



KEMAL DERVIS

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Karl KAISER, Director emeritus of the German Council on Foreign Relations, Harvard University

Next speaker, Kemal Dervis.

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Thank you very much, Professor Kaiser.

Some problems elude quick solutions, unfortunately. Claiming that there is a solution to what is happening, to the drama we are experiencing today, is unfortunately impossible. We must talk about how we have reached this point and what the underlying causes are. We have already discussed them rather thoroughly for two days at this conference. I am going to try to express some thoughts and make some points to prompt discussion, but I have got to tell you I am puzzled and very sad about what is happening. I am sure all of us share a certain sadness, but that obviously must not lead us to give up or stop trying to find solutions like the ones you mentioned, Mr. Korsia. What is happening on the human, religious and ethical levels is also important. All the religions must closely cooperate with each other.

The first point I would like to make is very macro. We are experiencing one of the dimensions, and Thierry de Montbrial always stressed it when he launched this conference. We are living in a world where the problems really overlap. The world is really interdependent. This world has a huge need for global governance. I do not say "government", because that is pointlessly utopian, but governance — mechanisms allowing us to cooperate across borders, cultures, religions, ideologies or political preferences. This conference contributes much to that endeavour, that search, that quest, without, obviously, offering a magic formula.

Seeing what is happening makes us realise on how many levels global governance has not worked, whether in the Middle East, where tragedies have been occurring for years, or in Europe, with major clashes over the euro, the euro zone, Greece and, more recently, the refugee issue. That is even more serious in a certain sense, especially on the human level. I would like to use this opportunity to emphasize that, here again, we see how much we need Europe, but a Europe that knows how to take decisions and that works. You have already mentioned that this is one of the few times we have voted by a weighted majority. It is time to say that Europe can only work with a weighted majority. If one small country or two or three countries can hold up an entire mechanism, Europe will not function. I think it is necessary to insist on that. It must be explained to citizens. Europe is facing a major turning point. Europe can self-destruct, but it can also come back, because the stakes are so high. Many citizens, I think, are aware of those stakes.

The second point I would like to make might sound a bit controversial. I have experienced situations in certain times of my life, including in my own country, where a state of emergency and strong, beefed-up security are actually the only way to prevent something much worse. Frankly, I believe all of us are in danger, especially in Europe, but also in the whole world. I think a very delicate balance must be found between humanity, generosity and the basic tenet that a person is presumed innocent until proven guilty, and taking all necessary steps, including the state of emergency that was declared in France. Perhaps it should be immediately declared in many more European countries. A state of emergency is not illegitimate when a serious threat exists. It is not just the terrorist menace threatening us, but also a far-right reaction, which will be inevitable if we ever allow two, three or four more attacks like the ones in Paris to occur. We must fight not only against the terrorists, but also against the reaction they might provoke. We are therefore fighting on two fronts. I think we must be aware of that and act before the event, not after.

My third point is that transit countries, such as Turkey and Greece today, and Italy for a long time, need support. I will not go into the details of all that, but they have been carrying a very heavy burden for a long time. In contrast, perhaps



the Gulf countries give some money, but take in almost no refugees. I find this situation totally unacceptable and unethical. This is yet another example of political cant and the gap between discourse and reality in this part of the world.

These countries need support. Turkey has taken in nearly two million refugees in less than three years and I think Turkish society has come through it all pretty well. It is not perfect, but there have been major efforts. I would also like to mention the example of Greece. How many countries can you name that are in an economic crisis so deep they have lost 25% of their GDP, have a 25% overall unemployment rate and a 55% youth jobless rate? There is no point in knowing who is to blame or which government is at fault. Greece not only managed this crisis democratically, with practically no violence, but also bears the economic burden of being one of the front-line countries receiving refugees and often does a good job taking care of them. I do not say “always”.

I would like to begin by emphasizing these points.

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You rightly stressed how important it was that the European Union decided by a majority that the problem now is that those who were outvoted refuse to accept the decision. Perhaps Hubert Védrine can add to that and deal later on with what we will do.

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Either Europe will learn to vote by majority decisions or it will not continue to function. In the end, another thing would have happened in Greece. Despite everything, the people voted for Europe. People have to make a choice. Do they want to be in Europe or not? If we do not, let them go.