



# **The Mediterranean in a Changing World**

## **Keynote speech**

by

HRH Prince Turki AlFaisal

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

I extend my thanks and gratitude to His Excellency Marco Minniti and Med-Or Foundation for the kind invitation extended to me to speak to such a distinguished audience.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The theme of this meeting is “A crossroads of the Mediterranean” a theme that is a very important at a time of uncertainty looming in our global horizon. Nowadays we are witnessing a fading old-world order, and the new world order is to be born. I have been lately quoting your Italian philosopher, Antonio Gramsci, in describing our time. In his words at the



end of World War I: “Now is the time of monsters”. I am afraid that we are now entering the age of monsters and more conflicts where there is no respect for international laws, norms, rules, principles, and institutions. The genocidal war on Gaza, the illegal Russian war on Ukraine, and the latest Israel wars on Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Iran, and the unjustified and deplorable attack on Qatar are tangible signs of our fading world order. In addition, President Trump's tariffs and his unilateral personal management and theatrical approach to world politics are cases at hand to prove the sad end of the Western liberal international order that existed for the last eighty



years. Therefore, it is not only the Mediterranean that is at a crossroads but all regions and the whole world at a crossroads. In this situation the supposed guardian of the old International Order is failing its commitments to preserve world peace and security. In fact, its policies are the cause of such a mess. They are not only failing their duties but also are on the verge of harming the future of our not yet born global order. While the unipolar moment was over long ago, it seems that there are desperate attempts by the current United States Administration to impose its will internationally, ignoring the fact that multipolarity is the order to be established. By such attempts the



United States is inviting other great powers to rebalance and to deepen international polarization and therefore bringing more conflicts and more crises that might escalate into more wars. The picture that captured the attention of the world lately is the Presidents of China, Russia, and the Prime Minister of India, holding hands during the last Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit. It is a clear message that unipolarity is not an option anymore.

Many wise American voices and thinkers are aware of such facts that are dictated by history and by realizing the nature of all structural changes in our world. The latest American voice, is a respected



former American diplomat, Ambassador Chas Freeman, who warns that while our old world is dying, new struggles are to be born.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Many countries of the Mediterranean, European countries in the north, and Arab countries in the south and the east were beneficiaries, to a large extent, of this crumbling world order and I hope that they will not be losers in the order to be born. Therefore, cooperation between all states of the Mediterranean is of outmost need to manage the perils of such a dangerous time of great transition. While the relations between the countries of the Middle East and Europe



are in good standing on the bilateral bases, I believe that they need to go beyond that to address the threats of the changing geopolitical environments, regionally and internationally, in their cooperation; due to their importance to each other. They can be forces of influence in addressing, for example, the need to stabilize the Middle East, finding a solution to the Palestinian issue, curbing the monsters in Tel Aviv and other places, and to be the voice of wisdom at this difficult transition time. They must give their input in forming whatever order of multipolarity to be born that must avoid the shortcomings of the dying order. Advancing global peace and prosperity must start from



working for such reforms at the helm of the world. The role of Europe is essential in this respect.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

For almost eight decades the eastern part of the Mediterranean has been going from one war to another, from one catastrophe to another, and from one UN Resolution to another; and justice is still elusive. Hypocrisy on the part of great powers, that are at the helm of world order and the “vanguards” of its basic principles, becomes crystal clear when it comes to Middle Eastern issues. Many European Countries are not innocent in this regard.





The Palestinian issue is and will remain the main source of threat to regional peace and security. Therefore, Mediterranean peace and security is not immune. International failure in this respect is behind the cycle of wars that erupt every few years. The latest of this cycle of violence is the on-going war in Gaza and its destructive long-lasting effects and is a case at hand. The inaction of the UN Security Council to stop the killing and mass massacres in Gaza, and before that in Syria, by the irresponsible use of the veto power is the cause of these tragedies. Abusing the veto power is a pattern, by all veto powers, when it comes to issues of peace and security in the Middle East. Without a



just solution that takes into consideration the legitimate demand of the Palestinians for self-determination this area will never experience stability and will remain exposed to all negative possibilities. We will never have a fair, peaceful new international order without addressing the major issues of peace and prosperity in the most strategic regions of the world.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The GCC countries are in the position today to play a constructive role in leading the region toward peace and security with like-minded countries in the world and to be a voice of wisdom in our troubled world. The Israeli challenge to peace and security



remain as an outstanding danger to the future of our region and the Mediterranean at large. We in Saudi Arabia are working with France to set the stage to move forward to the two-state solution by recognizing the Palestinian state as a step towards the desired end. Italy should be with us in this noble quest to end the tragedy of Palestine and bring peace to all the people of the Middle East. Mrs. Meloni's condemnation of the Russian war on and occupation of the eastern Ukraine should be coupled with her condemnation of the Israeli war on and much longer occupation of Gaza and the West Bank.

Thank you.