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Introduction

My name is Volker Perthes. I am the Executive Chairman and Director of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs called *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik*, and it is a great pleasure to have a panel here on the Arab Spring and global governance. We are going to see how we can pull the two issues together.

Let me try to introduce both the subject matter and our four speakers here on the panel. We are witnessing a historical moment in the Arab world, which, if we put it on the order of magnitude of world events, is probably only to be compared to what we have seen in Europe in 1989/1990. Do not get me wrong - it is not the same, but if we compare the Arab world with what we would have witnessed exactly one year ago, we see that about 100 million people are living freer today than they did one year ago.

It is a difficult process of change. Not everything we see is pretty. If we compare events in the Arab world today to 1989/1990 in Europe, we certainly see that the process of change we are witnessing in the Arab world seems to be more complicated, or messier, if you like, and it may take much longer. If we speak about a historical hour here in the Arab world, we have just witnessed the first three minutes or so of it in 2011. It means we have a decade or two that might be rather turbulent and volatile in the Arab world.

Now, some call it the Arab Spring, and that is actually in the title of our panel. For me, the term 'Arab Spring' is a little bit too seasonal and probably does not really invite much strategic patience. Others call it the Arab Awakening. We heard that term used this afternoon by Abdullah Gül. Now, this may suggest that the region had been asleep rather than just politically stagnant, so we should probably talk about the Arab countries' moment of change, and we may discuss this.

It seems to me that no country in the Arab world, from Morocco in the west to the Persian Gulf, Saudi Arabia and the other monarchies on the Arab peninsula, will be totally unaffected. No country will be immune. This is another thing that we may discuss. Certainly, we also witness how different Arab countries actually are, not only given different resource endowments, but also given different histories, different political cultures, different traditions and different socialisations into political behaviour, and so the Arab countries are going to deal with these winds of change in different ways.

Some may turn to democracy. Some may just try to introduce more participatory elements, more rule of law, more participation, more pluralism, more justice, perhaps, and some regimes are trying to resist any change violently, which probably makes us most concerned at the moment. This in consequence probably means that change will only come about violently. We have seen that in Libya. It may be what we are witnessing in Syria.

We have two Arab speakers here on the panel from two quite different countries, but probably the two most important countries in the Arab world. We have Amr Moussa, former Foreign Minister of Egypt, former and long-time Secretary-General of the Arab League and now a presidential candidate. Some of the participants here assume he will win. I think that is a bit premature. You are happy to be a candidate now - responsibility comes later.

The second Arab speaker is a very knowledgeable long-term observer and participant in Arab events. Prince Turki al-Faisal has been the ambassador of his country, both to London and to Washington. He has been the Chief of Saudi Intelligence and now is the Chairman of the King Faisal Centre for Research and Islamic Studies.

Next is Edward Djerejian, who has been a policy maker for many years and is now an analyst in the United States. We will ask him about the role of the United States in the region, given that this panel is called the Arab Spring and Global



Governance. Global governance in the context that we are discussing here probably means global and international cooperation. Who is going to focus on what? What roles are there for local, regional and international players? What can international players or outsiders contribute to the changes or to a peaceful transformation in the Arab world?

I am of the opinion that we Europeans and the Americans and other outsiders will not be able to decide outcomes in the Arab world, and we should not even pretend that we wish to decide outcomes, but we have a role. We have an impact and this is almost regardless of whether we do something or whether we fail to do something. There will always be an impact. The United States seems to have lost some appetite in dealing with all the matters in North Africa and the Middle East.

The Americans have already tried to make clear to the Europeans that if there was a war in Libya, the Europeans should try to leave it alone - it did not happen like that, but I guess the interest of the United States will be much more focused on two areas in the broader Middle East, which are the Persian Gulf and the Israeli-Arab fold, and we will hear more about what the US role is.

Finally, political transformations will make little sense and will not succeed if there is not an economic basis to it. I assume that the greatest risk in what we might call the transformation countries of the Arab world is that in five or six years from now, the same young people who have started a revolution in Tunis, Egypt and other places, or are trying to start revolutions in other places like Syria, will people say, 'We have democracy now. We have had clean elections two or three times, but we still have no jobs. We still have no chance.'

Without an economic transformation, without a sound macroeconomic basis, these revolutions may be incomplete and therefore it is very important to have a business voice here on the panel. I am happy that we have Christophe de Margerie, CEO of Total, who has long experience in the Middle East. I think he was the Middle East Chief of Total before he became the CEO. I am sure we will hear something from you about the role of business and the role of energy in the Middle East.

We will now have two or three rounds of discussion with the panel and will then pass it over to the audience to ask questions and make comments. In the first round, I will ask our Arab guests where they think that their particular countries and the region are going almost one year after the revolution in Tahrir Square and a week after the first round of free and democratic elections in Egypt. Where is Egypt going and where is the Arab world going? Is Egypt a trendsetter for the rest of the Arab world?