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Et *last but not least* – je ne sais pas dans quelle langue tu vas parler, du moment que ce n'est pas le japonais nous nous en tirons – Yoichi Suzuki est l'un des très grands diplomates du Gaimusho, avec une magnifique carrière. Il a été notamment notre dernier Ambassadeur du Japon à Paris avant l'actuel, et il a ensuite d'ailleurs terminé sa carrière en négociant le traité commercial, comme nous l'avons rappelé tout à l'heure, entre le Japon et l'Union européenne. Il est, je crois, un ami de plusieurs d'entre nous ici.

Cher Yoichi, *the floor is yours*.

Yoichi Suzuki

I will at least try to start in French. Much has already been said. But first I would like to join the others in congratulating you and your collaborators, indeed everyone, for this outstanding conference, which has given us plenty of information, plenty of food as well as food for thought.

Previous speakers have already covered much ground about the current state of the world. It is called either a "bipolar world" or, as Kevin Rudd says, a "binary state". Instead of repeating what they said, I will try to outline our possible responses to the current situation, where on one side is the United States, on the other side is China, which dominates the world.

During the last three days of debates, I have identified three objectives of our possible responses, shared by many of us, especially non-Americans and non-Chinese. Firstly, avoid being put into a position of having to choose between one and the other.

Secondly, how do we protect our own interests in the face of American or Chinese pressure?

Thirdly, minimize damage to the international system.

With regard to the last objective, here again, through the discussions, I think I have identified at least two leads that could be pursued.

One involves organizing collaboration, coordination, or cooperation between non-American and non-Chinese players, starting with Japan, Europe, India, Africa and others. The other is to develop, as John Sawers said, a way to rebuild or build a new system of global commons.

I would like to go home on a bright note. Let us see if we can pursue these two leads in a concrete way. For example, in the area of foreign trade, thanks to the beginning of cooperation/collaboration between some of our partners in Japan, we have already begun to note the possibility of finding common ground with the United States that might convince them to participate. President Trump cannot be forced back to multilateralism or non-bilateral agreements, but there is nevertheless a possibility of building a basis for the future.

For example, Japan negotiated and concluded the Comprehensive and Progressive TransPacific Partnership (CPTPP, or TPP minus the United States), which entered into force at the end of 2018. We also negotiated and concluded the



agreement with the European Union that entered into force early this year. President Trump has seen that his decision to pursue bilateralism or unilateralism, in other words to withdraw from the TPP or stay out of the CPTPP, has put the United States at a disadvantage.

Unfortunately, he could not be made to abandon his bilateral approach. The bilateral trade agreement Japan signed with the United States will ensure its short-term and defence interests. We wanted to avoid American pressure in the form of protectionist trade measures. But in return, Japan managed to include provisions found in our agreements with the European Union or our CPTPP partners that could serve as a common basis for drawing up multilateral rules. I admit that it is hard to say Japan has advanced the cause of multilateralism by signing a bilateral agreement. Granted, Japan has sent a mixed signal. But at least it can be said that we managed to send President Trump the message that it is not in their interest to remain outside the international system taking shape without them.

The same can be said about USMCA, the new NAFTA. It has many things that are in the TPP. In other words, President Trump negotiated something he calls bilateral, but it includes many items already negotiated multilaterally or regionally. I repeat. Even if President Trump does not admit it, he might be convinced to accept points that have been settled multilaterally without him.

Much has already been said about connectivity, the second area of multilateral cooperation. What you say about China's initiatives, Minister, is a reflection of the enormous demands that exist in the world today. But the idea mentioned by China's participants in this conference—that every country has the freedom and the right to choose its own development model—can sometimes be problematic. Today's world is so interconnected that it is in nobody's interest to let an unsustainable model develop. If the model you choose leads to over-indebtedness, you will apparently have a problem. Your infrastructure might have the latest technology but you are deeply in debt. That is a problem.

A common policy, shared by many, must be found to build infrastructure for sustainable connectivity and avoid debt traps. This must pertain not just to managing debt but also to climate issues. New infrastructure that emits more greenhouse gases must be avoided.

I will stop there but if there were enough time I would have liked to talk about developing ways to build or strengthen the global commons, starting with the WTO.

Thierry de Montbrial

Since you apparently have the answers and since you spoke less than the others, I will give you two minutes for that.

Yoichi Suzuki

On the one hand, China and the United States are locked in a trade war. On the other, the WTO is dysfunctional. Nevertheless, there are three issues that cannot be resolved bilaterally: intellectual property, subsidies to state-owned enterprises and forced technology transfers. The Americans are pressuring our Chinese friends on these issues because they have not been resolved within the WTO. Will President Trump manage to resolve them by exerting bilateral pressure? I do not think so.

The only way to convince the Chinese is to find multilateral solutions, for they respect multilateralism. Finding solutions, either within the WTO or elsewhere, to issues that do not strictly involve international trade is the way to go. New rules on forced technology transfers must be drawn up. For subsidies to state-owned enterprises, it is more a matter of finding effective means to enforce the WTO's current rules. So far, the WTO and its members have not managed to do that, but it is time for everybody concerned, starting with Japan and Europe, to show more political will and determination in pursuing multilateralism.

I will briefly touch on a third pressing issue. As Manuel said, an international framework for thinking about how to manage the digital economy appropriately must be found. It would be dominated by the United States and China. Unless something is done, the rest of the world will not have the means to safeguard its interests, which are not always the same as those of the Americans, the Chinese or their big digital companies. Therefore, a multilateral framework is needed. There are currently three schools of thoughts for managing the digital economy. The Americans, who have a

laissez-faire model, want zero regulation. The Europeans have regulations ensuring, for example, the protection of private data or the conditions necessary for competition in order to keep big companies from accumulating too much market power. The third model is the Chinese mercantilist model. Roughly put, you do not open up your own digital space but you benefit from others opening up theirs. So there are three models. Non-Americans and non-Chinese would stand to gain much from studying them and choosing the most advantageous one. I know which one it is.

Thierry de Montbrial

La réponse ?

Yoichi Suzuki

Le modèle européen.

Thierry de Montbrial

Merci beaucoup. L'une des premières ou la première remarque dans ta conclusion, avant le rajout si je puis dire, c'est-à-dire l'idée que les pays hors Etats-Unis et Chine discutent non pas contre (il ne s'agit pas d'être contre ni les Etats-Unis ni la Chine) mais ensemble pour essayer de voir leurs propres intérêts, cette idée-là est exactement le point de départ de la World Policy Conference il y a douze ans. On appelait cela les « puissances moyennes ». C'est une des vocations fondamentales de cette conférence.

Nos amis Américains et Chinois sont présents, nous sommes très heureux qu'ils soient là et nous en voudrions même un peu plus, mais l'agenda, la manière dont nous concevons les discussions est différente. On essaie de voir les choses du point de vue des puissances moyennes. J'ai même constaté qu'aussi bien les amis Américains que Chinois qui viennent ici s'y intéressent précisément à cause de cela. Ils voient un autre point de vue que celui auquel ils sont habitués.