financial stability and reforms that will help boost productivity and competitiveness. So there is plenty of homework to do. But this is one key advantage that we have.

Another important issue is if you look at the past 20 years, Türkiye has had relative growth performance in real terms, is actually pretty good, and is at par with emerging markets. But if you exclude India and China, we've done much better than emerging markets. So on a relative basis, there is pretty decent outperformance. To sustain this again what we need is predictability, rule-based policymaking, which is exactly what we've been trying to do, and we will continue to deliver. If you look at Türkiye, it's a sizable market. A working-age population is bigger than 18 EU members combined. This matters. So if we can get our house in order. No company can afford to ignore Türkiye with such strong prospects and such a sizable market. So that's the key. If we look at the working-age population growth for the past decade and a half, which is likely to last for the next decade and a half, you can see that Türkiye still offers significant growth prospects. And this again requires reforms like labour market reform to boost employment and productivity. So we have opportunities but to take advantage we need to do more. You look at total indebtedness in Türkiye, it's roughly about 117%. This includes household debt, private sector

debt, you know, sovereign debt. It includes essentially all debt. Compared to emerging markets, Türkiye is in good shape. And that also provides an advantage for Türkiye going forward.

Green transition is one of the key agenda items in our program. Why? Because we know it's good to do, I mean. It's the right thing to do, but it has direct benefits that are not compatible with some other countries. First of all, Türkiye's Achilles heel is the current account deficit. The current account deficit is dominated by energy imports. So, when you reduce your dependency on energy imports, it will help ensure macro-financial stability and hence resilience and competitiveness. Also true that we can create quality jobs as well as achieve net zero. So, the message here is to realise the opportunities much needs to be done. Are we doing the right things? So that's the question. Yes, we are. We have a lot of homework. Attaining price stability. Restoring fiscal health. Rebalancing growth on a sustained basis. Narrowing current account deficit. All of these require implementing comprehensive structural reforms as well as sound policies. So inflation has to come down. Inflation will not defy gravity. We are doing all the right things to bring inflation down. I know the market still has a degree of scepticism. We respect that. That means we have to deliver before we can win them over. But if you look at month-on-month inflation dynamics, already there is strong evidence that disinflation has begun and it will accelerate and it will be very visible in the second half of next year. We've been very clear. What are we doing to achieve that? Well, there's the conventional monetary policy tightening, but there's also selective credit tightening and quantitative tightening. But we're doing it as a textbook. We're doing everything that is needed to bring inflation down. I am convinced that there will be plenty of evidence going forward that inflation is falling in line with our central bank's estimates, if not lower. I'm actually convinced looking at the recent trends. If you look at the fiscal position, if you look at the last 20 years, Türkiye has been fiscally prudent. If you look at the deficit to GDP for the past 20-plus years. It's been roughly about 2.4%. But this year and next year are going to be challenging. This year and next year are largely dominated by the earthquake, even though there was also some impact of elections. This year, we pencilled in a deficit of 6.4% of GDP when we redesigned our program, but it looks like we're going to do much better than 6.4%. The deficit is going to be significantly below, hopefully, 6% of GDP. And that's despite utterly earmarking whatever the money is needed, deploying whatever resources are

needed to recover from devastating February earthquakes. Next year, the earthquake is still going to be an important factor in the deficit. But from 2025 onwards, 2026, we will return to primary surpluses. We will return to deficits that are sub hopefully 3% of GDP. This will give us fiscal room to do more reforms because reforms don't all come, but some of them require fiscal space. And that's why we need fiscal discipline to achieve that.

If you look at the past 20 years, Türkiye has had relative growth performance in real terms, is actually pretty good, and is at par with emerging markets. But if you exclude India and China, we've done much better than emerging markets. So on a relative basis, there is pretty decent outperformance. To sustain this again what we need is predictability, rule-based policymaking, which is exactly what we've been trying to do, and we will continue to deliver. If you look at Türkiye, it's a sizable market. A working-age population is bigger than 18 EU members combined. This matters. So if we can get our house in order. No company can afford to ignore Türkiye with such strong prospects and such a sizable market.

Growth has been strong in Türkiye. If you look at the last 100 years, growth has been close to 5% of GDP. If you look at the last 20 years, it's been about 5.5%. 5.5% growth is pretty good. Now growth looks set to slow next year. I know there are concerns. Yes, there may be a temporary slowdown. But as evidence emerges that the program is working, I think local portfolio preferences and global inflows will reduce the downside to growth. Even if we get more downside than what we have pencilled in here is highly likely to be temporary. We know that disinflation supports sustainable, high growth, and Türkiye has all the dynamics to grow fast, but we just need to make it sustainable. And this requires disinflation. This requires price stability. And price stability has been essential in advancing Türkiye's growth over the past 20 years. If we look at growth recently, it's been not of very top quality. Why? Simple. Because net exports contribution has been negative. We would like to reduce the drag on growth from net exports. This is what we mean by rebalancing as we rebalance. Inflation will fall. The current account deficit will narrow. And that's the key to long-term sustainable growth. I don't have time to go into details, but if you look at the current account deficit this year. It's largely

dominated by gold imports. Why? Why are Turkish people importing so much gold? After all, it's not edible. Well. The monetary policy practices of the past have led to gold demand as a hedge against inflation. But now that we've got to bring inflation down. The need for such a hedge is going to diminish. And therefore gold imports are going to moderate. If you look at the past 20 years, gold imports amounted to roughly about \$8 billion a year. This year it's over \$30 billion. Even if gold imports moderate to the tune of going down from about \$31 billion to about 15, \$16 billion, the current account deficit next year could be less than 3% of GDP. But we're not relying on that. We're relying on the rebalancing of growth to fix the current account deficit. Even though it's an important factor.

I talked a lot about structural reforms, and we have a very comprehensive agenda to achieve all these goals on a sustained basis, but also to take advantage of opportunities that the new global, you know, backdrop presents. We need to deliver on structural reforms. The first agenda item is enhancing human capital labour market flexibility. We've made some progress in the past, but more needs to be done. Another key area is boosting productivity and improving the investment climate. Again, there's plenty to say, but there's a lot of, you know, homework. And we've already started doing some of this. Increasing savings. Deepening capital markets, and reducing reliance on commercial bank lending is another area, but these require single-digit inflation, ideally low single-digit inflation. We'll get there, and when we get there Turkish corporates will have no issue tapping domestic and global bond markets. Bringing in resources that are similar to equity, similar to their capital, long-term in nature and competitive cost-wise. Public finance reform; we've already started working on it. We want to broaden the tax base. Because we believe that there's a lot of informal economic activity that needs to be brought under control. Including public procurement reform, including rationalising spending. Spending in productive areas is the way forward, and that's going to be one of the key agendas going forward again, as far as our reforms are concerned. When we look at today's world, we cannot afford not to have digital transformation. So digital transformation is going to also be a key focus area for us going forward.

So my final bit of my presentation: is the program working, you know? It's been a few months. Is there evidence that things are improving? Can I show something to you to convince you that we are on the right track? Well, first I

Rebalancing; we are still at the early stages, but there is now evidence in the third quarter; slight evidence that domestic demand is moderating and that external demand to that net export position is becoming less of a drag. The current account deficit is narrowing and it will continue to narrow significantly going forward. If you look at the central bank's gross or net reserves there is a significant improvement. Gross reserves are up by close to \$42 billion since the lows of May.

need to tell you how the program is supposed to work. The program is based on very simple, you know, pillars or tenets. We're not reinventing the wheels, by the way. Very simple, straightforward sound policies, structural reforms. And this leads to investor confidence, local and international. These lead to portfolio preferences or flows. Exchange rate stabilisation, possibly rate exchange rate appreciation. And this fosters speedier disinflation. And as disinflation gains momentum, we create a virtuous cycle. And that's how it's meant to work. We believe that disinflation will support further solid policies and structural reforms. So, this is how we see it working. Is it working well? One piece of evidence that I can show is that Türkiye's risk premium has fallen significantly. This is good news because this is not a market that we can interfere with. This is a global pricing of our risk. Globally, investors seem to think that we are doing the right things. Secondly, if you look at sovereign debt spreads, the red line is Türkiye, and the blue line is global emerging markets. As you can see, we were doing pretty poorly and now since July, and August, Türkiye is beginning to outperform. Its spread has narrowed faster. This is also good news for pricing. This is real. Again if you look at exchange rate volatility, through July and August, we were way out of the emerging market volatility band. Now we are well within that band. So exchange volatility has diminished significantly. Now I know many of you, or at least market players seem to think that the central bank is in the game. The central bank is not in the game the way you think. We only provide FX for those who are changing from so-called protected litter deposit schemes to ethics deposits. Other than that, we're not in the market. It's rule-based in that sense. Net portfolio inflows are now positive, strongly positive. At a time when emerging markets experienced outflows, at least the third quarter of this year. If you look at external debt rollover ratios, you look at the banking sector, if you look at non-financial corporations, as you can see, compared to, you know, the first half of the year, the second half of the year, there has been a significant improvement in rollovers. That means. Türkiye is back. Again, if you look at credit growth is slowing in a way that the program was meant to achieve. So it is working.

Rebalancing; we are still at the early stages, but there is now evidence in the third quarter; slight evidence that domestic demand is moderating and that external demand to that net export position is becoming less of a drag. The current account deficit is narrowing and it will continue to narrow significantly going forward. If you look at the central bank's

gross or net reserves there is a significant improvement. Gross reserves are up by close to \$42 billion since the lows of May. Now this is important because it reduces fragilities going forward. Again, if you look at reserve adequacy, we're not where we would like to be. By the way, this includes short-term debt, not just short-term debt, the debt that was borrowed as medium long-term debt that has now less than 12 months of maturity. So it's a broad definition, roughly about \$210 billion. So reserves, gross reserves as a percentage of short-term debt is roughly about 83%. We would like to be somewhere close to one time, roughly speaking, in an ideal world. We are rebuilding the yield curve. The monetary policy was dysfunctional and has become functional. Now we have a yield curve that is beginning to reflect market readings of economic activity as well as disinflationary dynamics. So clearly this was important for us.

There has been some improvement by rating agencies in Türkiye's outlook. We believe that Türkiye will get multiple rating upgrades over the next few years. I can tell you this if you look at Türkiye's debt spreads, it's currently trading. At 2 or 3 notches above what the actual rating is. This was the case back when I was in, you know, working in London, and today it's beginning to get back there. So the ratings are in the catching-up phase. We believe that as we deliver, rating agencies will respond. It's encouraging what they've done so far, but compared to market pricing, they're way behind the curve. So as you can see, there's plenty of evidence that the program is working, that we are on the right track, but we are still in the early stages. So we need time. We need patience. We need perseverance. And that's what's needed. Türkiye will take advantage of opportunities of the new economic era, which clearly has a lot of challenges, true reforms and true sound policies.

Highlights

Pornchai Danvivathana

PhD; Secretary-General, Asian Cooperation Dialogue (ACD)

Dr. Danvivathana is a lawyer by training and a seasoned diplomat. He was born in Bangkok, Thailand in 1957. He received a Bachelor's Degree in Law (LL.B., Class Hons.) from Thammasat University, Thailand and received his Doctorate Degree (J.S.D. in International Legal Studies) from New York University. Dr. Danvivathana began his career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and served in several countries including being Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman and Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa until his retirement. He also served as Chairperson of the ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre (ISC) Governing Council in Singapore for 3 terms and is currently assuming the position of the Secretary General of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), based in Kuwait City.



- Never give up hope. While the economy is fragmented, we could see that some, if not all, Asian countries, particularly those in the East, have made achievements in becoming OECD members and partners. This could be somewhat a model that we need to explore further. Meanwhile, others, particularly those in the South, have managed to move out of the least developed countries category by OECD.
- We have been experiencing quite a lot of challenges, particularly those of a transboundary nature and also disasters. We have to focus ourselves in order to make, or remake, the global economy that probably fits the national agenda and also the need for Asia. In that case, I think while we see crises, we also see opportunities where those are common denominators. Denominators like disasters could be one that we can benefit from in order to harness those regional and subregional blocs in Asia together. With that, I look forward to having some kind of strategy that would make the best use of the diversity of Asian countries in order to deliver what we have in mind.



Mirek Dušek

Managing Director, World Economic Forum

Mirek Dušek is the Managing Director at the World Economic Forum, responsible for global programming; he is also Head of Europe and Eurasia. As Managing Director, he oversees the strategy and organisation of all large-scale World Economic Forum events, including the Annual Meeting in Davos. As Head of Europe and Eurasia, he also leads the overall engagement in the region. Previously, he worked at the US Embassy in Baghdad and in Prague.

Mirek Dušek holds an MA in International Studies and a BA in Political Sciences and speaks Arabic fluently.



- If we have entered a new era but lack a corresponding system and face fragility, how do we proceed to build this new system? The conference's focus on solutions is pertinent here. Looking back over the past year, it's heartening to see stakeholders - governments, businesses, civil society organisations - moving into the solution space. However, it's crucial to understand that these solutions aren't quick fixes or narrowly focused. What we're discussing are the challenging aspects, involving painful iterations among partners, sometimes with opposing views, as we strive to navigate this new era and establish a functional system for the global economy.
- Another crucial aspect to introduce into the discussion is the necessity for truly inclusive dialogue, particularly regarding what some term as the Divide between the global North and the global South. This division is increasingly evident in issues such as climate change, trade, and geopolitics. While it may have been overlooked in the past, we can no longer afford to ignore it. If we are to construct a new system for this new era, addressing and rectifying this divide is imperative.
- We are only one year into the introduction of generative AI, and if we were having this conference last year, it would have been just starting to bubble up. It was around November, early December when it began gaining traction, but it wasn't yet a top priority for everyone. Now, particularly governmental and business leaders, among others, have it prominently on their minds. It has caught us somewhat off guard, prompting a catch up

game among governments, regulators, and businesses as they scramble to determine how to govern this technology. This underscores an important lesson: as we construct this new system, we must possess better foresight and agility regarding advanced technologies. While generative AI is currently in focus, we must also consider the implications of other emerging technologies such as biotech and quantum computing.



Umberto Del Panta

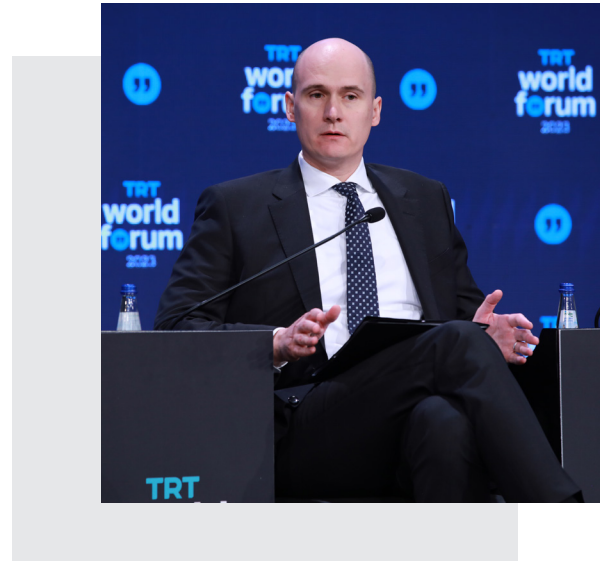
The Head of European Investment Bank to Türkiye

Umberto Del Panta is the Head of Representation to Türkiye at the European Investment Bank (EIB) since January 2021. He has a strong background in international finance, holding a Master's equivalent degree in Business Administration from "L. Bocconi" University in Italy.

His career began as a Financial Analyst/Credit Analyst at Mediobanca in 1984. Over the years, he took on roles such as Senior Financial Analyst at IBM, Portfolio Manager and Head of Research at Citibank, and Senior Financial Officer at the Bank for International Settlements in Switzerland.

From 1991 to 1999, Del Panta served as a Senior Banker in Lending Operations at the European Investment Bank. Later, he directed lending and equity operations as Business Group Director at the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank. His tenure at the EIB from 2005 to 2021 included roles as Managerial Adviser and Head of Lending Operations in Central Asia.

- For the past four years, we have not been very active in Türkiye. This was due to our interpretation of an EU council decision in 2019 recommending a review of our strategy for Türkiye, particularly in the public sector. As a result, we halted operations for the past four years. However, a few weeks ago, we signed a £400 million agreement for earthquake reconstruction. Initially, this was viewed as a one-off operation. Nonetheless, we have had a couple of very positive developments in the past week.
- A report from the commission, which was requested by the EU Council, has been released outlining how to re-engage and find ways to better cooperate with Türkiye. This is a significant development. One specific recommendation is for the European Investment Bank to re-engage across all sectors in Türkiye. We are hopeful that during the 15-hour meeting, the EU Council will formalise this recommendation. Our team is prepared to meet with promoters in Türkiye and resume activities, although initially perhaps not at the same level as ten years ago.



Çetin Nazikkol

PhD; Chief Strategy Officer Decarbon Technologies, thyssenKrupp

Dr. Nazikkol has been working for thyssenkrupp since 1996. In 2010, he joined thyssenkrupp Elevator as Vice President to develop and implement initiatives to improve the global Service Business. In 2013, he became CEO of thyssenkrupp Türkiye and remained in this position until 2015, when he was appointed as CEO Middle East & Africa (MEA) Regional Headquarters. Since April 2017, he combined his position as MEA Regional Headquarters CEO with the position of CEO for the Middle East and Türkiye at thyssenkrupp Industrial Solutions. In 2020, Dr. Nazikkol was appointed CEO of the Regional Platform Asia, Pacific & Africa. In addition to this role, he became Chief Transformation Officer in August 2023, to lead the group's global performance program "APEX". In October 2023 he also became Chief Strategy Officer at thyssenkrupp's new segment Decarbon Technologies.

He holds a Diploma and PhD in Chemistry from the University of Münster in Germany and an Executive Master in Business Administration from the Hogeschool Zeeland in the Netherlands.

- What we are witnessing now, the events of the past 40 to 50 years, are unprecedented. We are entering a phase where it's becoming increasingly difficult to control the impacts on the planet and everyone inhabiting it. The effects of these events are immense, affecting everyone on a global scale. Climate change is not just a theory; it is based on science and facts. We can see and feel its effects. These disruptions are already impacting supply chains worldwide. For instance, floods in Pakistan several years ago submerged one-third of the country, and we continue to see floods in China and droughts across the globe, all of which significantly impact the global economy.
- There is unanimous agreement that we require energy, and it must be affordable. Just consider the amount of electricity we are currently consuming in this room, where energy availability is not an issue. However, if we shift our focus to regions like Africa, India, and other emerging countries, the disparity becomes apparent. In Africa, over 50% of the population lacks access to electricity. This indicates a growing demand for energy. Failure to decarbonize energy generation will only exacerbate the challenges we face.



- Türkiye possesses tremendous potential for energy transition. The country boasts abundant resources including land, hydro, solar, and wind. Additionally, Türkiye benefits from a direct pipeline to Europe, which is the primary consumer of green hydrogen. This presents significant opportunities for Türkiye along with a corresponding responsibility.



Timothy Ash

Senior Sovereign Strategist, RBC Bluebay Asset Management

Timothy Ash is a senior sovereign strategist at RBC Bluebay Asset Management in London. He is also an Associate Fellow at the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) on their Russia and Eurasia Programme as well as a Trustee at Crown Agents International Development (CAID). Tim has run Emerging and CEEMEA research at a range of international banks previously including Bear Stearns, RBS, ICBC Standard Bank, and Nomura plc. He has also worked as a sovereign strategist at ABN Amro, WestLB/West Merchant Bank and Caspian Securities. In the mid-1990s Tim was an economist at the Economic Intelligence Unit, and worked as a development consultant in Emerging Europe, working in Ukraine, Russia, Poland and the Baltic states. He also worked as a research associate at Herriot Watt University and Exeter University researching the transition from plan to market. Tim has a Masters in Agricultural Economics from Manchester University. He has covered Türkiye as a professional economist for over twenty years and writes extensively on the subject.

- Türkiye possesses significant strengths, making it a prime investment destination. With robust public finances and low debt ratios, coupled with favourable demographics and a strategic location connecting 1.3 billion people within a four-hour flight radius, Türkiye stands out. The country boasts excellent banking institutions, skilled economists, and a rich manufacturing tradition, unlike some other nations such as the UK. Overall, with the implementation of sound policies, Türkiye's outlook appears highly promising.
- Türkiye is the standout story for 2024, largely due to the policies being implemented by Minister Simsek. There is significant excitement among institutional investors regarding the prospect of Türkiye once again becoming a favourable destination for conducting business.



Session 6

All-Knowing AI: Creative Potential or Disruptive Evil?



Moderator

Andrea Sanke, Presenter, TRT World

Keynote Speaker

Mehmet Fath Kacır, Minister of Industry and Technology, Republic of Türkiye

Speakers

Ali Taha Koç, CEO, Turkcell

Kalev Hannes Leetaru, Founder, GDELT Project

Elena Contioso-Fleming, Interim Regional Director South, EIT Digital

Key Takeaways

- Despite the promises of AI, there are significant risks and challenges. These include the spread of misinformation, job displacement, and the potential misuse of AI in warfare and conflict, posing ethical and societal dilemmas.
- The rapid advancement of AI technology outpaces regulatory frameworks, necessitating careful monitoring and governance to mitigate risks such as biased data and the proliferation of false information.
- There is a substantial digital skills gap across Europe, with less than one-third of citizens possessing skills beyond basic digital literacy. Addressing this gap is crucial to ensure equitable access to opportunities and prevent widening societal disparities.
- Europe excels in AI research but lags behind in private investment and adoption by businesses compared to global competitors. This discrepancy raises concerns about data ownership and power dynamics in the AI landscape.
- While AI offers significant capabilities, it currently lacks genuine reasoning abilities. Human oversight is essential to ensure the accuracy and ethical use of AI-generated content, as blind trust in AI tools poses risks of misinformation and manipulation.

Summary of the Session

The session titled “All-Knowing AI: Creative Potential or Disruptive Evil?” delved into the complex dynamics surrounding the emergence of AI technology, exploring both its promising possibilities and concerning implications.

The dialogue commenced with a fundamental query: whether AI heralds a future of innovation or poses a threat of destruction. Amidst varied perspectives, the moderator raised pertinent questions regarding the integration of AI into society and its regulation. While acknowledging the benefits AI brings to diverse domains, such as enhancing productivity and decision-making, concerns lingered regarding its potential misuse and the challenge of governance lagging behind technological advancements.

Participants discussed the pervasive issue of misinformation and disinformation amplified by AI, exacerbating societal vulnerabilities and raising questions about safeguarding

against manipulation. Governmental response and regulatory frameworks were scrutinised, highlighting the intricate task of balancing innovation with accountability.

Furthermore, deliberations extended to the socioeconomic repercussions of AI adoption, including its impact on employment landscapes and educational paradigms. As AI continues to evolve rapidly, the session underscored the imperative for institutions to adapt swiftly, navigating the transformative landscape whilst mitigating disparities.

Ultimately, the session probed the existential question of whether AI, endowed with superior intelligence, could serve as a bulwark against human fallibility or potentially exacerbate societal divides, leaving the audience pondering the delicate balance between innovation and ethical stewardship in an AI-driven era.

Keynote Speech by Mehmet Fatih Kacır

Minister of Industry and Technology, Republic of Türkiye

The technologies of the future are close at hand. Windows of opportunity that open to completely different worlds, stand before us. In all areas, from social life to business, production models to consumer behaviour, value creation is being reshaped with innovative data-based approaches. Tremendous trends are happening, particularly in digital technologies. One of those fields is undoubtedly artificial intelligence. 65 years ago, when Turkish professor Cahit Arif asked if a machine thought he was also shedding light on today's world. Today, AI forms the core of many smart systems used in all sectors, from communication to aerospace, medicine to defence. With AI, our data lives are becoming easier, faster and more efficient. For example, voice assistants in our smartphones and speech recognition technologies help us manage our daily tasks. Autonomous vehicle guidance systems increase traffic safety, making our travel much more comfortable. In healthcare, AI is making significant contributions to the diagnosis and treatment process. Chatbots can understand the language we use, create explanatory texts, write programs in different programming languages, and even detect errors.

Expectations are quite high for the future. Innovative technologies led by AI will contribute more than \$10 trillion to the global economy by 2030, achieving a 14% growth in the global economy. Developed countries are in a race for research and technology development to gain a larger share of this tremendous market. However, along with this growth and potential advantages, it should not be forgotten that AI also harbours vulnerabilities such as ethics, security, reliability and privacy. Biases fuelled by AI can create negative effects on social justice and equality, posing a risk to social peace. Similarly, deepfake technology also carries a significant risk of disinformation. With its ability to produce realistic images and sounds, this technology can shake the foundation of trust in societies. The new questions and challenges brought by AI applications are testing the limits of the current legal framework, especially in terms of data protection, privacy, ethics, responsibility, and security. The rapid development of AI applications requires laws



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to be continuously updated and adapted to those near technological advancements.

I would like to remind you of three important observations that I consider significant. AI is not developing in isolation,

The rapidly growing volume of data is making supercomputers one of the leading technologies of digital transformation. We are launching our new supercomputer at our national centre, which provides high-performance computing and data storage. We see the emergence of AI Startups in our country as critical for exploring the broad potential offered by AI, and for applying this technology to various industries. Today, we have an entrepreneurship ecosystem that is referred to as the Star of Europe, having produced seven Turkish unicorns we are calling them Turcoins and data obtained in the first three quarters of this year show that AI is the second most funded vertical in our Startup ecosystem, pointing to the great potential of Turkish AI Startups.

but rather in conjunction with deep technologies such as quantum, computing and biotechnology. Thus, its current and potential impacts are increasing exponentially. AI development activities are being conducted more by companies focusing on maximising profits, rather than by state or academic actors that bear direct responsibilities towards societies. In this field, where the United States and China are widening the gap with the rest of the world and view it as a new hegemony craze, there is no strong sign of a global consensus framework that limits developers, implementers and products. I think I can summarise the current situation in this matter. With the wider integration of AI and related technologies into our daily lives, a decrease in the need for certain job fields and service sectors is inevitable. The history of technology and industry is filled with countless examples of the drops and emerging new ones. Therefore, rather than resisting technological change, embracing and effectively managing this transformation is a must rather than a choice for our country. This approach is in line with our National Technology Initiative, aiming to increase Türkiye's global competitive power and ensure economic and technological independence.

With this goal in mind, we have launched our National Artificial Intelligence Strategy in 2021. We have focussed our efforts on creating the necessary research infrastructure and strengthening human capital. We have identified comprehensive policies and projects that will position our country not just as a market for AI technologies and applications, but as their developer and producer. To activate Türkiye's growing AI ecosystem and strengthen collaboration among stakeholders, we have established the AI Institute within TUBITAK. We boost efficiency, increase profitability and elevate quality across various sectors by leveraging AI. We prioritise the widespread use of AI in industry and public institutions in our country and increase the specialised workforce in this field. Under the TUBITAK scholarship and support programs, in the last 21 years, we have supported more than 3700 projects in the field of AI and provided financial assistance of nearly 7 billion TRY to over 1300 individuals. At Techno Fest, the world's largest aerospace and technology festival, we organise competitions in various fields to support our use in working on future technologies. Today, more than 2300 companies at our Techno parks and 200 R&D centres in our country are conducting AI projects. A crucial factor for advancing AI is data and data processing infrastructures.

The rapidly growing volume of data is making supercomputers one of the leading technologies of digital transformation. We are launching our new supercomputer at our national centre, which provides high-performance computing and data storage. We see the emergence of AI Startups in our country as critical for exploring the broad potential offered by AI, and for applying this technology to various industries. Today, we have an entrepreneurship ecosystem that is referred to as the Star of Europe, having produced seven Turkish unicorns we are calling them Turcoins and data obtained in the first three quarters of this year show that AI is the second most funded vertical in our Startup ecosystem, pointing to the great potential of Turkish AI Startups. In addition, we play an active role in international collaborations for the development and responsible use of AI technologies. This year, with our participation in the Digital Europe program, we will provide access to supercomputers and open data spaces. Our country also joined the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence last year. As part of our GPI membership, our active participation in international projects conducted in critical areas such as responsible AI, the future of professions, innovation and commercialisation and data governance will help us enhance the positive impacts of those technologies on society. Such collaborations will help us in our efforts to position our country as a centre of innovation and high tech.

We are seizing the momentum of change and transformation within the digital world ecosystem through AI. We aim to develop and operate AI systems in alignment with our shared values. We contribute to the transformation driven by AI technologies on behalf of humanity and ensure our country benefits from this process. To make the second century of our republic the centre of Türkiye, we will continue to work and strive with all our might in line with our National Technology Initiative goals.

As I conclude my words, I would like to share my final assessment regarding the title of this panel. We are at one of the turning points in world history. We are at a stage where almost none of the actors and elements of the order established after the Second World War are functional. We are at a moment where humanity is making groundbreaking advances in fields such as AI, quantum computing and biotechnology. History shows us numerous examples that technological capabilities lacking in moral norms have only brought disasters to humankind. Even this sentence is

insufficient. Perhaps I should have phrased this sentence as follows: The Israeli oppression we witness in Palestine shows us the stark reality of how technological capability without moral norms is destroying humanity again and again, every day, every moment and the lawless world order that allows this crime does not promise a bright future for what is coming next. Our world lacks a system capable of kerbing the profit-driven motives of big giant technology monopolies, as well as restraining those who exploit technological advancements for their distorted ideologies or power-driven goals that could endanger humanity. There is an absence of universal agreement on moral values, a consensus that should be embraced by all of humanity. In this situation, humanity's most urgent need is to reach a moral alliance based on justice and compassion. Otherwise, despite the added value it creates, the economic scale it builds, or all the prosperity it brings, every technology will lead humanity to near disasters, just like it has until today.



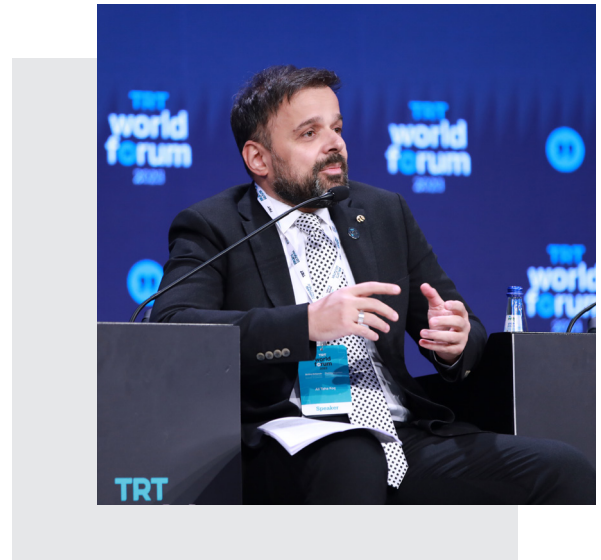
Highlights

Ali Taha Koç

PhD; CEO, Turkcell

Dr. Ali Taha Koç, Turkcell's CEO, earned a full scholarship for his undergraduate degree in Electrical and Electronics Engineering at Bilkent University in 2001. He pursued his master's and doctorate in the U.S. at Dallas Texas University with a scholarship. Joining Intel's R&D team in 2006, he contributed 61 patents and 23 articles, earning recognition as a top global engineer in 2013. Returning to Türkiye in 2014, he advised the Prime Ministry and later led the Presidency of Information Technologies, overseeing the establishment of the State Information Coordination Center. Appointed President of the Presidential Digital Transformation Office on September 12, 2018, he also served on Turksat's board. Since October 13, 2023, Dr. Koç has been Turkcell's CEO while teaching at Bilkent University. Additionally, he holds a pilot's licence.

- The essence of AI lies in its ability to emulate human-like behaviour within computers or software. However, it's crucial to recognise that while AI may mimic human traits, it will never truly replicate human consciousness. Therefore, we must approach its integration with caution, always mindful of its role as a tool for humanity. There's a prevalent debate about whether artificial intelligence will supplant human beings. The answer is unequivocal: it won't. Instead, humans who leverage artificial intelligence will outpace those who do not.
- Governments are striving to keep pace with advancing technology. However, it's a perennial challenge as technology often outpaces regulatory frameworks. Nevertheless, the overarching improvement stems from the abundance of data. With the proliferation of digitisation, vast amounts of data are generated daily. For instance, every day, we process an astounding 250 billion lines of data, reflecting the widespread engagement with social media platforms, with approximately 40 million subscribers. Amidst this data deluge, caution is paramount in determining what to process, as indiscriminate handling may encroach upon personal data privacy, posing risks for both operators and governmental bodies.
- Ensuring data quality is paramount, extending beyond mere error-free datasets to address biases. Biased



data, even if technically accurate, undermines the integrity of insights derived. Thus, establishing a robust set of principles becomes imperative. Data must not only be error-free but also devoid of biases. Transparency is key; every stakeholder, including government entities and users, should have access to algorithmic processes instead of operating within opaque "black box" mechanisms. This transparency fosters accountability and trust in the use of AI technologies.

- Technology ought to serve as a societal tool, benefiting humanity. Presently, AI predominantly functions as a sophisticated digital personal assistant, with limitations in reasoning capabilities. While it aids us presently, its potential as a transformative force is constrained. However, to harness its full potential, human oversight is indispensable. Algorithms must undergo scrutiny by humans to ensure accuracy and relevance. Machines excel at generating vast quantities of content, yet without reasoning abilities, much of it becomes irrelevant. Therefore, human intervention is vital to discern valuable insights from the noise. However, a significant challenge lies in the scarcity of human resources to cross-check the vast datasets generated by AI systems. Addressing this scarcity will be a pivotal challenge in maximising the efficacy of AI technologies in the future.

Kalev Hannes Leetaru

PhD; Founder, GDELT Project

One of Foreign Policy Magazine's Top 100 Global Thinkers of 2013, Dr. Kalev Hannes Leetaru is a global advisor to governments, NGOs and the world's largest corporations to help them solve tomorrow's greatest challenges in an ever more uncertain world. His GDELT Project fundamentally transformed modern global risk forecasting, becoming one of the most iconic and largest real-time open graphs over Planet Earth. For more than a quarter-century, his landmark studies have been at the forefront of reimagining how we understand our world through some of the largest datasets and computing platforms on the planet.

- AI has been part of our lives for decades now, aiding us in various tasks like driving, providing directions, and optimising supply chains. What's new is that AI is no longer just transforming processes; it's actively generating new content and solutions. Unlike before, it's now visible and accessible to consumers. In my work, we utilise AI daily to analyse global media across multiple languages and platforms, monitoring global risks and summarising events like the situation in Gaza or Ukraine across different media outlets. This accessibility to AI presents immense opportunities for innovation and understanding.
- However, amidst the potential, there are significant risks to consider. Currently, much of what we hear about AI is hyped, driven by companies investing heavily in its development and promotion. This initial wave of generative AI brings drawbacks, such as the phenomenon of hallucination, where AI fabricates information. Job displacement poses another concern, especially as white-collar roles face automation, prompting reevaluation of the impacts of globalisation. Yet, one of the gravest perils lies in AI's role in warfare and conflict. As someone who closely examines this area, I'm deeply concerned about scenarios where AI-generated content is used to manipulate perceptions, potentially leading to accusations of war crimes or the dissemination of personalised disinformation during elections. The proliferation of generative AI exacerbates these risks.
- It's essential to distinguish between the beneficial applications of AI, such as those employed by Turkcell and other companies to enhance customer service and optimise operations, and the societal implications, particularly in media, that I focus on. While AI excels in



tasks like generating imagery and coding, it currently struggles with text due to its requirement for reasoning and comprehension. My work primarily addresses the societal impact of AI, especially in mitigating disinformation and misinformation in the media landscape.

- AI has the potential to act as an equaliser, much like the digital divide we currently observe. Just as access to high-speed internet determines opportunities, AI may amplify existing disparities. However, this presents governments with an opportunity to intervene and bridge these gaps, akin to efforts to expand broadband access in the US. Addressing these challenges could unlock significant potential for societal advancement.
- Presently, AI tools lack the ability to think autonomously; they primarily function as autocomplete engines. However, they can serve a crucial role in combating misinformation, particularly during crises like natural disasters. As AI increasingly dominates information spaces, there's a growing need for AI-powered solutions to counter falsehoods propagated by malicious actors. Leveraging AI to scale up efforts against misinformation presents significant opportunities for positive impact.
- Presently, the AI available to us excels as personal systems, adept at tasks like ideation, creation, and serving as personal assistants. The question remains: how long until we develop AI capable of genuine thought? Yet, even now, these tools can create the illusion of thinking, leading people to trust them unquestioningly. This blind trust in tools that lack genuine understanding poses a significant danger.

Elena Contioso-Fleming

Interim Regional Director South, EIT Digital

Elena Contioso-Fleming, MSc. in Telecommunications Engineering from the University of Seville studied abroad at the University of Technology, Business Design Konstanz. In 2011, she took the Management Development Programme for International Centres of Excellence at the EOI Business School.

Before being appointed as Interim Regional Director South Elena was the Ecosystem Lead for Southern Europe based in Spain. She joined EIT Digital Digital as the Madrid Co-Location Centre Manager in 2018.

She started her career with startups simultaneously working as an entrepreneur in Germany. Prior to joining EIT Digital, she worked as General Manager at FIUS, the Research Foundation of the University of Seville. At the International Campus of Excellence Andalucía TECH, she was accountable for the execution, operations, and budgetary control. Over the last decade and a half, she has held management roles in the domains of technology transfer, research and innovation.



- The European Commission anticipates that artificial intelligence will enhance citizens' lives, a sentiment I share. AI is poised to drive improvements across various sectors, bolstering the economy and society through advancements in healthcare, transportation, and public administration. Existing AI applications have already demonstrated their capacity to assist in decision-making, previously the realm of highly trained professionals. This has yielded notable advancements, such as the ability to predict the occurrence and timing of natural disasters like earthquakes, as well as the capability to analyse medical images and identify cancerous cells.
- According to data from Eurostat: less than one-third of citizens in Europe possess digital skills beyond the basics. In simpler terms, two-thirds of Europeans are limited to tasks like sending emails and navigating simple software or the internet. This digital skills gap is concerning, especially as technology advances, increasing the demand for digital talent. Addressing this gap is crucial, as disparities between societies will widen if left unattended.

- Europe leads in AI research, matching global competitors, but lags in private investment and AI adoption by businesses. This discrepancy raises critical questions about data ownership and power dynamics.



Session 7

Dis/United Nations: Working Towards Effective Multilateralism



Moderator

Imran Garda, Presenter, TRT World

Speakers

H.E. Awn Al-Khasawneh, Former Prime Minister, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

H.E. Dr. Jorge Castaneda, Former Foreign Minister of Mexico; Global Distinguished Professor, New York University

Hans von Sponeck, Former UN Assistant Secretary-General and UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq

Gwi -Yeop Son, Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, United Nations Development Coordination Office

Key Takeaways

- There is a consensus regarding the urgent need for reform within the United Nations. This includes addressing outdated governance structures such as the Security Council and General Assembly to better reflect the contemporary global landscape.
- The current composition of the Security Council lacks inclusivity and diversity, with calls for a more representative membership that includes voices from regions such as Africa, Latin America, and the emerging Global South. Reform efforts aim to make the UN more inclusive and reflective of the world's diversity.
- Concerns have been raised regarding the veto power wielded by permanent members of the Security Council, highlighting the need to reassess its role in decision-making processes. Suggestions for alternatives, such as consensus-based decision-making, have been put forward to address this issue.
- Civil society's involvement is deemed crucial in the reform process, with emphasis on engaging diverse voices, particularly those of young people, in shaping the future of the UN. Their perspectives and activism are seen as essential in driving meaningful change and revitalising multilateralism.
- Despite challenges and limitations within the UN system, there remains a steadfast commitment to humanitarian action. Efforts to protect vulnerable populations, deliver aid effectively, and uphold international humanitarian and human rights laws persist, demonstrating the UN's ongoing dedication to alleviating human suffering.
- While acknowledging the complexities and obstacles ahead, there is optimism and hope for a reinvigorated UN that embraces multilateralism, inclusivity, and people-centric approaches. Aspirations for a more networked, inclusive, and people-centred UN drive the reform agenda, reflecting a shared vision for a better future.

Summary of the Session

The session “Dis/United Nations: Working Towards Effective Multilateralism” delved into critical questions surrounding the effectiveness and relevance of the United Nations (UN). The moderator initiated the discussion by posing the fundamental query: Is the UN still fit for purpose? This set the tone for an exploration of the institution's viability in contemporary global affairs. Another pivotal question raised was whether the UN should meet the same fate as the League of Nations, highlighting concerns about its efficacy and adaptability. The discussion further scrutinised the UN Security Council's structure, particularly the contentious issue of veto powers wielded by permanent members.

The session grappled with the historical context of the UN's establishment in 1945, questioning its relevance in today's vastly transformed geopolitical landscape. The disproportionate influence of veto-wielding nations, particularly evident in recent events, underscored criticisms of the UN's deci-

sion-making process. Participants debated whether pessimism regarding the UN's efficacy outweighs optimism for potential reforms. The discussion also touched upon the subjective nature of perceptions towards the UN, citing contrasting views based on specific contexts and historical experiences.

Moreover, the session highlighted the paradox between aspirations for a more peaceful, technologically advanced world and the persistent reality of violent conflicts and humanitarian crises. This dissonance underscores the ongoing challenges facing the UN in fulfilling its mandate to maintain international peace and security.

Overall, the session provided a platform for nuanced reflections on the UN's role in contemporary global governance, underscoring the imperative for meaningful reforms to enhance its effectiveness and relevance in addressing pressing global challenges.

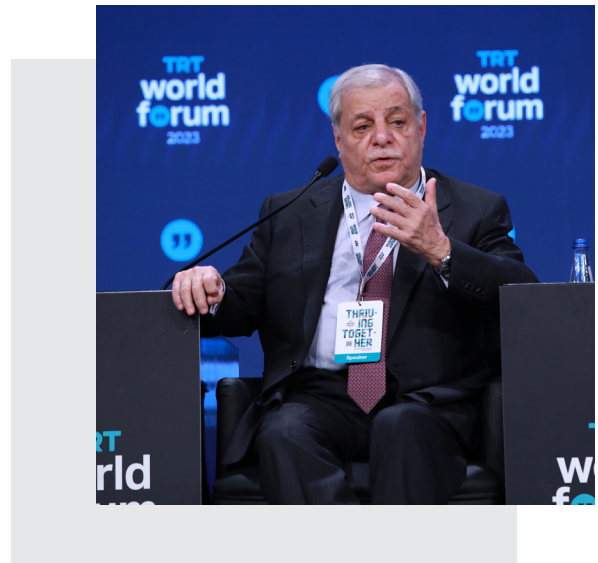
Highlights

Awn Al-Khasawneh

Former Prime Minister, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Judge Awn Shawkat Al-Khasawneh, educated at Cambridge University, continued his diplomatic career for Jordan after completing postgraduate studies in International Law. Serving as a Judge on the International Court of Justice from 2000 to 2011, he held the position of Vice-President from 2006 to 2009. Following his tenure, Al-Khasawneh became the Prime Minister of Jordan until April 2012. Currently, he is an Academic Expert at Doughty Street Chambers in London and an Honorary Fellow at Queens' College, Cambridge. Widely recognised for his expertise in public international law, he has lectured globally. Recently, he served as Judge Ad-Hoc in a dispute between Costa Rica and Nicaragua and continues to play a crucial role in arbitration cases, representing Sudan in State-State negotiations and acting as counsel in various investment-related arbitrations. Al-Khasawneh has also provided legal counsel to several regional governments on international law matters.

- There is a prevailing tendency to criticise the United Nations, yet we must remember that the United Nations serves as a mere reflection of the complexities within our world. When we express disdain towards the UN, we must recognise that it operates within the confines of global dynamics. Criticisms often target its principal organs, notably the Security Council and, to some degree, the General Assembly, for their perceived inefficiencies. These criticisms stem from the undue influence exerted by a few powerful states, exemplified in instances like the Palestine and Gaza situations, where actions by the United States and, to some extent, the United Kingdom, have significantly shaped outcomes.
- While contemplating potential avenues for reform may seem straightforward, we must acknowledge that the international system operates fundamentally on power dynamics rather than academic ideals. I have observed instances, such as during the development of the Rome Statute, where efforts were made to bolster the authority of judicial bodies, even in addressing issues of state responsibility.



- It is imperative that we accurately interpret the current state of affairs. Reflecting on the words of Al-Sharani, a 15th-century Egyptian jurist, who asserted that the wisest of men are those who can best interpret their times, we find resonance in our contemporary context. Throughout history, whenever a dominant group, whether within societies or on the global stage, perceives a threat to its supremacy, it tends to resort to drastic measures, driven by fear of losing control. This fear-induced response often leads to egregious actions and grave injustices. Presently, we find ourselves in such a moment in history, where the spectre of fear looms large. My concerns are deeply rooted in the hope that we navigate these turbulent times with minimal harm, not only to precious human life but also to the core principles and aspirations of international law and justice.

Jorge Castañeda

PhD; Former Foreign Minister of Mexico; Global Distinguished Professor, New York University

Jorge Castañeda, Mexico's Foreign Minister from 2000 to 2003, is a distinguished public intellectual, political scientist, and prolific writer. Born in 1953 in Mexico City, he holds degrees from Princeton University, Université de Paris-I, and the University of Paris-I. Castañeda taught at Mexico's National Autonomous University, Princeton University, UC Berkeley, and NYU. His extensive writings include over 15 books, covering topics like U.S.-Mexican relations, Latin American politics, and the Cold War's impact on the region. Notable works include "Compañero: The Life and Death of Che Guevara" and "Mañana Forever? Mexico and the Mexicans." Appointed Global Distinguished Professor at NYU, Castañeda is a Human Rights Watch member and received honours from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society.



to permanent membership in the Security Council, and would such aspirations be welcomed by others? Similar queries apply to other nations seeking greater representation.

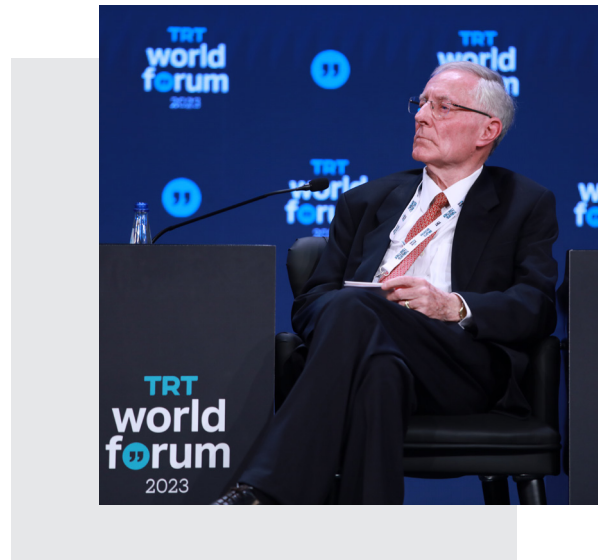
- The statement that "if the United Nations didn't exist, we would have to invent it" encapsulates the paradox. The UN performs indispensable tasks that require attention, yet its efficacy is contingent upon the will of member states. As rightly noted, not all member states wield equal influence, with the P5 holding significant sway. However, it's crucial to acknowledge the vital role the UN plays, often overlooked. Organisations like UNHCR and IOM are instrumental, particularly in regions like Latin America, addressing critical issues such as migration. Even today, in Mexico, these UN agencies are at the forefront, providing assistance to countless migrants awaiting entry into the United States, surpassing the efforts of national governments.
- The dilemma lies in whether to abolish the existing structure or to enact reforms. This quandary underscores the significance of countries like Mexico, representing the emerging Global South. While acknowledging the necessity of transforming not only the UN but also institutions like the IMF and the World Bank to reflect shifting global dynamics in demographics, economics, and trade, questions arise about the role of countries like Mexico. Are we part of the new Global South, or are we merely impoverished neighbours of the Global North? Should we aspire
- I hold little faith in the possibility of reforming the United Nations Security Council. It's improbable that the five permanent members, who hold veto power over any changes, would willingly diminish their own authority or redistribute it to others. Realistically, I don't foresee such a scenario unfolding in the foreseeable future. Given this reality, the question becomes: How do we navigate the current landscape? While I'm hopeful for change spurred by civil society or emerging powers from the Global South, I remain sceptical of significant shifts occurring. Moreover, I am cautious about the idea of universalising bodies like the Human Rights Council, despite its shortcomings. I'm hesitant about endorsing values that diverge from its current principles, as I find fault with much of its current operations."

Hans von Sponeck

Former UN Assistant Secretary-General and UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq

Hans von Sponeck, had a distinguished UN career from 1968 to 2000, serving as UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Türkiye and UN Resident Coordinator in Botswana, Pakistan, and India. His roles also included being the Director of the European Bureau of the UNDP in Geneva and the UN Assistant Secretary-General and Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq. Post-retirement, he contributed to academia as a Faculty Member of the Centre for Conflict Research at the University of Marburg (Germany) from 2006 to 2019. Additionally, he served as a Consultant Trainer at the UN System Staff College in Torino (Italy) from 2006 to 2015. An accomplished author, von Sponeck's notable work includes a multilingual monograph on Iraq, titled "A Different Kind of War – The UN Sanctions Regime in Iraq," reflecting his lifelong dedication to global humanitarian efforts and scholarly pursuits.

- The United Nations presents itself in various dimensions. There's the political facet embodied by the General Assembly and the Security Council, the judicial aspect represented by the International Court of Justice, and the executive realm, in which I was actively engaged for 30 out of the 32 years. This executive facet encompasses the Secretary-General and a multitude of specialised agencies, funds, and programs under his purview. When considering reform, it's crucial to recognise the distinct challenges faced by each dimension. We gather here to explore strategies for enhancing the effectiveness of the UN. However, it's important to note that the reform challenges differ significantly across these dimensions. While all aspects warrant attention, the reform challenge within the political sphere, particularly concerning the Security Council, may arguably be the most critical.
- The crux of the matter lies in the UN's failure to adapt to changing global dynamics. The world has evolved significantly, yet the UN's structure remains stagnant. Why should countries like Germany, Brazil, Japan, South Africa, and India not have a stake in permanent seats? Currently, Africa and Latin America lack representation in the permanent group, while Asia, with over 50% of the world's population, holds only one seat. Conversely,



the Western world retains three seats. Such imbalances render the current platform inadequate for addressing international geopolitical issues. Therefore, the primary reform imperative is to rectify this disparity and establish a more balanced representation within the UN framework.

- A new voice is emerging, and many of its proponents are among us, particularly the younger generation, driven by a desire to effect positive change surpassing that of previous generations. I firmly advocate that any future discourse on reform, whether academic or political, must actively engage civil society. Despite the challenges we face, I am more hopeful than some of my esteemed colleagues. When I reflect upon the current state of affairs, I see a glimmer of optimism, symbolised by a small smile in the mirror. I believe that through collaboration and partnership, we can transcend the limitations imposed by the dominance of the five permanent members. Indeed, the world is more than just these five governments; it encompasses a new power—the collective force of civil society. This perspective isn't naive; it's a stark reality.

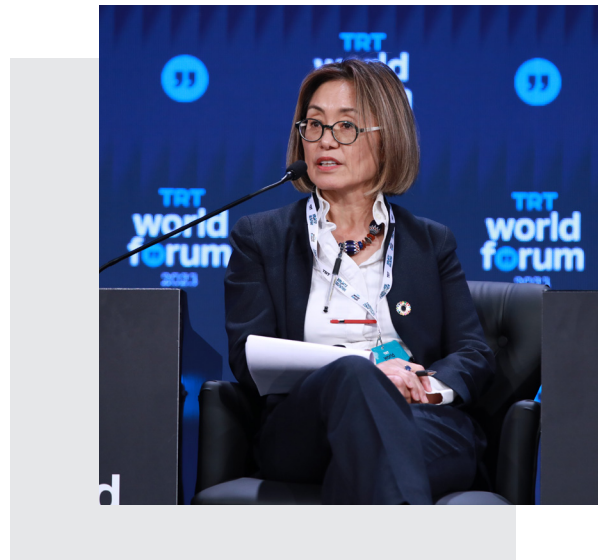
Gwi-Yeop Son

Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, United Nations Development Coordination Office

Gwi-Yeop Son began her career in Haiti, assisting HIV/AIDS patients with a non-governmental organisation. She then worked with the Country Women's Association of Nigeria, focusing on microfinance schemes.

In 1994, Ms. Son was posted to Somalia as a Programme Officer with the United Nations (UN) Development Programme (UNDP), marking the beginning of 18 years with UNDP. After two years in Somalia, she worked in various other locations including Lao PDR, Timor-Leste during the pre-independence period, Indonesia during the first democratic elections, and the Tsunami 2004 period. She was also posted in New York to serve as a Programme Adviser on Afghanistan and as OCHA's Director of Corporate Programmes. In OCHA, she was responsible for organising the World Humanitarian Summit and provided direct oversight over work on communications, information services, policy development and humanitarian financing including the CERF and the country-based pooled funds. Ms. Son took up her assignment as the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator from August 2018 until August 2020. Subsequently, she assumed the Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia with the Development Coordination Office.

- The Secretary-General has unequivocally stated in his opening address to the General Assembly this year that both the global governance structure of the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions are antiquated and urgently require reform to align with the realities of the contemporary world. There are concerted efforts underway to reform the UN, with specific proposals addressing the Security Council and General Assembly being actively discussed. These proposals will be presented by member states as part of the intergovernmental process during the upcoming summit for the future. The discussions echo the sentiments expressed by previous panellists regarding the UN's role as a mirror reflecting the fragmentation, division, and polarisation among member states. This context underscores the Secretary-General's decision to invoke Article 99.



- The dedicated efforts of United Nations staff members are commendable, as they tirelessly work on the frontlines of humanitarian response. This commitment is underscored by the Secretary-General's invocation of Article 99, urging for a humanitarian ceasefire to facilitate the delivery of aid to the most vulnerable populations. Protecting humanitarian aid workers is paramount to ensuring adherence to international humanitarian and human rights law, as it enables us to fulfil our mission of delivering aid effectively. It is imperative to safeguard hospitals, where lives are saved, and to ensure the safety of humanitarian workers. Regardless of the resolutions passed, the United Nations remains steadfast in its commitment to reducing vulnerabilities and alleviating human suffering. This unwavering dedication to humanitarian action persists, independent of the outcomes of resolutions.
- An example of necessary reform within the Security Council is the imperative for its membership to be more inclusive, reflecting the evolving global landscape. This entails diversifying the composition of the Security Council and re-evaluating the veto power. Should the veto power align with the new composition of the Security Council? Perhaps consensus-based decision-making could be explored as an alternative. Furthermore, there are recommendations concerning the General Assembly, advocating for a shift from non-binding resolutions to binding ones. Enhancing the accountability of not only the Security Council but also

other organs of the United Nations is a critical aspect of these ongoing discussions. These deliberations are occurring presently, highlighting the urgency and relevance of these reform efforts.

- We must aspire to a revitalised UN that revitalises multilateralism, fostering a more interconnected and inclusive global community. While it may seem ambitious, without such aspirations and vision, progress will remain elusive. Placing people at the forefront of our efforts is paramount, and the voices you represent are integral to effecting change within the UN system and advancing multilateralism.



Session 8

Empowering Humanity: Addressing Social Crises and Inequalities



Moderator

Efnan Han, Presenter, TRT World

Keynote Speaker

Mahinur Özdemir Göktaş, Minister of Family and Social Services, Republic of Türkiye

Speakers

Daniela Carmela Cicchella, Representative a.i. of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Türkiye

Chris Lockyear, Secretary General, Médecins sans Frontières (MSF)

Prof. Fatma Meriç Yılmaz, President, Turkish Red Crescent

Michael Spindelegger, Director General, International Center for Migration Policy Development - ICMPD

Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh, Politician, Former member of the SNP

Key Takeaways

- There are intricate connections between various crises, whether they stem from natural disasters, conflicts, or climate change. These crises often exacerbate each other, leading to complex humanitarian challenges.
- There's a clear recognition that humanitarian efforts cannot be divorced from political contexts. Political decisions heavily influence the effectiveness of humanitarian responses, making it crucial for leaders to prioritise the needs of affected populations.
- There is a necessity for collaboration and collective action in addressing social injustices and crises. No single entity or country can tackle these issues alone, highlighting the need for international partnerships and cooperation.
- The media plays a significant role in shaping public perception and understanding of crises. Highlighting human-interest stories and providing accurate information empowers individuals to form their own analyses and engage with humanitarian issues.
- There's a strong call for bold, principled leadership to navigate the complexities of global crises. Leaders are urged to prioritise the well-being of their populations, advocate for vulnerable groups, and spearhead efforts towards positive change.
- Increasing the representation of women in politics is seen as pivotal for driving positive change. Gender-inclusive leadership can lead to more empathetic and effective decision-making, potentially transforming humanitarian responses for the better.

Summary of the Session

The session titled “Empowering Humanity: Addressing Social Crises and Inequalities” highlighted various humanitarian crises and the responses required to address them. The moderator discussed the importance of collaboration in crisis response, exemplified by the Turkish Red Crescent's operations worldwide. The dire situation in Gaza, particularly concerning healthcare, was emphasised, shedding light on the challenges faced by doctors amidst limited resources and a collapsing health system.

The session also addressed mass displacement, exemplified by the plight of millions in Gaza and other regions, stressing the need for global partnerships and the media's role in shaping perceptions of crises and marginalised communities. Climate change-induced disasters were discussed as a catalyst for mass displacement,

necessitating robust recovery efforts.

Further discussions delved into the role of governments, NGOs, and innovative strategies in humanitarian response, as well as the injustice inherent in climate change impacts disproportionately affecting vulnerable nations. Issues of illegal migration and treatment of migrants in Europe and the US were examined, emphasising the importance of collaboration between governments and humanitarian organisations.

Challenges related to politics in humanitarian work were also acknowledged, highlighting the interconnectedness of politics and humanitarian efforts. Overall, the session underscored the urgency of collective action and collaboration to address social crises and inequalities worldwide.

Keynote Speech by Mahinur Özdemir Göktaş

Minister of Family and Social Services, Republic of Türkiye

It's a great pleasure to be with you at TRT World Forum, which has become a brand on its own, contributing to the intellectual agenda and providing a valuable platform for academics, think tanks and international organisations in order to communicate effectively with the world. In this session of TRT World Forum, under the theme of Empowering humanity: addressing the social crisis and inequalities, we are passionately joining the quest for new and immediate solutions to the humanitarian crisis that has now turned into a global ordeal. The world-renowned writer Tolstoy once said 'If you feel pain, you are alive, if you can feel the pain of others, you are human'. Summarising human existence with empathy, he reminds us of our essence in a universal language.

Today, as Tolstoy eloquently described the hearts of all those who are human, resonate deeply with the sufferings in Palestine. Unfortunately, we face a crisis in Gaza and Palestine, where not only human values are tarnished and destroyed, but also human life as a whole. A genocide in the making is what we are witnessing in Gaza. No love, no compassion, no respect for babies, children, women, elderly, mothers. This unfolding genocide perpetrated by the Israeli government against the Palestinians, is a savage attack on human existence, the right to life and future generations. We condemn this attack and in the face of oppression, express loudly once again that we stand by our Palestinian brothers and sisters. We witness actions in support of the Palestinians and protests against Israeli aggression in many countries worldwide, from Ireland to Japan, from Indonesia to the United States. However, reflecting on the bitter consequences of the global world, we observe that the global authorities, which united their powers to develop mechanisms and institutions for security and development, are remaining indifferent to the brutality unfolding. It horrifies us that the global authorities regard the people who lost their lives in Gaza, the majority of whom are women and children, as just a number of some kinds of data. We are witnessing once again that the humanist ideas that have been embraced and enshrined by the West since the 18th century have not eliminated the crisis in the Middle East.



This unfolding genocide perpetrated by the Israeli government against the Palestinians, is a savage attack on human existence, the right to life and future generations. We condemn this attack and in the face of oppression, express loudly once again that we stand by our Palestinian brothers and sisters. We witness actions in support of the Palestinians and protests against Israeli aggression in many countries worldwide, from Ireland to Japan, from Indonesia to the United States.

And in today's Gaza, those ideals are ignored, if not forgotten entirely. Moreover, when looking at the international media, it's unsettling to witness prestigious institutions attempting to portray the ongoing genocide in quotes such as a painful but justified or necessary operation.

From time to time, we witness the protests and the resignation of some conscientious media members working for those institutions. It's once again high time for hard-working and fact-seeking media organisations such as TRT World to reflect what's really happening on the field to the attention of the world. As our president, His Excellency Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has stated, those who remain indifferent to the deaths of thousands of Gazans today will have no credibility for any words they may utter on any subject tomorrow. Türkiye once again stands on the right side of history for Gaza and invites every state that has a share in human history to stand by humanity.

It's time to find new ways in our quest for immediate and sustainable solutions. The global system, under international institutions, claiming to perpetuate peace and justice worldwide, is now evidently failing to alleviate the pain and protect humanity comprehensively. Now it's time to realise that the world is bigger than five. Now is the time to speak about a more just and universal international system that genuinely embraces human values. In this renewal process, taking the initiative locally and regionally, from education to health care, from the economy to the defence industry, and from academia to politics has become crucial. Türkiye's strategy of renewal from the core to the periphery will enhance our global effectiveness, accelerate the healing of wounds, prevent the emergence of new crises, and serve as a good example of and inspiration for the entire world. The power behind our success is the intense love and loyalty we hold for human values, leading us to the Turkish century. This is because, in our culture, it's a good thing to pick up a stone that may trip a random passerby and then put it aside. Sharing your bread is a form of basic kindness. Sharing your troubles is a fine form of kindness, even a smile to a child is a form of kindness. Taking responsibility for the sake of goodness is the simplest and most practical form of humanity. At this point in human history, every single human being should once again adopt the motto of taking action for the sake of humanity as much as they can, and to the best of their ability. Because justice is the quintessential foundation of our dignity, and justice is a universal value.

As power becomes monopolised by one person or a group. Tears will not cease to flow in the common home of humanity or the world. Imagine that from some rooms of this house cries for help are arising and we all hear these cries. Do we stop and stare or do we act? Esteemed guests. Yes, I believe that every person who can feel the pain of others will feel a responsibility. Act with a sense of what I can do. And take a strong stance against those who disregard justice, especially in the face of injustices. Objecting with our words and intervening with our power to end injustice should be the guiding principles of our lives, as stated by our President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Particularly for international entrepreneurs, supranational organisations such as the United Nations, whose purpose is to find solutions to humanitarian and social crises, must take action in line with the equality and justice principles they promise. I therefore welcome Secretary-General Antonio Guterres's move by triggering article 99. However, yesterday we saw the hope for a ceasefire was short lived as the call was vetoed by only one member of the Security Council.

The world is bigger than five. As the Ministry, as a permanent ceasefire begins, we, along with the Palestinian people, will do everything within the framework of the United Nations as well as in coordination with bilateral and regional countries. Dear guest, we remember Rachel Corrie, who declared 'If oppression is ours I'm not one of us' and remained faithful to her words even at the cost of her life. This young woman became an unforgettable example of activism against the violence inflicted on civilians by Israel. With her compassion and sound judgement, she distinguished herself from the oppressor and took a clear stand. Dear guests, on earth the prevalence of justice, compassion and mercy is possible only when the good are as courageous as the oppressors. I particularly want to emphasise that the solutions we seek will not come from outside, but will rise from the conscience of common sense of those who are witnessing and experiencing the humanitarian crisis up close. It's also crucial to remind ourselves of the power of unity in solving humanitarian crises. The ones caused by the earthquake on February 6th in our country are being rapidly healed through the unity of all government units, NGOs and volunteer teams. United, we are healing our wounds. Our continuous efforts to provide humanitarian aid and our establishment of a system that delivers assistance not only during the crisis but also during the aftermath, have facilitated the development of a holistic and coordinated approach. And

this is not only for Türkiye but wherever aid or services are needed. As the Ministry of Family and Social Services, we want to express our readiness to collaborate in all efforts related to the humanitarian crisis.

Every society has a unique culture stemming from its story, geography, natural resources and traditions. The process of globalisation has opened the door for societies to open up to each other. However, it has also exposed them to influences, to alienate them from their unique culture. This has led societies to forget their own essence, making them more susceptible to cultural or physical invasion and occupation. At this point, it's important to know oneself and to read the past and the future through the mirror of our own culture. In our path to the Turkish Century, this is exactly what we are doing. The esteemed First Lady, Her Excellency Emine Erdogan said, in one of her speeches, 'Our past full of heroes or civilisation and culture, who will serve as a role model for humanity is our greatest legacy. Our responsibility is to utilise this increasingly barren climate of the world through this magnificent legacy.

Furthermore, I would like to draw your attention to the correlation between the colonial legacy with the humanitarian crisis and everlasting political and societal unrest. Every society has a unique culture stemming from its story, geography, natural resources and traditions. The process of globalisation has opened the door for societies to open up to each other. However, it has also exposed them to influences, to alienate them from their unique culture. This has led societies to forget their own essence, making them more susceptible to cultural or physical invasion and occupation. At this point, it's important to know oneself and to read the past and the future through the mirror of our own culture. In our path to the Turkish Century, this is exactly what we are doing. The esteemed First Lady, Her Excellency Emine Erdogan said, in one of her speeches, 'Our past full of heroes or civilisation and culture, who will serve as a role model for humanity is our greatest legacy. Our responsibility is to utilise this increasingly barren climate of the world through this magnificent legacy. Human human beings who move through change by nature manifest different crises through laws. We really are the last generation to solve many crises. A drop of mercy, a warm touch is enough for people together from where they have fallen to rise from the ashes when they are burnt. I wish that we could be this drop of mercy, this warm touch for the humanitarian crisis happening in the world right now.



Highlights

Daniela Carmela Cicchella

Representative a.i. of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Türkiye

After joining the UN Refugee Agency in Türkiye in 1995, she worked in different management positions in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East, with three assignments at Headquarters in Geneva and several field deployments. Her most recent positions have included Assistant Representative in Jordan (2013-2018) where she managed the protection response during the Syrian emergency, and the Division of External Relations at UNHCR Headquarters in charge of Communicating with Communities (2018-2020), before her assignment as UNHCR Deputy Representative in 2020.

Daniela Cicchella, a qualified attorney to the Supreme Court of Justice in Italy, holds an LLM in Sociology of Law/Criminology (Spain/UK) and an MA in Legal Theory/Anthropology (Belgium/France).

- Gaza is attracting the attention of all of us, as has Russia as well. But let's not forget that there are over 14 million people in the world at the moment who are forcibly displaced. And there are so many other locations that we should not forget. For instance, there was a displaced camp that was recently bombed in Myanmar. There is an ongoing situation in Sudan. There are still many crises in Africa. UNHCR currently has 46 emergencies in 23 countries globally. I think we should not overlook that element because it's something that requires attention and focus from all of us. We should focus, of course, on the most critical tragedies that we are witnessing every day. But keeping in mind that unfortunately, many of these crises are not in the highlights, and this is something that we need to address together.
- Giving a face to the statistics is important to focus on in order to find a collective way forward, especially in moments where hope may seem scarce. We need to harness collective strength to address and reverse these trends. This is becoming increasingly evident in our current times.



- Maybe we need to reflect on what innovative and innovation mean. Sometimes innovation is solely associated with technology or specific skills of individuals. However, in the context of our discussion today, innovation entails the collective responsibility of challenging the status quo and seeking ways to improve the situation. This requires courage at both individual and organisational levels. Despite the challenges and discouragements, it is crucial to continue striving for improvement.
- Türkiye is still the largest refugee hosting country to date, which is an important fact to remember. There has been significant welcoming of a large number of refugees thus far. However, similar efforts are being made worldwide. For instance, Asian refugees are primarily hosted in Asia, and those forcibly displaced in Africa are mainly supported there. As mentioned earlier, we need to expand our engagement beyond traditional stakeholders and actors. This includes involving financial institutions, the private sector, and other entities that don't typically engage with humanitarian crises.
- Orphan refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants often follow similar routes, yet we must never forget the diverse reasons driving their movement. Refugees are forcibly displaced, while asylum seekers flee against their will. Additionally, exploitation, trafficking, and profiteering often play a role in migration, underscoring the importance of understanding the nuances in addressing these issues.

Chris Lockyear

Secretary General, Médecins sans Frontières (MSF)

Chris first worked for Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in 2005 in Darfur, Sudan. He has since worked for the organisation in Somalia and Pakistan. In 2010, he was appointed Operations Manager in Amsterdam, in charge of operations in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, South Sudan and Uganda.

Since 2014, Chris has worked and studied outside MSF as a fellow at Yale University, operations director for Action Against Hunger in New York, and a student of philosophy and ethics in the UK.



- The context in which this crisis in Gaza is unfolding reveals pre-existing vulnerabilities in the health system, economy, and job market. As a medical organisation, we understand that hospitals and healthcare are foundational to society, yet they are being systematically destroyed. The indiscriminate bombardment makes it extremely difficult for our teams to operate effectively. While aid may be quantified in terms of trucks and tonnes, true humanitarian assistance is about people helping people. Currently, our efforts feel performative, as the scale of needs far surpasses what we can provide. With around 250 Palestinian staff persevering amidst the chaos, and only a handful of international staff able to support them, the reality of humanitarian aid falls short of the immense challenges we face.
- The statistics indicate that our capacity falls far short of what is needed, even before the current outbreak of conflict. Our ability to safely treat patients and provide basic healthcare, let alone the high-quality surgical and trauma-oriented care urgently required, is hanging by a thread. Working in Gaza is incredibly dangerous, with immense needs and limited resources. This situation not only tests humanitarian assistance globally but also presents a significant challenge to the world.
- Our aim is to further develop partnerships with ministries of health worldwide while also expanding our understanding of the economic and social impacts of climate change. Recognizing the reciprocal relationship between climate change and conflict,

we acknowledge the emergence of a toxic nexus contributing to contemporary patterns. Addressing this interconnectedness is essential for effective intervention.

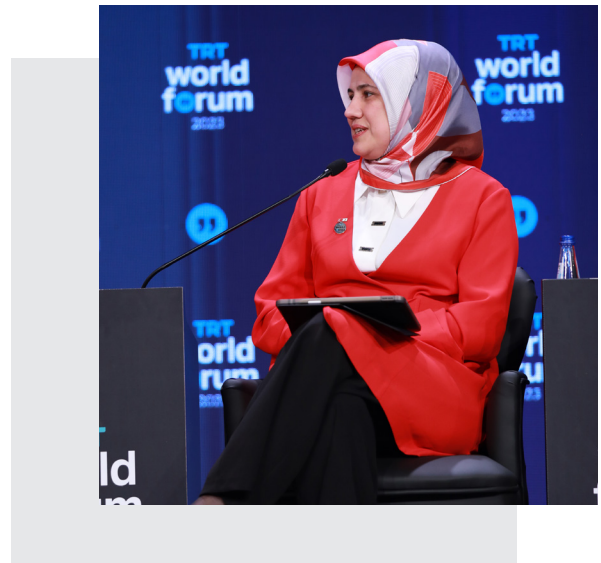
- Let's not be naive. Humanitarian assistance arises from systemic failures, leadership shortcomings, and political inadequacies. Whether in Gaza, Sudan, South Sudan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, or in addressing the climate crisis and the criminalization of migrants, all these crises necessitate political solutions. Humanitarian efforts serve as temporary fixes to deeper-rooted problems. We operate within political contexts, relying on negotiations for ceasefires or safe passage for aid convoys. Without political cohesion on critical issues like climate change and migration, humanitarian efforts risk becoming futile."

Fatma Meriç Yılmaz

Professor; President, Turkish Red Crescent

Prof. Dr. Fatma Meriç Yılmaz, a medical professional, graduated from Ankara University's Faculty of Medicine and later earned her Associate Professorship in 2008. She held roles such as Chief Assistant and Assistant Clinic Chief at Ankara Education and Research Hospital. Joining Yıldırım Beyazıt University, she became a Professor, serving as Laboratory Coordinator and earning various accolades. Yılmaz contributed to healthcare leadership as the General Secretary of Ankara 1st Regional Public Hospitals Association and Deputy Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health. An accomplished academic, she currently teaches at Yıldırım Beyazıt University, specialising in Medical Biochemistry. Additionally, Yılmaz is actively involved in scientific committees, holding positions like TÜBİTAK BİDEP Advisory Board member and IFCC C-NPU commission principal. Beyond academia, she has been a dedicated member of the Turkish Red Crescent, assuming the role of President after her election in July 2023.

- The challenges our world faces include both natural and man-made disasters, whose frequency and severity are increasing. Environmental degradation, climate change, and globalisation contribute to events such as flash floods, epidemics, and droughts. As part of the IFRC Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, the Turkish Crescent's response benefits from a unique structure with partners worldwide. Each national society within this movement offers countrywide coverage, enabling a localised and coordinated response.
- "The worldwide crisis comprises both natural and man-made disasters, amplifying the challenges we face. In this complex environment, no entity can respond to crises alone. Collective efforts are more crucial than ever, necessitating collaboration and solidarity. Together, hand in hand, we must work to address these challenges effectively.
- As a humanitarian organisation, our commitment is unwavering: we must be there when needed, leaving no one behind. Whether they are citizens or refugees fleeing from Syria or elsewhere, in our humanitarian eyes, there is no distinction. Access to basic needs, especially for women and children, is paramount. In emergency responses, regardless of the nature—be



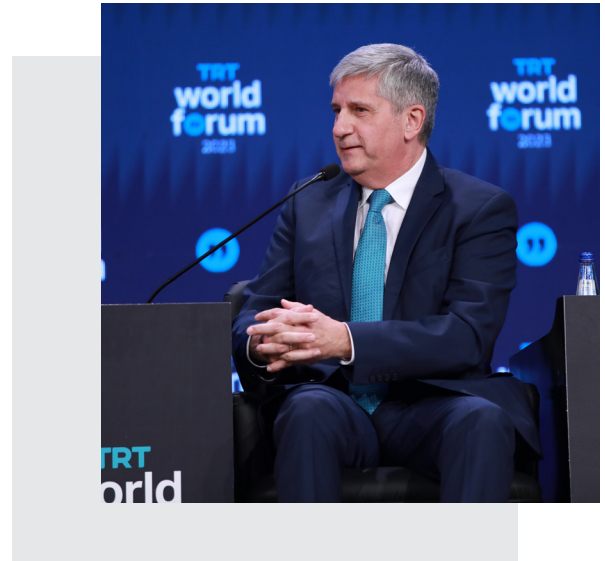
it armed conflict, natural disasters, migration, or other crises—the most vulnerable groups are consistently women and children. They are the backbone of our response efforts, as evidenced by their pivotal role in facilitating fast recovery and overall well-being.



Michael Spindelegger

Director General, International Center for Migration Policy Development - ICMPD

Michael Spindelegger has extensive experience in international relations through his work in the Federal Government of the Republic of Austria. From 2008 to 2013 he served as Minister of Foreign Affairs and from 2013 to 2014 as Minister of Finance. Additionally, he was the vice chancellor and leader of the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) from 2011 to 2014. In January 2016 he was appointed as the Director General of the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), and reappointed by the ICMPD Steering Group in December 2019 for another term of five years.



- Despite numerous initiatives over the years, finding effective solutions to address inequalities remains a formidable challenge. However, there are promising ideas emerging to tackle these issues and provide opportunities, particularly for young people in different countries. One such idea involves greater involvement of the private sector in migration. By creating sustainable workplaces in countries of origin, we can offer viable alternatives to irregular migration. Projects in Africa have demonstrated the tangible impact of this approach on the ground.
- Another promising idea is to establish more legal pathways for migration. Many migrants resort to irregular means, facing numerous challenges upon arrival in destination countries. Legal pathways provide alternatives and create opportunities for young people from countries of origin, leveraging their skills and contributing to job creation.
- What is particularly promising to me, having observed this for many years, is that many countries are increasingly open to forming partnerships along migration routes. This shift towards partnership signifies a common understanding of shared challenges and the willingness to view issues from the perspective of both one's own country and that of their partners. This collaborative approach holds great promise for the years ahead.
- In a country with 170 million people, living just one metre above sea level in Bangladesh, there is genuine fear for the future. The immediate impact of climate change on migration manifests as displacement within the country and to neighbouring regions. Recognizing this, we must prioritise the establishment of legal pathways for those affected, coupled with training initiatives in partnership with the private sector within their countries of origin. This proactive approach aims to provide hope and opportunity to citizens before mass displacement becomes inevitable.
- When migrant numbers surge, as witnessed in past instances, it erodes citizens' trust in the state's ability to manage the situation. This erosion of trust often leads to xenophobic sentiments, as seen in Europe in 2015/16. To mitigate this, it's essential to proactively educate and prepare citizens about the measures the state can take. Positive integration examples and successful projects serve as powerful communication tools in migration policy. By showcasing successful integration efforts and their benefits, states can garner greater support from their citizens.

Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh

Politician, Former member of the SNP

Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh is a Scottish politician, and former member of the SNP. When elected to the House of Commons in 2015, she became the first woman of colour in Scottish history, to be elected from Scotland to any parliament – Westminster, Scottish or European.

She was awarded an OBE by the late Queen Elizabeth for services to business and the Asian community. She has also won Scottish Asian Businesswoman of the Year in Scotland and Asian Woman Professional of the Year at the prestigious Asian Women of Achievement Awards in London. She also served as a board member of the Yes Scotland campaign in the independence referendum of 2014 and is an alumna of the US State Department International Visitors Leadership Programme.

Currently, Ms Ahmed-Sheikh is working in television as a producer and presenter and writes a weekly political column for The National.

- In situations where 13 countries may vote for a ceasefire to save lives, but one country can veto it, we must look to the future and ensure that we communicate the story effectively. The media's greatest role lies in highlighting the human interest aspect of events, such as the story you shared of a journalist's loss. These personal narratives resonate with people and facilitate a shift from political discourse to human connection. As individuals increasingly seek information independently, it's crucial to empower them with accurate information to form their own analyses.
- I'm quite taken aback by the UK government's misinterpretation of the situation. However, as a proud Scot, I'm heartened by the Scottish Parliament's vote for a ceasefire. When Scotland achieves independence, as I firmly believe it will, we will be an eager and conscientious participant in shaping foreign policy.
- People are displaced due to both climate emergencies and conflicts. However, there's no hierarchy of refugees. Unfortunately, there's a tendency to perceive some refugees as more deserving than others. As we contemplate future policies, particularly with the upcoming United States election, immigration



becomes an inevitable consequence of displacement. Where will these displaced individuals go? This is a matter of great concern for me.

- There's a significant responsibility on countries that are the primary contributors to climate injustice, which affects countless people worldwide. However, the UK is currently grappling with its immigration policy and experiencing internal strife. We must revisit the phraseology used by your president: "The world is greater than five." This underscores the need for collective efforts, partnerships, and unwavering determination to ensure that humanity triumphs. Humanity knows no boundaries of nationality, creed, religion, or colour. Every life is precious, and it's imperative that we work together to save each and everyone.
- Politics and humanitarian efforts are intertwined and inseparable. Political leadership plays a crucial role. Increasing women's representation in politics can have a profoundly positive impact. In conclusion, the world desperately needs bold, courageous, strong, principled leadership. If such leadership existed, we wouldn't find ourselves in our current predicament. Therefore, I urge all leaders worldwide to step up, take a stand, and truly represent their people. Speak for them, not at them or to them.

Session 9

The Critical Nexus of Food, Water and Energy Security



Moderator

Jaffar Hasnain, Presenter, TRT World

Speakers

Stephen Cahill, United Nations World Food Program Türkiye Director and Country Representative

Dr. Naji Abi Aad, Chief Operating Officer | Senior Advisor, Petroleb

Prof Ayşegül Kibaroglu, Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science and International Relations, MEF University

Asit K. Biswas, Director, Water Management International Pte Ltd, Singapore, Distinguished Visiting Professor, University of Glasgow

Key Takeaways

- There are intricate interconnections between food, water, and energy security. Participants highlighted how issues in one area, such as water scarcity or energy instability, can significantly impact the availability and access to other essential resources.
- Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that considers the nexus between food, water, and energy. The concept of a nexus framework emerged as a valuable tool for policymakers and stakeholders to understand and address the complex relationships among these resources.
- Global politics play a significant role in shaping the dynamics of food, water, and energy security. Conflicts, geopolitical tensions, and economic disparities can exacerbate existing challenges and hinder collaborative efforts to address them.
- Technological advancements offer promising solutions for managing and mitigating the impact of resource-related challenges. Examples of proactive measures, such as predictive flood management and innovative water management technologies, showcase the potential for technology to enhance resilience and preparedness.
- While water scarcity is a global concern, its solutions are inherently local. Thus, the importance of community-based approaches and leveraging local knowledge and resources to address water scarcity effectively is required.
- There lies a critical issue of distribution and access, particularly in ensuring equitable access to food and water resources. Challenges such as food waste, inefficient distribution systems, and economic disparities contribute to global hunger and water scarcity despite ample production.

Summary of the Session

The session on “The Critical Nexus of Food, Water, and Energy Security” delved deeply into the complex and interrelated challenges facing humanity in the realms of food, water, and energy sustainability. The moderator set the stage by highlighting a stark reality: around 800 million people worldwide are currently grappling with hunger, and projections suggest that by 2050, global food production must increase by a daunting 50% to adequately feed a population expected to surpass 9 billion. This raises fundamental questions about the feasibility of achieving food security within existing frameworks and practices.

Participants were prompted to consider whether current measures are sufficient to meet the long-term goal of ensuring food security. Concerns were raised about the impact of global politics on the state of food, water, and energy security, particularly amidst climate-induced geopolitical shifts and population movements. The moderator’s

firsthand experiences covering natural disasters and conflicts underscored the link between such events and subsequent migrations, which can strain resources and exacerbate energy security challenges.

A significant focus of the discussion revolved around the pivotal role of water in energy production, with emphasis placed on the urgent need for water conservation efforts. Despite increasing recognition of water’s importance, questions lingered about the sustainability of current practices and whether they are truly adequate to meet growing demands.

Furthermore, the conversation touched upon the perplexing paradox of hunger amidst plenty: if there is sufficient food, why do millions still go hungry? This led to reflections on the distribution mechanisms and socioeconomic factors contributing to food insecurity.

Amidst discussions about potential solutions, concerns were raised about the implications of proposed alternatives on existing industries. The tension between sustainability imperatives and economic interests was palpable, highlighting the complexities inherent in transitioning to more environmentally friendly practices.

In summary, the session underscored the urgent need for coordinated global action to address the intricate challenges at the intersection of food, water, and energy security. It illuminated the pressing need for innovative solutions, robust international collaboration, and a reevaluation of existing practices to ensure a sustainable and equitable future for all.

Highlights

Stephen Cahill

United Nations World Food Program Türkiye Director and Country Representative

Stephen Cahill is currently the Representative and Country director of the World Food Program in Türkiye. He has 30 years of experience spanning the humanitarian and private sectors in more than 10 countries. After holding key positions in the private sector across various regions, including the United Kingdom, Brazil, and the Middle East, Stephen joined WFP in 2004 and has since worked in several large-scale, complex emergencies including the Ukraine conflict in 2022 and the West Africa Ebola Outbreak (2014-15). He also played a crucial role in responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic by working closely with WHO, UNICEF, and other partners in establishing a worldwide platform for logistics services. This approach culminated with Stephen becoming Director of Humanitarian Logistics Services in 2021, offering critical emergency supply chain support to 900 humanitarian and development partners globally.

- Despite the apparent abundance of food in the world, pervasive uncertainty exacerbates numerous challenges. Climate change, for instance, introduces significant instability. Conflict represents another formidable hurdle, particularly for organisations like ours. Approximately 80% of our budget is directed towards conflict-affected regions, posing considerable operational challenges. The ongoing crisis in Ukraine, for example, directly impacts oil prices in regions like the Black Sea, a crucial source of global food. Fluctuations in food prices subsequently drive up global poverty rates, necessitating increased funding for organisations like WFP to sustain their efforts in feeding vulnerable populations.
- Preparedness emerges as a crucial avenue for mitigating the impact of emergencies, a sentiment with which



I wholeheartedly concur, echoing the professor's perspective. Extensive studies corroborate the significant returns on investment associated with preparedness efforts. For every dollar allocated to preparedness, the potential return on investment during an emergency is a staggering \$7. This underscores the cost-saving potential inherent in proactive measures. However, the unpredictable nature of climate change presents formidable challenges. Take, for instance, the devastating events in Mozambique in 2007, marked by one of the largest typhoon cyclones, or the unprecedented cyclone that struck the Philippines in 2015. These events, exacerbated by climate change, pose considerable difficulties in terms of preparation, given the unpredictability of their intensity and trajectory. Compounding this challenge is the reality that many affected countries lack the financial resources to invest adequately in preparedness measures. This underscores a troubling inequity: the countries most profoundly impacted by climate change are often

those least equipped to cope with its consequences.

- The importance of preparedness cannot be overstated. Preparedness represents a significant investment, and our studies validate its immense value. We've found that for every dollar allocated to preparedness, there's a potential return on investment of \$7 during an emergency. This not only underscores the efficacy of proactive measures but also serves as a compelling argument for

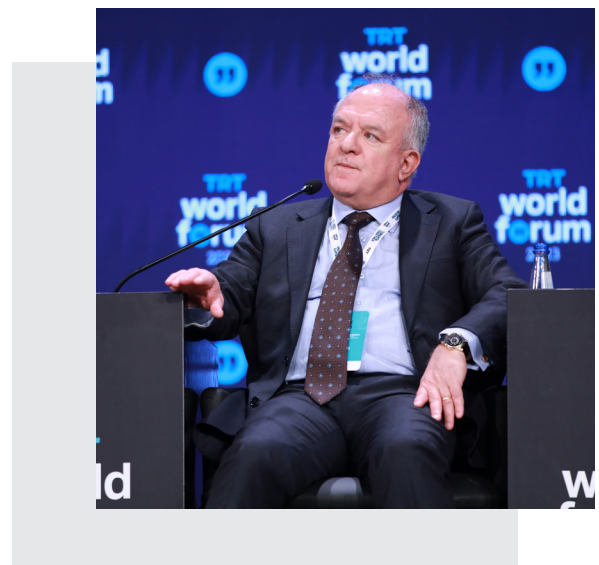
Naji Abi Aad

PhD; Chief Operating Officer | Senior Advisor, Petroleb

In September 2012, Dr. Naji Abi Aad assumed the role of Chief Operating Officer (COO) at Petroleb, an oil company based in Beirut, engaged in petroleum exploration in the East Mediterranean and the Gulf. Concurrently, from December 2016 to March 2020, he served as Senior Advisor for the Middle East at the US company Tellurian. Before relocating to Lebanon, Dr. Abi-Aad spent eight years in Qatar, initially as a Research Advisor for Qatar Petroleum (QP) and subsequently as a Media and Research Strategist in the Office of HE Qatar's Deputy Premier, Minister of Energy & Industry. He later held prominent positions at Qatar Petroleum International (QPI). Dr. Abi-Aad holds a PhD in Energy Economics from Grenoble University in France and has over 35 years of experience, contributing to numerous consultations, conferences, and studies on oil and gas in the Middle East. His expertise encompasses the security of oil and gas supplies, natural gas markets, and the development of gas sales and supply contracts at both local and global levels. Dr. Abi-Aad has authored over 100 reports and studies on Middle East energy issues, including a book on the security of petroleum supply in the region titled "Instability & Conflict in the Middle East: People Petroleum & Security Threats" (Macmillan, London 1997).

- In a world where energy resources are unequally distributed, there was a belief that interconnecting countries through energy networks could alleviate tensions and foster stability. This concept, often referred to as a mutually dependent stabilising factor, envisioned countries relying on each other for energy supply as a means to promote peace and cooperation. However, the reality has been quite different.
- The experience of Europe and the Middle East has demonstrated that even substantial energy connections, such as linking Western Europe to the Russian gas pipeline, have not necessarily resulted in peaceful

donors, highlighting the cost-saving potential inherent in preparedness efforts...Adding to the complexity is the unfortunate reality that these climate-related disasters often strike countries with limited financial resources to invest in preparedness measures. This raises profound questions of equity. The countries bearing the brunt of climate change are frequently those least equipped to mitigate its consequences, exacerbating existing disparities.



relations. On the contrary, these connections have sometimes exacerbated tensions. For example, the linkage between Western Europe and energy sources in the Soviet Union, later Russia, became a source of antagonism, particularly following the Ukrainian crisis.

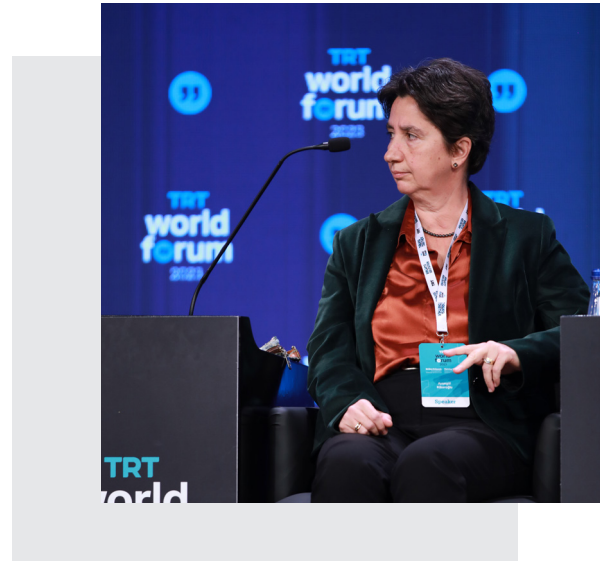
- Ensuring the security of energy supply necessitates not only securing the sources of energy but also guaranteeing stable and growing demand. Without demand, there's no purpose in supplying energy. It's essential to recognise that energy isn't just about powering homes and industries; it's intricately linked with other vital resources like food and water. This interconnectedness forms a nexus that cannot be overlooked.
- From my experience and observations in this region, particularly the Middle East, it's evident that political stability is paramount for ensuring the security of energy supply. The turbulent geopolitical landscape in areas such as the Suez Canal, Lebanon, Yemen, Eritrea, and the Strait of Hormuz underscores this reality. Without political stability, these crucial waterways become vulnerable, jeopardising the passage of oil and gas tankers essential for global energy trade.

Ayşegül Kibaroglu

Professor, Chair of the Department of Political Science and International Relations at MEF University

Aysegül Kibaroglu is a Professor of International Relations at MEF University, Istanbul. She was a visiting professor at the University of Texas at Austin. She is the author of *Building a Regime for the Waters of the Euphrates-Tigris River Basin* (2002, Brill) and co-editor of *Türkiye's Water Policy* (Springer, 2011). She has published in *International Negotiation*, *Water International*, *Water Policy*, *International Journal of Water Resources Development*, *Global Governance* and *International Affairs*. Her recent book, *Türkiye's Water Diplomacy: Analysis of its Foundations, Challenges and Prospects* is published by the Anthem Press. She is a founding member of the Euphrates Tigris Initiative for Cooperation (ETIC).

- The concept of the water-energy-food nexus has emerged as a notable buzzword, encapsulating the intricate and interconnected relationships among these vital resources. It serves as a framework to comprehend the complex dynamics and interdependencies inherent in the management of water, energy, and food resources. Global politics play a significant role in shaping these relationships, underscoring the importance of understanding and navigating them effectively.
- Moreover, the water-energy-food nexus offers a valuable policy framework for nation-states and other stakeholders to address resource challenges and constraints. By adopting a nexus approach, policymakers can better coordinate their efforts in planning, managing, and executing policies related to water, energy, and food. This holistic perspective encourages integrated decision-making and fosters collaboration among diverse stakeholders, ultimately contributing to more sustainable and resilient resource management practices.
- Political stability stands as a cornerstone for achieving socioeconomic development and addressing the economic challenges facing the Middle East and other pertinent regions. However, it's important to acknowledge that many people in the Middle East, like in other parts of the world, have become accustomed to living in what we might term "imperfect



peace." Despite the presence of ongoing instability, stakeholders, including politicians, professionals, and experts, endeavour to capitalise on moments of relative calm to advance projects aimed at economic development. In these instances, initiatives centred around water, energy, and food development take precedence. However, the reality is that waiting for sustained political stability can prove to be an exercise in futility. Political stability is often fleeting, and there are numerous factors that contribute to ongoing instability.



Asit K. Biswas

Professor; Director, Water Management International Pte Ltd, Singapore, Distinguished Visiting Professor, University of Glasgow

Prof. Asit K. Biswas is a globally recognised authority on water, food, environment, and development issues. With a distinguished career as an academic and senior public official in Canada, he has advised leaders in 23 countries, six Heads of UN Agencies, and multiple CEOs in Fortune 500 companies. Co-founder of the International Water Resources Association and World Water Council, he served on the World Commission on Water. A member of the Global Agenda Council of the World Economic Forum, he holds advisory roles with organisations like Pictet Asset Management and the Indian Institute of Technology. A recipient of prestigious awards, including the Stockholm Water Prize, Biswas has authored 89 books, translated into 43 languages. As the founder of the International Journal of Water Resources Development, he contributed to media outlets globally, reaching millions annually with his insights on natural resources, climate change, geopolitics, and business strategies. His extensive research reflects in over 935 publications and a Research Gate score in the top 2.5% worldwide.

- It's undeniable that the world possesses an abundance of food and energy resources. However, effective management of these resources is essential, and unfortunately, we're falling short in this regard. Energy production is intricately linked with water availability; without water, energy generation is simply not feasible. Conversely, providing water to communities also requires energy. This symbiotic relationship underscores the vital importance of both resources... Similar dynamics are at play in food production. Water is a fundamental requirement for agriculture; without it, food production would be severely compromised. Despite this, at a global level, we're already producing more than enough food to meet demand. Therefore, the issue lies not in food scarcity but in ensuring equitable distribution and efficient management of resources.
- While it's true that food production is ample, the glaring issue lies in people's purchasing power. This underscores the importance of discussing the water-food-energy nexus comprehensively. Economic growth has indeed been observed in recent years, but unfortunately, it has not been accompanied by proportional job creation. This phenomenon of "jobless



growth" is prevalent across many regions worldwide, exacerbating the challenge of providing for growing populations.

- Water scarcity is inherently a local issue, primarily due to the prevailing low prices of water, with the exception of bottled water, which can be transported across regions. However, water scarcity is not a physical constraint; rather, it is a multifaceted challenge that necessitates local solutions. Fortunately, we possess both the knowledge and the technology to address this pressing issue at the local level. By leveraging innovative approaches and community-based solutions, it is indeed possible to tackle water scarcity effectively.



Expert Roundtable Sessions

Session 1

Shared Goals, Shared Gains: Africa's Quest for Stability and Prosperity



Moderator

Yashn Padayachee

Speakers

Professor Arkebe Oqubay, British Academy Global Professor, Fmr. Senior Minister and Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia

Dr. Nkosana Moyo, Founder and Member of Advisory Board, Mandela Institute for Development Studies (MINDS)

Elif Çomoğlu Ülgen, Ambassador; General Director of Eastern and Southern Africa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Türkiye

Discussants

Dr. Asma Nairi Özen, Researcher, Africa Foundation

Kaan Devecioğlu, Expert, ORSAM

Dr. Tunç Demirtaş, Researcher, SETA

Dr. İsmail Numan Telci, Vice President & North Africa Studies Coordinator, ORSAM; Associate Professor, Sakarya University

Abdullahi Kaka Abubakar, Program Editor Africa Matters, MoneyTalks, TRT World

Gladys Njoroge, Africa Matters Executive Producer, TRT World

Dr. Yunus Turhan, Associate Professor, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University

Mohamed Hussein Aideed, Co-founder and Secretary of Development and Planning of BARWAAQO Party

Key Takeaways

- Despite internal challenges, the African Union played a significant role in fostering political stability in Ethiopia, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between political continuity and economic growth. However, a biased international system often neglects conflicts in Africa.
- Türkiye's foreign policy approach, exemplified in its engagement with Somalia, serves as a compelling case study. The Turkish involvement in Somalia since 2011, marked by President Erdoğan's visit despite security concerns, goes beyond mere symbolism, it underscores a commitment to constructive engagement and improvement without imposing an external agenda.
- Türkiye's strategic positioning within the African continent encompasses active contributions to the continent's economic development. This multifaceted influence is evidenced in Türkiye's focus on manufacturing, infrastructure development, and the maintenance of an independent foreign policy.

- Africa's historical struggle with a "master-slave" mentality underscores the need for a paradigm shift. Türkiye's unique engagement, free from colonial baggage, signifies a departure from historical inequalities. The partnership model emphasises the establishment of a nation-state paradigm, prioritising mutually beneficial deals. The mutual learning between Türkiye and Africa extends beyond security matters, encompassing humanitarian diplomacy.
- Africa's responsibility in negotiating deals with global players, such as China, becomes crucial for its sustainable development. Acknowledging and learning from Türkiye's commitment to a "win-win" foreign policy and tailored bilateral engagements can serve as a guiding principle for African nations.

Summary

In the expert roundtable on "Shared Goals, Shared Gains: Africa's Quest for Stability and Prosperity," experts delved into crucial topics surrounding Africa's development and stability. The session emphasised realism and the importance of acknowledging factors within control, focusing on peace, security, prosperity, integrability, and cultural identity. Prioritising achievable goals, especially in economic strength and diversity, emerged as a central theme.

Türkiye's strategic significance in Africa took the spotlight due to its extensive diplomatic presence and diverse identity. The experts explored Türkiye's response to the Ukraine-Russia war, highlighting its commitment to global peace and security. The complex nature of Africa was emphasised, rejecting the notion of treating it as a single entity. Specific attention was given to Somalia, with discussions on Ottoman-Somalia relations and Türkiye's involvement in education, military, and business in the region.

The meeting addressed economic growth in Türkiye, the role of Chinese investment, and diverse models followed by African countries. Key challenges identified included security, development, education, healthcare, accountability, corruption, and stability issues. Türkiye's limited resources were acknowledged, emphasising the importance of economic cooperation and sharing experiences between Türkiye and Africa, particularly in addressing terrorism.

The discussions underscored the significance of visible successes like hospitals and roads and the imperative for Africa to combat challenges for sustained progress. Women's participation in political affairs, Somalia and Ethiopia's international cooperation strategies, and potential collaborations between Turkish and African nations for advancing women's rights were also discussed. The overarching theme of the meeting was the pursuit of shared growth, stability, prosperity, and unity across the diverse African landscape.

Session 2

A Tipping Point in the Israel-Palestine Conflict: Where to After Gaza?



Moderator

Efnan Han

Speakers

Zaha Hassan, Fellow, Middle East Program, Carnegie

Khaled Elgindy, Senior Fellow, Director of Program on Palestine and Palestinian-Israeli Affairs, Middle East Institute,

Robert S. Ford, Senior Fellow, Middle East Institute

Çağrı Erhan, Professor, Rector, Altınbaş University

Discussants

Dr. Ahmet Yusuf Özdemir, Assistant Professor, Ibn Haldun University

Haydar Oruç, Researcher, Middle East Institute, Sakarya University

Ambassador Dipuo Letsatsi-Duba, Ambassador, South Africa

Dr. Aslı Nur Düzgün, Medeniyet University

Abdullah Baabood, Non-Resident Scholar, Malcolm H. Kerr, Carnegie Middle East Centre

Dr. Bruno Macaes, Former Secretary of State for Europe in Portugal

Özgür Dikmen, Lecturer, Stanford University

Dr. Alptekin Cihangir İşbilir, Anadolu Agency News Academy Manager

Key Takeaways

- The atrocities in Gaza, heightened by the events on October 7, poses significant challenges. Long-standing issues, such as extrajudicial killings, land annexations, and the Gaza blockade, mean that a two-state solution is not logical. The term “genocide” is debated, with concerns raised about Israel’s actions indicating intent. International mechanisms, like the International Criminal Court (ICC), face challenges, and there are calls for UN reform.
- The US role in the crisis is complex, with a historical context and internal dynamics, including the influence of Evangelicals. The lack of a clear Israeli endgame raises concerns, and there is uncertainty about when the US might take concrete action against Israel. The situation poses risks of a humanitarian crisis, potential displacement, and a re-evaluation of international norms.
- Efforts for accountability, potential sanctions, and the need for a just international system are emphasised. The atrocities in Gaza raise questions about the peace process, potential shifts in US foreign policy, and the role of the international community in the face of humanitarian crises.

Summary

During this expert roundtable session the Israeli violence in Gaza's global attention and rising concerns about the longstanding humanitarian conflict in Gaza was debated. While international organisations, including the UN, are being scrutinised for their ineffectiveness, finding a sustainable resolution, understanding the historical context and addressing core issues—such as extrajudicial killings, land annexations, and the Gaza blockade—is crucial. Without tackling these challenges, achieving lasting peace remains a formidable task. Netanyahu's actions, denying Palestinian rights and pursuing de facto annexation, face mild objections globally. During the roundtable, experts stated that the term “Gazacaust” signals a paradigm shift, urging the exploration of alternative approaches. The displacement of Palestinians raises concerns about a humanitarian crisis and potential conflicts with Egypt. The absence of an apparent exit strategy, an ineffective international system, and the need for a paradigm shift are also discussed.

Experts also talked about the need for reviving the Palestinian Authority, but its return to Gaza seems unlikely. The lack of credible leadership hinders a peace process. The focus on security as a prerequisite for humanitarian access is also emphasised. Suggestions for sanctions focus on targeting individuals and influencing US actions in the Security Council. As experts specified, expressing criticism of Israel is considered risky, with academic and intellectual stifling on the matter. Biden's silence on apartheid in Palestine raises concerns, and public mobilisation is urged, focusing on the ICC.

The expert roundtable encompassed the complex historical context of the problem, challenges to peace, concerns about genocide, lack of international accountability, and the need for a paradigm shift in addressing the crisis in Gaza. As discussions unfolded, the focus turned to potential humanitarian crises, the Palestinian refugee issue, and the urgency for a clear US stance. Experts eventually stressed upon the need for accountability, coupled with challenges in the existing international security architecture, and they called for a paradigm shift in addressing the complex dynamics of the crisis.



Session 3

Türkiye's Century: Reflecting on the Past and Shaping The Future



Moderator

Yusuf Erim

Speakers

Luke Coffey, Senior Fellow, Hudson Institute

Ali Bakir, Professor, Ibn Khaldon Center for Humanities and Social Sciences, Qatar University

Murat Yeşiltaş, Professor, International Politics, Ankara Social Sciences University

Michael Reynolds, Professor, Near Eastern Studies, Princeton University

Discussants

Prof. Tarık Oğuzlu, Professor of International Relations, Istanbul Aydın University

Prof. Özden Zeynep Oktav, Professor of International Relations, Istanbul Medeniyet University

Dania Thafer, Executive Director, Gulf International Forum

Dr. Valeria Giannotta, Director, CeSPI Observatory on Türkiye (Italy)

Dr. Esmira Jafarova, Board Member of the Center of Analysis of International Relations, AIR Center

Doç.Dr. Şuay Nilhan Açıkalın, Associate Professor, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University

H.E Mazen Kabbara, Ambassador, Republic of Lebanon

Bilgehan Öztürk, Researcher, SETA

Key Takeaways

- The establishment of the Republic of Türkiye a century ago marked a unique moment in the region's history. Türkiye's democratic evolution, influenced by Western ideals, distinguishes it as a regional power.
- Turkish foreign policy is depicted as pragmatic, adaptable, and intricate, considering factors like geography, economy, social dynamics, regional/international situations, and institutional orientation. Recent shifts in Gulf-Türkiye relations are attributed to various regional dynamics.
- The resurgence of Turkic identity in post-Soviet states, particularly in Central Asia, influences geopolitical dynamics. Türkiye's role in the region and potential collaboration with the US are crucial for future developments.
- Türkiye's historic reforms, military advancements, and diplomatic efforts position it as a regional power. The emphasis on regionalism, mediation, and cooperation in areas like energy and transportation contributes to its growing role.

Summary

This session delved into Türkiye's century-long journey, emphasising its unique democratic evolution and pragmatic foreign policy. The rise of Turkic identity in post-Soviet states, especially in Central Asia, adds complexity to geopolitical landscapes. Türkiye's regional influence is explored through historic reforms, military advancements, and diplomatic endeavours, portraying it as a significant player in mediating regional issues.

The discussion on strategic autonomy highlighted the intricate transformations in Türkiye's foreign policy linked to identity and geopolitical changes. Uncertainties in Turkish & EU relations, with questions

about Türkiye's role and strategic autonomy, are explored. It was argued in this expert roundtable that the concept of a transactional relationship gains prominence in global geopolitics.

Eventually, developments on nuclear weapons and new considerations posed by this stance, especially in a rapidly changing security dynamic are discussed. The session underscored the need for global cooperation in nuclear disarmament. It was stated by the experts that Türkiye's role in this shifting international landscape remains crucial, reflecting its intricate position in regional and global affairs.

Session 4

New Horizons in the Eastern Mediterranean: Competing Interests and Power Dynamic



Moderator

Ludovica Brignola

Speakers

Professor Paolo Magri, Executive Vice President, Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI)

Peter Millett, Chairman, Libya British Business Council

Tarek Megerisi, Senior Policy Fellow, MENA Programme, European Council on Foreign Relations

Professor Kostas Ifantis, Professor of International Relations, Panteion University of Athens

Discussants

Prof. Tarık Oğuzlu, Professor of International Relations, Istanbul Aydın University

Prof. Özden Zeynep Oktav, Professor of International Relations, Istanbul Medeniyet University

Dania Thafer, Executive Director, Gulf International Forum

Dr. Valeria Giannotta, Director, CeSPI Observatory on Türkiye (Italy)

Dr. Esmira Jafarova, Board Member of the Center of Analysis of International Relations, AIR Center

Doç.Dr. Şuay Nilhan Açıkalın, Associate Professor, Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University

H.E Mazen Kabbara, Ambassador, Republic of Lebanon

Bilgehan Öztürk, Researcher, SETA

Key Takeaways

- The European Union (EU) faces challenges in crafting a cohesive long-term policy for the East Mediterranean. The post-Brexit shift to a more tactical approach introduces cohesiveness issues, notably in navigating complexities such as migration, food security, and the humanitarian conflict in Gaza, with Greece playing a pivotal role in shaping the regional status quo.
- Italy's role in the East Med is driven by its interest in ensuring safety and contributing to Libya's stabilisation. The scrutiny of Italy's offshore deal with Libya underscores the nuanced nature of its engagement, with limitations and exclusions of key stakeholders in security and economics.

- The EU faces frustrations in managing the UN mission in Libya, influenced by energy companies and regional dynamics. Greece's collaboration with American companies and Israel's control over the offshore gas field add layers of complexity. The December 2023 Athens Agreement is seen as a potentially positive step, and Türkiye could become a cooperative partner in addressing East Med issues.
- Türkiye and Greece navigate complex relations, with the longstanding Cyprus issue and geopolitical considerations contributing to recurring crises. Despite challenges, there's potential to compartmentalise energy issues and foster cooperation in non-geopolitical domains. External actors like Russia and Iran influence the regional landscape, adding complexity to East Med geopolitics.
- Central Asia's strength lies in assimilating diverse influences beyond its Turkic identity. Recognizing affiliations to Russia and Islam is crucial. Strategic collaboration with China demands a nuanced approach to safeguard regional interests.

Summary

It was stated in this expert roundtable on “New Horizons in the Eastern Mediterranean: Competing Interests and Power Dynamic” that the European Union (EU) finds itself at a crossroads in grappling with the complexities of the East Mediterranean, confronted with the daunting task of crafting a cohesive and sustainable long-term policy. For the experts of this session, the post-Brexit era has witnessed a noticeable shift in the EU's approach, moving away from a strategic stance to one more tactical in nature. This transition has introduced challenges, notably in terms of cohesiveness, as the EU navigates the intricacies of the East Med.

The focal point of analysis of experts in this session revolved around Italy's offshore deal with Libya, a strategic move that warrants meticulous scrutiny. This scrutiny sheds light on the deal's limitations and the consequential exclusion of key stakeholders in security and economics, further emphasising the nuanced nature of Italy's involvement in East Med dynamics. The EU's journey in the East Med over the past year unfolded against a backdrop of frustrations and challenges. The intricacies of managing the UN mission in Libya, coupled with the complex influence of energy

companies in EU capitals, highlight the nuanced nature of regional dynamics.

Another notable issue mentioned in this roundtable is Israeli control over the offshore gas field in Gaza, particularly after the October 2023 Israeli war on Gaza. A critical juncture is identified in the December 2023 Athens Agreement, acknowledged as a potential positive step within the ongoing web of regional complexities. It appears that Türkiye can become a cooperative partner at least in the search for solutions to the issues in the East Mediterranean.

An extensive exploration into the intricate relations between Türkiye and Greece, extending beyond the East Med, reveals a tapestry of challenges and opportunities. The longstanding Cyprus issue, coupled with cultural misunderstandings and overarching geopolitical considerations, contributes to recurring crises and perceived threats. Despite these challenges, experts of this session stated that there is potential for compartmentalising energy issues and fostering cooperation in non-geopolitical domains, hinting at the possibility of a nuanced path forward.

Session 5

Europe's Multidimensional Challenges: Revitalising Multilateralism



Moderator

Melinda Nucifora

Speakers

Dr. Pavel K. Baev, Research Professor at the Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO)

Ryszard Czarnecki, Member, European Parliament

Dr Joris Van Bladel, Senior Associate Fellow, Egmont-Royal and Institute for International Relations

Dr Antonia Colibășanu, Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy Research Institute

Dr. Tessa Hauswedell, Lecturer, University College London

Discussants

H.E. Ms. Olga Hajflerová, Consul General, Czech Republic

Prof. Kıvanç Ulusoy, Professor of Political Sciences, Istanbul University

Prof Meltem Müftüler-Baç, Dean of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and Professor of International Relations, Sabancı University

Emre Gönen, CCR Executive Board, Bilgi University; Advisor to the Rector at Istanbul Bilgi University

Ana María Rodríguez Pérez, Communication Advisor, Embassy of the Kingdom of Spain in the Republic of Türkiye

Naim Rashiti, Executive Director, Balkans Policy Research Group

Prof. Talha Köse, Professor of International Relations

Key Takeaways

- The European Union (EU)'s multilateralism faces a critical juncture as Russia transforms from a strategic partner to a perceived threat, necessitating a comprehensive reassessment of strategies.
- Challenges arise within the EU due to the absence of a cohesive foreign policy, accentuated by diverse member-state responses to the Ukraine conflict. National identities often supersede a harmonised European identity, impacting internal cohesion.
- While the EU adapts strategically to manage conflicts and avoid hegemony, persistent challenges linger, including the tiered system among EU citizens and the imperative for vigilance against Russian threats.
- The EU's existence requires a commitment to inclusive dialogue, diversity celebration, and addressing multifaceted challenges. Concerns arise about EU dependencies on the US for security, ammunition, and public sentiment, emphasising the need for strategic autonomy.

Summary

In this expert roundtable, it was claimed that the EU's multilateralism, shaped by the aftermath of the Ukraine war, faces multifaceted challenges. Geopolitical shifts, particularly Russia's transformation, demand a comprehensive reassessment of strategies. Internal challenges, such as the absence of a cohesive foreign policy and struggles with identity consolidation, underscore the delicate balance required for effective multilateralism. The EU exhibits adaptability but contends with persistent issues like the tiered system among citizens and the imperative for vigilance against Russian threats.

The complexity extends to marketing challenges, where the EU's commendable performance in the Ukraine war contrasts with external perceptions favouring NATO. Inclusivity, diversity, and addressing challenges like ageing populations and external dependencies on the US become critical. The EU's dedication to a holistic and multilateral approach is questioned, emphasising the need for a resilient framework amid evolving geopolitical dynamics. Overall, experts of this roundtable noted that navigating such challenges is pivotal for the EU's sustained effectiveness on the global stage.

Session 6

Middle East: Between Normalisation and War



Moderator

Dr. Tarek Cherkaoui

Speakers

Dr. Dania Thafer, Executive Director, Gulf International Forum,

Dr. Tarik M. Yousef, Director and Senior Fellow, Middle East Council,

Dr. Abdullah Baabood, Chair, State of Qatar for Islamic Area Studies, Waseda University

Dr. Abdullah K. Alshayji, Professor, Former Chairman and Director, Political Science Graduate Program, Kuwait University

Discussants

Dr. Hakkı Uygur, President, IRAM Center

Dr. Muhammad Affan, Director, Al Sharq

Oytun Orhan, Researcher, ORSAM

Dr. Heba Raouf Mohamed Ezzat, Assistant Professor, Ibn Haldun University

Tarek Megerisi, Senior Policy Fellow, MENA Programme, European Council on Foreign Relations

Vali Nasr, Majid Khadduri, Professor of International Affairs and Middle East Studies, Johns Hopkins-SAIS; Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Atlantic Council's South Asia Center

Charles Kupchan, Professor of International Affairs, Georgetown University; Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations

Ali Bakir, Senior Policy Fellow, MENA Programme, European Council on Foreign Relations

Key Takeaways

- The Middle East faces challenges in balancing regional security and national interests amid the normalisation process. Economic factors, especially the cost of regional rivalries, play a crucial role.
- Strategic exhaustion and a focus on economic nationalism contribute to confidence-building measures, emphasising the need for cooperation despite trust issues.

- Disagreement exists on US retrenchment, with concerns about its reliability as a security guarantor. Shifts in focus and perceived decline contribute to a complex geopolitical scene.
- Ongoing conflicts are rooted in hegemonic and ideological competition, compounded by global system changes and leadership transitions.
- Iran is perceived as strategically winning in the region due to its tangible actions through proxies like the Houthis. Gulf states are engaging with Iran to contain its influence rather than confront it directly, highlighting the evolving dynamics and potential shifts in alliances.
- Public opinion reflects post-democratic moments, post-ideological shifts, and post-truth trends, contributing to the region's political dynamics.

Summary

The expert roundtable titled “Middle East: Between Normalisation and War” delved into the complex geopolitical landscape leading up to October 7th, highlighting the normalisation process and the challenges faced in the region. An expert discussed the shift from maximalist to pragmatic policies among Gulf countries, focusing on optics-driven normalisation with Türkiye and Iran. The impending normalisation between Saudi Arabia and Israel created dilemmas for Gulf states, balancing regional security and national interests. Economic factors, particularly the cost of regional rivalries, were emphasised, with concerns about the role of the Houthis and potential US counterattacks.

Other experts addressed the role of the economy in normalisation, citing strategic exhaustion and a realisation of diverging political and economic interests. Confidence-building measures, exemplified by dialogue between Türkiye and the UAE, were seen as essential. The analysis underscored challenges faced by Türkiye,

Egypt, and Jordan, leading to unsustainable costs of regional rivalries, potentially disrupted by incidents like the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

Another expert disagreed with US retrenchment, citing incidents like the withdrawal from Afghanistan, dysfunctional American politics, and a shift in focus to the Indo-Pacific. Concerns were raised about the US's reliability as a security guarantor, contributing to a declining perception in the Arab world. Another expert saw visible retrenchment post-Iranian oil attacks but acknowledged ongoing US presence in the Gulf.

The geopolitical scene was examined in the expert roundtable, emphasising endemic problems, ideological competition, and global system changes. The role of non-state actors, particularly Hamas, and potential US retrenchment were discussed. The complex public attitude was explored, considering post-democratic moments and the influence of social media on information consumption.

Session 7

Balkans under the Spotlight: Resolving Tensions and Disputes



Moderator

Nafisa Latic

Speakers

Naim Rashiti, Executive Director, Balkans Policy Research Group

Radmila Shekerinska, Former Minister of Defence, Former Deputy Prime Minister, Republic of North Macedonia

Sabina Cudic, Member of the National Parliament, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Mehmet Kemal Bozay, Deputy Foreign Minister, Republic of Türkiye

Discussants

Dr. İdlir Lika, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science and International Relations, Ibn Haldun University

Dr. Mehmet Uğur Ekinci, Researcher, SETA

Dr. Zuhail Mert Uzuner, Associate Professor of International Relations, Marmara University

Dr. Enes Turbic, Assistant Professor, Balkans Research Institute of Trakya University

Dajana Barusic, Researcher, Institute of Strategic Thinking Türkiye

Dr. Esin Ömer Ulukaya, Assistant Professor, Trakya University

H.E. Periša Kastratović, Ambassador of Montenegro to the Republic of Türkiye

Dr. Selver Buldanlıoğlu Şahin, Assistant Professor, Bilkent University

Berk Cem Tatar, Diplomat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Türkiye

Key Takeaways

- Türkiye actively engages in the Balkans, addressing regional issues and promoting well-being. Inclusive engagement spans ethnic and political lines.
- Addressing demographic concerns, job insecurity, and societal struggles is vital. Green digital transformations and quality-of-life improvements are key strategies.
- North Macedonia's NATO journey highlights the importance of small Balkan countries. EU hesitance poses risks, and Türkiye's integration is seen as transformative.
- Regional initiatives, such as the Open Balkan initiative, can enhance stability. Evolving political landscapes indicate growing maturity.
- The Balkans face geopolitical challenges, with Russia's influence and the risk of destabilisation strategies. Bureaucratic measures are crucial for stability.

Summary

The Balkans are undergoing significant challenges amidst geopolitical shifts. Tensions in northern Kosovo and separatist rhetoric in Bosnia Herzegovina raise concerns. Türkiye, recognising its strategic role, actively engages in the region, addressing issues such as the electric grid system. The panel emphasises inclusive engagement across ethnic and political lines. Disputes' root causes, including demographic concerns and job insecurity, demand a focus on quality of life and green digital transformations.

The Balkans face a frozen conflict, with war potential upon Kosovo Force withdrawal. Issues include political stagnation, societal struggles, and geopolitical challenges. NATO and EU dynamics are crucial.

North Macedonia's NATO journey, balancing regional and bilateral concerns, highlights the strategic importance of small Balkan countries. The Western

Balkans grapple with EU hesitance, posing risks of losing momentum.

Türkiye's EU integration, though challenging, offers transformative impacts. The EU's strategic direction faces criticism, urging a reconsideration of Türkiye's role, especially in energy dialogues.

Experts stressed the need for peace, exchange programs, and an understanding of Türkiye's evolving global role.

The Balkans, born from Yugoslavia's legacy, struggle with unipolar influences. Regional cooperation, as seen in the Open Balkan initiative, can enhance stability. The evolving political landscape, despite challenges, indicates growing maturity. The region must prevent harmful external dominance.

Session 8

The Central Asian Chessboard: Seeking Cooperation Amid Competition



Moderator

Alican Ayanlar

Speakers

Prof. Oktay Tanrısever, Professor of International Relations, Middle East Technical University

Dr. Aijan Sharshenova, Executive Director at Crossroads Central Asia

Dr. Esmira Jafarova, Board Member of the Center of Analysis of International Relations, AIR Center

Prof. Sean Roberts, Professor of the Practice of International Affairs, George Washington University

Discussants

Dr. Kenan Aslanlı, Expert, IRAM Center

Turan Gafarli, Non-Resident Fellow, Topchubashov Center

Dr. Vügar İmanbeyli, Associate Professor, Marmara University

Prof. Giray Saynur Derman, Professor, Marmara University

Prof. Oktay Tanrısever, Professor of International Relations, Middle East Technical University

Prof. Fahri Türk, Professor, Trakya University

Dr. Altay Atlı, Managing Director, Atlı Global

Key Takeaways

- Since 2022, Central Asian states have gained global recognition as independent actors, with Türkiye establishing early bilateral ties. Türkiye's democratic ideals play a crucial role in the region's paradigm shift towards comprehensive development.
- Post-Ukraine war, Central Asian states exhibit identity assertiveness, marking a significant decolonisation process. This departure from historical passivity reflects a proactive stance since gaining independence from the Soviet Union.
- The East-West Economic Corridor is central to regional collaboration, fostering connectivity and global visibility. The Organisation of Turkic States holds potential for economic and defence collaboration, but challenges like Russian caution and internal capacity building persist.

- Central Asia's relationship with Russia, rooted in cultural ties, contrasts with limited engagement from the US and the EU. Reciprocal partnerships are essential for the region's sustainable development and security.
- Central Asia's strength lies in assimilating diverse influences beyond its Turkic identity. Recognizing affiliations to Russia and Islam is crucial. Strategic collaboration with China demands a nuanced approach to safeguard regional interests.

Summary

It was stated in this expert roundtable titled “The Central Asian Chessboard: Seeking Cooperation Amid Competition” that the geopolitical recalibration since 2022 has thrust Central Asian states into global prominence, with Türkiye serving as a diplomatic trailblazer due to early bilateral engagements. Central Asian countries, exhibiting identity assertiveness following the war in Ukraine, are undergoing a significant decolonisation process, marking a departure from their historic passivity since the Cold War.

It was argued in the roundtable that the East-West Economic Corridor emerges as a transformative force, ensuring regional connectivity and global visibility. The potential of the Organisation of Turkic States as an economic and defence collaboration entity faces challenges, including Russian caution and the need for internal capacity building.

Central Asia's symbiotic relationship with Russia contrasts with limited engagement from the US and the

EU, demanding nuanced recalibration for sustainable development and security. Geopolitical nuances, including China's emphasis on “Turkish-speaking” and internal challenges in the Organisation of Turkic States, underscore the complexity of multilateral partnerships.

The region's historical strength lies in its adaptive capacity to assimilate diverse cultural influences, transcending its Turkic identity. Recognising affiliations to Russia and Islam is crucial for maximising regional benefits. While aware of potential challenges with Chinese business, Central Asian states see opportunities for strategic collaboration, necessitating a careful and nuanced approach to safeguard regional interests.

In navigating these complexities, diplomatic finesse and a sophisticated response are crucial. Experts of this roundtable expressed the view that Central Asian states must leverage historical people-to-people links with Russia to position the region as a pivotal player in global affairs.

 Speaker Ahmed Nadeem	 Speaker Gideon Levy	 Speaker Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu	 Speaker Noel Curran	 Guest of Honour Recep Tayyip Erdoğan	 Speaker Paolo Magri	 Speaker Asit K. Biswas	 Speaker Abdullah Baabood	 Speaker Charles A. Kupchan
 Keynote Mehmet Zahid Sobaci	 Speaker Alex Stuart Aiken	 Speaker Umberto Del Panta	 Speaker Husam S. Zomlot	 Speaker Awn Al-Khasawneh	 Speaker Hans von Sponeck	 Keynote Fahrettin Altun	 Speaker Dana Al Suyaygh	 Speaker Vali Nasr
 Speaker Gladys Njoroge	 Speaker Kalev Hannes Leetaru	 Speaker Jorge Castañeda	 Speaker John Dugard	 Speaker Michael Spindelegger	 Keynote Cevdet Yilmaz	 Speaker Evarist Bartolo	 Speaker Pornchai Danvivathana	 Speaker Çetin Nazıkkol
 Speaker Stephen Cahill	 Speaker Aysegül Kibaroglu	 Speaker Murat Yeşiltaş	 Speaker Pavel K. Baev	 Speaker Tasmina Ahmed-Sheikh	 Speaker Abdullah K. Alshayji	 Speaker Fatma Meriç Yilmaz	 Speaker Gıyay Sayınur Derman	 Speaker Najî Abi Aad
 Speaker Luke Coffey	 Moderator Tessa Hauswedell	 Speaker Ali Taha Koç	 Speaker Ryszard Henry Czarnecki	 Speaker Valeria Giannotta	 Speaker Michael A. Reynolds	 Speaker Aijan Sharshenova	 Speaker Daniela Carmela Cicchella	 Speaker Tarik M. Yousef
 Keynote Mehmet Fatih Kacır	 Speaker Yarek Megerisi	 Speaker Haluk Görgün	 Speaker Mirek Dušek	 Speaker Dipuo Letsatsi-Duba	 Speaker Elena Contino-Fleming	 Speaker Chris Lockyear	 Speaker Arkebe Oqubay	 Speaker Peter Millett
 Speaker Kostas Hantisi	 Speaker Antonia Colibășanu	 Speaker Can Kasapoğlu	 Keynote Mahinur Özdemir Gökaş	 Speaker Burhanettin Duran	 Speaker Bruno Maçães	 Keynote Mehmet Şimşek	 Speaker Esin Öner Ulukaya	 Speaker Shahin Mustafayev
 Speaker Sean R. Roberts	 Speaker Mazen Kabbara	 Speaker Radmila Shekerinska	 Speaker Sabina Cudic	 Speaker Mehmet Uğur Ekinci	 Speaker Vügar İmanbeyli	 Speaker Khaled Elgindy	 Speaker Özden Zeynep Oktav	 Speaker Joris Van Bladel
 Speaker Tolga Bilener	 Speaker Selver Buldanhoğlu Şahin	 Speaker Mehmet Kemal Bozay	 Speaker Ahmet Yusuf Özdemir	 Speaker Naim Rashiti	 Speaker Abdullahi K. Abubakar	 Speaker Muhammad Affan	 Speaker Nkosana D. Moyo	 Speaker Turan Gafarlı
 Speaker Ramazan Erdağ	 Speaker Şuay Nilhan Açıklan	 Speaker Zaha Hassan	 Speaker Meltem Müftüler Baç	 Speaker Mohamed Hussain Aided	 Speaker Haydar Oruç	 Speaker Hakkı Uygur	 Speaker Oktay Tanrısever	 Speaker Enes Turbic
 Speaker Tark Oğuzlu	 Speaker Yunus Turhan	 Speaker İsmail Numan Telci	 Speaker Ali Bakır	 Speaker Dajana Barusic	 Speaker Timothy Ash	 Speaker Robert S. Ford	 Speaker Robert S. Ford	 Speaker Periša Kastratović

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