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I will be delivering my remarks in English despite the pressure of speaking French in an eloquent manner. Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests and speakers, dear friends, a very warm welcome to the United Arab Emirates. We are incredibly delighted to be hosting the 15th edition of the World Policy Conference in Abu Dhabi for the second time. This is indeed a great privilege, and we are here, hopefully not only welcoming you to enjoy your time here, but also to engage in substantive discussions. Because the World Policy Conference is also a platform for valuable exchange and dialogue and from the share diversity of the speakers and the attendance, it is very clear that whether in government or in business, the most pressing global issues must be addressed in that spirit of collaboration and cooperation.

We are after all, in a country that was founded on the basis of hundreds of different nationalities and thousands of different people contributing to its success and its ethos. That success really does come from the ability to look towards the future but also the recognition of the value of different and diverse perspectives. That is why you see in the UAE such a multicultural, multi-dimensional perspective being brought to the table in a very Arab environment, but also in a very global environment at the same time. As we exchange goods, trades, practices, and ideas with countries from all around the world, we use that as a learning point on how we as a nation and as a people can continue to grow and evolve. The path forward for us has never been a solitary path, it has always been in accord with walking and working with the international and global community.

As we look today, in 2022, at the challenges of tomorrow and the problems that we are all facing today, we must give an honest assessment of where and why we are where we are. We must study it, analyze and understand it and then we must through serious collective efforts, look at ways in which we can improve it. This diverse group of speakers and distinguished voices on the agenda, demonstrate that the WPC is truly casting a wide net, not to just bring people to talk and converse, but also to bring people to dialogue and to build different forms of what that future could look like.

2022 was an unexpectedly very challenging year, certainly as we continue to recover from the pandemic, there is much work that needs to be done. Also, the lessons we have learned from that pandemic have not fully registered. In addition to that, the Ukraine war has not only exposed geopolitical fault lines and caused a huge humanitarian crisis in Europe, but it has also thrown into the spotlight the urgency of matters such as food security and supply chain vulnerability, especially amongst developing countries and food-vulnerable populations. It highlights the fact that international institutions need to be more adapted to the challenges of our time.



This week's agenda examines these issues at great length and great depth, and I am grateful for the presence of the members of the diplomatic corps, who are here with us today, because these systemic forces and trends that are shaping our international political and economic order are ones that need to be brought to the table in full conversation but also in diverse perspectives. Having said that, another challenge looms strongly and that is climate change. As you know, the United Arab Emirates will be hosting COP28 next year and we do so in the spirit of also wanting to have a COP that is meaningful and impactful and that brings diverse and different thoughts to the table from all around the world, and in particular, the countries of the Global South. How we manage to deal with a just energy transition by also ensuring prosperity and stability for people around the world, how we manage to do that in an equitable manner that also considers the growing and important role of countries from other continents, whether it is Africa, Asia, or South America. As we grapple with this challenge of climate change, how do we do so in the light of new geopolitical rivalries that could jeopardize international cooperation, my direct portfolio, as we have always known it? We were speaking before coming onto the stage that over the course of the last decades, there have been international institutions that were formulated post-World War II. As we look at changing environments but also changing new dynamic challenges that are brought to the table, these institutions need to be able to continue to provide the solutions that the pressing nature of our time demand.

The path forward in the UAE is clear, it can only happen through constructive dialogue, but we do not meet with each other to simply talk to one another, we must meet to also ensure that we are bringing more to the table by being innovative and inventive and bold. We do have to look at ways where we also do not become echo chambers where we simply repeat and agree with one another about what the path forward needs to look like. There is a strong conviction in the UAE that the strength of the output can only come through diverse opinion and also through a clear intent that we are delivering on impact and not simply on output. Everyone can and must be part of the solution, and everybody has a duty to contribute. Sometimes these efforts start with a strong foundation and rich, shared history or cultural legacy. At other times, a hand must be extended and a certain degree of faith must be placed on a new relationship. Regardless of how we begin, international cooperation is also based on the recognition that everyone has something to offer that you do not, and that the collective wisdom has the capacity to chart a path forward that is necessary in uncertain times. The solutions for today's urgent problems and tomorrow's approaching ones begin in the mind and are made real through rigorous discussion and partnership between states and at all levels of government and society. Through this, we hope to step into the future, confident in our ability to collectively meet its challenges and seize on opportunities.

My best wishes to you all for a successful and productive conference. Thank you so much for your time and attention.