

WORLD
POLICY
CONFERENCE



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WORLD POLICY CONFERENCE

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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



WORLD
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CONFERENCE

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Foreword



Since its first edition in October 2008, at the very moment of the major financial crisis that marked that year, the World Policy Conference (WPC) has placed global governance at the heart of its concerns, as a necessary condition if interdependence is not to degenerate into chaos. We have always emphasized the special role that middle powers could and should play in this governance.

Since then, the history of international relations has constantly confirmed the relevance of this approach. The ever-accelerating technological revolution, the geopolitical reconfiguration of Eurasia following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the rise of China and India and the changes underway in the Arab-Muslim world have profoundly challenged the forms of governance inherited from the Second World War. The very idea of balanced governance is being called into question, particularly by the United States, at a time when it seems increasingly necessary to avoid a purely imperial logic. However, recent history shows the significant role played by certain middle and even small powers in preserving a minimum of structural stability.

The 17th WPC, held in Abu Dhabi from December 13 to 15, 2024, was highly successful in this respect, as uncertainty grew across the planet. This report, written, like the previous one, under the direction of Song-Nim Kwon, will be a source of inspiration for everyone interested in these issues. It is a veritable book, which people will benefit from reading whether or not they attended our conference.

Thierry de Montbrial
Founder and Executive Chairman
of Ifri and the WPC
March 12, 2025



Friday, December 13

08 :30 – 09 :45
Opening session

Noura Al Kaabi, Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates

Tiémoko Meyliet Koné, Vice President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire

HH Bartholomew Ist, Archbishop of Constantinople - New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch

Thierry de Montbrial, Founder and Executive Chairman of Ifri and the WPC

09:45 – 11:00
Plenary session 1: Global Economic Governance in a Fragmented World

Chair :
Jean-Claude Trichet, former President of the European Central Bank, Honorary Governor of the Banque de France

Speakers :
Gabriel Felbermayr, Director of the Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO), former President of the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW)

Vincent Koen, Deputy Director of Country Studies at the OECD

John Lipsky, Senior Fellow of the Foreign Policy Institute at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze, School of Advanced International Studies, former First Deputy Managing Director of the IMF

Jean-Marie Paugam, Deputy Director General of the WTO

Qiao Yide, Vice Chairman and Secretary General of Shanghai Development Research Foundation

11:00 – 12:00
Plenary session 2: Multi-vector Foreign Policies?

Chair :
Thierry de Montbrial, Founder and Executive Chairman of Ifri and the WPC

Speakers :
Ana Brnabić, Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia

Lasha Darsalia, First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia

Roman Vassilenko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan

12 :00 – 13 :00
Lunch

13 :15 – 14 :30
Plenary session 3: De-globalization or Re-globalization?

Chair :
Bertrand Badré, Managing Partner and Founder of Blue like an Orange Sustainable Capital, former Managing Director and Chief Financial Officer of the World Bank Group

Speakers :
Sébastien Jean, Professor of Economics at CNAM University, Associate Director of Ifri's Geoeconomics and Geofinance initiative

Bark Tae-Ho, President of Lee&Ko Global Commerce Institute, former Minister for Trade of Korea

Vladislav Inozemtsev, Director of the Center for Post-Industrial Studies in Moscow, Special Advisor to Middle East Media Research Institute's Russia Media Studies Project in Washington, DC.

Kazuto Suzuki, Director of the Institute of Geoeconomics at International House of Japan, Professor at the Graduate School of Public Policy at the University of Tokyo

Pierre Jacquet, Professor of Economics at the École nationale des ponts et chaussées (ENPC), Member of the Cercle des Économistes

14 :30 – 15 :00
Plenary session 4 :

Conversation with Kevin McCarthy, 55th Speaker of the United States House of Representatives

15 :00 – 15 :45
Plenary Session 5: The Role of G7 in a Changing Landscape

Chair :
Thierry de Montbrial, Founder and Executive Chairman of Ifri and the WPC

Speakers :
Philippe Etienne, *Ambassadeur de France*, Professor of Public and International Affairs at Columbia University, former Diplomatic Advisor to President Macron, also acting as G7 and G20 Sherpa

Lee Hye-Min, former G20 Sherpa of Korea, former Ambassador for International Economic Affairs of the Republic of Korea, Senior Advisor of KIM & CHANG

Gary Litman, Senior Vice President for Global Initiatives at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

15 :45 – 16 :45
Plenary session 6: Geopolitics of Climate Change

Chair :
Marc-Antoine Eyl-Mazzega, Director of the Center for Energy & Climate of Ifri

Speakers :
Nawal Al Hosany, Permanent Representative of the UAE to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

Stéphane Michel, President Gas, Renewables & Power (GRP) and Executive Committee Member of TotalEnergies

Frank Wouters, Chairman of MENA Hydrogen Alliance

Mikaa Blugeon-Mered, Special Advisor at Hy24, Adjunct Lecturer on Hydrogen Geopolitics at Sciences Po and Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P)

16 :45 – 17 :30
Plenary session 7: The IMEC Economic Corridor: A New Era of Global Cooperation and Growth

Chair :
Gérard Mestrallet, Special Envoy of the French President for IMEC

Speakers :
Anurag Varma, Senior Vice President of the Adani Group
Gidon Bromberg, Cofounder of EcoPeace Middle East

17 :30 – 18 :45
Plenary session 8: Economic Growth and Geopolitical Challenges in Asia

Chair :
John Andrews, Author, Journalist and Contributing Editor to *The Economist*

Speakers :
Douglas Paal, Distinguished Fellow at the Asia Program Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Jean-Pierre Cabestan, Senior Researcher Emeritus at the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), Professor Emeritus at Hong Kong Baptist University

M.K. Narayanan, former Senior Advisor and National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of India (Manmohan Singh), former Governor of West Bengal

Hur Kyung-Wook, Chairman of Seoul Financial Forum, Chairman of the Board of the Korea Center for International Finance, former Vice Minister for the Ministry of Strategy and Finance

Yuichi Hosoya, Professor of International Politics at Keio University in Tokyo, Director of Research at the Asia-Pacific Initiative

19 :15
Dinner with Kevin Rudd, Ambassador of Australia to the United States, former Prime Minister of Australia

Saturday, December 14

08 :30 – 09 :45
Plenary session 9: The Future of Europe After the Ukraine War and Trump's Election

Chair :
Terry Martin, Journalist, TV news anchor

Speakers :
Yann Coatanlem, Cofounder of GlassView, President of Club Praxis

Zaki Laïdi, former Personal Advisor to the High Representative and Vice President of the Commission EEAS

Hubert Védrine, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of France, Founder of Hubert Védrine Conseil

Vuk Jeremić, President of the Center for International Relations and Sustainable Development, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia

Norbert Röttgen, Member of the Deutscher Bundestag and member of the Foreign Affairs Committee

09:45 – 10:15
Plenary session 10 :

Conversation with Aiman Ezzat, CEO of Capgemini

10:15 – 11:15
Plenary session 11: The AI Revolution and Beyond

Chair :
Daniel Andler, Professor Emeritus at Sorbonne University, Member of the Académie des sciences morales et politiques, Philosopher

Speakers :
François Barraud, Founder and Chairman of FDB Partners, Chairman of IDATE DigiWorld

Omran Sharaf, Assistant Foreign Minister for Advanced Science and Technology of the United Arab Emirates

Lee Tiedrich, Distinguished Faculty Fellow in Law & Responsible Technology at Duke University, member of the OECD and Global Partnership on AI (GPAI)

11 :15 – 12 :15
Plenary session 12: Innovative Leaders: Transforming Business with Generative AI

Chair :
Lucia Sinapi-Thomas, Executive Vice President, Capgemini Ventures Managing Director

Speakers :
Lucia Russo, Artificial Intelligence Policy Analyst at the OECD

Eiso Kant, CTO & Cofounder of Poolside

Rotem Alaluf, CEO of Wand.ai

Felix Naser, COO of Liquid.AI

12 :30 – 14 :30
Lunch / Business Community Lunch

14 :45 – 15 :45
Plenary session 13: Brics Expansion: Implications for the Future of Global Order

Chair :
Nikolaus Lang, Managing Director and Senior Partner in BCG's Munich office

Speakers :
Etienne Berchtold, Ambassador of the Republic of Austria to the United Arab Emirates, former Foreign and European Policy Spokesperson for three Austrian Chancellors

Trudi Makhaya, Board Member, Spar Group & Former Economic Advisor to the President of South Africa

Constanza Negri Biasutti, Brazil B2o Sherpa and former Trade & International Integration Head at CNI (National Confederation of Industry) in Brazil

Qiao Yide, Vice Chairman and Secretary General of Shanghai Development Research Foundation

15 :45 – 16 :15
Plenary session 14 :

Conversation with Anwar Gargash, Diplomatic Advisor to President of the United Arab Emirates

16 :30 – 19 :00
Parallel workshops

Workshop 1: Economy and Finance

Chair :
Jean-Claude Trichet, former President of the European Central Bank, Honorary Governor of the Banque de France

Speakers :
Hur Kyung-Wook, Chairman of Seoul Financial Forum, Chairman of the Board of the Korea Center for International Finance, former Vice Minister for the Ministry of Strategy and Finance

Pierre Jacquet, Professor of Economics at the École nationale des ponts et chaussées (ENPC), Member of the Cercle des Économistes

Sébastien Jean, Associate Director of Ifri's Geoeconomics and Geofinance Initiative, Professor of Economics at CNAM University

André Lévy-Lang, Founder and Chairman of the Louis Bachelier Institute, former CEO of Banque Paribas

John Lipsky, Senior Fellow of the Foreign Policy Institute at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze, School of Advanced International Studies, former First Deputy Managing Director of the IMF

Gary Litman, Senior Vice President for Global Initiatives at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Jean-Claude Meyer, Vice Chairman International of Rothschild & Cie

Workshop 2: Energy and Environment

Chair :
Valérie Ducrot, Executive Director of Global Gas Center

Speakers :
Majdi Abed, Vice President International Public Affairs at TotalEnergies

Jean Abiteboul, President of GIGNL (International Group of Liquefied Natural Gas Importers), Non-Executive Board member of Tellurian, Inc. (AMEX: TELL), Founder and Chairman of JA Energy Consulting

Igor Yurgens, Chairman of the Management Board of the Institute of Contemporary Development of Moscow

Marc-Antoine Eyl-Mazzega, Director of the Center for Energy & Climate of Ifri

Jeffrey Lewis, Partner and Member of the Executive Committee of the international law firm Cleary Gottlieb

Tomás Lanardonne, Energy Regulatory and Transactional Expert, Founding Partner of MHR Abogados (Argentina & Uruguay)

Nicolas Piau, Cofounder & CEO of Tilt Capital

Workshop 3: Economic and Social Issues in the Middle East

Chair :
Adil Alzarooni, CEO of Al Zarooni Emirates Investments and Al Bidayer Holding, Founder of Citizens School

Speakers :
Dorothee Schmid, Head of the Türkiye/Middle East program at Ifri

François Gouyette, Chairman of Pro Oriente Conseil, Vice-Chairman for Public Diplomacy of The Global Diwan, Advisor to the Chairman of Diot-Siaci

Raed Charafeddine, Central and Commercial Banker, former First Vice Governor of the Central Bank of Lebanon

Kamel Abdallah, Managing Director and CEO of Canal Sugar, Egypt

Monica Malik, Chief Economist at Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank

Fareed Yasseen, Secretary General of the Iraq Pugwash Association, former Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq to the United States

Ernesto Damiani, Professor at Khalifa University for the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Director of the Center for Cyber-Physical Systems (C2PS)

19 :15
Cocktail

19 :30
Gala dinner with His Excellency Sheikh Salem bin Khalid Al Qassimi, Minister of Culture, United Arab Emirates

Sunday, December 15

09 :00 – 10 :30
Plenary session 15: Global Health Challenges

Chair :
Michel Kazatchkine, Special Advisor to the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe

Speakers :
Antoine Flahault, Director of the Institute of Global Health at the University of Geneva, Director of the Swiss School of Public Health

Maha Barakat, Assistant Minister for Health and Life Sciences at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the UAE

Jean-François Etter, Professor at the Institute of Global Health (ISG) of the University of Geneva

Juliette Tuakli, Mercy Ships International Diplomatic Ambassador for Africa, former Clinical Professor in Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, Founder and former Medical Director of CHILD Accra in Ghana

Yoshiyuki Sagara, Senior Research Fellow at the Asia Pacific Initiative (API) specialized in health security policy

10 :30 – 11 :45
Plenary session 16: Geopolitics, Food, World Hunger: A Forgotten and Explosive Subject

Chair :
Jean-Michel Severino, President of Investisseurs & Partenaires, former Vice President of the World Bank for Asia, former CEO of France's International Development Agency (AFD)

Speakers :
Máximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

Philippe Chalmin, Founder of Cercle Cyclope, Professor Emeritus at Paris-Dauphine University

Bayu Krisnamurthi, Professor at the Bogor Agricultural University, former Vice Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Indonesia

Kamel Abdallah, Managing Director and CEO of Canal Sugar, Egypt

Jean-Marc Astorg, Strategy Director at Centre national d'études spatiales (CNES)

11 :45 – 12 :30
Plenary session 17: Politics and Religion in the Middle East

Chair :
Thierry de Montbrial, Founder and Executive Chairman of Ifri and the WPC

Speakers :
Olivier Roy, Research Director at CNRS (French National Center for Scientific Research)

Haim Korsia, Chief Rabbi of France

12 :30 – 13 :30
Lunch

13 :30 – 14 :15
Plenary session 18: What Perspectives for a Sustainable Arab-Israeli Peace?

Chair :
Steven Erlanger, Chief Diplomatic Correspondent, Europe, for *The New York Times*

Speakers :
Nabil Fahmy, Dean Emeritus at the American University in Cairo, former Foreign Minister of Egypt

Itamar Rabinovich, Vice Chairman of the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) in Tel Aviv, Distinguished Fellow at the Brookings Institution

14 :15 – 15 :15
Plenary session 19: War and Peace in the Middle East: What Role for the Europeans?

Chair :
Renaud Girard, Senior Reporter and International Columnist at *Le Figaro*

Speakers :
Mohammed Baharoon, Director General of the Dubai Public Policy Research Center (b'huth)

Volker Perthes, Non-Resident Senior Fellow and Senior Advisor to the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP)

Marc Hecker, Deputy Director of Ifri, Editor-in-Chief of *Politique étrangère*, and Research Fellow at the Security Studies Center, Ifri

15 :15 – 16 :15
Plenary session 20: Building a Sustainable Future in Africa

Chair :
Seán Cleary, Chairman of Strategic Concepts (Pty) Ltd., Founder and Executive Vice Chair of the FutureWorld Foundation

Speakers :
Nardos Bekele-Thomas, CEO of the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), former United Nations Resident Coordinator in South Africa

Vincent Biruta, Minister of Interior of Rwanda, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda

Nialé Kaba, Minister of Economy, Planning, and Development of Côte d'Ivoire

Jean-Michel Severino, President of Investisseurs & Partenaires, former Vice President of the World Bank for Asia, former CEO of France's International Development Agency (AFD)

16 :15 – 17 :30
Plenary session 21: President Trump: What Economy and Foreign Policy?

Chair :
Virginie Robert, Foreign Desk Editor at *Les Échos*, Vice President of the European-American Press Club in Paris

Speakers :
Hiroyuki Akita, Commentator of *Nikkei*, Japan

Peter Beyer, Member of the Deutscher Bundestag, former Coordinator of Transatlantic Cooperation of the Federal Government

Fareed Yasseen, Secretary General of the Iraq Pugwash Association, former Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq to the United States

Jean-Claude Gruffat, Member of United Way Leadership Council, Board Member of Atlas Network, Managing Director of Weild and Co LLC New York

Jay Truesdale, CEO of TD International

17 :30 – 18 :30
Plenary session 22: Final Debate

Chair :
Thierry de Montbrial, Founder and Executive Chairman of Ifri and the WPC

Speakers :
General Francis A. Béhanzin, Cofounder and Chairman of the Réseau mondial des professionnels de sécurité et de défense pour la prévention et la lutte contre le terrorisme, former Commissioner Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Michel Foucher, Member of the Center for Higher European Studies (former ENA) and Senior Counsel on studies at MEDEF

Christophe Poinssot, Deputy CEO and Scientific Director of the Bureau de recherches géologiques et minières (BRGM)

18 :30

Envoi







Noura Al Kaabi

Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates



The war in Ukraine continues to strain the international order, fueling divisions and creating ripple effects that impact global energy markets, food systems, and multilateral fora. The conflict in Sudan continues unabated, as we witness the unfolding of a humanitarian catastrophe in real time. Throughout all this, we believe it essential that we continue to uphold the principles of dialogue and mutual respect, even in the face of stark disagreements. We must work tirelessly to find diplomatic solutions. We must keep talking to each other—without dialogue progress is impossible. At the same time, we must be mindful that the world is undergoing profound shifts in its economic and geopolitical landscape. The rise of new economic groupings and the evolution of multilateral organizations reflect a growing recognition that the traditional systems of global governance must adapt. There is a pressing need for more inclusive and equitable frameworks that give voice to emerging countries, while preserving the core values of cooperation and shared responsibility. Still, it is vital to recognize the enduring importance of international institutions. Organizations like the UN despite their challenges and need of reform, remain indispensable platforms for addressing global crises. At the same time, regional organizations like the African Union and the League of Arab States have a critical role to play in complementing these efforts, bringing localized insights and tailored solutions to the table.

*Full version page 136



Tiémoko Meyliet Koné

Vice President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire



This challenging international environment is jeopardizing development efforts worldwide. Countries are struggling to meet the Sustainable Development Goals, the SDGs, which have been adopted as a universal roadmap. According to a 2023 United Nations report, more than 80% of the SDGs are behind schedule, and there is little chance that they will be met by 2030. The consequences for the world's populations are alarming. Millions of people are still living in extreme precarity. The situation is even worse in sub-Saharan Africa, where poverty, youth unemployment and lack of infrastructure continue to hinder development. On the economic front, the post-pandemic recovery remains fragile and prospects in several regions are still insufficient to meet people's growing needs and expectations. Despite an international context marked by major challenges and numerous uncertainties, Côte d'Ivoire has managed to stay the course of economic growth. [...] Since 2011, three successive National Development Plans have served as a strategic framework to guide the reforms and investments required for this transformation. They have led to ambitious structural reforms and massive investments to provide Côte d'Ivoire with modern, competitive infrastructure in key sectors of its economy. These efforts have helped to revitalize the country's economy and boost its average annual growth rate to around 8% over the past decade. Côte d'Ivoire's performance is also based on the confidence of its development partners and the dynamism of the private sector, which plays a key role in diversifying and modernizing the economy. The investment rate, below 9% in 2011, surpassed 25% in 2023.

*Full version page 137



HH Bartholomew Ist

Archbishop of Constantinople - New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch



The Orthodox Church holds a special place in addressing global problems since, although it does not participate in political campaigning, its testimony with regard to human dignity and spiritual freedom naturally bears political relevance. This subtle method allows the Church to remain committed to its spiritual goal while significantly add to public debate. Our interaction with contemporary concerns stems from our basic dedication to human flourishing and spiritual well-being rather than from political ambition. Maintaining this cautious balance helps us approaching urgent worldwide problems without becoming caught in limited political objectives. Focusing instead on universal values that advance human dignity and societal harmony, our responsibility mainly consists in providing moral direction and spiritual insight transcending political divisions. This strategy permits us to keep our spiritual integrity while nevertheless does not hinder us from participating in important conversations like economic fairness, technological developments, and climate crisis. By use of this lens, we can promote a more holistic approach to universal problems that respects divine wisdom as well as human dignity. In confronting today's challenges, we must remember the enduring lesson from the Council of Nicaea: true success arises from the harmonious integration of spiritual wisdom and practical governance. The impending common observance of Easter in 2025 serves not only as a calendar alignment, but also as a significant symbol of the potential unification among Christian traditions. This unique convergence presents an opportunity to transform symbolic unity into tangible partnership. Drawing inspiration from the example set by Nicaea, we can collaborate to ensure that this event catalyzes substantial action for the benefit of society. Like our ancestors seventeen centuries ago, the path ahead necessitates the integration of our spiritual heritage with practical solutions. Let us seize this opportune moment to establish collaborative connections between religious wisdom and contemporary knowledge that will benefit future generations.

*Full version page 138



Thierry de Montbrial

Founder and Executive Chairman of Ifri and the WPC



I'd like to add a word about the European Union, which has been notoriously weakening, as I said, since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Since its inception, the European Union has remained closely linked to the United States, which has always referred to the Euro-Atlantic institutions. A new era is likely on the horizon with Donald Trump's return, and he is likely to focus on China and the economy. American protection in Europe will no longer be guaranteed under the same conditions. The new period that is unfolding will be a decisive factor for the future of the transatlantic union and thus for the future of the European Union itself. It's said, and sometimes rightly so, that great shocks are an opportunity for great renewal. There are many of us in this room who hope so, because a strong European Union is in the interests of each of its members but also, I am convinced, in the interests of the whole world. Because of its history and civilization, this union is destined to become a major balancing factor for the advent of a new international system more conducive to peace and prosperity. When we look back on the history of the world, we realize how fragile peace is, locally and a fortiori globally. Generations of the happy globalization era, at least in certain countries, wanted to believe in the advent of perpetual peace and the universal extension of prosperity. Today, we can only conclude that we are already entering a Second Cold War. The first, says historian Niall Fergusson, was a peace that was not a peace. The cold war that is beginning might not be a war. It is now up to all forces of goodwill, and in particular all of us gathered here, to think and act intelligently to contain and reduce the toxic impacts of this New Cold War. The main issue is definitely to ensure that the New Cold War does not degenerate into a full-scale world war.

*Full version page 139





Global Economic Governance in a Fragmented World



CHAIR:
Jean-Claude Trichet
Former President of the European Central Bank, Honorary Governor of the Banque de France



Gabriel Felbermayr
Director of the Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO), former President of the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW)

In the recent period, to oversimplify the 40 to 45 previous years, there has been some crystallization of the concept of good governance in the economic field, which started in the private sector and expanded to the public sector, as well as at a global level. This idea that there was some kind of good governance that had some kind of universal reach is something that developed progressively and culminated in something that was quasi universal, not only at the level of each economy or country, but also at the global level with the collapse of the Soviet Union. A period then started of around 15 years when we really observed a broad consensus of what correct governance was. That was also a period when the United Nations itself functioned in a quite extraordinary way because a consensus was found at a succession of the Security Council of the five permanent members, which really demonstrated that at this time there was really a broad consensus on what was appropriate in terms of governance. Then there was a change, which we are now experiencing. As we all know, we now have the emergence of new institutions, in some cases, that are more or less juxtaposed to the Bretton Woods Institutions. I am talking about the two institutions, one in Shanghai and the other in Beijing, and of course, we also have the enlarged BRICS. The West is responsible for the fact that the main shareholders, Europe and the US, did not react sufficiently rapidly to the yearly growth in the importance of the other countries and economies in the developing and emerging world. It is extraordinarily important to understand better how the world currently works in this very difficult period.

I am saying in a "fragmenting" rather than a fragmented world, which I think is a first sign of hope. If we follow the European debate, we sometimes get the impression that Europe has forgotten the fact that we still are a huge player. We have offered solutions in the past and we might do the same again in the future. However, the dynamics are moving from being the global trade hegemon to Europe now being second to China if we count the number of countries, and that has had an impact on the state of thinking in the European Union. The EU has engaged with many countries around the world and there too, Europe is a leader because there is no other bloc or political entity that has so many trade agreements. When you say that the world is fragmenting, Europe is both itself fragmented and a factor of fragmentation as well. There is a big discussion about trade or international economic relations being weaponized to become instruments in big power rivalries and in that sense, the question of trust is crucial. Global value chains relate to trade in inputs and raw materials, not to trade in final goods. The analysis shows that all the European countries would suffer dramatically, but there is a lot of heterogeneity, so Europe serves as an example for the whole world, we are not all affected the same when the global regime crashes. Places like Luxembourg or Ireland would see losses up to minus 70%, so disconnecting them from global value chains would be devastating. When I say disconnecting, I also mean that European global value chains would be destroyed, which I hope is very unlikely. I believe in the single market. If global value chains are interrupted but the European single market stays intact, losses are very much smaller. I would say that the big lesson to the world that Europe offers here is that our free trade at continental level protects us from shocks that happen around the world. I think this is important for Africa, the Gulf regions and Southeast Asia to realize that regional integration is probably the most important protection against what is going on at the larger world scale.



Vincent Koen
Deputy Director of Country Studies at the OECD

Global growth has held up over the past three years following the bounceback from Covid and despite the enormous adverse supply shock imparted by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but with sharp contrasts across countries. Central banks tightened policies substantially in 2022 and the supply shock that hit at that time has largely faded so inflation is back to more comfortable levels, though service price inflation remains sticky in many countries. Unlike in earlier tightening episodes, labor markets have continued to perform quite well overall. Even so, consumer confidence has languished, not least due to the much higher price levels that now prevail. Business sentiment has generally held up somewhat better, boding well for near-term growth. For 2025-26, the OECD forecasts annual GDP growth of around 3% both for the G20 and for the OECD area as a whole, but several risks cloud the outlook. Energy prices could spike again, notably if geopolitics takes a turn for the worse. Uncertainty surrounding trade policy has soared. While it is difficult to know what to make of recent announcements, a more fragmented, protectionist trading environment would constitute an adverse supply shock, raising prices and disrupting supply chains. Public debt ratios have reached new highs in advanced countries, emerging market economies and low-income countries alike. At the same time, fiscal spending pressures associated with aging populations, climate action and defense priorities are building up and interest rates are unlikely to go back to around zero. Therefore, greater efforts are called for to restore fiscal space and sustainability.

Global Economic Governance in a Fragmented World



John Lipsky
Senior Fellow of the Foreign Policy Institute at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, former First Deputy Managing Director of the IMF

For economic and financial issues, the critical institutions were the IMF and its associate, the World Bank and the GATT, now the WTO. The character of these organizations is that they are multilateral and treaty-based. As a result, their decisions carried the force of international law. For most operational issues, majority rules. In fact, this effort was hugely successful: From 1950 to 2007, growth in global trade was faster than growth in global output virtually every year, and that period most likely also represented the most rapid period ever experienced of sustained global economic growth. We currently are at the fourth systemic inflection point of the 21st century in terms of our system of global governance — and the previous three inflection points have tended to undermine the pre-existing system. The first inflection point was the global financial crisis of 2007-2010, leading to the establishment of the G20 leaders' process. Global growth has been substantially slower in this period than previously. In addition, it is clear that in the wake of the global financial crisis, the Chinese authorities adopted new views about financial integration. Again, a development that undermined the pre-existing system. The second inflection point was the Covid pandemic, that created powerfully contradictory forces. As a result, the focus increasingly centered on national issues of security, supply chains, etc. The third inflection point was Russia's invasions of Ukraine, which has demonstrated that in the context of great power conflict or disagreement, the G20 has become virtually inoperable in terms of being able to produce action. These are the influences that have brought us to today. The challenge of the second Trump administration. Obviously, we are seeing similar contradictory forces elsewhere. Is this going to succeed or are we going to move to a world of greater trade conflict?



Jean-Marie Paugam
Deputy Director General of the WTO

We have debated deglobalization for years, but trade continues to grow. Trade in services demonstrates this even more clearly because it is growing very fast. So we are not in an era of deglobalization. There are cracks and fragmentation in three areas that are still under control but "hot." The first is environmental and climate policies because they are uncoordinated. This is obvious on carbon pricing, for example, where Europeans are putting a price on carbon while the Americans are granting subsidies for carbon alternatives. There is a whole area where fragmentation can be seen around these policies, which, moreover, are totally legitimate. The second area of fragmentation involves everything to do with economic security policy. It concerns the supply of energy and essential goods, especially foodstuffs, and industrial autonomy policies, which can lead to public interventions that can fragment trade. The third area of tension is security policies. Sanctions, embargoes, and so on play an increasing role in international trade. These three areas of tension are interrelated. Sometimes they overlap. They are shaking up the governance system. The stock is the acquired gains, the principles of transparency, non-discrimination and good faith that have underpinned global growth since GATT. These principles are more or less respected. The flow, which is the negotiation of new rules, is much more complicated. Issues of disagreement are found in all international organizations about the inherited balance sheet, knowing whether the previous rules are balanced or not. Disputes were settled by the WTO's appellate body, which has established much jurisdiction in trade relations. In a way, this has been "shut off" by the United States. With this in mind, important dates are coming up, in particular Trump's inauguration.



Qiao Yide
Vice Chairman and Secretary General of Shanghai Development Research Foundation

The current global economic governance is represented by the Bretton Wood Institutions. They have played a very positive role in keeping the world peaceful and economically stable over the last 80 years. However, now is a critical time for global economic governance because it seems that the idea of "might is right" has started to prevail in many places, which leaves global economic governance in danger of becoming the law of the jungle. The first question is whether the two wars I mentioned can be peacefully resolved or, at least, not spill over to the rest of the world. Second one is whether isolationism and protectionism can be reversed before too long and if not, I would imagine something similar to the 1930s could happen again. Third one is whether advanced countries can adapt the existing Bretton Woods Institutions to fully meet the needs of the Global South and let them have a greater role in decision-making. If they do, global governance will really become a public good that would keep the world peace with healthy economic growth. If they do not, global governance will be totally dismantled or even lead to disaster. In summary, if these questions or challenges can be resolved smoothly, it is my hope that positive global economic governance could return to normal, otherwise, global governance could break into several small individual areas of governance. Another bad scenario would be the total collapse of global governance and that is not impossible.



CHAIR:
Thierry de Montbrial
Founder and Executive
Chairman of Ifri
and the WPC

Multi-vector Foreign Policies?



Ana Brnabić
Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia



Lasha Darsalia
First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia



Roman Vassilenko
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan

For Serbia's geopolitical and economic strategy, the critical focus is on maintaining a balanced approach amidst global tensions. The country is committed to EU integration, with a target to complete all necessary reforms by 2026, although full membership by 2027 seems unlikely. Serbia's foreign policy is characterized by its historical ties to the Non-Aligned Movement, allowing it to forge strong partnerships with the EU, the USA, and China, which contribute to its economic and political stability. Germany, the USA, and China serve as Serbia's top partners in goods, services, and investment, respectively. Serbia's economy demonstrated resilience by increasing employment during the Covid-19 pandemic. As global tensions escalate, Serbia positions itself as a bridge between major powers, promoting dialogue and avoiding division. In 2024, the country hosted several world leaders, underscoring its role in international diplomacy. Concerns were raised about double standards in international law, referencing past interventions and the actions of various global powers. The belief is that major world conflicts require dialogue rather than escalation. Serbia remains open to cooperation with all global actors while prioritizing its national interests. The rise in geopolitical divisions is seen as a hindrance to addressing urgent global issues like climate change. There is a call for pragmatic diplomacy over ideological confrontation, with middle powers encouraged to take a more active role in global governance. Serbia aims to maintain regional stability and contribute to a more balanced global order, using its strategic position to facilitate discussion between conflicting sides. Strengthening ties with Latvia and the Baltic states is a priority, as Serbia remains fully committed to EU integration while safeguarding its national sovereignty.

Now, when you are in the Russian neighborhood, when you are even an immediate neighbor of Russia, unfortunately, especially now when it became the revisionist country in the international system and the responsible player, your choice is either you become part of some collective security solution, like NATO, or even the European Union, though it is not security, or, if you fail, then war is imposed on you, like Ukraine now or Georgia before. Russia made the very dangerous precedence when occupying territory of a neighboring country and trying to forcefully change the internationally recognized borders, and unfortunately, it was Georgia who experienced this. Unfortunately, as I said, the situation is difficult for us because of our neighborhood. I would compare Georgia's situation to living in a cage with a wounded bear. The rest is just the strategy of survival. I believe that the international community is much stronger than any single country. Peace is very important, but I think it is more important to have a just peace, because otherwise trying to have peace at the expense of international law will trigger future wars and future conflicts. History does not like "if" questions, but just imagine if Russia was stopped, not in 2022, or it is not even stopped now, but if it was stopped in 1991, when it triggered the ethnic cleansing of Georgians in the Georgian state, or if it was stopped during the genocide in Chechnya, or for its actions in Transnistria, or in 2008. Because we Georgians remember. We hear this all the time: "Okay, yes, you have these problems. You have occupation. However, let us pragmatically engage with Russia and hear what they want." They want just one thing. They do not recognize their neighbors as countries. For as long as we will not deal with the issue of who was before, we will keep asking who is next.

The only side we should all be taking is the side of cooperation, not confrontation; the side of international law, not lawlessness; the side of mutual benefit and win-win, not mutual exclusion and zero-sum games. This war in Ukraine should never have happened and could have been avoided. Being realists, pragmatists, we think that there is still a chance that this situation will go according to the first scenario that you outlined in your opening remarks, that there is a growing recognition, both in Russia and in Ukraine, as well as in the West, that it is unsustainable to go on like that, to continue this war. Otherwise, this will be the war until the last Ukrainian. Is this what the West wants? I do not think so. I think all of the speakers, including myself, will agree that what is needed is UN reform. I have been in diplomacy for 30 years plus. As long as I remember, there has been this conversation about the need for UN reform, but we are still there. We think that we need to get serious about this reform, and it has to have a stronger regional representation. The UN is the only international unique organization. I know there have been various groups, various discussions, but they have come to naught so far, and that is very, very bad for mankind, especially since we are facing so many challenges globally, not just wars, but climate change and the advent of new technologies that we all need to take care of together. You mentioned the middle powers. We were called a middle power earlier this year by a German think tank. We appreciate this title, but we take it very seriously and we understand that this requires a lot of responsibility. We are ready to share our experience. We are ready to contribute to the resolution of international conflicts, but we think that we can only do it together, again, perhaps as a network of likeminded middle powers who can come together and impress upon the superpowers that there is a greater international community which stands for international law. If we are to follow the logic of Mr. Ivanov to follow the rule of the strong one, this is the law of the jungle. What will come of the world after that? Nothing good.



De-globalization or Re-globalization?



CHAIR:

Bertrand Badré

Managing Partner and Founder of Blue like an Orange Sustainable Capital, former Managing Director and Chief Financial Officer of the World Bank Group



Sébastien Jean

Professor of Economics at CNAM University, Associate Director of Ifri's Geoeconomics and Geofinance initiative



Bark Tae-Ho

President of Lee&Ko Global Commerce Institute, former Minister for Trade of Korea

The globalization that emerged after the fall of the Berlin Wall and lasted until the global financial crisis is dead. What is now emerging is far from clear, and we are grappling with numerous concepts and definitions. These include de-globalization, multipolarity, regionalization, fragmentation, alternative globalization, and re-globalization, alongside concepts like derisking, decoupling, nearshoring, friend-shoring, the return of sovereignty, national security and safety. To a certain extent, some people might wonder whether we are moving from a rules-based order to a contract-based or transaction-based order. Obviously, capital flows and investment, both public and private flows are under pressure and, in my daily job as an investor they are becoming increasingly complex between sanctions, rising compliance requirements, etc. We will not forget data, technology and communications, which continue to grow exponentially but are also facing new types of barriers these days and we cannot forget the AI shock. Eric Schmidt, the former Chairman and CEO of Google, said last week, 'I think the most important thing people cannot know today is that what is happening now in tech is working at mega scale, everything, everywhere, all at once.' That might be the new definition of another form of globalization. He added, 'This is largely due to scale computing, huge computational power, network of resources, and of course, the application of AI to everything.' Therefore, there are flows of people, money, goods and services and also the reorganization of the power around this and what it means. The debate is no longer the one we have heard many times between the West and the Rest, it is also the power shared between individuals and the tech powers. When you have rules, the people who can escape them make the choice, so there are governments that can impose their rules and others that have no choice other than to follow and accept the rules of others. This is where we are and I would like to quote Reid Hoffman, one of the founders of Linked-In. Last week he said, 'Today there is a China-US war on tech and in tech there is no place for the referee.' Again, that is a new form of globalization that we were not prepared to handle in 1989.

The current narrative is dominated by two stories, the first of which is about geoeconomic fragmentation, a term coined by the IMF, in a context marked by trade wars and war, and the second is the build-up of competing industrial policies. I am going to fact-check these two stories using trade data. Since the beginning of the trade war in early 2018, trade between blocs has been lagging behind the rest of world trade by 10% to 20% but this is an average. If we look beyond the average, we can see that war is very disruptive but by one order of magnitude rather than 10% or 20%, that is a kind of hard decoupling. Trade war is also significantly disruptive but again, not by 10% to 20%, more in the order of 30% to 45% compared to similar flows, a kind of soft decoupling. What is left if you exclude the hotspots in terms of what we are told is a reorganization of world trade by blocs. The answer is that nothing is left, trade between blocs is not lagging behind the rest of world trade. It does not mean that geopolitics are not important to world trade. It just means that this story of world blocs for trade is oversimplistic and does not reflect the much more complex reality. The second part of the story is the build-up industrial policies. Many of these industrial policies are trade distortive. If that was shaping world trade patterns, we would expect a scattered pattern. The trade data tell a very different story, which is that China is now becoming the world's sole manufacturing superpower. The Chinese surplus in manufactured goods measured as a proportion of the total worldwide trade in manufactured goods shows that it has now reached 11% of world trade, which is a huge amount and it increased big time after the Covid pandemic. The Chinese situation has improved in every single branch. My conclusion in the paper is that this is mainly policy driven, and it is actually a very explicit political choice.

Global business enterprises have made proper adjustments in response to various recent incidents such as Covid-19 pandemic, wars, and several significant US actions against China that have taken place in the world trade environment. Some global business enterprises found new supply sources and reduced their overdependence on a few specific countries or regions while others tried to avoid restrictions through producing and exporting from the third-party, called 'connector' countries. Trade experts note that these adjustment activities are derisking behaviors which can be regarded as a positive 're globalization effect.' Of course, there remain some areas where re-globalization effects appeared quite significantly. Thanks to these positive adjustment behaviors of the business sectors, global trade flows have been growing at a stable rate. However, if US-China trade tensions are intensified when President Trump's second term begins next year, we expect positive re-globalization benefits to diminish, severely damaging global trade activities. I would like to make some suggestions for the future global trade order. First, even though it sounds a bit naive, like-minded country, particularly middle-power countries could raise their collective voices and urge the US to take a leadership role in re-invigorating multilateral trade governance by reforming the WTO. Second, WTO member countries with similar interests and positions should pursue open plurilateral trade agreements in areas such as trade in services, investment and digital trade. Third, WTO member countries should work together to reach agreements on areas of common interests, such as climate change, public health and food security. Finally, like-minded WTO member countries should strengthen WTO rules on subsidies to discipline unilateral industrial policies of major nations.



De-globalization or Re-globalization?



Vladislav Inozemtsev

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Kazuto Suzuki

Director of the Institute of Geoeconomics at International
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Pierre Jacquet

Professor of Economics at the École nationale des ponts
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des Économistes

I want to turn all the participants' attention to a new and dangerous phenomenon I use to call "the alternative globalization". During the Cold War, the Communist bloc operated on non-market basis, and its economies have been largely autarkic and self-sufficient. International trade and financial transactions at that time were reserved almost exclusively to the Western system, and after the collapse of the Soviet Empire globalization of the 1990s and 2000s has been constructed upon this particular basis. As their confrontation between the West and the new revisionist powers returns, these nations are starting to develop their own version of globalization defying all existing rules and norms. Illicit trades, shadow fleets, denouncing of intellectual property rights, arms trades, and even the creation and use of government-backed mercenary armies – all are the features of this "alternative globalization". It affects also the financial transactions as the outcasts banned from the use of both dollar and euro, are now experimenting with renminbi, barter and havalas schemes, and cryptocurrencies in their attempt to create a "parallel" network of payments, immune to the Western sanctions. I would argue that these efforts shouldn't be underestimated since they may result in significant undermining of the system that has been securing the West's dominancy position for many decades since the end of the World War II.

I will propose the idea that this is the time of geoeconomics. The geoeconomics mean that there are geographically defined spaces, such as national jurisdictions, where it is becoming extremely important to protect their own people, culture and national wellbeing. Globalization is not over, the movement of trade and capital is still going on but there are a number of countries that are taking certain measures driven by domestic concerns that globalization or free trade is actually harming their economy and society. Free trade became increasingly an enemy and using tariffs and export controls, or other means to restrict trade, is becoming a fashionable way to weaponize the economy because we are trapped in interdependence. The trade between blocs still continues because we are trapped by interdependence, but its contents are now changing, and it cannot easily be used for economic growth but rather for weaponization. The economic sanctions against Russia are one of the ways to decouple or separate the Russian economy from the Western economy or the rest of the world, but in fact, it is getting harder. The interdependence during globalization is now creating a lot of pain for other countries when it comes to decoupling, so interdependence can be used as both a weapon and as a safeguard for globalization. Globalization as we know it is no longer applicable because there is no willingness among any countries to strengthen this interdependence and to create more vulnerabilities. If there are tariff barriers, they can be overcome by investing in the US jurisdiction and I think that this is now becoming a very interesting move because the tariff is no longer a measure of protectionism but an invitation to invest in the United States. Globalization as we know it is over, but I think globalization with the characteristics of geoeconomic competition is starting now. Fierce internal competition is making Chinese products very competitive externally, but the internal framework of the economic competition and the market is more fragile and fragmented.

I wish to discuss four key points about global economic governance and politics. First, domestic politics is becoming more central to the approach to globalization, which signals a necessary shift from democratic nation states being somehow embedded in the global economy to the global economy needing to be democratically embedded into national politics. Second, while globalization continues through trade, investment, human mobility, cultural and scientific collaboration, and global public goods requiring demanding forms of joint action, its benefits and costs need to be more properly analyzed and documented at a more granular, individual level, and more debate is required on the policies that are necessary to ensure a legitimate and consensual balance between these benefits and costs. Third, global economic governance is in transition as old rules lose credibility and legitimacy, leading companies to look for "de-risking" options in response to new forms of uncertainty. Such de-risking may contribute to political fragmentation, but it can also generate new forms of global interdependence (for example, protectionism may lead to trade being substituted by direct investment in the target markets). Finally, two major trends dominate the current approach to globalization: shaping new rules of the game imply a long period of transactional behavior and complex negotiations; and a new, more inclusive approach is needed to account for multipolarity as more countries deserving seats at the negotiating table. In conclusion, while the former international economic order was based on a stable geopolitical and institutional environment and could be analyzed (notably by economists) by abstracting from politics, economics and politics can no longer be separated. Rebuilding a shared global political vision of our integrated world is a priority.



Conversation with Kevin McCarthy



CHAIR:
Thierry de Montbrial
Founder and Executive
Chairman of Ifri
and the WPC



Kevin McCarthy
55th Speaker of the United States House of Representatives

Chairman Thierry de Montbrial and Speaker Kevin McCarthy dive deep on American politics in this expansive session.

Speaker McCarthy outlines the various forces that drove the latest election cycle and analyzes what factors help explain the disconnect between political pundit predictions and election results.

The two also discuss what to expect from President Trump's second term including executive branch staffing decisions, domestic policy focuses, and foreign policy goals to watch for.

McCarthy details his vision for a second term wherein President Trump is more focused, disciplined, and prepared to make change from day one in office. He reminds listeners of Trump's macro-approach to policy and unique negotiation style with other leaders.

In summary, Speaker Kevin McCarthy articulates a policy path that can drive a resurgence in American leadership and international cooperation amongst America's closest allies.



CHAIR:
Thierry de Montbrial
Founder and Executive
Chairman of Ifri
and the WPC

The Role of G7 in a Changing Landscape



Philippe Etienne
*Ambassadeur de France, Professor of Public and
International Affairs at Columbia University, former
Diplomatic Advisor to President Macron,
also acting as G7 and G20 Sherpa*



Lee Hye-Min
*Former G20 Sherpa of Korea, former Ambassador
for International Economic Affairs of the Republic of Korea,
Senior Advisor of KIM & CHANG*



Gary Litman
*Senior Vice President for Global Initiatives
at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce*

It is important to keep in mind the origins of G7 even if the world has changed a lot since the 1970s. These summits remain important to give the leaders an opportunity to have an informal and substantial discussion on the most pressing issues of the moment. Another Important feature is the possibility to take concrete initiatives, for example on AI to take a recent example. At the same time, the goal should not be to form a block opposed to another block. The G7 deliberations can positively contribute to the G20 summits which often discuss the same global topics. To achieve this the outreach dimension of the G7 is very important and can be organized in a way which gives really a voice to non G7, for instance African, countries. This is a takeaway from our last G7 Presidency and Summit in Biarritz (2019), where we had a political discussion between G7 leaders, a real exchange with outreach countries and concrete results.

Traditional and formally structured international governance institutions are established and based on a founding charter or an international treaty, such as the Charter of the United Nations or the Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund. However, as you can see, the G7 and the G20 were not formed by such official agreements. Therefore, the G7 and the G20, from the beginning, lacked the legitimacy afforded to such international organizations. With the increasing economic growth of the emerging economies, its share in the global GDP continued to decrease from 61% in 1980 to 52% in 2008. When the global financial crisis broke out in the fall of 2008, it was not possible for only G7 members to deal with this crisis. The G20 leaders then convened for the first time in Washington, DC in November 2008 as a leaders' meeting. The G20 leaders declared in the next year, in 2009, in Pittsburgh, that the G20 would be the premier forum for international economic cooperation, and it has become a major actor in global governance, in fact, replacing the G7. The G20 has since stabilized the world economy, successfully overcoming the 2008 financial crisis through active macroeconomic policy coordination among its members. It was also very instrumental in concluding the Paris Climate Change Agreement in 2015 at COP21 and its early entry into force in 2016. However, the last three G20 Summits in Bali, New Delhi and Rio demonstrated that the G20 could no longer have any meaningful impact on global issues because of the breakdown of global cooperation mechanisms. Finally, here comes President Trump. He said that the G7 is an outdated group of countries. The America First policy does not appreciate the value of alliance and partners, so I expect the vitality of the G7 and the G20 would be significantly reduced. The leadership role of the United States in the G7 and in the G20 may be different in the years to come. This will be a challenge to all of us.

G7 has proven itself over recent years to be an important agenda-setting format for political leaders. The private sector of our respective countries has gained more experience with, and access to the deliberations of G7. We have learned to value it as the forum that sends a strong signal to our markets about the most important trends in policymaking. The interagency process behind the G7 summits has developed the muscle memory of cooperation that allows policies to bridge political changes. The goal of supporting sustainable growth in mature markets requires a high level of understanding among leaders which is why G7's flexible format remains productive. G7's credibility will depend on its capacity to address the problems of mature democratic economies while recognizing the divergent challenges faced by the rest of the world. Business is keen to expand its contribution to the dialogue among G7 policymakers.



Geopolitics of Climate Change



CHAIR:
Marc-Antoine Eyl-Mazzega
Director of the Center for Energy & Climate of Ifri



Nawal Al Hosany
Permanent Representative of the UAE to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

When we look at the world, we see a tale of two stories, basically. On the one hand, the energy system still has a strong inertia. We still have growth in oil demand. We still have growth in gas demand. We might finally see a peak in coal demand, but a peak that is at a very, very high level. Nonetheless, we now have global clean tech investment level on a yearly basis that is twice as big as fossil fuel investments, and this is rising year by year. If I look at the annual deployment levels of clean technologies, we are really beating every record every year. It is remarkable growth. As we speak, 80% of electricity generation investments are renewables and low carbon electricity investments. It is absolutely remarkable. Almost nobody still invests in coal. That is therefore a remarkable development. However, the problem is that climate urgency is there. Everything that has been done is not enough. 1.5 degrees warming limitation is out of reach. Therefore, we have to focus on still continuing mitigation plus adaptation. If we look at one of the most likely reasons why we are not there yet, it is because we are in a fragmented world. We have very few carbon markets. We have different sets of regulations or incentives, but in too many countries, there is still nothing or almost nothing in place. In this fragmented world, it is still very profitable to invest in fossil fuels and much less so in clean techs, although that is improving.

I think the one thing that we have, and many times we miss it, is incredibly visionary leadership. Our journey in renewables started when it was not even fashionable. When people were not even looking at renewables, we created Masdar Initiative back in 2006. Today, we have three of the largest and lowest cost solar plants in the world. Our journey with renewables started much earlier when we used to call them, bleeding edge, not even cutting edge, technologies. However, most of those have now materialized and have even become commercially viable and very competitive. We are extremely confident that we are on the right track to achieve our own tripling targets. In 2022, our installed capacity was 3.1 gigawatts, mainly solar, clearly, but by 2024 we have already doubled this to six gigawatts, and by 2030 our aim is to achieve 14.2 gigawatts. Therefore, our overall clean energy target is for almost 20 gigawatts, including 5.6 gigawatts of nuclear power in which we are already investing. Looking into all our stakeholders, everybody is aligned towards that target, and we have very strong companies. I think you just mentioned as you were coming in that we have TAQA, ADNOC and Masdar. They are all collaborating together in different ventures to accelerate the process of advancing renewables, but also new technologies such as hydrogen production for both national and international markets. At 18 years old, Masdar is now active in 40 countries. They have installations on six continents and their combined capacity is 31.5 gigawatts worldwide. When it comes to renewables, to be honest, I am not very concerned. The only thing that maybe we are a little bit concerned about, and not only, I guess, here, but globally, is energy efficiency, because it seems to be somewhat neglected. Nobody really looks at it in a systematic way.



Geopolitics of Climate Change



Stéphane Michel
President Gas, Renewables & Power (GRP) and Executive Committee Member of TotalEnergies



Frank Wouters
Chairman of MENA Hydrogen Alliance



Mikaa Blugeon-Mered
Special Advisor at Hy24, Adjunct Lecturer on Hydrogen Geopolitics at Sciences Po and Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P)

Then when you look at the outcome of COP28, I believe there are three interesting ideas. The first one is clearly to triple the amount of gigawatts of renewable energy produced by 2030, which means at least doubling the pace at which we are doing that. The second is to acknowledge the role of gas in that transition, because today, as you mentioned, we continue to increase the consumption of coal, and we continue to invest in coal fire plants, which is total absurdity when you know the difference. The third is to ask the oil and gas industry to work on decarbonizing its production, which 54 companies have now agreed to do, signing the Oil and Gas Decarbonization Charter. Patrick Pouyanné is currently chairing that group, and that group already represents around 50% of the industry, with plenty of national companies, and with concrete actions to improve the industry's emissions, and notably to reduce the methane emissions to zero. However, at the same time, it cannot only be renewables. It needs to be gas as well, and decarbonized gas. I am glad to say that we are currently building a small plant, but a nice one, 1 million ton of LNG in Oman, fully decarbonized using electricity coming from solar panels, a 300 megawatt solar plant. That will be the lowest emitting LNG plant in the world, and so the lowest gas, and it will be used for bunkering LNG to allow the maritime industry to switch from the current fossil fuels to LNG, improving their own emissions. Therefore, clearly, those COPs reaffirming where we should go are an inspiration for the strategy we put in place.

If you look at the European situation, and it is very similar in Japan, you are a net energy importer right now, and that will not change in the future. Then the question is that, if you have an import dependency, you are going to have strategic reserves. There is no situation where I foresee a future where you are replacing fossil fuels with cleaner molecules, where you do not have strategic reserves for those. You want to have a strategic reserve because you want to reduce price shocks and guarantee that the system works at any point in time. Why not build a strategic reserve now? There we did some numbers, and a realistic number for hydrogen in 2013 for the European Union is 6.8 million tons of hydrogen. Then, if you take the numbers that we have right now, 25% of that, you would already require hundreds of salt caverns deployed by that time. However, it would provide an immediate mechanism for the projects that are there, because the projects are there. There are about 1,500 large scale hydrogen projects that people have developed, but they do not find an immediate off taker. If we start with a strategic reserve, which we are going to need anyway, you have an immediate mechanism to actually get going. Then you get on the cost curve, and then you start getting into a market situation.

Initial national hydrogen strategies (2013-2022) focused on mass production and international trade. However, this approach has proven ineffective. Southern countries, rich in renewable resources, refuse to simply export raw hydrogen and prefer to develop a local industry that creates added value and jobs. This phenomenon, called 'green shoring', is pushing industrialized countries to invest directly in producing countries to secure their supply of green hydrogen. Investment funds like Hy24 are supporting this transition by financing infrastructure and equipment. As demand drives the market, countries like Korea, Japan and Germany are refocusing their strategies on it. By stimulating local demand, the creation of local value chains is encouraged rather than mass imports. This refocusing on demand and 'green shoring' represents a major geopolitical shift. Green hydrogen is no longer simply an energy source, but a tool for economic development and geopolitical rebalancing.



The IMEC Economic Corridor: A New Era of Global Cooperation and Growth



CHAIR:
Gérard Mestrallet
Special Envoy of the French President for IMEC



Anurag Varma
Senior Vice President of the Adani Group



Gidon Bromberg
Cofounder of EcoPeace Middle East

IMEC was created by an agreement, an MOU, signed in September 2023 in New Delhi on the sidelines of the G20. This agreement was signed by eight chiefs of state or chiefs of government: Mr. Modi for India, Mohammed bin Salman for Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Zayed for the Emirates, and with four signatories in Europe, namely President Macron for France, Chancellor Scholz for Germany, Prime Minister Meloni for Italy and Mrs. Von der Leyen for the European Union, which is a member as such, and also Joe Biden. It is an economic and logistics corridor. It aims to develop and enhance the connectivity between the three continents: India, the Middle East and Europe. IMEC will be one of the major infrastructure projects of the 21st Century. What is it physically? Physically, the corridor will transport goods by containers. This will therefore imply ships, ports and railways. It will also transport energy: electricity, green electricity, high voltage lines, green hydrogen. IMEC will be the most important corridor for green hydrogen because it will connect the most important consuming zone and the most important producing zone. India, Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Oman, but also Egypt along the Suez Canal, and Jordan – this zone will produce very important quantities of green hydrogen, and Europe has decided to import massive quantities of green hydrogen. Therefore, IMEC will be the link between them. IMEC will create prosperity and growth around the track. We will create special economic zones, industrial zones, logistics zones, in order to have jobs, growth and prosperity, mainly in the hinterland of the ports. That will be the case in India, that will be the case in Marseille, and that is mainly already the case in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, but it can be developed, and also it will be the case in Haifa. The hinterland of Haifa will strongly benefit from IMEC, and what is the hinterland of Haifa? It is Israel, of course. It is Jordan, south of Lebanon – it is close to the border – and also Palestine.

When you have a global initiative starting in India, going through Haifa and beyond, we are well positioned and very excited at the opportunity to participate, and hopefully, in some ways, lead in this initiative. Where are the practicalities of why this makes sense? First and foremost, as many of you know, infrastructure investment is a long term investment. You do not do it quickly, and you do not do it for the short term. You invest a lot of money in CapEx, and then you recover the CapEx, and then you make money over the decades beyond that. We look at cost effectiveness. That does not mean building cheaply. It means building in a cost wise manner, such that we build without delays and disruptions. Delays and disruptions are very costly to us. As we look at it, whether it be the Eastern Corridor, the Middle Corridor, or the Western Corridor, we look at, will this be cost effective? Also, is there demand? In many cases, energy is the best investment because there is a demand all the time, everywhere, for energy. Airports, not always, sometimes. Everyone needs energy, not everyone needs an airport. Therefore, these are the things we evaluate along the way. I think the most important thing is innovation. Why invest in infrastructure, if what you are investing in is not going to be better than what is already there? We are therefore looking at this infrastructure investment in terms of making it better. It is not just about supply chain resiliency and providing alternatives. It is: can we do it better? Do we have better security? Do we have cyber security? In India, for example, given all the investments I just told you about, one successful cyber attack would shut down a third of India in a minute. Cyber security is therefore important. Digitization is important. That definitely affects operating costs. The other thing is skills development. If you look at the entire corridor, there are a lot of opportunities to enhance skills development in all of the affected countries. That actually helps our long term durability of the project, and it benefits all the countries along the way.

The elephant in the room in moving so many of the discussions that have been held today, and certainly in succeeding in IMEC, is seeing how we can help resolve the Israeli Palestinian, the Israeli Arab conflict, and IMEC can play a critical role in doing that. The concept of the Peace Triangle is transformative because it is coming and saying that Palestinians need to see how they can live with dignity in their own state. It is coming and saying that Israelis need to see how they can live in security in the Jewish state, and Jordanians need to see how they can live in prosperity with the rest of the region. The Peace Triangle concept helps each of our people see the future. Unfortunately, our leaders at present are not providing us with the vision of the day after that enables our peoples to see themselves living in dignity, security and economic prosperity. IMEC, with the Peace Triangle addition, presents that opportunity, but not only in concept, but in a real project. We are proposing three catalytic projects. The railway is already largely built from the Saudi border with the Emirates all the way to the Saudi border with Jordan. It is built to head to the Mediterranean. We say extending that railway through Jordan to Haifa is brilliant, but it is not good enough. We need to see and we propose that Jordan be a hub and, as the enlarged map shows, a second line also going to Gaza so that the Gaza port, like the Haifa port, can enjoy the type of prosperity that is envisioned for dignity for Israelis and Palestinians. By doing so, the project becomes catalytic because it does not just meet the Palestinian dignity needs of prosperity in their own state, but it also helps meet Israel's security needs of living in its Jewish state. It is in the interest of all our neighbors, of all our partners in this IMEC corridor.



Economic Growth and Geopolitical Challenges in Asia



CHAIR:
John Andrews
Author, Journalist and Contributing Editor to *The Economist*



Douglas Paal
Distinguished Fellow at the Asia Program Carnegie
Endowment for International Peace

For decades we have assumed that Asia's economies were always bound to outperform, not just outperform, but actually race ahead of the rest of the world, especially sclerotic Europe, corrupt, war-torn Africa, and a Latin America that always seemed to punch, sadly, below its weight. For many years, our assumption was right. China was able to double its economic size with each decade. For a time, India disappointed us, but it is now surpassing the PRC because the People's Republic is already suffering from its demographic imbalances. As for Japan and South Korea, the other big economies in East Asia, they prosper comfortably as the world's third and 13th biggest economies, respectively. Add in the promise of Indonesia, and what is not to like? The answer to that question, I think, will be given by this particular panel. It is really the state of geopolitics and, of course, the return to the White House of Donald J. Trump and his threat of punitive tariffs on Chinese exports to the United States, and indeed the prospect of tariffs on all of America's imports. However, that is not the only geopolitical and economic factor worth noting. China, North Korea, Russia and the US are all nuclear powers in East Asia, and further afield, also, of course, Pakistan and India, so the potential for misadventure is obvious, be it over Taiwan or over the Himalayas or in the South and East China Seas. The rest of the world can no longer really count on a Pax Americana. I mean, the days when Madeleine Albright would say America is the indispensable nation, maybe those days are fading. Bear in mind, also, that China's ascent to equality with the United States as a superpower is stumbling, thanks to its economic woes. There is not yet any Pax Sinica. Finally, bear in mind that the Ukraine war has mocked Vladimir Putin's dream of resurrecting the old Soviet or Russian Empire. In short, we are living in troubled and troubling times.

Take this all the way to the present, and we look at China, which has got its own domestic problems – I am not belittling those, nor am I magnifying them – but China has put itself in a very strong position as the leading trading partner of most of the neighboring nations. The Biden Administration is leaving the new Trump Administration with a legacy of improved security ties with Korea and Japan. Trump can strengthen those but he is also capable of weakening them. We have a new relationship with Australia. It is all in the future. We do not know what it is now. The future may bring us stronger ties. It may just pass into history the way SEATO did back in the 1950s. This comes down to an important issue then. When China looks at Taiwan, in my view, China normally says to itself, "Well, is it worth a fight? Are we provoked so much that we have to fight? Or if we are not provoked, is Taiwan so available to military or coercive economic or other kinds of Chinese actions that Taiwan is susceptible to being pulled back into some kind of reunification or unification with China because the US is so much weaker economically and militarily in the region?" I think on the economic side, yes, China is stronger. The efforts of the Biden Administration, which will probably extend into the Trump Administration, to identify high tech areas that we can deny to China and sort of experiment with trying to hold China back in its technology development, give some advantages to the US, but we are still mostly facing an uphill battle. Where we have not made significant reforms is in our military procurement. Our Navy, Air Force and Marine capabilities in the region have not kept pace with the capacity of China to intimidate Taiwan, and therefore Taiwan is in a more vulnerable place today than it was 20 years, 30 years ago, and it is continuing in that direction. A big test for the incoming Trump Administration is will they use the likes of Elon Musk and his reform capability and his entrepreneurial incentives, and new people in the Defense Department as well, to improve our systems of procurement, give direction to our military to really modernize in a hurry.



Jean-Pierre Cabestan
Senior Researcher Emeritus at the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), Professor Emeritus at Hong Kong Baptist University

Economic growth in the coming years will depend on a number of major economies in the region, first of all, the Chinese economy, and it will depend upon the stimulus package which is going to be put forward by Xi Jinping and the Chinese Communist Party. In the Asia-Pacific region itself we do not see much decoupling. Economic integration continues to develop. Economic regionalization is also continuing to deepen. Despite conflicting maritime and territorial claims with China, in the last few years, there has not been any major friction between China and Vietnam, which is quite a big contrast with the frictions which have accumulated between the Philippines and China in the South China Sea. Beijing's objective is to intimidate Taiwan, to put more pressure on the current government in Taiwan, in a context where the Taiwanese president, Lai Ching te, However, for the time being I do not see China moving to a more aggressive strategy, for instance, a blockade. Trump is going to adopt a more transactional policy, which, to some degree, may stabilize the US relationship with China. Taiwan is concerned, I think Trump has been much less committal than Biden. China's interest is to try to take advantage of the return of Trump Administration to drive a wedge between the US and its allies, both in Europe and in Asia.

Economic Growth and Geopolitical Challenges in Asia



M.K. Narayanan
Former Senior Advisor and National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of India (Manmohan Singh), former Governor of West Bengal

Asia has grown into an economic powerhouse by the first quarter of the 21st century, with diverse nations like China and India leading the way. China is recognized as a global manufacturing hub, while India, with its vast youthful labour force and leadership in IT and business process outsourcing, is emerging as a significant player. India boasts a youthful population with a median age of 25-26, averaging 6.7% economic growth and is now the second-largest economy in Asia after China. Both nations have captivated global attention, while it must be recognized that India also has a significant cadre of scientists and engineers. India's economy aligns closely with that of the USA, its largest trading partner. Their cooperation on critical and emerging technologies marks an important step forward. India's participation in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) with the USA, Japan, and Australia, showcases a coordinated stance. Despite geopolitical challenges, India and China's conflict avoids direct confrontation, emphasizing civilizational politics over hot war. The threat that China poses to East and South-east Asia, through disputes like the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait, needs attention. Other geopolitical conflicts, especially in the Korean Peninsula and with North Korea, suggest potential for enduring conflict. However, some tensions, like the India-Pakistan conflict, have reduced in recent years. Asia's geopolitical landscape poses complex challenges to global stability. Technological advancements in AI highlight talent gaps in many Asian countries, posing additional threats alongside cyber warfare and geopolitical instability. Coordinated global responses are needed to tackle threats like China's trade surplus and global warming, but joint strategies are currently lacking. The hope remains that future discussions will bring a glimmer of hope for Asia and the world.



Hur Kyung-Wook
Chairman of Seoul Financial Forum, Chairman of the Board of the Korea Center for International Finance, former Vice Minister for the Ministry of Strategy and Finance

This unfortunate martial law was a single isolated individual event. It is mostly not consistent with the Korean level of political and economic development and it is not supported by mass people on the street. Not only the opposition members but also some members of the ruling party who were present over there, unanimously agreed to lift this martial law. What we have seen is not the decay of a democratic Korea, but rather a test of the democratic resilience of Korea because it was just the people on the street who clearly said no to this ill conceived attempt. The power will go to the prime minister, who will act as interim leader until the new presidential election, which if everything goes as planned, will probably happen by around April or at least by May. There was some short term turbulence in the financial market, but it was basically contained to an acceptable degree. All the credit rating agencies, like S&P and Moody, all said that Korean economic stability is intact and they do not have any intention to change their rating of the Korean sovereign rating. It is basically a dilemma between economic reality and geopolitical pressure, particularly the rivalry between the US and China, which is getting more and more serious. The biggest concern of most Asian countries is how to maintain this economic and financial linkage with both China as well as the US without taking sides with either one of them. Whatever deal or negotiation that the incoming President Trump might have with the North Korean leader, we hope that it will be made in very close consultation with South Korea, without skipping over Korean interests. Despite all of these changes in the political government in all three countries, we hope this relationship is going to continue as a stabilizing force in the region. There is a growing importance of India in the region. Korea also wants to join the CPTPP. Also, even though it is not a trading regime itself, it has also actively participated in the IPEF. I think all of these regional arrangements, whether it is trading or just a talking shop, can play a stabilizing force in the region.



Yuichi Hosoya
Professor of International Politics at Keio University in Tokyo, Director of Research at the Asia-Pacific Initiative

East Asia is therefore full of contradictions. In this way, it is always difficult to predict. Like the Taiwan contingency, this is also another case of contradictions. Even though I said that the Taiwan contingency is quite unlikely to happen, at the same time, both Japan and Taiwan are under stronger pressure coming from China that combines two things: economic coercion and maximum military pressure from China's military, the People's Liberation Army. Therefore, both Japan and Taiwan are now facing serious security concerns. Also, there is political warfare or influence operations. Chinese infiltration into Taiwanese domestic politics is another important issue that we have to think about. In this way, China is perhaps taking a much more indirect approach to try to reunify the country. We have to think therefore with a much broader perspective about the Taiwan contingency, not just looking at the possibility of the overall Chinese invasion of mainland Taiwan. We have to think about that North Korea's enhanced military capability is actually destroying the previous strategic stability in the region. Of course, China has serious concern about that, the much stronger link between Russia and North Korea, alongside North Korea's enhanced military capabilities due to Russian assistance. American allies in Asia generally tend to think that a second Trump Administration is not a bad thing because it is quite likely that the second Trump Administration will take an Asia first policy, sacrificing Ukraine. Of course, it will have a serious effect upon the future of Ukraine. However, the Trump team often mentions the importance of Asia and that China is the principal hegemonic rival or enemy to the United States. It means that the United States under the second Trump Administration will probably use much stronger or larger resources upon Asia. This is, of course, a welcoming effect. Also, as I mentioned, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan need to expand their military capabilities, and we basically agree with this.



The Future of Europe After the Ukraine War and Trump's Election



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| <div>CHAIR:</div> <div>Terry Martin</div> <div>Journalist, TV news anchor</div> | <div>Yann Coatanlem</div> <div>Cofounder of GlassView, President of Club Praxis</div> | <div>Zaki Laïdi</div> <div>Former Personal Advisor to the High Representative and Vice President of the Commission EEAS</div> |
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Europe faces several pressing challenges. Number one, I would say, is security. The war in Ukraine has underscored the vital importance of NATO while raising questions about Europe's strategic autonomy. Number two, economic realignment. Sanctions, energy diversification and global trade tensions demand a rethinking of Europe's economic strategies. We also have challenges surrounding unity and leadership in Europe. That is no secret. The world is growing more polarized. Europe must find a way of navigating its internal divisions if it hopes to retain credibility as a global actor.

It is now widely accepted that Europe cannot retain its standards of living and its influence in the world if it cannot restore its economic strength. Now what do we do about it? In order to propose concrete solutions, I will highlight one key diagnosis of the Draghi report that has been mostly overlooked. What is the main takeaway from Mario Draghi? European economic performance is significantly lagging the US, and most of the gap between Europe and the US comes from the tech sector. Now, what is so special about the high-tech industry? Simply put, it is the rate of failure. Companies that innovate, that are at the technology frontier, fail very often in an industry that is changing at a very fast pace. Think of a runner in a competition, who has to run fast but falls a lot because of frequent obstacles on the road. The only solution is to get back quickly on your feet. You need flexibility, you need agility. In the US, this agility is available: tech companies can restructure, lay off staff, rehire new profiles in a matter of months, both in terms of costs relative to employee compensation, but also in execution. In Europe, the costs are typically an order of magnitude higher in Europe. Because of that, employment protection can choke the profitability of high-risk projects. Consequently, European companies tend to specialize in marginal innovation and remain in mature industries. What solutions? A good start would be to adapt the Danish system of flexicurity, but limited to the top 5-10% of employees. This way, you get a kind of win-win situation: renewed productivity without impacting most workers.

There is no doubt that Russia will remain, for the EU, a major security threat for the coming years. All of the assessments made by the military in Europe conclude that Russia will reinforce its military capacity, and therefore the Europeans, of course, have to avoid any kind of military confrontation with Russia, it would be irresponsible. But we need to deter Russia, and in order to deter Russia we need to ramp up our military effort on a national basis. However, we also have to do it collectively. We are now talking about reaching not simply the 2% target, but the 3% target. However, this is not going to be enough if we do not start working seriously together. There are a lot of discussions, a lot of projects on the table, very huge projects on the table, in order to ramp up the military efforts of the European Union. At the same time, we all know the obstacles on the way, including bilateral cooperative programs, such as the French and the German programs, which are not in a very good shape. This is what has not changed. What has changed is, first, the fact that we, of course, have to realize that Russia did not collapse, that the regime in Russia has adapted itself to a war economy, in spite of the huge problem the Russian economy is facing. We cannot underestimate those difficulties. They are huge. However, at the same time, the Russians have been able to adapt, and the regime is not on the verge of a collapse. It has adapted itself to a war economy. I mean, there are very, very different ways. On the military front, we are facing what I call a sort of bloody stalemate, in the sense that the Russians are advancing in the Donetsk very slowly, but they are advancing, and they are advancing at a huge human cost. However, the Russians have a huge capacity to generate new forces. On the military front, and I can develop this point, but very quickly, the Russians have been able, and this is something which is not mentioned a lot in publications and in debate in the press.



The Future of Europe After the Ukraine War and Trump's Election



Hubert Védrine
Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of France,
Founder of Hubert Védrine Conseil



Vuk Jeremić
President of the Center for International Relations and
Sustainable Development, former Minister of Foreign Affairs
of Serbia



Norbert Röttgen
Member of the Deutscher Bundestag and member
of the Foreign Affairs Committee

Two remarks. First, I think Trump will try to freeze the war, but at the same time he will feel compelled to dissuade Putin; otherwise, he will be seen as a weakling. I do not rule out that he will promise Putin the lifting of sanctions. It is in his nature and that will put Europeans in a very tough spot. Again, the thorniest point here is that even if Trump cannot leave NATO, he will give very few American guarantees and shift that onus on to Europe. But there is some confusion between what has to do with Europe and what has to do with NATO. There is no body composed of European allies within NATO. So we may have to invent one. Will we then face a question we have never had to deal with because it never came up, i.e., who decides? This is not just a matter of the armaments industry or declarations. It is a matter of war and peace. Consequently, policy decisions must be totally legitimate. We had better think about that. Second remark. I think we should not forget a body that was reinvented by Letta, Draghi, Macron and Scholz, i.e., the European Political Community. I am aware that nobody believes in the EPC for the moment. It seems marginal. The media ignore it. However, it is the only body that brings together all Europeans and only Europeans. The EPC will not replace NATO, but since we are going to encounter the hardest questions that we Europeans have had to face in seventy years, which we must absolutely settle, it must not be neglected.

Drawing on personal experiences from the breakup of Yugoslavia, Mr. Jeremić stated that he sees many parallels with the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. He described the conflict as tragic, and expressed his belief that the war is approaching its end, possibly within months or a year. Any delay in resolution, he warned, will only lead to more loss of life, before reaching the same inevitable outcome. He also raised concerns about the war's potential to escalate into something even worse, even involving weapons of mass destruction. He highlighted the potential role of President Trump's actions, noting that if Trump fulfils his campaign promises, the conflict might end sooner. Expressing his hope that Europe will not try to transform into a war economy, he warned that doing so could lead to disastrous outcomes. He expressed hope for peace by 2025 but also argued that Ukraine would not join NATO, as NATO expansion seemed unlikely. He further explained that the EU would not accept Ukraine as a full member, drawing parallels to the Western Balkans' experience. He stated he does not foresee the EU taking in any new fully-fledged member into the European Council, before changing certain decision-making rules. Jeremić advocated for greater emphasis to be placed on the European Political Community, supported by France and President Macron. Lastly, he highlighted that recent statements from EU officials about Ukraine's EU membership do not have a high likelihood of being materialized. He called for adjusting expectations to avoid misunderstandings and stressed the need for evolving diplomatic and political dynamics between Ukraine and Europe, for the sake of future relations.

The future of Europe, first and foremost, has become a security matter. European security, for the first time since December 1941, has become primarily a European matter. This is fundamentally new. What is of paramount interest for us Europeans and the future perspective of security is that we clearly see our strategic goal to make this war a failure because if this war, the Russian Putin war, were to turn out to be a success, even to some degree, if there were a revote for war, war would remain. The election of Trump means that we do not know how American foreign and Ukraine policy will evolve. I would consider this approach to a deal by Trump as the worst case scenario for the Europeans because it would accelerate the process of adaptation for the Europeans, perhaps in a way that would be too quick to adapt.



Conversation with Aiman Ezzat



CHAIR:
Thierry de Montbrial
Founder and Executive
Chairman of Ifri
and the WPC



Aiman Ezzat
CEO of Capgemini

The digital revolution is comparable to the industrial revolution. The rules of competition and consumers' expectations are radically changing. Value is increasingly shifting towards digital technology and we are witnessing a transition from a physical world to a hybrid physical-digital one. Among the technologies at work, artificial intelligence has a major part to play. AI is nothing new, but its capacities have grown considerably thanks to advances in computing and data management in recent years. Its multiple applications make it possible to generate wealth pervasively in society. Adopting it will take time because of the changes necessary in processes and working methods.

Beyond AI, the transition to the hybrid physical-digital world will come with multiple challenges.

- The uses, not the technology, must be regulated.
- The right balance of sovereignty must be found.
- On cybersecurity, we must look ahead and prepare for the future.
- Technology and innovation will provide solutions for sustainability.
- Investments in human capital will be needed.

Each player, public and private, has a part to play in the transition.



The AI Revolution and Beyond



CHAIR:
Daniel Andler
Professor Emeritus at Sorbonne University, Member of the Académie des sciences morales et politiques, Philosopher



François Barrault
Founder and Chairman of FDB Partners, Chairman of IDATE DigiWorld

With the help of AI, humanity is set to travel far and wide. How far and where is unclear, but we have a say. AI does not drive itself and we cannot let the Magnificent Seven and their counterparts in China decide for us. When we look ahead, we ask how good AI is going to get. But this can be understood in two ways: (1) Of what cognitive feats will it eventually be capable. (2) How good it will be for us. What is good for AI is not necessarily good for humanity. Recommending that we reap the benefits of AI while preventing or limiting the damages it can inflict is vacuous. We must do better. By scrutinizing AI's achievements and effects so far, we can assess whether we are moving in the right direction or should correct the present trajectory. We can sort the products and promises of AI along two dimensions: beneficial versus harmful, toxic or risky; real or realistic versus speculative or just hype. Examples that combine realism and a priori beneficence might be smart search engines, scientific, medical, legal and driving assistance. Examples that combine realism and risk of toxicity are near-perfect chatbots, especially of the AI companion kind, as well as AI poets, novelists, composers, etc. On the side of beneficial but unsupported promises and exaggerated achievements, explainable artificial general intelligence, AGI, safe Level 5 self-driving vehicles. On the side of dangerous but mercifully, unsupported systems, black box AGI, fully autonomous AI physicians, teachers, judges, policemen, therapists, politicians, and CEOs. Finally, concerning pitfalls or downsides, I distinguish between predicaments that have no solution but need to be faced from challenges that can be taken up. Examples of the first sort might be autonomous lethal weapons and the new battlefield, cybersecurity, increased inequalities within and between nations, dehumanization. Examples of challenges that must be met head-on are respect of privacy, of intellectual property, of simple factual truth, some degree of transparency as far as it does not contradict the very idea of AI, environmental impact, deskilling and fabrication of false persons.

When discussing the reasons for our focus on AI, I believe there are three key points. First, there is the explosion of technology. Second, AI has been portrayed as an anxiety-producing theme on television; when the world is stable, people tend to avoid watching TV, but fear generates significant interest. Lastly, we have the popularization of ChatGPT. Technology encompasses three components: hardware, transmission/telecommunications, and software. In terms of hardware, we see a new interpretation of Moore's Law, where capacity is no longer doubling every 18 months. Instead, we have very small chips, such as quantum chips and advancements in edge computing. Our smartphones exemplify today's new technology. For transmission, we have 5G+, 6G, fiber optics, and satellite technology. Regarding software, we create, transmit, and compute data using new algorithms including Large Language Models (LLMs) and Large Quantitative Models (LQM). ChatGPT debuted in 2019, making it relatively new, and we are currently on ChatGPT 4. The progression of ChatGPT can be likened to developmental stages: version 1 was like a three-year-old, version 2 was a teenager, version 3 resembled a college student, and now it operates at a PhD level. Future versions, such as ChatGPT N+1, will work with a corpus of selected information within a designed context. ChatGPT N+2 is particularly interesting, as it is expected to achieve nearly 100% accuracy. This will involve understanding the words we use, our emotions, our stories, and our preferences. As a result, ChatGPT N+2 could serve as a chief of staff. The evolution of ChatGPT will lead to the decline of task-oriented jobs, allowing us more time to communicate and engage our creative side. In conclusion, AI has the potential to simplify our lives by eliminating mundane tasks, thereby providing us with more opportunities to connect with each other and create a better world.



The AI Revolution and Beyond



Omran Sharaf

Assistant Foreign Minister for Advanced Science and Technology of the United Arab Emirates



Lee Tiedrich

Distinguished Faculty Fellow in Law & Responsible Technology at Duke University, member of the OECD and Global Partnership on AI (GPAI)

In the past, technology played a vital role in shaping the geopolitical landscape in the background. Today with AI and other upcoming emerging technologies, the arrow has shifted to being in the frontline. I am saying this because in the past, advanced technologies were only focused or within the reach, capacity and capability of state actors. Today, we have non-state actors who actually have access to this sector, developing this technology and having a say in how this technology is shaped down the line. Because of this, the impact on the equation that defines geopolitics has changed. Technologies such as AI and others, whether it is genomes or quantum, where there was a recent breakthrough, will change the ways nations deal and work with each other and AI is an excellent platform or opportunity for us to learn how to prepare. In general, I believe as nations we have been very reactive when it has come to actually dealing with AI. Some people are panicking, some are not, and I think it will bring many more opportunities than challenges. The question is how we govern it, if we regulate it or nurture it so that it goes in the right direction. I think this debate needs to happen at the level of multilateral platforms and bilateral discussions, where nations have to discuss this but at the same time, not hinder or stop the progress of the developments in this important field that brings a lot of benefits to humanity. This technology is very complex actually requires us to work together because from an efficiency point of view, it is more efficient and effective for us to collaborate rather than have different blocs not working together on this important and critical capability.

Certain jurisdictions have really jumped out ahead in terms of the regulatory approach. UNESCO adopted an agreement in 2021 around AI. More recently, there is the Global Digital Compact, with follow-on actions, as well as, the UN AI High-Level Advisory Board and the ITU. I think AI really has evolved into a global and multidisciplinary game. I think part of what this also means for companies is they need be prepared to adapt. I always tell people, I cannot tell them what the legal landscape is going to look like a year from now, but I feel comfortable saying it is going to change. I think companies also need to have very much of a global multidisciplinary approach. This starts at the design phase, where you need to have your designers and engineers talking to the law, ethics, policy and other teams. This collaboration needs to be a continuous process throughout the AI system lifecycle. One of the issues I have been working on wearing my Global Partnership on AI (GPAI)/OECD hat is the impact of AI on the environment. Again, this also presents a lot of challenges and opportunities. Through the work that we have done through GPAI/OECD, we have produced reports on how AI can be an agent to help abate some of the climate issues we have been encountering as well as biodiversity loss. For example AI can be used to try to improve the electric grid, optimize the use of renewables, smart agriculture, etc. There are a lot of great examples, but all you have to do is pick up the papers and there are reports about the extreme energy demands of AI systems. Again, it is a question of how we optimize the benefits and mitigate the risks, and I think it all comes down to science. One of the things we need is better measurement techniques so that we can measure both the benefits and the impacts.



Innovative Leaders: Transforming Business with Generative AI



CHAIR:
Lucia Sinapi-Thomas
Executive Vice President – Capgemini Ventures
Managing Director



Lucia Russo
Artificial Intelligence Policy Analyst at the OECD

For business leaders, generative AI is expected to bring the next frontier of automation and productivity. No doubt and no surprise, that in our latest Capgemini Research Institute survey, GenAI appears as an item on the Board's agenda for 96% of respondents. We cannot ignore the fact that along with these expected benefits, generative AI is also raising some fundamental concerns. For example, scientists signed an open letter in 2023 urging for a pause in AI research and the development of ethics and regulations. This resonates with unprecedented fear of a tech singularity, an hypothetical point where computers would transcend human intelligence. The day after he received the Nobel Prize, Geoffrey Hinton raised the alert to AI-related risks for humanity, while Davos 2024 pointed to the risks of disinformation. All this explains why AI is also a hot topic on political agendas. In February, France is hosting the first Artificial Intelligence Action Summit, which is likely to emphasize the question of international governance of AI. If we focus on GenAI enterprise adoption, I will give a few examples of what is on the critical path. We heard that large language models can hallucinate and of course, for enterprise adoption explainability, auditability and transparency are paramount. Moreover, the environmental impact of GenAI cannot be lowered. LLMs are very compute intensive, for example, a search on ChatGPT is 10 times more compute intensive than a search on Google. The amount of data that is generated is doubling every two years, raising the need for data centers, numbers of which are expected to increase by 48% between now and 2030, of course, requiring the right level of power. The International Energy Agency forecasts that by 2026, data centers will consume as much as the whole of Japan.

My OECD colleagues landed somewhere in-between a 0.5 and 0.9 percentage point contribution to our net productivity gains. This tells us that there is potential to boost productivity through AI but not to revamp productivity to the levels we had in the sixties though, of course, these estimates are subject to some factors. Adoption is one of the key factors that will enable competitiveness and some productivity gains, he challenges that mostly concern policymakers around AI are related to, for instance, misinformation and disinformation. We know that this is not a new phenomenon, but the scale of content generation and propagation has been accelerated by generative AI. We know that these models are trained on large bodies of text and other material that is often copyrighted, and this raises the question of fair remuneration for authors. Labor market implications are also a concern although, for instance, the OECD Digital Economy Outlook acknowledged that they have not yet materialized with the disruption we were thinking about. Just to conclude, I would like to underline the role that policymakers must play in governing these risks while fostering these innovative gains. The first thing is to build trust in AI because the demand for these systems hinges on the fact that users trust that the systems are transparent, accountable and safe, which can be done through policy frameworks, but should not hamper innovation. Second, and perhaps the most important, is to support AI adoption through investment in complementary assets, digital infrastructure intangible but perhaps, above all, skills to enable the deployment of these technologies. Third, to facilitate the reallocation of factors across the economy, including labor, so facilitating transitions in the labor market but also ensuring that capital is reallocated through well developed financial systems.



Innovative Leaders: Transforming Business with Generative AI



Eiso Kant
CTO & Cofounder of Poolside



Rotem Alaluf
CEO of Wand.ai



Felix Naser
COO of Liquid AI

We often see a lot of hands in the room go up, but I posit that actually, the vast majority of us are still underestimating what is going to happen in the coming decades. We believe that the path towards AGI – which I think is a poorly defined term but let us take it as entirely closing the gap between human and machine intelligence in all things we consider economically valuable – is first going to go through closing that gap in software development. Our view is that the road to AGI is going to go through building the world's most capable capabilities in software development and coding first, and secondly only in other areas. We are going to want to provide them with growing amounts of information and access to the data inside our enterprise. What we do today with Poolside is that we deploy our systems entirely behind the customer's firewall, including the model, the data layer, the intelligence layer and also the applications. What is unique about us and where we sit in the world is that we have what is called a first party relationship with Amazon Web Services, something that they have only done a few times in their entire history. However, there is SaaS software out there today that is trying to mimic what the human workforce does. Those pieces of software, those companies are either going to grow with AI and move towards a world where they are offering agents that can take on more and more of those tasks at a higher level of abstraction or objectives given to them, or they are going to fall behind. I think it is unlikely that the entire SaaS offer will go away, we are still going to want a lot of software to exist. I want my bank transactions to be done by deterministic software, not by an agent. However, it is true that a lot more software that will sustain the test of time is going to be bigger systems of record combined with companies that are able to take advantage of these models and turn them into really useful agents that augment the existing workforce.

In summary, AI, especially when we get into enterprise, government mission critical systems, is not a one component language model or any other foundational model. It is a much more complex platform that requires dozens of different components, and an enterprise does not necessarily need to build everything end-to-end, I even recommend not to do it. Tech companies need to do that, they need to push more in creating enterprise great solutions that provide this trust, and all the different components needed for the enterprise to use the system in a better way. The last thing I want to say is that the tech is difficult, but it will be solved. A lot of very smart people are working to solve the tech barriers today and, in my opinion, they will reach human capabilities in almost every task we are thinking about in the next 5 to 10 years. The thing that is even more difficult than the tech today is the change management, how we bring the technology to the people and how we create the trust. There is a lot of work there for consulting firms so that different companies can see how we can close the gap between the current situation, what we can call the old software situation, and move to this new world of AI workforces collaborating with humanity. I would say that is even more difficult than the text parts today.

Liquid AI is a foundation model company with our headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Our mission is to build capable and efficient general-purpose AI systems at every scale. Our foundation models (LFMs) enable three major advantages. One is efficiency compared to what was possible before, especially compared to transformer architectures we really are enabling a step function change in terms of efficiency. We can look more into why the model makes which decision and, based on that, take the corresponding action, either improving data quality and/or alignment with human preference. We want to ensure as much as possible that the model is actually behaving in a way that is correct. Last but not least, none of this comes with a quality disadvantage but actually with a quality advantage. With the latest introduction of our first series of foundation models we have released language. These models are the new state-of-the-art in their corresponding sizes. They not only unlock efficiency and ability gains but also outperform other models in their corresponding size. That is really exciting and that is why we are also looking forward to continuing to work with our design partners and customers to bring this technology to the world and enterprises. As you can imagine, based on these quality and efficiency gains, especially if you look at on-device applications where all of a sudden GenAI on the edge is possible because of the efficiency gains we can enable through liquid foundation models. From our customers' perspective this is amazing for the following main reasons: latency is not dependent on any expensive cloud calls, but answers can be computed directly on the device and of course, this also allows complete local privacy.



Brics Expansion: Implications for the Future of Global Order



CHAIR:
Nikolaus Lang
Managing Director and Senior Partner in BCG's Munich office



Etienne Berchtold
Ambassador of the Republic of Austria to the United Arab Emirates, former Foreign and European Policy Spokesperson for three Austrian Chancellors

The panel on "BRICS Expansion: Implications for the Future of Global Order" brought leaders together for an insightful discussion on global forces affecting businesses, BRICS expansion, and how business leaders can respond to the evolving dynamics. As leaders constantly ponder and ask questions about the macro-trends impacting businesses, BCG has identified global forces shaping businesses. These forces include Asia trade shifts, BRICS expansion, war in Ukraine and crisis in the Middle East, the geopolitics of AI, and navigating demographic shifts. The developments of the past six months, particularly the formal expansion of BRICS, have underlined the importance of that organization given its huge population and impact on GDP and trade. The expanded BRICS will influence five areas that are critical for businesses: energy, trade, infrastructure and development, monetary policy, and—last but not least—technological cooperation. First, energy: The volume of exports and imports of oil and gas shows that the expanded BRICS and potential new joiners are creating their own energy market independent of other players. Looking at trade and the linked volume of exports and imports, we note that in the 20 years from 2003 to 2023, the share of intra-BRICS trade for many countries has grown between 10 to 20 percentage points. With these dynamics in mind, BCG has identified five major responses for businesses: develop a BRICS specific go-to-market strategy; tap into the infrastructure boom in the expanded BRICS; leverage the expanded BRICS for building resilient supply chains; navigate the Western sanctions regime and BRICS-for-BRICS business realities; and build geopolitical muscle in decision-making and organization.

We have seen a steady decrease in Western influence over the last 15 years. Quite honestly, half of the world has not followed us down the path of imposing sanctions on Russia after its war of aggression and this leads us to an evaluation of where we stand and where we should continue to go. One of the main lessons the West, the G7 and the European Union should draw is not to continue to lament this decline in influence. When it comes to what we have to do is engage in dialogue with the BRICS countries, listen to them and their concerns, and not lecture them. For example, if our host country tells us that the BRICS countries are a geoeconomic project, we should accept it as such and start a dialogue on this basis, aimed at geoeconomic diversification. The UAE is very good at economic diversification and implementing their CEPAs, their free trade agreements. It would also help to invite BRICS leaders, as Italy has already done this year, to G7 summits. In the end, we should be careful about issuing threats against the BRICS, as President elect Trump made clear a week ago on X, that if they ever implemented an alternative to the dollar the US would impose 100% tariffs. So far, there have been no concrete plans to implement a currency at the BRICS level but if we continue to threaten them maybe they will get the idea to do that.



Brics Expansion: Implications for the Future of Global Order



Trudi Makhaya

Board Member, Spar Group & Former Economic Advisor to the President of South Africa



Constanza Negri Biasutti

Brazil B20 Sherpa and former Trade & International Integration Head at CNI (National Confederation of Industry) in Brazil



Qiao Yide

Vice Chairman and Secretary General of Shanghai Development Research Foundation

If I look very specifically at the South African experience, from the trade perspective in the BRICS configuration, we mostly export to China but also to a certain extent we enjoy good relations with Brazil, India and less so in terms of exports and trade with Russia, but still quite present. On the whole, we have found that the trade balance is against South Africa, so we are running a deficit against the BRICS nations, in particular our main trading partner there, China. We also find that a lot of exports we send to the BRICS bloc have continued to be commodities with very low value added and they also tend to have very cyclical pricing. The question then is if we have really fundamentally changed the quality of the trade. You will have recently seen a lot of advocacy from South Africa to the BRICS nations has been on how to close the trade gap and try to move towards more balanced trade, and in essence, narrow the deficit. It is also about how we move away from commodities towards more value-added products. To summarize, I would say that BRICS is given options, which are being deepened by expansion, but it is important that this is constructive optionality that really changes the structure of how Africa is integrated into the rest of the economy.

Despite the differences we see in terms of the composition and geopolitical views, the G20 and BRICS should be as seen as complementary. This is particularly true for Brazil, a country that pursues a balanced approach in terms of foreign policy and that creates more strategic opportunities for the private sector and diversifies economic opportunities by balancing relationships with different powers. I think that economic integration across these forums, specifically in terms of the BRICS, may take some time and we will have to see what happens because an expanded BRICS is still in the very early stages. I think it reflects the fact that they already represent important markets for businesses in the short-term, so active participation in discussions in these forums is strategic and badly needed in terms of the private sector agenda for the economic agenda to move. As a quick reminder, let us look at the main priorities for governance that Brazil has established for these two presidencies. For the G20 500 Hunger and Inequality addresses sustainable development across economic, social and environmental dimensions and advances global governance reform to reflect contemporary reality. Turning to the BRICS priorities, the Brazilian government has already given a quick overview of these, and we see five priorities in terms of the governance that will deepen throughout next year from the start in January 2025: 1/ Reform of international monetary and financial systems; 2/ Artificial Intelligence governance; 3/ Climate change, which is about coordinating efforts for COP 30 and other issues that are not addressed in the UNFCCC framework; 4/ Health will be a priority for Brazil in BRICS; 5/ Distribution of development inside the governance of BRICS in terms of how new members can be integrated and coordination mechanisms streamlined.

First, the NDB is operating very well and is rated at AA+ by Standard and Poor, which is higher than the individual five countries. The NDB is raising capital in the international market, the cost is only 30 or 40 bps, higher than that of the World Bank. Second, obviously, the principle of equity has been properly carried out because, as I mentioned, the equity is shared equally among the five initial members. The last point is that the performance is very good, and its purpose and target is to support the existing international economic order rather than undercut it, as some people originally suspected. First of all, I would say we should have one strategy for one country because all the BRICS are very diverse in terms of different development strategies and social systems, so you cannot use one strategy to fit them all. Second, we should study in-depth the business environment, law and regulations, not just before investing but also continuously after investing in the operation. Third, local talents and experts should be used and trusted. When it comes to pitfalls, the first thing to avoid is too much concentration of decision-making at headquarters. Second, companies should not simply copy their experience in advanced countries, even if they had been successful or in other developing countries but should do something that is designed for specific countries.



Conversation with Anwar Gargash



Anwar Gargash
Diplomatic Advisor to President of the United Arab Emirates



CHAIR:
Thierry de Montbrial
Founder and Executive Chairman of Ifri and the WPC

Vis-à-vis Syria. I would say that there are three important key words: hope, concern and opportunity. The hope is that the Syrians will finally be able to build a system that can encompass them all and that they will be able to move forward, because the Syrians are a very talented people. What is extremely important for them is to overcome their tortured history. The first lesson from the past is that marginalizing components within Syrian society has failed. I think we must be optimistic and help the Syrians in the difficult task at hand today and it really is a monumentally difficult task. I think the third issue is opportunity and, as you know, every crisis brings opportunities. If we think in terms that this is going to be a reincarnation of the brutal adventures of ISIS or a repeat of the Arab Spring, then I think we will have another episode of conflict in the region. Our relations in the UAE and other countries in the Arab world are improving with Iran. We also hope that Iran learns to come back and try to reincarnate a program of regional expansion based on militias and sectarianism is not really for the good of the region or Iran itself. The current state of Iran's relations with many of the Gulf countries, including the UAE is probably in the best condition for many years. I think this is something that Iran is also eager to maintain and keep. Clearly, we do not really know what the new American policy will be, we have glimpses of it based on President Trump's first term and different statements, etc. I think that optimism always has to be there for diplomacy to have the ability to unlock what sometimes seem to be closed doors or prospects. *Vis-à-vis Israel and Prime Minister Netanyahu.* I think the lesson we also have is that military success without a political conclusion, in the region and in history, has always been an elusive mirage. Without that political conclusion, these defeats themselves will create new crises in many ways. I think that the Trump administration also understands these facts. From that realism I think we need to see more American leadership in this area. We also have to be aware that there are many sinister forces today that still live in a sort of ideological bubble and want to recreate their dream, which over the years has not failed just once but many times.



The Covid-19 pandemic

- The COVID-19 pandemic is the worst combined health and socioeconomic crisis in living memory.
- The global excess death toll is estimated to be 30 million.
- At its highest point in 2020, 90% of schoolchildren were unable to attend school.
- At least 150 million people have been pushed into extreme poverty.
- US\$ 22 trillion of output is expected to be lost in the period 2020-2025 — the deepest shock to the global economy since World War II.
- The pandemic continues to have a profound impact on lives and livelihoods as economic recovery takes place in wealthier countries but falters in the poorest countries.
- Covid-19 and pandemics have dropped off the global political agenda.



Global Health Challenges



CHAIR:
Michel Kazatchkine
Special Advisor to the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe



Antoine Flahault
Director of the Institute of Global Health at the University of Geneva, Director of the Swiss School of Public Health

To conclude, let me make two points. One is that health is an important issue for the foreign policy agenda, health is a geo-political issue, which we see every day in negotiations in Geneva. Health is an issue of both hard (when negotiating a treaty) and soft power. Health is now key on the security agenda. Under the Biden administration, global health was under a Global Security Affairs department in the State Department. Health is a huge issue on the international economic agenda, of commerce and industry. It is also an issue of social justice and human rights and it is an integral part of intertwined, interconnected crises and challenges we face, food, climate, energy and water. We heard from our Brazilian representative on the panel yesterday that it will be a key issue on the G20 agenda of the BRICS for the coming year. It has been on the WPC agenda for three years now, a clear symptom that is indeed taken as something important for the foreign policy agenda. What we are to cover in global health are a number of common issues that the world can only address by coming together as an international community. No one country can solve these issues alone and I have listed some of them: 1/ Pandemic prevention, preparedness and response; 2/ HIV, tuberculosis, malaria, which are ongoing pandemics; 3/ Polio eradication; 4/ Antimicrobial resistance; 5/ Increasing epidemic of obesity and type 2 diabetes; 6/ The social, economic, commercial and political determinants of non-communicable diseases; 7/ Synthetic drugs, which are now a common problem for the world; 8/ Digitalization of health, all of AI and regulating AI for health; 9/ The issue of global health governance.

We are facing today huge demographic challenges, with a rapidly ageing society that needs multilateral efforts, exactly as we had in the last century for smallpox, with a lot of diseases and risks we could try to avoid or reduce. It is not about prolonging our lives infinitely but much more about improving our health and quality of life within our already long life expectancy. Prevention is about compressing morbidity to the final steps of our lives. If we succeed to require less cure against chronic diseases in seniors we will contribute to save health expenditures. In OECD countries, we dedicate 95% to 97% of our health expenditures to treating patients with expensive drugs or hospital stays. Prevention can avoid or delay diseases from occurring. With less healthcare needs, prevention can contribute reducing the shortage in healthcare workers. And prevention also benefits the planet, the air we breath and the climate. There is a lot to learn and to win with prevention. What is often lacking is political will here.



Maha Barakat
Assistant Minister for Health and Life Sciences at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the UAE

It has been estimated that by the end of the century, climate change will probably be directly taking over nine million lives every year. The effects include: 1/ Extreme weather events, and we have just seen recently in Valencia in Spain, the devastating effects of that; 2/ Just having too much heat can cause heat stroke and other issues; 3/ Respiratory illness and an increasing burden of asthma, lung cancer, chronic obstructive lung disease; 4/ Waterborne illnesses and we have just heard about cholera and there are others, for instance, polio; 5/ Zoonoses, diseases that start in animals and jump into human beings. Many epidemics and for instance, the pandemic we have just had was a zoonosis, something that started in an animal and jumped into humans. That relates to Covid-19 and also to Mpox, swine flu, avian flu and all these influenza viruses that start in animals and jump to humans. Moving on to air pollution, we heard briefly how air pollution is affecting the world. This slide shows two news reports, one from Lahore and the other from New Delhi and a very senior thoracic surgeon from New Delhi publishes widely on this topic and he is basically saying that what he used to see in the 1980s is very different from what he is seeing now. Over 50% of cases of lung cancer in New Delhi are now in non-smokers, which is unheard of, before more than 90% were from smokers and he is seeing it in younger and younger people.

Global Health Challenges



Jean-François Etter
Professor at the Institute of Global Health (ISG) of the University of Geneva

Smoking is a leading cause of global deaths and diseases, killing over 7.5 million people annually and impacting economies through productivity losses. The international response to this crisis is the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), which encourages countries to implement laws and taxes to reduce smoking prevalence. The FCTC has made significant contributions, including inspiring other international agreements, like the Paris Climate Accord and the ongoing pandemic treaty. However, its implementation has been slow, enforcement weak, and interference from the tobacco industry persistent. The evolving tobacco market—featuring electronic cigarettes, heated tobacco products, and nicotine pouches—has outpaced the FCTC's response. Funding from private philanthropists also raises concerns about their undue influence on public policies. Finally, some countries not party to the FCTC have also reduced smoking prevalence, raising questions about the FCTC's impact. Tobacco harm reduction offers alternatives to smoking by addressing the harms of combustion rather than nicotine use. This approach is especially relevant for populations struggling to quit, such as individuals with mental health issues. However, tobacco harm reduction remains controversial, with critics fearing it could normalize nicotine use, attract youth, or undermine traditional tobacco control policies. The WHO and FCTC have strongly opposed this strategy, and leading experts have been excluded from the COPs (conference of the parties). Key lessons from the FCTC for global health include the power of multilateralism, the need for science-based policies, protecting policies from undue influences, robust but inclusive governance, transparency, and flexibility to address emerging challenges. These principles can guide responses to future public health crises, including pandemics.



Juliette Tuakli
Mercy Ships International Diplomatic Ambassador for Africa, former Clinical Professor in Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, Founder and former Medical Director of CHILD Accra in Ghana

Alternative forms of health care financing are critical for building up resilience in Africa's health care systems. In addition, there has been a shift in the cost burden of disease prevention. Safe affordable surgical access is a critical and cost-effective component in enhancing health prevention as the continent's non communicable disease burden outweighs the impact of communicable disease.



Yoshiyuki Sagara
Senior Research Fellow at the Asia Pacific Initiative (API) specialized in health security policy

The world is repeating the cycle of "panic and neglect" when it comes to pandemic prevention and response. Historically, pandemics have prompted governments and global bodies to prioritize prevention, but sustained attention often fades over time. The Global Health Security Agenda, launched after the 2014 Ebola outbreak, was initially based on the flawed assumption that pandemics would mainly affect developing countries. However, the Covid-19 pandemic demonstrated that all nations are vulnerable, sparking renewed international discussions on preparedness and regulation, including the proposed WHO Pandemic Preparedness Treaty and amendments to the International Health Regulations in 2024. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the global health security agenda largely functioned as a national health security agenda. Experts underscore that prevention is not only a global imperative but also a critical national interest. To make this a reality, it's essential to operationalize the pandemic prevention agenda by focusing on two key areas: (1) robust surveillance mechanisms to detect emerging pathogens and diseases, and (2) Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Japan has taken a leading role in showcasing effective strategies for both. Its early detection of Covid-19 on January 15, 2020, was supported by surveillance systems established in 2019—originally intended for the planned 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Even with limited PCR testing capacity, Japan's efficient referral processes, including the use of CT scanners, helped manage cases effectively. Additionally, UHC systems curbed the spread of the virus and saved lives, contributing to Japan's low Covid-19 mortality rate. Looking ahead, Japan is promoting UHC worldwide through a new knowledge hub in Tokyo in partnership with the WHO and World Bank.



Geopolitics, Food, World Hunger: A Forgotten and Explosive Subject



CHAIR:
Jean-Michel Severino
President of Investisseurs & Partenaires, former Vice President of the World Bank for Asia, former CEO of France's International Development Agency (AFD)



Máximo Torero Cullen
Chief Economist of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

For those of you who attended this session last year, many things have happened since then, prices have gone in all directions but mostly up, and to a certain extent we have swallowed the consequences of the Ukraine-Russia war. We have also witnessed what we thought would take place, extreme weather events, droughts, floods, etc., that have continued to disrupt not only the economics of food, production and consumption but also how people live. However, the major structural issues such as inequality, hunger, poverty and access to food have not changed that much and I think our panelists will insist on that. This is all linked to a kind of resurgence of agricultural issues at the heart of our geopolitical debates, such as the Mercosur debate, which has shown how sensitive those issues are, also in industrialized countries. Nevertheless, I find it striking and that is a question for us, that those agricultural issues have remained very low on our debating agenda. We have had three very important multilateral discussions this semester: COP 29 on climate, COP 16 on biodiversity and the negotiation of the new Plastics Treaty. In all those three international negotiations, agricultural issues were basically very low on the agenda, if not. This lack of focus on what is, with health, one of the most critical of our global issues when it comes to the sustainability of our livelihoods, is a big question.

As per the latest FAO flagship publication *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2024*, today 733 million people suffer chronic hunger. 2.3 billion people lack regular access to food and 2.8 billion people cannot afford healthy diets. The numbers are terrible and have stayed basically the same in the last three years without any significant improvement, although there are some improvements, especially in the South. This is in a context where conflicts have been increasing, climate events have been increasing in frequency and intensity and, of course, we have the economic and financial situation. In order to minimize the effects of shocks, we need to increase the resilience of countries. This concept is divided in two components: "vulnerabilities" (minimizing risks through better investment in early warning systems) and "capabilities" (managing risks when they occur and increase capacity of absorption).



Philippe Chalmin
Founder of Cercle Cyclope, Professor Emeritus
at Paris-Dauphine University

I will conclude by saying that to my mind agricultural production globally is not really a problem, sufficient agricultural products are produced in the world to satisfy human needs. I would be rather hopeful. When we were younger, there was a book written by Joseph Klatzmann, in France, *How to feed 10 billion people*, and I think the world will be able to do it. The problem is not there, it is a problem of poverty, and I am afraid to say that trade is not really the solution, to my mind self-sufficiency should be a problem. When I listen to our friend in Rome, there may be a problem on some markets one year because of climate, etc., but on the whole, I think the big question is food poverty and that is something that can be averted both through agricultural and food policies. I sometimes dream not of the very complex system of insurance, etc., that the FAO loves but it seems pretty simple, like we had in Europe with the Common Agricultural Policy. The Common Agricultural Policy was a success, it allowed Europe to not only become self-sufficient but an exporter. I sometimes dream of an equivalent policy in many African countries, for example, but at the end of the day I have no answer to who pays for it.

Geopolitics, Food, World Hunger: A Forgotten and Explosive Subject



Bayu Krisnamurthi
Professor at the Bogor Agricultural University,
former Vice Minister of Agriculture of the Republic
of Indonesia

The potential global food solutions, of course include: 1/ Emergency food relief, better food distribution and opening up the food trade, which I think is very important; 2/ I liked the approach by previous panels to sustainable food agriculture to seek help on climate change issues and food, and hunger are also climate change issues; 3/ Then of course, there is technology, and I think there have been 20 or 30 years of debate about GMO, and I think we can come to some conclusions about that because biotech is much more than this but has a huge potential to solve problems and including AI and IoT; 4/ Of course, non-land-based food agriculture is becoming increasingly popular in many countries; 5/ Reducing food loss and waste is another key factor we need to talk about; 6/ The role of the private sector and we now see more and more social entrepreneurs who do not see it as the biggest margin in the business but that they can still make a good profit helping people solve their food problems; 7/ Global governance? I put the question mark in because we already have organizations like the FAO and others, but to be effective I still think that the governance needs to be reviewed and different approaches so that we can solve the persistent problems of hunger and food insecurity.



Kamel Abdallah
Managing Director and CEO of Canal Sugar, Egypt

When it comes to ending hunger there are a lot of tensions. The first is within governments themselves with multiple jurisdictions and ministries of agriculture in conflict with ministries of water, irrigation, with one controlling things above ground and the other the underground, and conflicting with ministries of health. There is the issue of cost reductions, profits and reducing carbon in food manufacturing that is an important issue that is also raising costs. Consumers have different kinds of problems, they love plastic bottles because they are cheaper and more consistent but of course, they are not sustainable. Finally, as producers we have issues with the ESG because of a lot of agriculture works with minors and with social practices that are not unacceptable or compliant with the ESG. Just to finish, small is beautiful and in our view, this is solution. Stick to local communities, use technology, let the private sector do its job and most important, get people to eat healthier food and less food, and to stop wasting 1 billion tons of food every year.



Jean-Marc Astorg
Strategy Director at Centre national d'études spatiales
(CNES)

On the occasion of a June 2025 United Nations conference in Nice, all the global space players will plan to create a spatial alliance for the oceans. The aim is to make all their spatial data available to understand and preserve the oceans better. Lastly, I would like to mention the Space for Climate Observatory, an initiative that France proposed to all its international partners in 2019. Today, the observatory is supported by the United Nations and 50 countries participate, including the United Arab Emirates. It is a group of extremely local projects that make spatial data available for climate-related issues. Here is an example. In Vietnam, the issue of how global warming and the influx of saline water will change rice paddies is extremely critical. A project we are conducting with Vietnam allows us to forecast what the conditions of farming the rice paddies will be in the next 10 years. This will enable farmers to make informed, extremely local decisions on where to plant them.



Politics and Religion in the Middle East



Olivier Roy
Research Director at CNRS (French National Center for Scientific Research)



Haïm Korsia
Chief Rabbi of France

CHAIR:
Thierry de Montbrial
Founder and Executive
Chairman of Ifri
and the WPC

At the time, the Iranian axis was to rely on Shiite minorities across the Arab world and on groups that could be called crypto-Shiite, such as the Houthis in Yemen and the Alawites in Syria. However, this bid to take over the Shiite world was not a resounding success. In playing the Shiite, militant, anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist, etc. card, Iran left aside what could be called the Sunni masses. The Sunnis became radicalized jihadists. The jihadist wave, which began in 1995 and, to me, ended very recently, blinded us Westerners to the real dynamics in the Middle East. There is a logic in Julani's breakthrough and taking of Damascus, an extraordinary but perfectly logical event, i.e. the seizure of power in Syria by the Sunni majority. Julani's challenge now is to manage Syria's two non-Arab Sunni parties. The project is to rebuild a multi-faith but predominately Sunni Arab Syria. So whatever the form of government, Syria will remain within its borders and not destabilize its neighbors. Now the Arab states will look inward and focus on their national interests. Julani is a politician who wants power and knows what must be done to ensure the reunification of Syria and show the face of a multi-faith, multi-ethnic Syria. Now, there are two possibilities. Either the Kurds, who are in northeast Syria, will be caught between the Turkish army in the north and the new Damascus regime in the west and south. I do not rule out an agreement, which would assume the demilitarization of the Kurds and the PKK in general and the end of armed conflict. Kurdish fighters would surrender their weapons in Syria and Türkiye at the same time and some form of regional government would be set up on both sides.

I think that here in the Emirates they have understood that religious openness reaps political benefits. When we hear about religious freedom in Syria, it must never be forgotten that this is also essential for Eastern Christians and for us in France. That has always been our line, because religious diversity is already in tatters. In almost all of these countries, not a single Jew is left. That is already a reality. Religious diversity is embodied in this country in the House of Abraham. This shows respect for everyone. It is also what I am trying to build with Muhammed Al Issa, secretary general of the World Islamic League. The first time we met, I explained three points to him. The first was that the Ummah, the entire world Muslim community, must take account of local realities. One can have a vision of the Ummah, as I see it, as I see Judaism, as monolithic, which it is not. There are local differences depending on the majority. The second point is that France is a secular country. This is hard to understand because it is not atheism. The third point is that if he could start a movement in the Muslim world, it should be what is called ijthâd, the interpretation of the texts instead of following them by the letter. On the other hand, the body of rabbinical thought since the Torah was given to us 3,300 years ago has integrated modern questions and answered them with invariants. Principles are adapted to questions. So I asked Al Issa to start a movement. He said, "We are going to do something." There was a big launch at the Paris stock exchange and he made a speech setting out those three points. I deeply believe in the invariants of history. One of those invariants is the proximity between Judaism and Persia, maybe not Iran, but Persia. So the existence of an adventure, even a long one, does not prevent the invariants of history for various reasons. There has certainly not been an Israeli-Palestinian war since October 7. To me it seems very important for Israel to allow a new generation of Palestinian leaders to take the helm and manage the area of what would be the Palestinian state. So I absolutely agree with you. External elements will make an overthrow of the government a credible eventuality. Then, the people will go out into the streets. So I think that in the long run religion will be a means to express the yearning for democracy.



What Perspectives for a Sustainable Arab-Israeli Peace?



CHAIR:
Steven Erlanger
Chief Diplomatic Correspondent, Europe,
for *The New York Times*



Nabil Fahmy
Dean Emeritus at the American University in Cairo, former
Foreign Minister of Egypt



Itamar Rabinovich
Vice Chairman of the Institute for National Security Studies
(INSS) in Tel Aviv, Distinguished Fellow at the Brookings
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I must say the economic disaster in the West Bank is quite severe and there is a war going on there, it is not like nothing is happening, it is a second front. In the meantime, under this current government with Smotrich and Ben-Gvir, the settlement activity is proceeding, often with I would say the indifference of the Israeli forces. I do not think that they are actively helping much but what they are doing, is they are at war with Palestinian militancy and have killed an awful lot of Palestinians, you know they have bombed West Bank cities. For the PA even to get involved takes a bit of leap of courage because one of my friends in the West Bank, who teaches at Birzeit University, said to me that one of the loneliest things in the world today is to be a moderate Palestinian.

Personally, I do not support any material engagement from one state versus another across borders, and I mean in the negative sense, not in term of support and, of course, that applies to Türkiye, to the bombings that occurred on Syrian territories and so on. That being said, they will pursue their interests and do that in a multifaceted way, with some of which we will agree and some with which we will differ. My approach and my suggestion even to my own colleagues is, complain all you want, that is part of the game, but you have to be proactive and balance the playing field. If you leave the playing field open, others will fill it. My point to my Arab colleagues, including my own country is to be out there in the playing field, make your suggestions, engage the Turks, the Syrians and whoever is on the ground because otherwise it will be the result of an internal balance of force. The real concern now, and this is always on the mind of Egyptians, is that if we move away from the nation state concept to non-state parties, it is very dangerous and, I do not want to take you back to Sykes-Picot, but that whole area has families and different sects across borders. If you start pulling those strings you never know what you are going to pull in other countries as well.

In 1965, Patrick Seale, the well-known British journalist and expert on Syria, wrote a classic called *The Struggle for Syria*, in which he argued that Syria became the playground of the Middle East after 1945. It became independent and was a very weak, unstable state, with three coups in 1949 alone and it turned out that behind each of these coups, there was either a regional power, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, etc., or an international player, Britain or France. Syria escaped from this mayhem by actually merging into Egypt as the United Arab Republic in 1958, which again failed, etc. Syria only gained stability and strength or power as a state under Hafez al-Assad, who ruled for 30 years and had a Faustian deal with the Syrian public; I will give you stability, I will turn Syria into an important country in the region and sometimes internationally, but you will have to accept oppression, corruption and rule by a sectarian minority. That lasted 30 years and the son, Bashar, was not as capable as the father, and he was a so-so president for 11 years and then the civil war broke out and the regime became rotten. One of the explanations for what happened is that it was so rotten that it only took a push for the regime to fall.



War and Peace in the Middle East: What Role for the Europeans?



CHAIR:
Renaud Girard
Senior Reporter and International Columnist at *Le Figaro*



Mohammed Baharoon
Director General of the Dubai Public Policy Research Center
(bhuth)

We have a very challenging subject, which is War and Peace in the Middle East: What Role for the Europeans. It is very challenging because, after the victory in World War I, the British and the French played a big role in reshaping the Ottoman Empire and America was not involved in that far remote conference. They divided up the Middle East but since 1956 and the failure of the Suez expedition, the Europeans mainly and concerned, were quite absent from the Middle East, although they came back a little bit with the Madrid conference. You know they say about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Americans are paying for the Israeli bombs, the UN is paying for the food, and the EU is paying for the reconstruction. War and peace in the Middle East are not only about the Israelis and the Palestinians, it is also Turks and Kurds through Julani in Syria, and of course war between Israel and Iran. When I met Netanyahu in his office a month ago, he told me that there was no way Iran would ever be nuclear. You have a war in Sudan between the army and the border security forces of Hemedti and there are problems with the Houthis in Yemen.

Syria, represents a major opportunity to change the needle away from conflicts. This is true for UAE and other countries including Türkiye and Iran. Europe has been dealing with the region with an old toolbox that suits an analogue phone not a digital one. We need to bring the economic aspect back into this and I think there is a lot to be done, and again, Syria is one place we can't forget its huge experiment with the Marshal Plan in Germany. Europe also needs to play the facilitator role rather than of polarizer. We need other people working with us, it is not a problem if China, Russia, India or others are going to support the de-escalation. There is a need to maintain statehood, because that is the biggest problem we are going to face in the region, is the difference between a Nation and a nation state. A nation goes across states, and this is what the Muslim Brotherhood wanted to do, and what Iran with its Shiasim wanted to do, even what al-Qaeda and ISIS wanted to do. This is exactly what we wanted from Syria under Bashar al-Assad, and it is exactly what we want from Syria under the new leadership. We would easily fall into a trap if we thought that this is Iran's point of weakness, and we need to hit it now and put conditions on it because it is defeated. We have seen a lot of changes in Iranian behavior and those are not just because of military weakness, it has to do with their own legitimacy, which is connected to their own economic realities. We should help Iran make the transition from the game of Geopolitics to Geoeconomics like the rest of the region.



War and Peace in the Middle East: What Role for the Europeans?



Volker Perthes
Non-Resident Senior Fellow and Senior Advisor
to the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP)



Marc Hecker
Deputy Director of Ifri, Editor-in-Chief of *Politique étrangère*,
and Research Fellow at the Security Studies Center, Ifri

On Syria, Europeans actually have a role. I see five points here if we want to devise an agenda or a strategy, besides getting to know the new guys in Damascus. The first thing for Europe, the Arabs and everybody else who wants to help, is to support a UN-supported but Syrian-owned political process to get an all encompassing, inclusive political governance setup in Syria. In addition to that, the new people in Syria do need help in a transitional justice process in order to avoid bloody revenge. Then there is reconstruction. Europeans, together with American friends and others in the international community have to start by lifting the sanctions. These sanctions are an obstacle to reconstruction. There will be European money and expertise, and Arab money and expertise, and there are Syrians experts so we need to make use of the diaspora community. Then we have to work on and with our NATO partner, Türkiye. We understand what Türkiye's strategic interests are on the one hand they want stability in Syria in order to allow Syrian refugees to return, but on the other they have a conflict with Kurdish organizations, and they want their allies in Syria to fight the Syrian Kurds. My last point is that we need to make sure that the enormous capacities that exist in Syria's expat community are used to rebuild that country. That would be a strong case but also a resource, as I said, for Syrian-European cooperation.

Let me just say four things briefly to launch the conversation. First, the Europeans are divided, especially on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. For instance, 12 EU members have recognized a Palestinian state, including three recently, Slovenia, Ireland and Spain, and the other 15 have not. Even within EU institutions, you can see the divisions. Second, for years we have heard, especially on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, that the European Union was a payer but not a player, meaning that its influence has been waning over the last three decades. It is a harsh statement, not totally wrong but that can be nuanced. Europe did pay for a number of infrastructures, which were later destroyed by the Israeli Defense Forces on different occasions. However, the EU and its members have also tried to be a player and did try to launch a state-building process in the Palestinian territories. Third, for several European countries it is a tricky issue to deal with this region because they have to face domestic consequences. It is true in Germany where refugees from the Middle East are sensitive to the Palestinian cause. There are also domestic political forces that are very involved in this issue. In France, there have been a lot of demonstrations, tensions and polarization. Outside the EU, the war in Gaza had a strong impact in the UK where, by the way, the demonstrations were much bigger than in France and Germany. Policymakers in the different countries have to take that into account. Fourth, to end on a more optimistic note, if we want to see the European divisions more positively, we can also understand them as a form of diversification: certain European countries have closer relations with different actors in the Middle East and are more interested in specific sectors. What's more, collectively, European countries still matter economically in the Middle East. This economic cloud was analyzed by Gabriel Felbermayr in his presentation yesterday: many countries in the region still have the EU as their main economic partner. Europeans also retain some diplomatic influence. For instance, France was involved in the recent ceasefire deal in Lebanon. Eventually, certain EU member-states still have a military presence in different countries, including Lebanon, with UNIFIL.



Building a Sustainable Future in Africa



CHAIR:
Seán Cleary
Chairman of Strategic Concepts (Pty) Ltd., Founder and Executive Vice Chair of the FutureWorld Foundation



Nardos Bekele-Thomas
CEO of the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), former United Nations Resident Coordinator in South Africa

Regarding the challenges, there are wars across the Sahel from the West coast to Sudan and the Horn, and in the Eastern DRC and Mozambique. There are health challenges due to shortages of nutritious food and a lack of appropriate healthcare. At least 600 million Africans do not have access to modern energy. Africa is overly dependent of primary production, and needs further industrialization, digitization and value-added beneficiation. Education and employment opportunities must be greatly expanded to meet the needs of the youngest and fastest growing population in the world, in a continent that will have a majority of its population of working age and below until the end of the century. The opportunities are equally extraordinary because Africa will have the largest demographic dividend in the world over the next 70 years. It has created the framework of the largest free trade area in the world – the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTA) comprising 54, and potentially 55 countries; and eight Regional Economic Communities within the African Union. These provide a fertile environment for profitable investment by both African and foreign companies and financial institutions willing to take the time to understand the environment. Drawing on the observation by the Prime Minister of the UAE, Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, in 2014 that "The future belongs to those who can imagine it, design it and execute it. It is not something you await. It is something you create", it is clear that we can and must create a sustainable future in Africa. The opportunities are extraordinary; the risks considerable. We cannot await success but must engage to create it, as our panellists are doing. We invite all others to join them.

Africa is at a pivotal moment, harnessing its vast resources, young population, and strategic vision under Agenda 2063 to drive economic transformation. As part of this vision, the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan provides a robust roadmap for sustainable growth. At the heart of these efforts is AUDA-NEPAD's Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) which serves as the backbone of Africa's integration and industrialization, driving transport, energy, and broadband expansion. Most notably, the Continental Power Systems Master Plan (CMP) aims to increase energy capacity from 237 gigawatts to 1,200 gigawatts, integrating renewables and private sector investment. By strengthening regional connectivity and closing infrastructure gaps, these initiatives provide the foundation for the successful implementation of the AfCFTA. In addition, with 60% of the world's arable land and vast reserves of critical minerals, Africa is well-positioned to drive agriculture, energy, and the green economy. Strengthening food security, reducing post-harvest losses, and enhancing productivity remain key priorities for sustainable growth, in line with CAADP. However, despite contributing only 4% of global carbon emissions, Africa bears the greatest burden of climate change, underscoring the urgent need for stronger support for adaptation and mitigation efforts to safeguard livelihoods and economic resilience. Furthermore, Africa's youth and entrepreneurs are at the forefront of innovation and technological transformation but require greater investment, opportunities, skills development, and training to unlock their full potential. In the health sector, Africa is advancing local production towards pharmaceutical self-sufficiency. With strategic partnerships and targeted investment, Africa is set to catalyze economic prosperity, accelerate industrial growth, and drive sustainable development.



Building a Sustainable Future in Africa



Vincent Biruta
Minister of Interior of Rwanda, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Rwanda



Nialé Kaba
Minister of Economy, Planning, and Development of Côte d'Ivoire



Jean-Michel Severino
President of Investisseurs & Partenaires, former Vice President of the World Bank for Asia, former CEO of France's International Development Agency (AFD)

Of course, there are challenges to the integration agenda of our continent and our region. One of them is the low pace of integration by some member states. We mentioned the Africa Continental Free Trade Area. It has been largely adopted, but there are other protocols which should be ratified to facilitate the free movement of goods and people. One of them is the protocol related to the free movement of people, which has been ratified by only four member states of the African Union. Of course, there are these interstate tensions from time to time. We have mentioned conflicts in some of our regions. There are still internal armed conflicts. There is also the need to invest in infrastructure because goods cannot move without proper infrastructure: airports, ports, railways and so on. Rwanda has achieved a lot in the last 30 years, and we believe that we will achieve even more in the coming years. We have adopted our 2050 vision, and we aim to become a country with an upper middle-income status by 2035, with a GDP per capita of over 4,000 US dollars from the current per capita GDP of 1,040 US dollars. In 2050, we aim to be among the high income countries with a GDP per capita of over 12,476 US dollars. I wish to conclude with a quote from my president, His Excellency Paul Kagame, who said, "We do not want to be a status quo country or a status quo people. Vision 2020 was about what we had to do in order to survive and regain our dignity, but Vision 2050 has to be about the future we choose because we can and because we deserve it". Rwanda believes that planning, good governance, accountability, transparency, security and long term political and economic stability, supported by regional integration, can lead us to the Africa we want.

I am here to share the views of ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States. In short, it is an economic and customs union founded in 1975, with 15 member states, in two blocks – one English-speaking and one French-speaking. Fifteen states accounting for 400 million consumers, or roughly a third of the African population. Among these 15 states, 11 are LDCs. In economic terms, this economic and customs union subscribes to the right of establishment and the free movement of people and goods between member states. It embodies a shared ambition for inclusive economic development in a context of peace and regional integration. There are some major challenges for the sub-region. Given these challenges, in 2022, ECOWAS adopted a development agenda built on five core pillars: 1/ Peace, security, and stability; 2/ Governance and the rule of law; 3/ Economic integration and interconnectivity; 4/ Transformation and sustainable development; 5/ Social inclusion. Up until now, Côte d'Ivoire has accounted for 40% of the gross domestic product of the eight WAMU member states, reflecting its leading role in the development of ECOWAS. With its buoyant economy, Côte d'Ivoire remains a magnet for investment and a platform for regional integration. France remains a key partner for financing infrastructure projects, training human resources and transferring technology. The French-speaking economic community must be mobilized further to create business networks, encourage trade and promote mutually beneficial entrepreneurship.

How has the 7 trillion US dollars in debt amassed over the last two decades been used? This is a key question. In 2000, oil and gas accounted for 30% of Africa's total exports. Today, it has risen to 50%. Foreign direct investment in oil and gas in 2000 was 30% of total investment; today it is 40%. Put simply, the money from the debt was used to finance export corridors and the equipment and infrastructure needed to extract oil and gas from the African continent. As an investor, I do not think it is a good idea to take on debt in a business that is structurally problematic. Why is it not good business? There are two ways of approaching it. The first is to look at what future oil and gas prices will be in the next few years, when peak oil will be reached – probably fairly soon – and evaluate the long-term prospects for the huge infrastructures being built to exploit resources that are at risk of depletion. The second reason to doubt the relevance of this kind of business, is to look at historical performance. I am going to quote two figures to bring this speech to its conclusion. Let us consider the African countries that are exporters, according to the World Bank's categories of "resource intensive countries"; today, they account for a good half of the African economy. If we take an index of 100 in 2000, the GDP per capita of those countries in 2020, measured against this index of 100, will be 150. If you then look at the countries that are poor in raw materials, the same index of 100, which is 150 for the countries rich in raw materials, has risen from 100 to 230. In short, raw materials aren't profitable, and in all, they represent a less favorable opportunity for growth than.. human resources! What is good for growth, as we have long known, is added value, investment in agriculture, intelligence and capacity building. Which is something that most of the countries that have borrowed heavily to finance their development have failed to do.



President Trump: What Economy and Foreign Policy?



CHAIR:
Virginie Robert
Foreign Desk Editor
at *Les Echos*, Vice
President
of the European-
American Press Club
in Paris

Hiroyuki Akita
Commentator of *Nikkei*, Japan



Peter Beyer
Member of the Deutscher Bundestag, former Coordinator
of Transatlantic Cooperation of the Federal Government

Trump's second term is very different from his first: the key word in his first term was transactional. In his second term, however, the keywords are neo-Yalta diplomacy and the Nobel Peace Prize. Neo-Yalta diplomacy is the idea that a handful of great powers will make deals with each other and steer international politics. Middle powers are expected to follow, rather than dictate the decisions of the great powers. In his second term, Trump is likely to pursue this kind of neo-Yalta diplomacy. China and Russia may be adversaries for him, but they are also important players in the management of international politics. So Trump sees the leaders of China and Russia as his friends and has good relations with them. Not because he likes them personally, but because he finds them useful as players. If Trump promotes neo-Yalta diplomacy, there is a risk that the national interests of allies will be neglected or ignored. To avoid this, allies should strengthen cooperation and minimize the risks of neo-Yalta diplomacy. On the other hand, it is not impossible that Trump's direct deals with China and Russia could lead to progress on international issues that have traditionally been stalled. Trump wants to make a successful diplomatic deal and win the Nobel Peace Prize. Specific issues could include a ceasefire in Ukraine and nuclear issues in North Korea and Iran. Allies should not only fear the risks of Trump's diplomacy, but also make an advantage of it, by using his negotiating skills against to make breakthrough on these issues.

Then one last thing that I really wanted to mention is that in Europe we need to finally understand that we need to prepare, not only because Donald Trump will serve a second term in the Oval Office, but because even beyond Donald Trump, what I am talking about is NATO, defense security, and it is with regard to trade and tariffs. Therefore, it is good to build up something like a core Europe of the form of the Weimar Triangle. You have Germany, France and Poland. Add to that the UK and Italy, so the influential economies of the so called old continent in Europe, and form a strong group and put in place a toolkit, a toolbox, so that you have something as a response in negotiations. If you sit down at a negotiation table with Donald Trump himself or with his team, with his administration, then the Europeans can say, 'Well, we are strong. We are big economies. We are your partner, but do not fool us. We are also sending out a signal of strength'. I hope, and I see signs happening over the last several weeks and months in Europe, that this is being established. Our own party chairman, Friedrich Merz, who is likely to be the next German chancellor, is heavily investing a lot of time in this to building up this core Europe, so that regarding Donald Trump, who only understands the language of strength, that he shows some respect and we can do business with him amongst partners, but on an equal footing.



President Trump: What Economy and Foreign Policy?



Fareed Yasseen
Secretary General of the Iraq Pugwash Association, former Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq to the United States



Jay Truesdale
CEO of TD International



Jean-Claude Gruffat
Member of United Way Leadership Council, Board Member of Atlas Network, Managing Director of Weild and Co LLC New York

These remarks on the forthcoming administration are addressed to an ambassador in Washington. What can I share to help him/her understand the new Trump administration better? First, this election is different from Trump's previous one. Many in the United States believed the 2016 election was Hillary Clinton's to lose. This time, Trump won decisively: the Electoral College, the popular vote, both houses of Congress, and he has the Supreme Court. Trump has a mandate and the freedom to pursue his agenda. Second, in 2016, the Republicans were unprepared. This made it hard to find people suited to Trump's personality and ideas, leading to many departures. This time, it will be different. Think tanks, sympathizers, and funders have been working on this transition. A U.S. presidential election and inauguration resemble a crowning. Diplomats in Washington, should note how this inauguration will be much more effective, professional, and flamboyant than in 2016. One major concern is Trump's likely decision to withdraw from climate agreements. The U.S. has a significant global effect, and actions without federal involvement or access to their technology will be harder. However, the U.S. private sector and many major individual states will remain engaged. After Trump's withdrew from the Paris Agreement in 2016, U.S. emissions still fell. If other countries can access U.S. private-sector innovations and supportive states without relying on federal input, progress can still be made. On immigration, I think Trump will impose limitations. In 2017, his administration imposed a "Muslim ban" that included Iraq. Iraq lobbied to be removed from the ban, which was agreed pending some measures on immigration that satisfied the administration's concerns.

I really do believe there is a sense of mandate and a sense of mission for President elect Trump and those around him. However, while he has a mandate and while he is entering to office with tremendous momentum, he has surrounded himself with individuals who do not have senior level executive experience. Therefore, while Trump is entering with administration experience, others have ground to gain, at least in the first six to twelve months. The other dynamic that we saw in the first administration was what the professional class of civil servants did upon the entry of President Trump and his cabinet level leaders, particularly at the State Department where I was serving at the time, but also in the intelligence community, both the CIA and the FBI, at Commerce, and at other executive level agencies. I project there will be early retirements taken by retirement eligible individuals who will not want to put up with another round of uncertainty in the interagency policymaking process when so much will be centralized in the White House, particularly around those five policy areas. What will that mean? I believe there will be a gap in decision-making on technical topics, where decision-making will not be centralized in the Oval Office. To fill that gap, there will be pressure on the incoming administration to name nominees and push through the roughly 1,200 to 1,400 nominees who will take senior level positions in the administration, of which roughly one third are either economic or national security positions. Therefore, I would say that if you were writing a memo to your colleagues on how to manage the transition, knowing how to gain access to the Trump White House and how to work through the institutions that are going to go through a lot of turmoil will both be critical. The last point I will make is that getting access to those institutions will require unorthodox access points.

Trump has not changed very much, his personality is still the same although the assassination attempt he escaped by a quarter of an inch, has marked him significantly. He is coming back to the Oval Office much better prepared than he was in 2016. He knows how Washington operates and this time he wants to surround himself with loyalists, not the establishment. Particularly for matters that were the core themes of his campaign, such as immigration and DEI. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion. Nevertheless in economic and financial matters, he appointed seasoned professionals, a mix of tech moguls, and hedge funds billionaires. He does not share common views on major topics but deregulation. He has named a woman who was very instrumental in his campaign, bringing order and discipline in what used to be chaotic, as his chief of staff, a key position given in 2016 to the Chair of the Republican National Committee. One thing that is not changing is Trump defiance *vis a vis* multilateralism. He practices the Art of the Deal, and we are likely to see it in action with his proclaimed addiction to tariffs. He will use them to extract bargains from allies and adversaries. And we may expect to see him deporting illegal immigrants particularly criminals. Nevertheless I don't see massive deportations which would be logistically and financially unfeasible. But at the same time he might decide to fix somehow the large illegal immigrants population in country, something that can only be achieved in a bipartisan effort. Trump is controversial, can easily change views on issues, is subject to influence. He will have to arbitrate between various components of his administration, he will also be consequential and not just in the US.



CHAIR:
Thierry de Montbrial
Founder and Executive
Chairman of Ifri
and the WPC

Final debate



General Francis A. Béhanzin
Cofounder and Chairman of the Réseau mondial des professionnels de sécurité et de défense pour la prévention et la lutte contre le terrorisme, former Commissioner Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)



Michel Foucher
Member of the Center for Higher European Studies (former ENA) and Senior Counsel on studies at MEDEF



Christophe Poinssot
Deputy CEO and Scientific Director of the Bureau de recherches géologiques et minières (BRGM)

I would like to conclude on the topic I know best: security solidarity worldwide. In Africa, especially West Africa, we can consider two levels. The first is regional solidarity. ECOWAS encompasses 15 states, and everybody knows that each one looks after the safety of its own citizens and their property. Mali, which I know very well, Burkina Faso and Niger have left ECOWAS out of unhappiness with its lack of regional solidarity. ECOWAS sets the rules for overall regional strategy, but each country must look after its own security. At the regional level, we have drawn up an estimated 2.3 billion US dollars action plan. We have received no support. And yet when Russia invaded Ukraine, the US alone gave the country over 100 billion US dollars to keep the fighting and killing going. The second level of solidarity is international. In Mali, as in Burkina Faso and Niger, we have benefited from international solidarity, but the results have been unsatisfactory. That is the main reason why Africans have stood up against the presence of foreign forces in their countries. If today terrorism has not collectively spread, because terrorism in the Sahel is a collective unit, and there is only isolated terrorism in Europe and the West in general, it is because the air force keeps an eye on these countries, in addition to all the measures taken on land to protect citizens. But African states do not have these resources.

The expression "Global South" is a representation of today's world. As a geographer, I would say a mental map. The term was coined in 1969 by an American researcher in Ann Arbor to denounce the domination of the North during the Vietnam War. But it did not become the expression of the year until 2023, enriching the *Dictionary of Received Ideas* (along with "the collective West" and "the global majority"), which Gustave Flaubert nicknamed the catalogue of trendy ideas. In international economics circles, it replaced the term "emerging countries," which underscores the weight of geopolitical issues in major economic decisions. This stereotype tells us about the speakers, for whom it is an anti-Western narrative battering ram consciously promoted by China. The expression speaks to us of a world where the middle powers are classically Westphalian. They want their place in the sun, as von Bülow said about Germany in 1897 in relation to the great power rivalry between France and Great Britain. We in the North must understand that we no longer have the monopoly on normative and narrative power. We must listen to the messages of the local Souths and interact with them on an equal footing economically and multilaterally, addressing all the fault lines with the countries concerned in the areas of health, energy, technology, currency, standards and rules.

First, regarding critical and strategic metals, while many thought that the extraction, refining and processing of mineral resources was an activity of the past, destined to play a minor role in world affairs, recent history shows that this is not the case. As in past centuries, the control of supply chains is a key strategic goal for many countries. Essential for the manufacture of low-carbon and digital technologies, these strategic minerals have become a major geopolitical and strategic issue in the space of a decade, all the more so as China has conquered a key position in these markets by gradually relocating most refining and processing industries to its territory, putting the rest of the world in an uneasy situation of dependence. The race for minerals is exacerbated by the speed with which the West plans to make the energy transition, putting markets under severe strain. Demand is far outpacing what manufacturers can reasonably supply in the available time. The result will be a fierce economic war, a no-holds-barred fight for influence and conflicts of use between the digital and energy transitions. Secondly, despite mitigation policies, many countries are already dealing with the reality of climate change. Longer droughts are increasing tensions over water resources, rising sea levels are exacerbating natural coastal risks, extreme weather events are accelerating land movement, etc. The growing impact on public policies and finances will lead to major changes in the balance of power and strategic and geopolitical interactions. At first glance, the two issues may seem to be scientific and technical, but they encompass a geopolitical and strategic dimension that will gradually have an impact on the world's equilibrium and modify the balance of power between different countries. Therefore, they warrant attention in discussions about the changes underway in today's world.





1. Economy and Finance



CHAIR :

Jean-Claude TrichetFormer President of the European Central Bank, Honorary
Governor of the Banque de France

When it comes to summing up the positives and negatives for the world economy after Trump's election, I will start with the positives. Perhaps obviously, confidence up, significant deregulation, significant corporate tax alleviation, budget expansion, abandonment of the Paris Green Deal and you can probably see that I am not necessarily in line with all those elements, but they might appear to be positive in the short-term. Long-term positive, I would list total factor productivity push, corporate investment, financing of innovation, so going even further in the direction that is already indicated by the US. Another thing that has to be listed as a long-term positive is a displayed strategy to end present wars and prevent new ones, settling geostrategic difficulties. When it comes to short-term negatives there are higher tariffs and trade barriers, higher inflation, maybe higher levels of real and nominal interest rates as a consequence, massively less immigration, which will have a short-term negative impact. Then I think that possible trade wars, not only with China and Europe, but also Mexico and Canada obviously, has to be listed in the short-term negatives. Then long-term negatives on growth would be abandonment of the Paris Green Deal in the long-term, uncertainty on the results of each transactional negotiation and unpredictability in general, which is something that might crystallize in a much more predictable attitude after a while. Whatever the new Minister of Finance is saying, that is to say 3%. There is uncontrollable outstanding public debt in the US, and I do not take it for granted and of course, I already mentioned less immigration. However, I think we have to be balanced and not stick only one or other attitude as regards the possibility of having an economy that would be entirely negative or entirely positive.

**Hur Kyung-Wook**Chairman of Seoul Financial Forum, Chairman of the Board
of the Korea Center for International Finance, former Vice
Minister for the Ministry of Strategy and Finance

When it comes to the Korean economy, I think this year it will probably grow by around 1.9% but because of what happened plus President Trump coming in, there is a much bigger downside risk. The 1.9% is the most recent projection from the central bank but I think the performance is likely to be lower rather than higher. With President Trump, we find ourselves particularly vulnerable in three ways. First, our trade dependency is very high at around 85% to 86% and Germany is probably the only one of the top 12 countries to reach anything similar. That means that anything that hurts the predictable rules-based regime can hurt Korea more severely and in terms of the economy, the export sector is pushing the economy forward and domestic demand is very low, actually coming up with a negative for the last couple of quarters. This makes Korea very vulnerable when Mr. Trump comes in. The second element that makes Korea more vulnerable than other countries is that we are caught between the US and China. Traditionally, China is the country that we have relied on economically at around 25%-26% but since Covid and China's slump that has changed and the US is now our largest strategic partner, closely followed by China. More interesting is that we have always had a big surplus against China but last year we had a negative trade account against China, while our surplus with the US increased very fast to around USD 44 billion. I do not think Mr. Trump is going to like that because in the first Trump, i.o. our trade surplus was one-third of that, still we have to revise Korea's US FTA. At this level, I am sure that there will be big pressure and, as Madame Lagarde said, we are willing to import energies, LNG, etc., to reduce it.



1. Economy and Finance



Pierre Jacquet
Professor of Economics at the École nationale des ponts et chaussées (ENPC), Member of the Cercle des Économistes

Total factor productivity (TFP) shows concerning trends: negative growth in the Euro Area since early 2000s, recent decline in developing countries, while US maintains positive but lower growth compared to 1950s. Analysis of 8 major economies (1990-2024) reveals varying TFP contributions to growth: negative for France and UK, recently positive for Japan and Brazil, mixed for Germany, consistently positive for US, China, and India. ICT investment significantly contributes to growth in US, China, and France, while China maintains high non-ICT investment (3% annually in 2023-24). Labor contribution to growth has become minimal in most countries except India, both in quantity and quality. And given aging, notably in Europe, and difficult retirement debates, one cannot expect long-term growth to be based on labor accumulation. Long-term growth prospects depend on increased investment both to increase the stock of capital, especially IT capital, and to promote total factor productivity. The productivity trends notably reflect Europe's lag in innovation. But environmental and health concerns complicate the understanding of how to define and measure desirable value creation. The impact of AI and its potential to rejuvenate productivity growth is much debated. Public investment, notably in education, research, market organization, and innovation systems including AI, and in sectors contributing to the green transition, will have to play a big role. While fiscal discipline is important, it needs to be firmly set in a long-term approach and current short-term focus on debt and deficit ratios may be counterproductive. Europe needs a long-term fiscal approach allowing front-loaded public investment, as recommended in the Draghi report. What matters is not the overall quantity of public spending as much as its quality and allocation.



Sébastien Jean
Associate Director of Ifri's Geoeconomics and Geofinance Initiative, Professor of Economics at CNAM University

I think the first key word with Trump is almost by definition, uncertainty, because he boasts about being unpredictable and of course, trade is his favorite domain for applying this uncertainty. What will be applied is a big question and if you take the whole set of threats he has been making, I think this is far too inflationary to be acceptable even to him, not for economic reasons but just domestic political ones. My take is that he will certainly use tariffs and do something but not everything he is threatening to do, which of course, leaves us with a lot of uncertainty. Added to that is the uncertainty about the responses from other countries, and for me it is certain that partners will retaliate but I am also assuming that most, if not all, will only retaliate partially and not try to match American duties, at least as far as the WTO's usual definition of matching in terms of trade distortion. Instead they will use it more as political leverage, which will probably be the name of the game in any case, even from the American point of view. When it comes to the impact, the first impact of uncertainty is that it is bad for investment and the energy impacts will also be concerned because the whole program of deregulation on the US market leaves a big question mark. I think there will also be an impact that will weaken the multilateral trading system at a time where trade tensions are already high. By the way, this year trade defense instruments, mainly anti-dumping, by emerging economies against Chinese imports were almost double the number raised in 2023. It is too early to take this as a long-term trend because there is a lot of year-on-year variability, but I think it is an interesting indicator of the degree of tension that already exists on world markets, in particular the manufacturing goods world markets.



André Lévy-Lang
Founder and Chairman of the Louis Bachelier Institute, former CEO of Banque Paribas

I will make a brief presentation on some research we did at the Louis Bachelier Institute on what we call the intermingling of geostrategy, geopolitics and finance, its consequences and where it is going. Of course, the sanctions were applied by using the dollar and applied to the banks because if they trade using the dollar in the way they can face very heavy fines, which in some cases could make a bank insolvent, and even the Chinese banks have been very careful not to use the dollar. The second aspect of the sanctions was on the financial infrastructures and the main one affected is SWIFT, and of course, China, India and Russia have tried to create systems to go around SWIFT. One of the things that made that possible is that the dollar remains by far the main trade instrument as money or to use in trade. China's efforts to use the renminbi have limited the use of the dollar to some extent but if you look at the numbers, the dollar is still by far the main currency used in trade. In the same way, in capital markets the US capital markets today represent in volume the same amount as the sum of the 10 next largest capital markets in the world. If you add the UK, China, France, etc., you reach the level of the value of the US capital markets. Therefore, the US remains a leading financial power, and this is going to last for some time. If we look at the trends, of course, central bank reserves are increasing their gold, with a small portion of euros being maintained but the dollar is still the number one reserve, even if it slightly less than in the past. Therefore, the consequences of the sanctions will be felt in the structure of trade.



1. Economy and Finance



John Lipsky
Senior Fellow of the Foreign Policy Institute at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, former First Deputy Managing Director of the IMF

The strength of the US total factor productivity growth has been a notable — and unanticipated — factor contributing to stronger than expected US economic growth in the post-Covid period. One explanation for this development has been the strength in capital spending by non-financial corporations. In particular, spending on high-tech equipment has underpinned the strength in capital spending. At the same time, one striking aspect of post-Covid US economic performance has been an unprecedented surge in new business formation. Moreover, the post-Covid period also has been noted for the significant increase in US work-from-home practice compared with the pre-Covid period. In contrast to typical European policy during Covid to provide support directly to businesses to maintain their linkage with workers, there was limited equivalent practice in the United States. Thus, it is plausible that the combination of heightened labor market flexibility, together with new technologies, has encouraged new business formation that has helped to propel productivity gains and stronger growth. It will be important to see whether these trends are sustained.



Gary Litman
Senior Vice President for Global Initiatives at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

A lot of companies are extremely optimistic, especially when they speak in public about what the new administration and new Congress might bring, particularly in terms of reducing regulations. At the same time, I think the mood in private reflects the uncertainty and especially that larger companies have to shift pretty quickly from the narrative of investing in the energy transition and climate to investing in security and tech. The investment in tech has certainly been going on for some time but it is now going to be the dominant narrative with everybody saying they have huge investment in mind. That will basically mean that investment in most other sectors will dry up because there is just not enough money. When you go to conferences and meetings with companies, with high-tech majors and others, they are talking about literally investing billions and billions a year in an arms race to be the first to develop the next model, the next version of AI. Looking at the capital markets, there is a huge capital market advantage and a lot of that is the enormous valuations of the same 10 companies. If you think about that, the way that these companies who define the next several years and our economic performance will monetize that investment or show any return is very unclear unless, and people are talking about that a lot, they look at everything as another Manhattan Project. What that means is a Cold War scenario thinking that it is very difficult to build a growth model for large companies investing billions and billions in AI if the government does not pay for it. Ultimately, it is unclear whether the consumer will get a lot more money to pay for those enormous investments.



Jean-Claude Meyer
Vice Chairman International of Rothschild & Cie

We can anticipate one scenario for Europe and two for the US, and maybe as a surprise, a third one for the US. In my view, there is only one scenario for Europe, which is continuous very slow growth of 0.9% to 1% next year and inflation around 2%. Europe will be affected by the US tariffs and by the Chinese market for its exports. The ECB will continue to cut rates following the deposit rate of 3% down to 2%, maybe 1.5%. Europe is faced by many diseases, organic growth has been only one-third of that of the US since the pandemic and is tarnished by the absence of capital market union, the ageing workforce, a declining labor force, low productivity, lack of energy, low investment in technology, and missing a true single market. Therefore, the difference between the US and Europe will widen. In brief, the outlook for Europe is rather dark and the European stock markets, despite relatively good earnings per share, will remain dull and much less attractive than the US market. We have two scenarios in the US, first one booming, already in place, called the Trump trade. The US enjoys growth of 3%, unemployment of 4.1%, and inflation of 2.7%, with the SSP having increased by 26% this year with a strong dollar reinforced by the flow of hot money invested in the US. Growth next year should be around 2.4%, twice the eurozone level, and investors from all over the world will continue to bet on the US, especially if compared to a declining Europe, and a much less attractive China. Every year, Europe invests EUR 300 billion in the US financial markets. The second scenario is less rosy because of Trump's policies, a rebound of inflation is likely to happen because of restrictions on immigration which will increase wages, as well as higher trade tariffs and a huge trade deficit. These three factors, plus low unemployment, will create overheating and therefore a slower easing cycle, if not a later increase in interest rates in the US. To conclude, what is likely to happen in the US is a third scenario with a rather good beginning to the Trump presidency and a more unstable and risk period six months' later.





2. Energy and Environment



CHAIR :

Valérie Ducrot

Executive Director of Global Gas Center

I am just back from three days at the UN ESCAP in Bangkok, which brought together all regional commissions. There were representatives there from the Asian Development Bank and they clearly said that they did not have the tools from a financial point of view to advise countries like Indonesia, etc., which use a lot of coal, how to switch from coal to gas. They said they had international pressure not to invest in fossil fuels, which means gas for the time being, and they had reached a point where they did not know what to do. You can put some ammonia, and some things but the fight is very low. I would also add the workforce and the people. How do you switch the local people who work in this sector from coal to something else? Nothing has been done, and I would say the international community is facing a huge problem. At all the meetings we face the fact that there are huge difficulties.



Majdi Abed

Vice President International Public Affairs at TotalEnergies

Along with oil and gas, the second pillar is electricity, which for us is the energy of the future because it is the energy of decarbonization. We have seen it clearly in the mobility sector, but it is going to be the energy of the future. We have demographic growth, the Global South aspires to a better standard of living, we know that 700 million people live without access to electricity, and those people are going to need more and more electricity. At the same time, there will also be a need for more electricity from the development of data centers, digitalization, Artificial Intelligence and other processes, so we will definitely need more and more electricity. That is why we are making large investments in clean electricity based on renewables and we are covering the entire electricity value chain from production to distribution so that we can manage renewable intermittency and provide firm, clean and low-cost energy to our customers. We have demonstrated that is a viable economic model for low-carbon energies. In 2023, we achieved 10% profitability in our electricity activities, and I mention that because profitability is very important if we want companies to invest in renewables and this new low-carbon electricity. Our target is 35 gigawatts in 2025 and 100 gigawatts in 2030 and we are investing around USD 5 billion in low-carbon renewables and low-carbon energy.



2. Energy and Environment



Jean Abiteboul
President of GIGNL (International Group of Liquefied Natural Gas Importers), Non-Executive Board member of Tellurian, Inc. (AMEX: TELL), Founder and Chairman of JA Energy Consulting

I have two takeaways I want to stress and one question I hope will be discussed later today. The main takeaway is that LNG is growing very fast, probably plus 60% over the next 10 years. It provides a lot of flexibility, security and capacity to resist shocks, such as Fukushima and Ukraine. My main question, and I read this in a French newspaper last week but not only, that new liquefaction projects are climate bombs. It is true that if you calculate the CO₂ emissions during the whole life of a liquefaction project, 25 to 30 years, there is a huge number of tons of CO₂ at stake. However, for me the full calculation should also take into account the CO₂ emissions that are avoided by new liquefaction projects. Since it is not possible to replace all the gas projects with renewables or nuclear from one day to another, the only short-term alternative is coal. For me, it is really an issue of communication and if we start to calculate the CO₂ emissions attached to a new LNG project, we should also take into account the avoided CO₂ emissions that would have been emitted by an alternative fuel. Today, if we assume that renewables are at a maximum state of development, that is coal.



Igor Yurgens
Chairman of the Management Board of the Institute of Contemporary Development of Moscow

If we talk about energy issues there exists two hardly the reconcilable factions of mitigation and adaptation. Only reduction of the use of fossil fuels will not solve the problem and that adaptation of the planet to the existing level of carbon emission is equally if not more important. COP 29 worked under the Damocles Sword of the President elect Trump's decision of withdrawing from the Paris agreement for the second time. For Russian Federation, which is heavily sanctioned and virtually excluded from the general cooperation the logical outcome is the regional cooperation. Hence, the more active cooperation and coordination of country programmes within the framework of BRICS-SCO makes more sense for us. Each major country including India and China will pursue its own goals and interest. But for Russia to work with the methodology jointly discussed and approved would be more productive. From the point of view of efficiency I think that Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is preferable to BRICS because the latter does not have Secretariat and is a club rather than a functioning organization on a daily basis. China is criticized and even ostracised for the so-called overcapacity. The accusation stems from the Western concern about their own competitiveness and market share, which slows down the green transition. Russia does not share this view and is ready to import Chinese electric vehicles, wind turbines, and solar panels. We depend on good trade relations with BRICS and SCO countries and it will be logical for us to work on green transition, including energy matters, on the regional basis with these countries. I think that will be our strategy from today and on to the COP 31.



Marc-Antoine Eyl-Mazzega
Director of the Center for Energy & Climate of Ifri

Fugitive methane emissions do not only come from the energy sector, they also come from the waste and agricultural sectors. This leads me to my second point on voluntary carbon markets. Clearly, these voluntary markets were an issue at the COP in Baku. We have seen some progress, which has been disputed; nonetheless, it is good that is moving forward. My point is that the best, clearest and most efficient voluntary carbon market is, for example, related to reducing the methane emissions from landfills because this is something that you can really account for. You know that most of these emissions come from developing countries because they have these landfills, etc., and that there is no way to address this problem because there is no money there. I think this is clearly an area where we should have efficient voluntary carbon markets that reduce the fugitive methane emissions from these areas. Another point to add to the discussion relates to the roll-out of renewables. The Chinese are really powering the world with that. Now, what you see everywhere in the world, in the North but it is even more dire in the South, is the problem of grids. The underinvestment in grids is dramatic and it would be fantastic if the BRICS Development Bank, the European Union's development support, whatever is left from the United States, etc., everything should now be focused into supporting grid modernization and expansion projects in the emerging world with loans and various kind of finance solutions. I think these are low-hanging fruits, often these companies are financially weak, if not almost bankrupt and just bailed out by their governments on a year-to-year basis. That would really make a huge difference because the solar PV technology and the manufacturing capacity are there, it is diversified, etc. And, it is no longer only China, we heard yesterday that it is expanding in India and elsewhere. The bottleneck is really with the grids, and you will also need the grids for gas to play its backup role.



2. Energy and Environment



Jeffrey Lewis
Partner and Member of the Executive Committee
of the international law firm Cleary Gottlieb

LNG is not an economical solution from a consumers' point of view in Latin America. LNG is not going to be a solution to the Dominican Republic's ability to transition to cleaner energy away from coal, we are going to have to find other solutions for that group. Then transportation within the rest of the region is really a pipeline-based approach to gas and that is where natural gas is going to be spread about the region as a general matter. For the most part, you are not going to see LNG being transported from Peru to somewhere else because it will just not be economical. Obviously, LNG is relevant for the region because Latin America is rich in natural gas resources and so there are lots of opportunities, which we have seen starting to develop, for LNG plants and export. However, I will point to two issues I have seen as that development has occurred. One is political tension because there is a great need for gas in the region to stabilize and convert from coal to a greener energy source, which means a lot of political tension between local supply of gas and gas for LNG. I am going to use Peru as an example, so the Camisea gas fields are very rich in gas and were mainly developed for export and an LNG facility was built, which cost USD 5 billion, and it cost USD 30 billion to develop the gas fields. The only way the Camisea gas fields would have been developed is to be able to get an export price for the gas. But there is tremendous political tension in Peru because there are constant blackouts in Lima, because there is still not a stable electricity supply in Lima and many other cities and communities. The second issue I want highlight that I have seen in Latin America relating to gas and LNG is that there is great concern about their patrimony and sovereignty over natural resources. A big issue in a number of these countries where there are ample resources, is how to balance that concern about giving away the natural patrimony to foreign investors versus the need to attract capital. To me, Mexico is the poster child for this, where it should be in the position of being a net exporter of gas but is in fact a net importer. And it is really because of this issue; they have not been able to resolve that fundamental conflict.



Tomás Lanardonne
Energy Regulatory and Transactional Expert, Founding Partner
of MHR Abogados (Argentina & Uruguay)

Argentina has the determination of contributing to global energy security of supply and the mitigation of climate change through its vast natural resources, while carrying out its own energy transition. In 10 years, Argentina intends to export around 25 million metric tons per year through several LNG projects located over its Atlantic coastline. This would entail duplicating our current production. In the mid-term (5 years from now), and thanks to already installed interconnection pipeline capacity, we expect to export around 30 million cubic meters of gas per day to Chile, Brazil, Uruguay and Bolivia. The main assumptions of this plan are the following: 1/ The shale rock is there, its productivity is better than Permian, and development costs are being reduced constantly; 2/ Argentine gas has a low carbon intensity; and 3/ The global energy transition will need Argentine LNG. The action points of the Argentine energy plan are: 1/ Regulatory action, Argentina has modernized its legislation to foster shale gas massive development during the past 10 years; 2/ Argentina arranged what I call the "domestic business environment"; and finally 3/ Argentina is decarbonizing its energy mix through a series of cumulative measures. Each country is devising its own energy transition considering its energy mix baseline, its natural resources endowment and its economic possibilities. All these decarbonization measures require capital and financing. And the goal of Argentina is to finance part of that energy transition through its LNG exports.



Nicolas Piau
Cofounder & CEO of Tilt Capital

I think there is a misconception on European energy security, energy is a physical matter, and we need to look at physical realities. If I take the production of oil and gas in Europe, the two main powers on that front are the UK and Norway, and the creaming curve in the UK is more than flat and I think production is decreasing by 7% per year. Norway is also flattening and, I think most of the big majors have left Stavanger, though you may still have an office there. But Shell and BP have certainly left, and it says something about what is happening there. Then if you say there is renewable energy, the average load factor in Europe for wind is 25% and 12% for solar, but for the US, the average load factor is 35% for wind and around 17% to 18% for solar, which is a totally different ballpark. You could also add that we do not have the land mass compared to the US where you could spread solar panels all across Nevada, Arizona or whatever, and then of course you need the network. I will say something because I have heard that for several years since the horrendous invasion of Ukraine by the Putin regime, but Russian gas was in fact a rational option for Europe, there is no question about that. We were not naive about the fact that there was interdependency, but it was one of the cheapest ways to get energy in Europe. I just want to give a bit of perspective, and it is super important for Europe to think of the post-Putin era. There is no way we can work with Putin and his clique right now, but we need to think about how we work with Russia as Europeans afterwards. If gas is the vector for energy transition, and I do believe it is, I do not see how Europe can turn its back on Russian gas and of course, I am reaffirming that it is impossible to consider in a situation where Putin is in power.



3. Economic and Social Issues in the Middle East

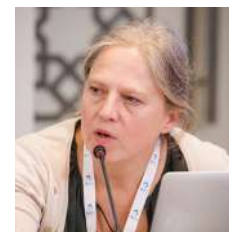


CHAIR:

Adil Alzarooni

CEO of Al Zarooni Emirates Investments and Al Bidayer Holding, Founder of Citizens School

Family businesses in the GCC represent almost 80% of jobs and, depending on the country, anywhere between 60% and 70% of GCC GDP. Most of these families found wealth, mainly in the fifties and sixties. Most of these families are moving into their second or third generation, most of them have no experience in sustaining their wealth, and almost a trillion dollars is supposed to shift from one generation to another within the next 20 years. They need to be equipped and structured properly legally and financially, and future generations need to understand why, moving forward, money needs to be kept together for reasons of efficiency as well as to secure private jobs. The subject of sustaining family businesses is super crucial for maintaining the social fabric in the GCC. I used to work on developing economic zones in Libya in the Gaddafi days, in Egypt, Syria and Türkiye. All these countries wanted positive change and all the other countries in the region were happy to give their support, but the problem is that you cannot do that without political stability. Why is there 600 billion dollars of disposable income sitting in regional banks? Much of that is due to the fact that most of us, more than 95% to 97%, do not have a clue how to manage our wealth in the long-term. Delivering knowledge of long-term wealth management and wellbeing in general is something that the education sector has to take onboard and be responsible.



Dorothee Schmid

Head of the Türkiye/Middle East program at Ifri

The rebuilding of Syria after the fall of Bashar al-Assad is both an economic and a social challenge – provided that the new political frame holds and ensures the minimum stability that is needed to restart the engine. Arguably, the economic collapse of the Assad regime contributed a lot to the internal weakening of the system. The poverty rate in Syria has reached an estimated 70% (officially) to 90% (unofficially) of the population, fuelling social pressure against the president who had transformed an already weak economy into a sort of mafia system essentially relying on the selling of captagon (around two-thirds of Syria's exports). Syria's gross domestic product has contracted by 85% since the start of the war, its basic infrastructures are almost destroyed entirely or not functioning, and the World Bank deems that it will take at least 10 years to rebuild them. The country has very few resources – its agriculture has been devastated by the fighting and the oil fields are still controlled by the Syrian Defense Forces in the Kurdish region, therefore not available to the government in Damascus. Strong territorial imbalances are a result of the fragmentation of battlefields. There is a now need to build in parallel a working production system and a new system of relationships with the outside world. The Assad regime depended heavily on Russia and Iran who are now out of the game, while the international community is ready to engage in order to ensure stability for Syria in the long term. The political normalization of Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham is an absolute prerequisite to lift the sanctions that still hinder the efforts of the international business community.



3. Economic and Social Issues in the Middle East



François Gouyette
Chairman of Pro Oriente Conseil, Vice-Chairman for Public Diplomacy of The Global Diwan, Advisor to the Chairman of Diot-Siaci

North Africa was once on the geopolitical periphery of the Middle East dynamics, but it has increasingly come to shape regional trends. In addition to internal political and economic transformations that were accelerated by this so called Arab Spring, the region is also contending with a range of external challenges. These include changing market dynamics, including energy markets, the growing presence of new regional actors, like China, Russia, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Israel, each of which has competing interests, priorities and operating methods and the changing role of traditional allies such as the EU, GCC and the USA. These dynamics are compounded and worsened by climate and demographic changes and meanwhile, the increasing number of migrants attempting to reach Europe leaves European countries scurrying to find solutions while standing for human rights. It is a somewhat difficult task, as we see with Tunisia, a country with which the EU has heavily engaged by signing a memorandum of understanding that aims to stem migration flows while also improving its economic conditions. In other words, North Africa, sometimes considered as a backwater within the broader Middle East context, actually deserves, in my opinion, far more attention from the international community. Its states are facing a dizzy array of challenges related to domestic and global trends, political transformation, either recent or underway, economic stagnation worsened by the pandemic, social challenges associated with a frustrated young population. These trends are giving the region more geopolitical relevance with implications for the broader Middle East, Europe and Sub Saharan Africa.



Raed Charafeddine
Central and Commercial Banker, former First Vice Governor of the Central Bank of Lebanon

Lebanon is a nation that has endured the worst trials of human adversity in the past five years, political instability, economic collapse, security risks and warfare. This was preceded by a decade of regional turmoil, particularly the previous repercussions of the Syrian war and concerns about the current coup; on the other hand, the difficulties in the public finances in terms of the budget deficit and worsening public debt and its service imposed an immense burden. Cumulative layers of tragedy and hardship have been inflicted on Lebanon. The unprecedented economic and financial crisis, the socio-economic and political unrest, the consequences of the Covid pandemic, the catastrophic explosion of the Port of Beirut, and the recent Israeli atrocities, which have once again tested the limits of the nation's endurance. Yet, amid this persistent chaos, the trauma of destruction, displacement, and loss, the Lebanese people continue to exhibit extraordinary resilience and strength, which binds them together across divides. Lebanon's journey towards recovery is undeniably challenging, yet the resilience and determination of its people shine as a beacon of hope while the destruction caused by the Israeli war, actually atrocities, has left lasting scars. Lebanon's true strength lies in its citizens, their unwavering spirit, ingenuity, and resolve to rise above diversity. By prioritizing governance reform, economic revitalization, and social reconciliation, Lebanon has the potential to rebuild and emerge stronger, more united, and more prosperous than ever before.



Kamel Abdallah
Managing Director and CEO of Canal Sugar, Egypt

Let me focus on my area of expertise, which is food security. We have problems with population growth in some countries, for example, in Egypt you must feed an additional 3 million mouths every year, which is a challenge for the government. Nowadays, we also have the opposite problem, not hunger but obesity and diseases; we have one of the highest rates of diabetes in the world between Saudi Arabia and the UAE, and people are living longer so governments have to spend more and more of their budgets on addressing the human costs of these diseases. In addition, unfortunately only about 9% of our land is ready and fit for agriculture. We do have places where we historically had water, of course, the Nile River, the Iraq Euphrates & Tigris, which used to be the food basket of the region. However, water scarcity is creating conflicts; when it comes to the Nile in both these countries, for example, without diplomacy we would have had a war between Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan and everyone in-between. Then similarly when it comes to relations between Iraq and Türkiye, the rivers and dams are creating major tensions. Likewise Lebanon Litani river, where I am originally from, is of interest to the Israelis and others. Beyond rivers, aquifers and underground water utilization is also a challenge. Within the GCC we have been using our aquifer without ensuring recharging it, and we have also been using that in Egypt because the solution to expanding agriculture has been land reclamation. Thank God, the technology allows us to do land reclamation but of course, you do not have infinite water underground and it will probably be affected within the next 100 to 200 years and, as His Highness the late Sh. Zayed has mentioned before, for us water is more vital, expensive and more important than oil.





3. Economic and Social Issues in the Middle East



Monica Malik
Chief Economist at Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank

What particularly makes me positive about this region at this moment, really since the oil price collapse in 2015, is the policy focus, the strength to move forward with reforms, and make difficult decisions that were earlier found difficult to progress with. Thanks to these reforms and a focus on spending, many of these have come down. For the UAE and Qatar, we expect the budget breakeven to be below USD 60 per barrel. Since Saudi Arabia has progressed with Vision 2030 and its diversification plan, that has also changed the narrative in the wider Gulf economies where the focus on either staying ahead or progressing with reforms has been very important, so the focus on diversification. What we have seen from the UAE, for example, is that we have increasing CEPA, comprehensive economic partnership agreements, so we have seen the catchment area of being a trading and service hub, as well as a capital hub, has moved from the Gulf to the region to the Indian subcontinent and Africa. It is now spreading more and more to the wider globe and really being a transshipment service hub all the way from China to the Americas. FDI to GDP was 6%, greenfield FDI in the UAE was second only to the US in absolute terms, so this is a place where the private sector can thrive alongside the state-owned entities, which are key drivers.



Fareed Yasseen
Secretary General of the Iraq Pugwash Association, former Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq to the United States

The interconnected challenges of demography, water scarcity, and climate change increasingly affect the future of Iraq, and other countries in the region. For example, Iraq's population has grown from 8 million in the 1960s to 45 million today. At the same time, the population has shifted from rural to urban areas, where oil-funded government jobs are concentrated, diminishing agricultural productivity. Simultaneously, Iraq's iconic date palms, once numbering 30–40 million, have dwindled to as low as 8 million due to wars and water shortages. Water scarcity, exacerbated by upstream dams, inefficient management, and climate change, demands urgent agricultural reform. Traditional methods like flood irrigation are unsustainable, and Iraq loses approximately 250 square kilometers of land to desertification annually. Climate change further compounds the crisis, with extreme heatwaves and wet-bulb temperatures making outdoor work hazardous. Rising sea levels also threaten infrastructure, particularly in Basra, requiring new construction strategies. As an oil producer, Iraq faces dual vulnerabilities: the direct impacts of climate change and economic risks from global decarbonization efforts. Adaptation is essential, including reviving traditional architecture suited to the climate, adopting advanced agricultural techniques for arid environments, and diversifying the economy. Collaboration is key. Iraq must work with neighboring countries to secure resources and develop strategies to address shared challenges. Only by combining individual and collective efforts can Iraq ensure a sustainable and resilient future. The same applies to all countries in the region.



Ernesto Damiani
Professor at Khalifa University for the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Director of the Center for Cyber-Physical Systems (CzPS)

The term "reconstruction": is often used to designate rebuilding systems and infrastructures as they were before a disaster. We argue that the reconstruction of war-torn areas of the Middle East can show more resilience, benefiting from the momentum of the MENA region in deploying advanced communication techniques based on Low Orbit Satellites (LOS) and innovative Artificial Intelligence (AI) agents based on open Large Language Models (LLM). Leveraging advanced communication techniques and innovative AI agents offers potential for transformative change and could lead to more efficient and resilient systems. Indeed, LOS can provide reliable and widespread connectivity, which is crucial for rebuilding and maintaining infrastructure in war-torn areas. Also, it enables high density of communication devices even in remote and underserved regions. Advanced communication techniques facilitate better coordination among various stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and local communities. This will lead to more cohesive and collaborative reconstruction efforts. In turn, AI agents based on LLMs can analyze vast amounts of data to inform decisions on resource allocation, urban planning, and infrastructure development. This can ensure that reconstruction efforts are well-targeted and effective. Advanced Gulf countries, particularly the UAE, can take the lead in integrating innovative technologies and promote sustainable development practices, ensuring that reconstructed areas are built to withstand future challenges and are environmentally friendly. By incorporating these advanced technologies, the reconstruction of war-torn areas in the Middle East could become not just a restoration of the past but a leap towards a more connected, data-informed, and resilient future.





Kevin Rudd
Ambassador of Australia to the United States,
former Prime Minister of Australia

It will be remembered that two years ago when China first emerged from the zero-Covid environment, it was expected that Chinese economic growth would come roaring back; it has not. There are a number of manifestations of that: 1/ Weak consumer demand; 2/ Weak levels of business confidence, reflected in weak levels of private fixed capital investment; 3/ We have had a radical downturn in the Chinese real estate and property market, which of itself represents some 28% of GDP and the principal vehicle for personal savings and investment in the PRC; 4/ We have also seen only a small growth in public investment because there are ultimately constraints in terms of fiscal capacity; 5/ Therefore, the main driver of economic growth these days continues to be net exports. Therefore, what we have seen around the world is great pressure being placed on global markets as China seeks to undercut international competitors around the world in order to boost its net export earnings back into the economy. In fact, one of the few areas that is registering positive growth for China's economy at present is the net export sector. [...] In China's domestic political economy it has been the question of how to restore economic growth through stimulus rather than fundamental policy change, which can be a very difficult objective to achieve. The Chinese system itself, under normal circumstances will spend at least 12 months examining the nature of the incoming Trump administration. More broadly in terms of Trump's own strategy towards China, where does that land as they seek to reconcile President Trump's stated economic objectives in his national policy document released during the Republican National Convention, for the United States to prevail in its long-term strategic economic competition with the People's Republic of China? Then, how is that also reconciled with the continuing national security concerns in and around Taiwan?





His Excellency Sheikh Salem bin Khalid Al Qassimi
Minister of Culture, United Arab Emirates

Tonight, I would like to reflect on the cultures' profound role in our shared future. The UAE has stood its ground when it comes to culture, our anchor in this rapidly changing world. Our heritage teaches us the importance of hospitality, generosity and mutual respect, values that are essential in a world that is often marked by division. By preserving and celebrating cultural diversity, we have built a more tolerant, peaceful and prosperous future for all. Culture also serves as a medium through which we can address some of the most pressing issues, such as climate change, one of the most urgent challenges of our time. Culture inspires actions by connecting us to shared stories of resilience and adaptation, as well as serving as a pillar for society that influences policies and progression. In this spirit, the United Arab Emirates issued a federal decree law to empower the arts sector and to support artistic institutions as part of a wider effort to enhance the UAE's artistic ecosystem and the creative economy. Through initiatives such as the National Grant Program for Culture and Creativity launched by the Ministry of Culture, we aim to support creatives, as well as foster talent and overall cultural production. We also recognize the increasing importance of data across all sectors, including culture. The pursuit of peace and stability is another area where culture plays a significant role. By promoting the values of tolerance and co-existence, the UAE has demonstrated the importance of cultural exchange and inclusive solutions, and these principles come to life in our region. These efforts build more than just physical structures, they restore the cultural and communal bonds that are essential in the long-term development of societies.

*Full version page 140















Bertrand Badré

“As was said again and again at every session, unfortunately, we are living in a world that is fragmenting, dislocating and looking for a compass. It is crucial to have a place where people of goodwill can come together, openly voice their opinions and find common ground. This conference is important if only to have a place for discussion, dialogue and listening to each other. In addition, if it can inspire and offer solutions that can be implemented in the years to come, that would be fantastic.

Robert Sigal

“I attend this conference because it offers rich, thought-provoking material exploring sociological, financial, economic and philosophical viewpoints. It is a catalyst for ideas and actions.

Sabine Oueiss

“I have noticed that every year, despite the presence of regular participants, the hot topics of the moment fuel exchanges of ideas and reflections on the world's economic future, whether in Europe, Africa, or elsewhere. As a Lebanese journalist, what I especially like is the conference's openness to such stimulating themes.

Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean

“The breaking down of barriers is the real added value of this conference. Bringing people from different backgrounds – business, politics, academic research and think tanks like IFRI – together makes it possible to compare many points of view and opinions on the same subject.

Nialé Kaba

“I would like to point out the quality of the debates I attended and say how honored I am to be on the panel.

Christophe Poinssot

“Thank you for inviting me to these three particularly enriching days of reflection. Your invitation to shed light on unexplored aspects likely to deeply influence global geopolitics was invaluable.

Jacques Michel

“It was a beautiful conference with first-rate experts, intense debates and memorable moments. The organization and logistics were flawless and very professional again this year.

Tiémoko Meyliet Koné

“I would like to thank Thierry de Montbrial, President of the Institut Français des Relations Internationales, for again inviting Côte d'Ivoire to this special space to reflect on economic and geostrategic issues. This forum allows decision makers, researchers and opinion leaders from different backgrounds to discuss the world situation, share ideas and propose solutions for a better future.

Jay Truesdale

“I am excited to further contribute to the good work you're doing with the WPC. Thank you for making me feel so welcome as a part of the community!

François Barrault

“I want to thank and congratulate you on the 2024 WPC. It was excellent both in form and substance and I was very happy to participate and contribute. The quality of the discussions, the topics addressed and the excellence of the speakers make the WPC an exceptional event that stands out from all the others I attend or organize.

Jean-François Etter

“I want to thank you again for inviting me to the WPC. It was a fantastic experience, and I really enjoyed the discussions and talks.

Juliette Tuakli

“The 17th World Peace Conference, with its focus on global governance, has proven an unexpectedly ideal venue for launching this partnership between NEPAD and Mercy Ships. As previous attendees, both Ms. Bekele-Thomas and I recognize the significance of moving beyond discussion to concrete action, and this collaboration exemplifies that commitment.

Constanza Negri-Biasutti

“Participating in this conference and its panels has been tremendously rewarding. The discussions have provided diverse and insightful perspectives on the major challenges confronting the world, our nations, and humanity as a whole. The breadth of geographical scope and thematic depth have been particularly enriching.

Gabriel Felbermayr

“I always leave this conference feeling inspired, with plenty of food for thought and valuable new contacts. I truly appreciate the experience and look forward to coming back.

Nardos Bekele-Thomas

“The WPC excels at bringing together diverse stakeholders – government authorities, private sector actors, and development partners. This networking environment fostered our own partnership, enabling us to move from acquaintance to collaboration. The WPC exemplifies the critical importance of networking and partnership-building as essential drivers of development solutions.

Seán Cleary

“Congratulations on another well-planned WPC organized at a historic turning point!

Mohammed Baharoon

“The World Policy Conference stands out for addressing topics beyond conventional geopolitics. It delves into crucial areas of what I consider 'new security,' encompassing health, food, energy, identity, and politics. These discussions are of paramount importance, and I'm pleased that the WPC is hosting them here in Abu Dhabi.

Gidon Bromberg

“It is a real honor to be here, and I think it is a real credit to the organizers for also inviting a civil society organization to speak on this stage because we want to contribute and we want to speak about the elephant in the room.

Steven Erlanger

“One is to thing is to thank Thierry, Song-Nim and all the team for truly a substance-filled conference. I have been very impressed because there are a lot of conferences that are not nearly as substantive.

Vincent Biruta

“Thank you. It is my first time participating in this World Policy Conference. I wish to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Thierry de Montbrial for inviting me and also to appreciate the high quality of the panels which have discussed various important topics.

Noura Al Kaabi

“It is a pleasure to welcome you to the United Arab Emirates for the 17th Edition of the World Policy Conference. We are excited to host this distinguished gathering for the fourth time. WPC as a forum has consistently fostered the kind of open dialogue and innovative collaboration that we value so much here. Over the years, this conference has become an essential space for addressing the pressing challenges of our times, driven by the insights and contributions of global leaders, policymakers, and thinkers.

Raed Charafeddine

“Thank you very much for inviting me to the 17th edition of WPC. As with every year, this year's conference was highly successful with its organization, themes, speakers, and events. I have one suggestion for next year. We need to get younger people on board. They were present on the AI sessions, but it is worth considering them for other sessions as well, be a speakers or moderators.

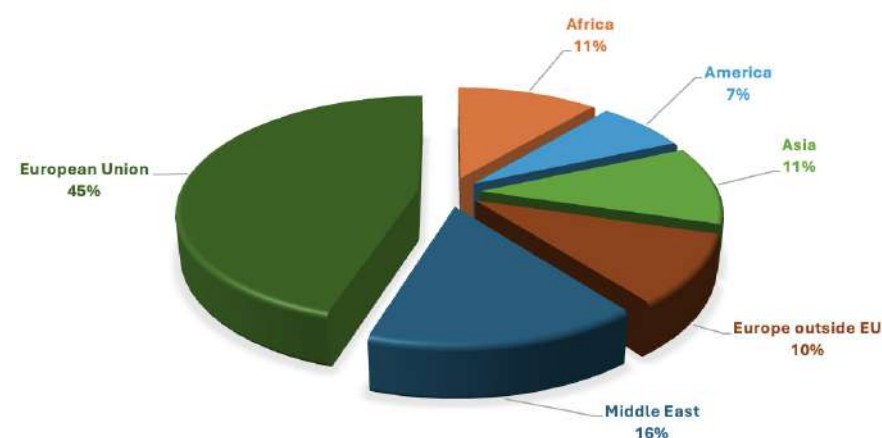
James Stuewe

“I just wanted to send you a note to say congrats on what I'm sure was a wonderful conference. I watched a bit of WPC TV when I could. Seemed like it was a really engaging and interesting conference, as it always is.

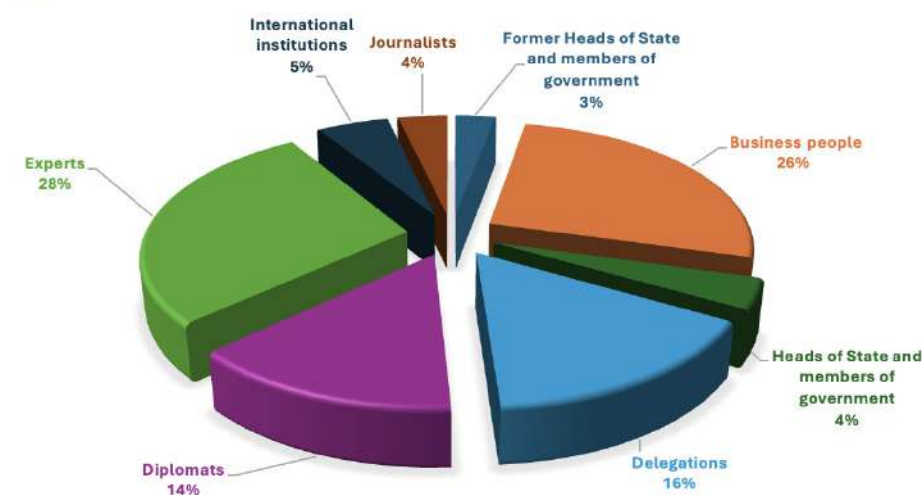
Gary Litman

“Thank you again for including me in the WPC family. Congratulations to you and your excellent team for delivering a great experience. The Conference in Abu Dhabi gave me a valuable window into the vibrant world beyond Washington politics. Many of the participants offered original perspectives that we should take more seriously. I am especially grateful for including me in the discussions on G7 and the workshop on global governance. While I share the skepticism expressed by the seasoned sherpas about the G7 and G20, I suspect the more flexible formats may turn out to be more resilient than the formal institutions of global governance if only because from the U.S. point of view G7 and G20 do not require congressional involvement. The coincidence of French and U.S. presidencies of G7 and G20 respectively in just 12 months from now should put a premium on joint reflection on global issues between our two policy communities. Please let me know your plans for building up on the 17 years of success.

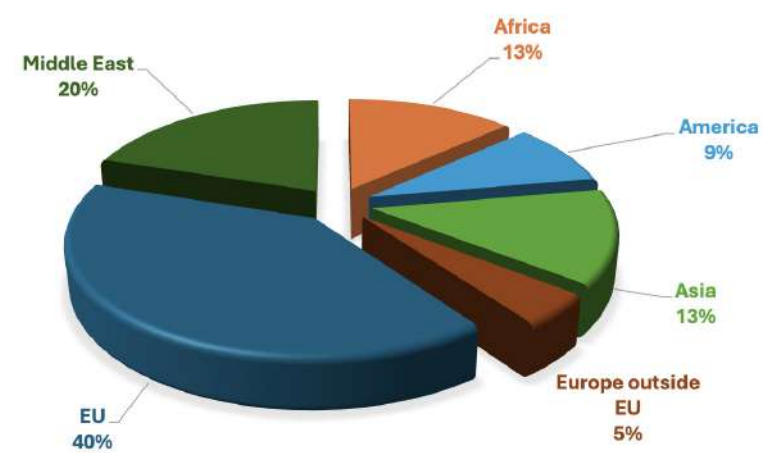




Participants – Geographical breakdown
(301 participants from 54 countries)



Participants – Breakdown by function
(301 participants from 54 countries)



Geographical breakdown of main published articles
(total : 49 articles)





Abdallah, Kamel

Managing Director & CEO of Canal Sugar. Dr. Kamel Abdallah is a national food security expert, he served in Board Director/Managing Director/CEO positions in Agri/Food based companies, including Baladna QPSC, Aujan Industries/Rani Investments, and Exeed Industries/National Holding. He also served as Assistant Vice President of the American University of Beirut.

Abdelatif, Soumeiya

Medical doctor, director of companies. First Vice President of the Robert Schuman Institute for Europe, she was also an auditor of the Institute of Advanced Studies in National Defence (IHEDN) and of the Center of Diplomatic and Strategic Studies (CEDS).

Abed, Majdi

Vice President International Public Affairs at TotalEnergies. Prior to joining TotalEnergies in 2019, he held several positions at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He notably was Consul General in Dubai, Political Advisor for the French Delegation to NATO and n°2 at the Embassy of France to Qatar.

Abiteboul, Jean

President of International Group of LNG Importers, non-executive Director of Tellurian Inc. Former Executive Vice President for Supply, Trading & Marketing, he also served as President of Gaselys, International Executive Vice President, Advisor to the Chairman & CEO and as Secretary of the Board of Directors within Gaz de France.

Adamakis, Emmanuel

Elder Metropolitan of Chalcedon. Former Vice President and President of the Conference of European Churches, he also served as director of the Office of the Orthodox Church to the European Union in Brussels. After being elected Metropolitan of France, he was Co-President of the Council of Christian Churches in France.

Akita, Hiroyuki

Commentator of *Nikkei*. He writes commentaries, columns, and analysis on foreign and international security affairs. Former Beijing Correspondent and Washington Chief Correspondent, he was Senior and Editorial Staff Writer and worked for the "Leader Writing Team" of the *Financial Times*.

Al Balushi, Marwan

Minister Plenipotentiary Head of the Media and Communication Center at the Foreign Ministry of Oman. He specializes in crisis and emergency management and reputation management. He also worked at the Public Authority for Electricity and Water and the Ministry of Housing.

Al Hameli, Afra

Director of Strategic Communications at the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Al Hosany, Nawal

Permanent Representative of the UAE to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). She also holds the position of Deputy Director General of the Emirates Diplomatic Academy (EDA) and is Programme Director of the UAE-led Women in Sustainability, Environment and Renewable Energy (WiSER) initiative.

Al Kaabi, Noura

Minister of State at the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She previously served as Minister of Culture and Youth, Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs, and President of Zayed University. On the international stage, she spearheaded the UAE's successful bid to join UNESCO's Executive Board.

Al Mansour, Natalia

Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar. She held various positions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at Embassies of the Republic of Slovenia in Tehran, Prague and Cairo, as well as at the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to the EU in Brussels.

Al Mutar, Faisal

Social entrepreneur and executive with extensive experience in economic development, innovation, and nonprofit leadership. Founder of Ideas Beyond Borders, he has built the organization into a leading platform for advancing free market thought, innovation, and policy reform in the Arab world, particularly in Iraq.

Al Qassimi, Salem Bin Khalid

Minister of Culture of the United Arab Emirates.

Alaluf, Rotem

CEO and founder of Wand AI, with a strong record as a Cofounder of several other successful ventures, he also serves on the advisory boards of global companies. Early pioneer in artificial intelligence, he has spearheaded the development of large-scale systems across diverse sectors, including defense, intelligence, finance, and technology.

Alangari, Sultan bin Abdullah

Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the United Arab Emirates.

Alzarooni, Adil

CEO of Al Zarooni Emirates Investments and Al Bidayer Holding. He has served in various leadership positions within UAE government entities as well as financial services, logistics, media, technology, food and beverage, fast moving consumer goods and real estate.

Andler, Daniel

Professor Emeritus at Sorbonne University. Member of the French Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, he was the founder and first director of the department of cognitive studies at the École normale supérieure in Paris. He is chiefly interested in cognitive science and artificial intelligence, and in their impacts on education, collective decision and public policy.

Andrews, John

Author and journalist, specializing in geopolitics as a contributing Editor to *The Economist* and *Project Syndicate*. In 2021, he became head tutor for *The Economist's* first online course on global trends in geopolitics, with a particular focus on China and the United States.

Antil, Alain

Director of the Ifri Sub-Saharan Africa Center. He works on Mauritania and security issues in the Sahel. He teaches at the Institut d'études politiques (IEP) of Lille and Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne University. He holds a PhD in political geography from the University of Rouen.

Astorg, Jean-Marc

Director of Strategy of CNES, the French Space Agency, he is actively involved in adapting CNES and the French space ecosystem to the new environment created by New Space. He is an expert in space issues, with in-depth knowledge of the space sector in France and worldwide in all areas: launchers, satellites and ground segments.

Augé, Benjamin

Associate researcher at Ifri and head of investigations at Africa Intelligence. He teaches the geopolitics of oil and gas in Africa, the comparative African policies of the P5 members and relations between Africa and the Gulf at the Executive Masters programs of HEC and Sciences Po Paris.

Avital, David

Senior Director of AEye Strategic Solutions. Entrepreneur, venture capitalist and philanthropist who has realized great success in real estate, parking, biotech and other areas thanks to the strong values and principles acquired through his long military career. He also serves on the board of directors of several companies.

Badré, Bertrand

Managing Partner and Founder of Blue like an Orange Sustainable Capital. Former Managing Director and Chief Financial Officer of the World Bank Group, he also served as Group Chief Financial Officer of Crédit Agricole and Group Chief Financial Officer at Société Générale.

Baharoon, Mohammed

Director of the Dubai Public Policy Research Center (b'huth). He focuses on the interplay between geostrategy and policymaking in governance, stability, capacity building, and future-proofing. Former Deputy Director of Watani (UAE's first initiative on National Identity), he was also a founding member of the board of "Bussola Institute".

Barakat, Maha

Assistant Minister for Health and Life Sciences in the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Director General of the Frontline Heroes Office in the UAE. Former Director General of the Health Authority Abu Dhabi, she also served as Chair of the RBM Partnership to End Malaria.

Bark, Tae-Ho

President of the Global Commerce Institute of Lee&Ko, President of Seoul Forum for International Affairs (SFIA), Professor Emeritus of the Graduate School of International Studies (GSIS) at Seoul National University. He is also Chairman of the Korean Committee of the Trilateral Commission and former Minister for Trade of Korea.

Barrault, François

Founder and Chairman of FDB Partners SPRL. Chairman of IDATE DigiWorld, he has had unique and diversified entrepreneurial and corporate experiences in the technology sector. He served as President and CEO of Lucent EMEA and then as International CEO and corporate officer, and as CEO of BT Global Services.

HH Bartholomew Ist

Archbishop of Constantinople - New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch. Ordained to the Diaconate in 1961 and to the Priesthood in 1969, His Holiness served as Assistant Dean at the Patriarchal Theological School of Halki and then as Director of the Private Patriarchal Office of Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios.

Beacco, Jean-Michel

Chief Executive Officer Institut Louis Bachelier, Associate Professor of Finance at Université Paris-Dauphine, he also serves as President of the Department of Economics at École nationale des Ponts et Chaussées. He headed the capital market's Credit Trading and structuring department at Société Générale, CACIB and Natixis.

Béhanzin, Francis

Chairman and cofounder of World Network of Security and Defense Professionals for preventing and combating terrorism. Former Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of ECOWAS, he is also a member of the Benin Human Rights Commission of Benin and Lecturer at the Institut des hautes études de défense nationale (Paris).

Bekele-Thomas, Nardos

First female CEO of the African Union Development Agency/NEPAD. She was Resident Coordinator for the United Nations (UN) and Head of the UN System in South Africa where she led successful efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. She also served as the UN Resident Coordinator in Kenya and Benin.

Berchtold, Etienne

Ambassador of the Republic of Austria to the United Arab Emirates. Former Foreign and European policy spokesperson for three Austrian Chancellors, he served as spokesperson for the Austrian foreign minister Sebastian Kurz, and as an employee at the Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels and for Shell Austria GmbH in Austria.

Besnainou, Pierre

Honorary President of the French Judaism Foundation. He served as President of the European Jewish Congress and of the French Unified Jewish Social Fund. He also co-chaired the Unified Jewish Appeal of France and is a member of the Board of Governors at the Shimon Peres Center for Peace and of the Weisman Institute France.

Beyer, Peter

Member of the German Bundestag where he serves on the Committee on Foreign Affairs. He is also the Spokesperson of the Committee of Inquiry on Afghanistan and was a Coordinator of Transatlantic Cooperation of the Federal Government.

Biloa, Marie-Roger

Chief Executive Director of The Africa International Media Group and its branch MRB Productions. Media Consultant and Adviser on African Affairs with Africa International, she is also a frequent TV guest (TV5Monde, France24, Aljazeera, RFI, i-Télé, ARD, ZDF) to comment on current news and African politics.

Biot, Jacques

Board member and advisor to companies in the field of digital transformation and artificial intelligence. Former President of the École polytechnique in Paris, he is also Trustee to several scientific academic institutions, and he Chairs the Board of Directors of Huawei Technologies France.

Biruta, Vincent

Minister of Interior of the Republic of Rwanda. Former Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, he also held several cabinet positions in the Government of Rwanda. He was the President of the Senate in the Parliament of the Republic of Rwanda and President of the National Transition Assembly.

Blugeon-Mered, Mikaa

Independent researcher specialized in geopolitics and international markets of hydrogen. He is an adjunct lecturer at Sciences Po Paris, Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P). He also coordinates the Hydrogen Task Force of MEDEF International, advises Hy24 and Hyvolution, and Chairs the Steering Committee of CertifHy.

Brnabić, Ana

Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. Former Prime Minister and Minister of Public Administration and Autonomous Administration. She was Director of Continental Wind Serbia (CWS) and has more than ten years of experience in working with international organizations, foreign investors, local self-governments and the public sector.

Bromberg, Gidon

Cofounder and co-director of EcoPeace Middle East. Immersed in the environmental peacebuilding world for over 30 years, he has written extensively on the relationship between water issues and Middle East peace, which he has presented on before the UN Security Council, UN Climate Summit, US Congress, and the European Parliament.

Cabestan, Jean-Pierre

Senior Researcher Emeritus at the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), attached to the French Research Institute on East Asia (IFRAE) of the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations (INALCO). He is also Professor Emeritus at Hong Kong Baptist University.

Caboche, Thierry

Head of International Public Affairs at Ardian. Former diplomat for the French Foreign Office, he held various Embassy postings across the Middle East and served as the Chief of Staff and Spokesperson of the Ambassador of the French Mission to the United Nations in New York.

Callonico, Guillaume A.

Geopolitical Risk Manager, Senior Director at La Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec (CDPQ). A political scientist and risk manager specializing in international relations, democratization process and geopolitical risk, he also teaches political and geopolitical risk management at the University of Montreal.





Chalmin, Philippe

Founder of Cercle Cyclope, Professor Emeritus at Paris-Dauphine University, Consultant for various International Organisations (OECD, EEC, UNCTAD). He was a member of the Council of Economic Advisers in the Office of the French Prime Minister and has published around forty books, including *Journal de la dissolution* in 2024.

Charafeddine, Raed

Executive Chairman at Al Makeen, he is Central and Commercial Banker. Former First Vice Governor of the Central Bank of Lebanon, he is a high-level senior finance professional with profound expertise in public and private sectors in the Middle East and Africa.

Charbit, Stéphane

Partner in the Sovereign Advisory department of Rothschild & Co. He advises governments, sovereign wealth funds and state-owned companies on economic development, financial policy and debt management, across Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, Central and Latin America.

Chauvel, Jean-Baptiste

Regional Head of French Treasury's units in the Arabian Peninsula and economic counselor at the French Embassy in Abu Dhabi. He was previously member of the office of the French Minister in charge of Foreign Trade and Economic Attractiveness and Group General Secretary of the Kepler Cheuvreux Group.

Choi, Yongjoon

CEO of LIG Corp., a South Korean conglomerate. At LIG Nex1, an aerospace and arms manufacturer, he held various leadership positions, including Director of Strategic Planning and Director of Network Divisions. Prior to joining LIG Group, he worked in management consulting.

Cleary, Seán

Chairman of Strategic Concepts (Pty) Ltd. He is also the founder and Executive Vice Chair of the FutureWorld Foundation, Diplomacy Moderator of the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator, a member of the Advisory Boards of EIT-Climate-KIC, World Leadership Alliance-Club de Madrid, and the Institute of Advanced Studies, Kőszeg.

Coatanlem, Yann

Cofounder of GlassView, the inventors of Neuro-Powered Media™ and President of Club Praxis. Member of the Board of the Paris School of Economics and French Foreign Trade Advisor in New York. In 2024, he contributed to the debate on disruptive innovation and the cost of failure in Europe, including in the Draghi report.

Cozon, Stanislas

Executive Vice President of Capgemini. Former Managing Director in charge of global industry sectors within Capgemini, he started his career at the "Inspection générale des Finances" (French Treasury).

Damiani, Ernesto

Dean of the College of Computing and Mathematical Sciences and Director of the Center for Cyber-Physical System at Khalifa University, Abu Dhabi. Full Professor at the Department of Computer Science, Università degli Studi di Milano, where he leads the SESAR research lab, and President of the National Interuniversity Consortium for Computer Science.

Darsalia, Lasha

First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia. He is chief negotiator from Georgia to the Russian Federation in the Geneva International Discussions. He previously was First Deputy Minister at the State Ministry for Reconciliation and Civic Equity.

David, Dominique

Advisor to the Executive Chairman, Ifri, Editor of *Politique étrangère* and co-director of the annual report *Ramses*. President of the Austro-French Centre for Rapprochement in Europe, he was Deputy Director of the Institut français de polémologie, and then Secretary General of the Fondation pour les études de défense nationale (FEDN).

Davidonis, Ramūnas

Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq. He is also Ambassador-Designate to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He was Deputy Ambassador at the Lithuanian Embassy in the UK, and Deputy Director for Latin America, Africa, Asia and Oceania Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Delcourt, Antoine

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to the United Arab Emirates. Former Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium to the People's Republic of China, and to Mongolia, he also served different positions such as Coordinator for the Middle East and Northern Africa Regions.

Desouches, Christine

Honorary lecturer at the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. Expert-consultant to international organizations and member of the strategic council of Ifri, she held various positions in the International Organization of La Francophonie, and has become a specialist in democratization, crisis and peace-building processes, especially in Africa.

Dossou, Robert

Lawyer at the Paris Bar and currently practicing at the Bar of Benin. President of the African Association of International Law and member of the Curatorium of the African Academy for Regional Cooperation. Former Chairman of the Bar, he was also President of the Constitutional Court of Benin.

Drouin, François

President of ETI FINANCE (SMEs and Midcaps financing, Asset-based lending). Former Vice President of the French Public Investment Bank (BPI), he held numerous leading positions such as Chairman of Caisse d'Épargne de Midi-Pyrénées and Crédit Foncier de France, and CEO of OSEO.

Ducrot, Valérie

Executive Director of the Global Gas Centre (GGC). Former Manager of the UNECE (the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe), she has also occupied several positions in the French energy company named today ENGIE.

Duero, Arash

Managing Director of UAE-based Big Picture Strategy LLC. He is also Senior Advisor at Berlin Global Advisors, as well as Head of Strategic Programs at the European Cluster for Climate, Energy and Resource Security at the Centre for Advanced Security, Strategic and Integration Studies (CASSIS), University of Bonn.

Elia, Roula

Attorney at Law, CEO of Echo for Peace Foundation and of Rased Lebanon, member of Beirut Bar Association and International election Observer. Legal Consultant to many associations and civic organizations, she was delegated as "Lawyer and Journalist" to attend hearings in the Special Tribunal of Lebanon in The Hague, Netherlands.

Emilsson, Peje

Founder and Owner of Kreab Worldwide and Kunskapsskolan Education. Board member of the Nobel Prize Outreach and Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (IVA), he was Chef de Cabinet of ICC, the world business organization, and Chairman of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce.

Erlanger, Steven

Chief Diplomatic Correspondent, Europe, for *The New York Times*, based in Berlin. Former London, Paris and Brussels Bureau Chief of *The New York Times*. He shared in a Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Reporting for a series on Al Qaeda and global terrorism in 2002 and for International Reporting on Russia in 2017.

Etienne, Philippe

Ambassador of France and Professor of public and international affairs at Columbia University. He also serves as G7 and G20 sherpa. He previously was Ambassador of France to the United States, Germany and Romania, as well as Ambassador and Permanent Representative of France to the European Union.

Etter, Jean-François

Swiss public health expert and researcher known for his work on tobacco control and smoking cessation. Honorary professor at the University of Geneva, his studies often focus on harm reduction strategies, particularly in relation to e-cigarettes and other nicotine and tobacco products.

Eyl-Mazzega, Marc-Antoine

Director of Ifri's Center for Energy & Climate. Prior to joining Ifri, he worked at the International Energy Agency, notably as Russia & Sub-Saharan Africa Program Manager. He was also in charge of a Ukraine observatory at the Robert Schuman Foundation.

Eyoun, Ambre

Diplomatic Advisor to the French President Special Envoy for IMEC. In 2023, she joined the G7-G20 summits Taskforce at the Ministry of Europe and Foreign affairs in Paris. Prior to her diplomatic career, she worked in the energy industry at TotalEnergies, at various positions related to energy diplomacy, strategy and sustainability.

Ezzat, Aiman

CEO of the Capgemini Group, where he has been working for more than 25 years. He was previously COO and CFO of Capgemini. He is also on the Air Liquide Board of Directors and is a member of the Business Council and the European Round Table for Industry.

Fahmy, Nabil

Dean Emeritus at The American University in Cairo, and Founder of the School of Global Affairs and Public Policy. Former Foreign Minister of Egypt, he also served as Ambassador to the United States and Japan, as well as Chairman of the United Nations Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters.

Fain, Jeremy

CEO of Blue Water Intelligence. Driven by a passion for technology-driven impact, he cofounded Verteego in 2007 and served as CEO at Welcomr.

Felbermayr, Gabriel

Director of the Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO). Professor at the Vienna University of Economics and Business, he served as President of the Kiel Institute for the World Economy (Institut für Weltwirtschaft – IfW) and as an Associate Consultant with McKinsey & Co, Vienna.

Figures, Tim

Partner and Associate Director, EU & Global Trade and Investment at Boston Consulting Group, London. He previously served as a policymaker with the UK Government and the European Commission. He also was a policy advisor on EU and trade issues for the UK Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Flahault, Antoine

Director of the Institute of Global Health at the University of Geneva. Deputy Director of the Swiss School of Public Health in Zürich, he previously served as Co-Director of the European Academic Global Health Alliance, President of the Agency for Public Health Education Accreditation, and Founding Director of

the French School of Public Health.

Foucher, Michel

Member of the Center for Higher European Studies (former ENA) and senior counsel on studies at MEDEF (Network of French entrepreneurs). He was French Ambassador to Latvia and served as an Advisor to the French Foreign Minister, as well as a Special Envoy to the Balkans and the Caucasus.

Frossard, Thibaud

Chief of Staff to the Capgemini Group CEO. Formerly an advisor on industrial policy at the French Ministry of the Economy, Finance and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty, he has previously held various senior positions at the Government Shareholding Agency and the Budget Directorate.

Gargash, Anwar

Diplomatic Advisor to the President of the United Arab Emirates. Member of the Board of Trustees of the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy, he was Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and Minister of State for National Council Affairs.

Germay (de), Nicolas

Vice Chairman of the WPC. Former Vice Chairman of the Franco Indian chamber of commerce, he is also Chairman and founder of Alandia Industries.

Girard, Renaud

Senior reporter and war correspondent at *Le Figaro*. He has covered major worldwide political crises and armed conflicts for the past 40 years. He is also a Professor at the Institut d'études politiques de Paris and a member of the Editorial Board of *Revue des deux mondes*.

Gouyette, François

Chairman of Pro Oriente Conseil, Vice-Chairman for Public Diplomacy of The Global Diwan, Advisor to the Chairman of Diot-Siaci. Former Ambassador of France in the UAE, Libya, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and Algeria, he also served as Ambassador in charge of the EUROMed process in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Gruffat, Jean-Claude

Governor of the American Hospital in Paris and Vice Chairman of the American Hospital of Paris Foundation. He also serves on the Board of Atlas Network and is a member of the Leadership Council of United Way Worldwide. He also holds a position at the investment banking firm of Weild Capital LLC.

Guérin, Gilles

Managing Director of Bordier & Cie in Geneva, member of the Board and Treasurer of the WPC Foundation. Former Managing Partner of EFG Bank in Geneva, his area of expertise is private asset management. He previously worked as Treasurer for Europe at the National Bank of Abu Dhabi in Paris.

Halalai, Traian

Executive President of Exim Banca Romaneasca. President of the Management Board of Banca Romaneasca SA, he has extensive experience in top management positions in the Romanian banking sector. He is also Associate Professor at the Academy of Economic Studies in Bucharest.

Halferty Hardy, Kerry

Cofounder of a healthcare startup focused on global systemic threats and opportunities and President of the American Club of Paris. She also serves as strategic advisor and Board member of international companies and NGOs, particularly focused on the healthcare sector, with additional experience in agriculture and energy.

Hallak, Jalim

Chief Investment Officer of the Othaim Family Office. A distinguished leader in global capital markets, he has held senior roles at prestigious financial institutions, including Société Générale, BNP Paribas, Standard Chartered, Deutsche Bank, and Credit Suisse. He was also Head of Investments at Riyadh Bank.





Hecker, Marc

Deputy Director of Ifri and Editor-in-Chief of *Politique étrangère*. PhD in Political Science, he taught for many years a course on terrorism at Sciences Po. He published several books including *La Guerre de vingt ans* (Robert Laffont, 2021 with Elie Tenenbaum).

Hosoya, Yuichi

Professor of International Politics at Keio University, Managing Director and Research Director at the Asia-Pacific Initiative in Tokyo, he is also Senior Researcher at the Nakasone Peace Institute, Senior Fellow at The Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research, and Senior Adjunct Fellow at the Japan Institute of International Affairs.

Huby, Olivier

Cofounder and Board member of MFEX Mutual Funds Exchange. Former Chief Investment Officer of Axa Investment Managers, he began his career at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a mission in Eastern Europe, and worked with the Paribas group in Asset Management.

Hur, Kyung-Wook

Chairman of Seoul Financial Forum, Chairman of the Board of the Korea Center for International Finance. He is also a Board member of Doosan Shareholding company. Former Ambassador of Korea to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, he also served as Vice Minister for the Ministry of Strategy and Finance.

Inozemtsev, Vladislav

Director of the Center for Post-Industrial Studies in Moscow, Special Advisor to MEMRI's Russia Media Studies Project in Washington, DC. A Russian economist and political scientist, he is the Founder and Director of the Center for Post-Industrial Studies in Moscow, and a teacher at Moscow State University and the Higher School of Economics.

Jacquet, Pierre

Professor of international economics at the École nationale des Ponts et Chaussées and member of the French Cercle des Économistes. Former President of the Global Development Network, he was Chief Economist and Executive Director of Strategy of the French Development Agency and former Deputy Director of Ifri.

Janjgava, George

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Georgia to the Republic of Türkiye, with accreditation to the Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the Republic of Sudan. Fluent in English, Russian, Turkish, and Persian, he has authored two books and over 30 publications.

Jansen, Sabine

Professor of International Relations at the Conservatoire national des arts et métiers and Research Fellow at the Laboratoire interdisciplinaire de recherches en sciences de l'action, she is Vice President of the Committee for Parliamentary and Political History and Delegated President of the Society for the History of the French 5th Republic.

Jasmee, Faten

Business strategist with extensive expertise in international market expansion, cross-cultural partnerships, and strategic business development. Serving as the Deputy Secretary General of the Malaysian Business Council UAE, she actively fosters collaborations between ASEAN and Middle Eastern enterprises to drive regional growth.

Jean, Sébastien

Associate Director of Ifri's Geoeconomics and Geofinance initiative, professor of Economics at Conservatoire national des arts et métiers, where he holds the Chair Jean-Baptiste Say of industrial economics. A member of France's Council of Economic Advisers and National Productivity Council (CNP), he was Director of CEPii, after holding positions at INRAE and OECD.

Jeremić, Vuk

Former Serbia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, he is a member of the Leadership Council of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN) and Professor at the Paris School of International Affairs at Sciences Po.

Jordanov, Ivan

Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to the United Arab Emirates.

Kaba, Nialé

Minister of Economy, Planning, and Development of Côte d'Ivoire. First-class economist and first woman to serve as Minister of Economy and Finance of the country, she previously Chaired the African Development Bank Group Board of Governors, and participated in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals discussions.

Kant, Eiso

CTO and cofounder of poolside. He is an engineer who has been building early-stage companies in the AI and developer tools space for over a decade. Founder and former CEO of Athenian, a data-enabled engineering platform, he also built source(d), the world's first company dedicated to applying AI to code.

Kastouéva-Jean, Tatiana

Research Fellow and Director of Russia/NIS Center of Ifri. Before joining Ifri, she taught International Relations for the French-Russian Master at MGIMO University (Moscow State Institute of International Relations). She currently heads the trilingual electronic collection Russie.NeiVisions.

Kazatchkine, Michel

Special Advisor to the Regional Office of WHO for Europe. Former Executive Director of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, he served as French ambassador on HIV/AIDS and communicable diseases, and UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on HIV/AIDS in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Keller, Daniel

President of "Servir en Entreprise" and former member of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council of France as a qualified person, he is Chief Officer in charge of transversal projects of the Division of complementary pension and social action at Malakoff-Humanis.

Kervasdoué (de), Jean

Professor Emeritus of the Président of Economics and Management of Health Services at the Conservatoire national des arts et métiers (CNAM), Founder of the Pasteur/CNAM School of Public Health. Former Consultant to the OECD, he served as Under Secretary at the French Ministry of Health in charge of hospitals.

Koen, Vincent

Country Studies Division Chief in the OECD Economics Department. He has also served as the Department's Economic Counsellor, as the main author of the OECD Economic Outlook and as OECD G10 Secretary. Earlier on, he worked at the Bank of France and was an Economist at the International Monetary Fund.

Koné, Tiémoko Meyliet

Vice President of Côte d'Ivoire. Prior to this, he served as the Governor of the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO), where he Chaired several important entities, including the BCEAO's Board of Directors, the Monetary Policy Committee, and the Financial Stability Committee of the West African Monetary Union.

Korsia, Haïm

Chief Rabbi of France. Member of the Académie des sciences morales et politiques, he served as a member of the National Consultative Ethics Committee, General Jewish Chaplain of the Army and the Polytechnic School, Director of the General Chaplain of the Air Force as well as General Secretary of the Association of French Rabbis.

Kotti, Randy

Head of the regional economic service for Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur in France and economic advisor for the Regional Prefect. Former consultant for the World Bank, he also worked for Neoen in Australia, an independent renewable energy developer.

Kowal, Pawel

Professor at the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Former member of the European Parliament, he served as Chairman of the EU delegation to the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Committee, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a member of the National Security Council.

Krisnamurthi, Bayu

Professor at the Bogor Agricultural University, former Vice Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Indonesia. Former President Director of BULOG and President Commissioner of RNI-IDFood (2021-2023), he serves as Chairman of the Inclusive and Sustainable Agribusiness Initiatives, which he founded, and of the Association of Agribusiness Indonesia.

Lablanchy, Jean-Pierre

Medical Doctor and Psychiatrist, Member of the Supervisory Board of Edeis as well as Member of Surveillance Board of Edeis.com and active Member of Bealy.io. He specializes in the management of conflict situations, and in particular in the management of post-traumatic syndromes.

Laïdi, Zaki

Former Personal Advisor to the High Representative and Vice President of the Commission EEAS. He has been a Professor at Sciences Po for over 20 years.

Lainé, Hugues

Rear Admiral, Joint Commander of the French forces deployed in the Indian Ocean.

Lanardonne, Tomás

Energy Regulatory and Transactional Expert, Founding Partner of MHR Abogados (Argentine & Uruguay). Argentine transactional and regulatory lawyer with more than 20 years of experience in oil and gas, conventional and renewable energy, mining, and natural resources-related litigation and arbitration.

Lang, Nikolaus

Managing Director and Senior Partner in BCG's Munich office. He is the global leader of the BCG Henderson Institute, BCG's think tank, global vice Chair of BCG's Global Advantage practice, and Chair of the Center of Geopolitics, supporting clients on an array of globalization-related topics.

Lee, Hye-Min

Senior Advisor of KIM & CHANG, Visiting Professor of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul. Former Deputy Minister for Trade of Korea, he also served as G20 Sherpa, Chief Negotiator for the Korea-EU FTA and Ambassador to the Philippines and France.

Letourneur, Charles

Managing Partner and Cofounder of ALVEN, one of the largest and most active venture capital funds in digital technologies in Europe (software, artificial intelligence, fintech). Charles Letourneur started his career in M&A with LAZARD in New York, and then Paris. He was appointed Executive Director in 1999.

Lévy-Lang, André

Founder and President of the Louis Bachelier Institute. Member of the Board of Ifri, he is also affiliate Emeritus Professor in Finance at Paris-Dauphine University, Non-Executive Chairman of *Les Échos*, and Chairman and Founder of the Fondation du Risque and Institut Louis Bachelier.

Lewis, Jeffrey

Partner and member of the Executive Committee of the international law firm Cleary Gottlieb, with over 35 years of experience in Latin America. His practice focuses on the energy and natural resources sectors, in which he has led a number of groundbreaking transactions.

Lipsky, John

Senior Fellow of the Foreign Policy Institute, at Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Chair of the National Bureau of Economic Research, and Co-chair of the Aspen Institute's Program on the World Economy, he also serves as the Vice Chair of the Bretton Woods Committee, and of the Center for Global Development.

Litman, Gary

Senior Vice-President of Global Initiatives at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. He is responsible for the Chamber's policy advocacy for the economic reform agenda of the G20, G7, and international institutions. He leads the Chamber's participation in a range of global business coalitions and related business summits focused on sustainable economic policies.

Lixi, Claude

Head of Global Market Commodities at Natixis. Former Global Head of the oil derivatives trading and marketing teams at BP, he served as trader in several companies such as Elf Trading, TFS, Morgan Stanley, Trafigura, and Gunvor.

Maila, Joseph

Professor of Geopolitics and International Relations and Senior Fellow at ESSEC Business School. He was elected Dean of the Faculté des sciences sociales et économiques, then President of the Catholic University of Paris. He was Director of the Prospective (Policy Planning Staff) at the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs.

Makhaya, Trudi

Acclaimed South African Economist and Entrepreneur. Between 2018 and 2023, she served the Presidency as full-time economic advisor to President Cyril Ramaphosa, driving the administration's investment and reform agenda. Trudi also served as South Africa's G20 Sherpa, representing the President in the negotiations ahead of Leaders' summits and meetings.

Malik, Monica

Chief Economist at Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank. Dr. Malik has over 30 years of experience as an Economist specializing in the MENA region. At Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank, she established the Economic research team. Previously, she was the Chief Economist at EFG Hermes and was the lead person in the Economics team.

Mallikarjun, Manu

Social entrepreneur working in the fields of International Relations and Real Estate Development. His current projects include a film series, the goal of which is to find potential paths to a peaceful and sustainable world. He has also penned a book to be published soon for the same purpose.

Mariton, Hervé

Chairman of the Federation of French Overseas companies (Fedom) and President of the Franco-British Council. He served as a Member of the French Parliament, Secretary for Overseas Territories and opposition Spokesperson on the Finance Committee.

Martin, Terry

Journalist and TV news anchor. Formerly an anchor with CNN International, he is now Senior Anchor with DW News. He is also the Founder and Director of the research communications agency SPIA. He has provided live coverage from G7 summits, UN climate conferences, and multiple national elections.

Mattli, Arthur

Ambassador of Switzerland to the UAE and the Kingdom of Bahrain. Former Head of Division for Europe, Central Asia, Council of Europe and OSCE at the Directorate of Political Affairs in Bern, he was Head of Mission in Dar es Salaam, where he represented Switzerland at the East African Community and in Zambia.





McCarthy, Kevin

55th Speaker of the US House of Representatives. Prior to his election to Congress, he served as the fastest rising Minority Leader in the California State Legislature. In Congress, he held nearly every elected leadership position in the House Republican conference and served under four Presidents, and through consistent political upheaval.

Mestrallet, Gérard

Special Envoy of the French President for IMEC, the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor. Previously, he served as Executive Chairman of the French Agency for AIUla from 2018 to 2023. Former Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of GDF SUEZ (now ENGIE). Gérard Mestrallet is a prominent figure of the French private sector.

Meyer, Jean-Claude

Vice Chairman International of Rothschild & Cie. Member of the Board of Ifri, he served as General Partner of Rothschild, Advisor to DATAR, an office of the French Prime Minister, and Managing Director of Lazard Frères & Cie.

Michel, Jacques

Chairman of International Public Affairs at THOMSON BROADCAST. Former Chairman of BNP Paribas Middle East and Africa for Corporate and Institutional Banking, he also served as Deputy CEO/Chief Risk Officer of Fortis Bank Asia-Pacific in Hong Kong, and Chief Risk Officer of Crédit Lyonnais/ Calyon for Asia-Pacific.

Michel, Stéphane

President Gas, Renewables & Power and Member of the Executive Committee of TotalEnergies since 2021. In 2011, he became TotalEnergies E&P Qatar Managing Director and in 2014, the E&P Senior Vice President Middle East/North Africa and a Member of the Management Committee of the Exploration and Production segment.

Mirenge, John

Ambassador of Rwanda to the United Arab Emirates.

Mourtada, Nada

Secretary-General of the University Leadership Council of the UAE (ULC). Former Founding Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs of the American University of Sharjah, she has held visiting professorships at leading universities and research institutions, including the University of California and the Institut d'études politiques de Paris.

Myklebust, Olav

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to the United Arab Emirates.

Narayanan, Mayankote Kelath

Former Governor of the State of West Bengal. Former Special Advisor and National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of India, he has dealt extensively with a whole range of issues concerning internal, national and global security, including aspects such as Counterterrorism, Counter-Intelligence and Strategic Analysis.

Naser, Felix

COO at Liquid AI. Felix Naser is an experienced leader in the fields of technology and automotive software. He has led international teams in academia, startups, and corporations, co-creating intelligent software and mobility solutions. Cofounder of Venti Technologies, he has also worked as a Global Software Project Lead at BMW Group.

Nasr, Samir

President of ECE Consultants SAL. Chairman of Phoenician Funds Holding in Lebanon and Executive Director of the Mouflon Fund in Cyprus, he served as consultant at the OECD, Professor of Economics, Chairman at the National Investment Guarantee Corporation, and economic and financial advisor at various GCC countries.

Nawandhar, Sanjay

Associate Director at the Boston Consulting Group. Sanjay Nawandhar leads the BCG Center for Public Economics (CPE) and has over a decade of experience advising government ministries, investment agencies, and leading public and private sector organizations on economic transformation, policy design, and strategic planning.

Negri Biasutti, Constanza

B20 Sherpa and former Head of Trade & International Integration at CNI, where she leads the strategic coordination of the B20 Brasil, ensuring the effective preparation, delivery, and advocacy of policy recommendations to advance global economic priorities.

Niemtchinow, Nicolas

French Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. He held several functions in the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs such as Deputy Director of Strategic Affairs, Deputy Director of the State Minister's private office, first Secretary at the French Embassy in Moscow, and Deputy Head of Mission at the French Embassy in Amman.

Nordmann, François

Former Ambassador of Switzerland to France. He joined the Foreign Service in 1971. Former Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Guatemala and other States of Central America, he also served as Head of the Swiss Delegation to UNESCO, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the international organizations in Geneva and Chairman of FN Conseil.

Ouziel, Sylvie

Founder and Chairwoman of Swift Property Holdings (Dubai-based REIT and prop tech), Founder and CEO of Blue Bridge (expert in generative AI adoption at scale and digital agents). Sylvie Ouziel is a board member of Covivio (REIT managing €25+bn assets) and Technion University.

Paal, Douglas

Distinguished Fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Former Vice Chairman of JPMorgan Chase International, he also served as an unofficial US representative to Taiwan as Director of the American Institute in Taiwan, worked as a Senior Analyst for the CIA, and worked at the US embassies in Singapore and Beijing.

Paugam, Jean-Marie

Deputy Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva since 2021. Previously, he was the Permanent Representative of France to the WTO. He has held various Senior Management responsibilities on Trade, Development and International Finance, with the French Treasury and with the UN system (International Trade Center).

Perthes, Volker

Senior Distinguished Fellow at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP). He is a former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and has served as Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Sudan and Head of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS).

Piau, Nicolas

Cofounder and CEO of TILT Capital Partners. First Mover Fellow of the Aspen Institute, he works in the field of energy and project development / M&A. Nicolas was Senior Vice President in charge of M&A and Corporate Development for Engie.

Poinssot, Christophe

Deputy Director General and Scientific Director of the French Geological Survey BRGM. Former elected president of the association EuroGeoSurveys, he worked in the French Atomic and Alternative Energy Commission (CEA) and was the Nuclear Counsellor at the French Embassy in China (Beijing) and the CEA representative in this country.

Qiao, Yide

Vice Chairman and Secretary-General of Shanghai Development Research Foundation, a non-profit institution with the purpose of promoting research on the issues of development. He is also an Outside Expert for International Finance and Economy at the Ministry of Finance in China.

Rabinovich, Itamar

Professor Emeritus of Middle Eastern History at Tel Aviv University. President Emeritus and Counselor of the Israel Institute (Washington and Tel Aviv), he is also a Distinguished Fellow at the Brookings Institution, and the Vice Chairman of the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS) in Tel Aviv. He served as Ambassador of Israel to the United States.

Ramaswamy, Ramu

Partner in Dentons' Paris Sovereign Advisory group. He focuses his practice on supporting governments and government-related entities on the development and financing of resources and energy-related projects. An expert in non-contentious infrastructure law, he has advised on the development of large-scale energy and infrastructure projects all around the world.

Robert, Virginie

Foreign Desk Editor of *Les Échos*, the French business newspaper. She was the daily newspaper's New York correspondent. Vice President of the European-American Press Club in Paris, she is also a member of the French Diplomatic Press Association.

Robin, Arnaud

Acceleration Manager within the Interministerial Digital Directorate. He is empowering state startups to increase their impact and scale their operations. He also worked for Google, the French railway group SNCF and Wayfair. He holds an engineering degree from Corps des mines and École Polytechnique, and a MS from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Rombaut, Frédéric

Head of Direct Investments at the UAE Sovereign Wealth Fund. With over three decades of transformative experience in private equity and corporate development, he has overseen 100 investments totaling \$24 billion across major tech hubs worldwide. His career is distinguished by trailblazing contributions that have shaped our current digital ecosystem.

Rostand, Alexis

Managing Director of Eiffel Investment Group and SEO of Eiffel IME, established in Abu Dhabi. He led the development of the firm in France before setting up the office in Abu Dhabi in 2023. He held previous positions in the insurance and asset management industry in Paris and London.

Röttgen, Norbert

Member of the Deutscher Bundestag and member of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Former Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, he is the Co-chair of the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) and Board Member of various institutions.

Roy, Olivier

Professor at the RSCAS and Adjunct Professor at the School of Transnational Governance (European University Institute, Florence). He has been a Senior Researcher at the French National Center for Scientific Research (since 1985), Professor at the Ecole des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (since 2003), and Visiting Professor at Berkeley University (2008/2009).

Russo, Lucia

Economist and Policy Analyst in the Artificial Intelligence and Digital Emerging Technologies division of the OECD. Her work focuses on analyzing national AI strategies, policies, and regulatory approaches, as well as coordinating AI country reviews. Lucia Russo also leads the development of a composite measurement framework for AI.

Ryu, Jin Roy

Chairman and CEO of Poongsan Group, one of the world's largest manufacturers of copper products and munitions. He is actively involved in numerous business organizations, notably as Chairman of the Federation of Korean Industries (FKI), the Korea-U.S. Business Council, the Seoul Forum for International Affairs (SFIA) and the Korea-France Club.

Sagara, Yoshiyuki

Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Geoeconomics (IOG) and the Asia Pacific Initiative (API), based in the International House of Japan. He focuses on economic and health security, sanctions, international conflicts, and Japan's foreign policy. In 2021, Mr. Sagara co-authored "The Independent Investigation Commission on the Japanese Government's Response to Covid-19: Report on Best Practices and Lessons Learned".

Saihood, Ali

COO and Executive Vice President of Raban Al-Safina Group (RAS Group). Mr. Saihood's strategic leadership has been pivotal in expanding the group into a conglomerate comprising 28 companies across diverse industries, including oil & gas, power production, education, banking and financial services, security services, and industrial facilities to name just a few.

Saihood, Hussein

Senior Vice President of Raban Al-Safina (Group), a pioneering private sector entity driving energy transition in Iraq. In this capacity, he has played a pivotal role to continuously spearhead strategic projects that not only bolster the nation's economy but also contribute to its overall development.

Sano, Tadakatsu

Attorney-at-law at Jones Day. Former Director-General of the Trade Policy Bureau and Vice Minister for International Affairs, he also worked at the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, and served as Chief Executive Assistant to Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama.

Schmid, Dorothee

Head of the Türkiye / Middle East program at the French Institute of International Relations (Ifri). She started the "Contemporary Türkiye" research program, to follow the emergence of Türkiye as a global power. Her present research focuses on Turkish diplomacy, new regional conflicts and their impact on Middle East economies.

Severino, Jean-Michel

Chairman of Investisseurs et Partenaires (I&P), member of the Académie des technologies and French General Inspector of Finance. Former Director in charge of international development at the Ministry of Cooperation and Development, he served as Vice President of The World Bank for Asia, and CEO of France's International Development Agency.

Sharaf, Omran

UAE Assistant Foreign Minister for Advanced Science and Technology. In this capacity, H.E. represents the Emirates on the global stage in the fields of advanced science, technology, and space. In June 2022, he was appointed Chair of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Sheetrit, Meir

Former member of the Israeli Knesset. He served in a number of high-level cabinet positions, including Minister of the Interior, Minister of Housing and Construction, Minister of Finance, Minister of Justice, Minister of Intelligence Affairs and the Committee of Atomic Energy, Minister of Transportation and Minister of Education, Culture and Sports.

Shek, Daniel

Former Ambassador of Israel to France. During his 27-year long career in Israel's diplomatic service, he also served as Director of European Affairs, Spokesman of the Foreign Ministry and Consul General in San Francisco. He has extensive experience in European Affairs and has participated in several chapters of Arab-Israeli negotiations.





Sievers, Marc J.

Ambassador (ret.), inaugural Director of AJC Abu Dhabi: The Sidney Lerner Center for Arab-Jewish Understanding. For more than 30 years, Amb. Sievers served across the Middle East and North Africa, as well as in Türkiye, including postings in Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Morocco and Saudi Arabia.

Sigal, Robert

Chief Executive Officer of the American Hospital of Paris. Former President and Chief Commercial Officer of InSightec, he also served as General Manager and President of General Electric Healthcare France. He is leading the International Patients working group of French Healthcare.

Simon, Jean-Marc

Ambassador of France and Chairman of Eurafrique Stratégies SAS. He was advisor to the French Foreign Minister and the Minister of Cooperation. He served in numerous embassies, notably as Counselor and Consul General before being appointed as French Ambassador to Central African Republic, Nigeria, Gabon, and Côte d'Ivoire.

Simon, Tobby

Founder and President of Synergia Foundation, a strategic think tank. Commissioner with the Global Commission for Internet Governance (GCIG) and member of the Trilateral Commission, he also served as advisory board member of the Center for New American Security (CNAS), and as adviser to several international organizations such as the WHO.

Sinapi-Thomas, Lucia

Executive Director of Capgemini Ventures. She held various positions in Capgemini, including Deputy Chief Financial Officer and Executive Director Business Platforms of Capgemini Group. She is a member of the Board of Directors of Capgemini SE, Bureau Veritas and Dassault Aviation.

Sollogoub, Tania

Head of research on Emerging countries and Global Geopolitics at Crédit Agricole Group's Economic Research Department. Former head of the Master's in Finance and Strategy, she teaches economics and country risk analysis at Sciences Po Paris. She has been expert for the European Commission and member of the London Club for the restructuring of Russian debt.

Sur, Serge

Member of the Académie des sciences morales et politiques. Agrégé in Public Law, he is Emeritus Professor of Public Law, University of Paris Panthéon-Assas, where he set up the Master's in International Relations. He was Deputy Director of the UNIDIR (1986-1996) and *ad hoc* Judge at the International Court of Justice (2009-2012).

Suzuki, Kazuto

Professor at the Graduate School of Public Policy at the University of Tokyo, Japan, and Director of the Institute of Geoeconomics at International House of Japan. Senior Fellow of Asia Pacific Initiative, he is President of Japan Association of International Security and Trade.

Tesseire, Matthieu

Managing Partner, in charge of the Investor Relations team at Eurazeo. He joined Eurazeo in 2015 to accelerate the firm's international expansion. Previously, he was a Senior Advisor to Everest Capital, a Miami and Singapore-based investment manager focusing on emerging markets.

Tiedrich, Lee

Senior AI Advisor for the US National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Lee Tiedrich is also a member of both the OECD and Global Partnership on AI (GPAI) AI expert groups and co-chairs both the GPAI Responsible AI Strategy for the Environment (RAISE) committee and the GPAI Intellectual Property Advisory Committee.

Torero Cullen, Máximo

Chief Economist of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Former World Bank Group Executive Director for Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay, he also led the Division of the Markets, Trade, and Institutions at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

Touazi, François-Aïssa

Senior Managing Partner at Ardian and Global Head of International Affairs. Vice President of the French GCC Business councils at MEDEF International, he also serves as Head of the Sovereign Wealth Funds Council. He had served in the French Foreign Office as MENA advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Tricaud, Martin

Group Head of Investment Banking at First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB) and Group Head of International Banking. Chairman of FAB Private Bank Suisse, member of the Executive Committee. Previously, he held several senior positions with HSBC group, including Deputy Chairman and CEO for the Middle East, North Africa and Türkiye.

Trichet, Jean-Claude

Former President of the French Académie des sciences morales et politiques. He is honorary Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bruegel Institute, honorary Chairman of the Group of Thirty and former European Chairman of the Trilateral Commission. He also served as President of the ECB, Governor of Banque de France and Director of the French Treasury.

Trochu, Emmanuelle

Global Head of Official Institutions Coverage at Crédit Agricole Corporate and Investment Bank. She has held several positions in the market Department of Ca-cib such as Head of the sales team covering Financial Institutions in France and Belgium. She also created and headed the Central banks Sales team.

Truesdale, Jay

CEO at TD International, a Washington-based top global advisor on geopolitical strategy, market intelligence, and risk compliance. Prior to joining TDI, he served as CEO of Veracity Worldwide. He previously was a leader at McKinsey & Company, and served as Foreign Service Officer, with postings including Russia and Ukraine.

Tuakli, Juliette M.

Mercy Ships International Diplomatic Ambassador for Africa since 2022. She facilitates partnerships with governments, diplomatic entities and communities, supporting Mercy Ships' mission to deliver free medical and surgical care to those in need across the African continent. She was the first African woman clinical professor in Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School.

Vangheli, Anatol

Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova to the United Arab Emirates. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he worked as Secretary General, Ambassador to the State of Israel, to the Hellenic Republic and to Cyprus. Director of the Policy Analysis, Monitoring, and Evaluation Division and Asia, Africa, Middle East, and Pacific Division.

Varma, Anurag

Senior Vice President and Head of Public Affairs and Business Development for Adani North America, part of India's largest infrastructure and logistics conglomerate, where he shapes the company's partnerships and strategic growth in North America. Previously, Anurag was Vice President, Head of Global Government and Public Affairs at Infosys.

Vassilenko, Roman

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Former Assistant to the Head of the Prime Minister's Office, he worked as Chief Inspector of the Secretariat of the Secretary of State, Consultant of the President's Chancery of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and Deputy Chief of Staff to the Secretary of State.

Vaswani, Kamal R.

Ambassador of the Republic of Singapore to the United Arab Emirates. Former Deputy Permanent Representative at Singapore's Permanent Mission to ASEAN, he served as First Secretary at the Singapore High Commission in Kuala Lumpur, and as an Assistant Director in the Policy, Planning & Analysis Directorate.

Védrine, Hubert

Founder of Hubert Védrine Conseil, a public affairs consultancy specialized in international, economic and geopolitical issues. He was President of the Institut François Mitterrand. He served as Minister of Foreign Affairs under the government of Lionel Jospin. He was a partner in the law firm Jeantet et Associés.

Vijayakumar, Vignesh

COO & CFO for a prominent investment office in Dubai investing across all different asset classes. Previously, Mr. Vijayakumar served as COO & CFO for Miras Investments. He not only specializes in LP investing in both public & private markets but also specializes in building investment management infrastructure across legal, operations, finance, treasury, IT and Human capital.

Villain, Jean-Paul

Director of the Strategy and Planning Department, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA). He is also a permanent invitee to ADIA's Investment Committee. He joined Banque Paribas as a Portfolio Manager and as Head of Investments in the Asset Management Department. He served as ADIA Regional Manager for Europe and as a Senior Fund Manager for all financial assets.

Weymuller, Bruno

Member of Total Professeurs Associés, and of the French Energy Council. He was Executive Vice President at Total in charge of Strategy and Risk Assessment (2000-2008). He was Chief Financial Officer of Elf Aquitaine (1994-2000). He began his career at the Ministry for Industry (1972-1978), then he joined the Prime Minister Raymond Barre's cabinet (1978-1981).

Wouters, Frank

Chairman of the MENA Hydrogen Alliance. Frank Wouters has been leading renewable energy projects, transactions, and technology development for more than 30 years and played a leading role in the development of renewable energy projects all around the world. He served as Deputy Director-General of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) from 2012 to 2014.

Yasseen, Fareed

Former Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq to France and later to the United States. He was until recently Iraq's Climate Envoy. He has worked and consulted for various UN agencies and think tanks. He served as Head of Policy Planning, Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Diplomatic Advisor to Deputy President Adil Abd al-Mahdi.

Yun, Jongkoo

CEO of LIG System Co., Ltd., South Korean defense and IT solutions company. Mr. Yun served as CFO of Huseo Inc. and LG Electronics Australia Inc. At LG Electronics Inc., he held key positions including Director of Trade Defense & Anti-Dumping and Team Leader for Overseas Subsidiary Management.

Yurgens, Igor Y.

Professor of Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) and Director of the MGIMO Centre for Sustainable Development and ESG Transformation, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Russian International Affairs Council. He is also Honorary Consul General of Monaco. He graduated in Economics from Moscow State University (MSU).

Zaghouani, Douraid

Executive Vice President, Chief Operating Officer at Investment Corporation of Dubai (ICD), Dubai's sovereign wealth fund. Leading the corporate functions, Douraid Zaghouani supports the Managing Director in the corporate strategy development and is responsible for the efficient operational management of the organization with the aim of optimizing business performance.

Montbrial (de), Thierry

Thierry de Montbrial is Executive Chairman of the French Institute of International Relations (Ifri), which he founded in 1979. He is Professor Emeritus at the Conservatoire national des arts et métiers. In 2008, he launched the World Policy Conference. He has been a member of the Académie des sciences morales et politiques of the Institut de France since 1992, and is a member of a number of foreign academies. He serves on the Board or Advisory Board of a number of international institutions. Thierry de Montbrial Chaired the Department of Economics at the École polytechnique from 1974 to 1992. He was the first Chairman of the Foundation for Strategic Research (1993-2001). Entrusted with the creation of the Policy Planning Staff (*Centre d'analyse et de prévision*) at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he was its first Director (1973-1979). He has authored more than twenty books, several of them translated in various languages, including *Action and Reaction in the World System – The Dynamics of Economic and Political Power* (UBC Press, Vancouver, Toronto, 2013) and *Living in Troubled Times, A New Political Era* (World Scientific, 2018). He is a Grand Officer of the Légion d'honneur, Grand Officer of the Ordre national du Mérite. He has been awarded the Order of the Rising Sun – Gold and Silver Star, Japan (2009), Commander of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany (2016) and other state honors by the French and several foreign governments. Thierry de Montbrial is a graduate of the École polytechnique and the École des mines, and received a Ph.D. in Mathematical Economics from the University of California at Berkeley.



OPENING SPEECHES
FULL VERSIONS





Noura Al Kaabi

Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, and esteemed speakers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor to address you today.

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the United Arab Emirates for the 17th Edition of the World Policy Conference. We want to begin by thanking Thierry de Montbrial, Founder and Executive Chairman of the WPC as well as Founder and Executive Chairman of the French Institute for International Relations, and the wider WPC team for organizing this conference and bringing distinguished guests to deliberate on critical issues that are shaping the trajectories of our societies and nations. As a country, we are excited to host this distinguished gathering for the fourth time.

WPC as a forum has consistently fostered the kind of open dialogue and innovative collaboration that we value so much here. Over the years, this conference has become an essential space for addressing the pressing challenges of our times, driven by the insights and contributions of global leaders, policymakers, and thinkers.

Your presence here today—representing diverse perspectives and areas of expertise—underscores the shared commitment to seeking solutions to the world's most urgent and complex issues. Collaborative spirit is the bedrock of the World Policy Conference.

As we convene, we do so in a year of profound global uncertainty and transformation. From geopolitical tensions to environmental crises, the challenges the world is facing are vast. Multiple concurrent conflicts threaten peace and stability in Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. At the same time, 2024 was packed with an unprecedented number of key elections that will shape global policy in the coming years. Yet, amid these changes, there is also the promise of progress, grounded in our collective determination to chart a positive path forward.

As we begin, it is imperative to acknowledge the ongoing tragedies that weigh heavily on the global conscience. The war in Gaza is now over a year old, and the loss of civilian lives continues. The humanitarian crisis in Gaza remains a deep source of concern, with untold suffering and loss of life. The UAE reaffirms its call for an immediate cessation of hostilities. We believe firmly in the need for de-escalation and the delivery of life-saving aid to those in desperate need.

This situation highlights the critical need for robust diplomacy and cooperation. It serves as a stark reminder of the interconnected nature of global peace and security. We have seen the spillover effects of the war in Gaza firsthand in Lebanon. At the same time, we have seen the promise of diplomacy in brokering a ceasefire in Lebanon. We are hopeful that this could lead to further improvements in the situation, and that there will be similar diplomatic achievements in the future. These conflicts do not remain confined; their consequences ripple outward, disrupting economies, straining communities, and testing the resilience of societies far beyond their immediate borders.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The war in Ukraine continues to strain the international order, fueling divisions and creating ripple effects that impact global energy markets, food systems, and multilateral fora. The conflict in Sudan continues unabated, as we witness the unfolding of a humanitarian catastrophe in real time. Throughout all this, we believe it essential that we continue to uphold the principles of dialogue and mutual respect, even in the face of stark disagreements. We must work tirelessly to find diplomatic solutions. We must keep talking to each other-without dialogue progress is impossible.

At the same time, we must be mindful that the world is undergoing profound shifts in its economic and geopolitical landscape. The rise of new economic groupings and the evolution of multilateral organizations reflect a growing recognition that the traditional systems of global governance must adapt. There is a pressing need for more inclusive and equitable frameworks that give voice to emerging countries, while preserving the core values of cooperation and shared responsibility.

Still, it is vital to recognize the enduring importance of international institutions. Organizations like the UN despite their challenges and need of reform, remain indispensable platforms for addressing global crises. At the same time, regional organizations like the African Union and the League of Arab States have a critical role to play in complementing these efforts, bringing localized insights and tailored solutions to the table.

The challenges and changes we face are compounded by accelerating technological advancements. Artificial intelligence in particular, is reshaping industries, societies, and even the way we perceive human potential. While these innovations offer extraordinary opportunities, they also bring ethical dilemmas and risks that must be managed carefully. We are eager to unleash the power of human creativity, but we also cannot ignore the real and potential harms of mismanaging AI. In the UAE, we are committed to fostering a balanced approach, leveraging technology for good while safeguarding against its misuse.

Environmental challenges, meanwhile, remain a defining crisis of our time. Climate change is not a distant threat—it is a present reality that demands immediate and sustained action. We are seeing the cumulative effects of it already. The UAE has long prioritized climate action, including as the host of COP28, emphasizing the need for inclusive and results-oriented collaboration. We stand ready to support future COP efforts as well.

Our efforts to address the climate crisis must also encompass the intertwined challenges of food and water security and economic inequality. Climate-induced disruptions to these essential resources, threaten not only the livelihoods of millions but also the stability of entire regions. These challenges threaten developmental goals, and could undermine hard won progress. Tackling these issues requires integrated strategies that harness innovation, promote resilience, and ensure that no one is left behind.

Equally important is the role of education and human capital development in building a sustainable future. An educated, empowered populace is the key to building this future. As technology transforms our economies, the need for a skilled and adaptable workforce becomes ever more critical.

The UAE has long prioritized investments in education, with a focus on empowering youth and women as drivers of change. We firmly believe that diversity and inclusion are not just moral imperatives—they are practical necessities for innovation and progress.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we reflect on these global challenges, we are reminded here in the region that the Middle East stands at a crossroads. The region's history of conflict and division is well known, but so too is its potential as a hub for innovation, trade, and cultural exchange. We have seen this potential become reality in some places, and we are eager to further foster this progress. Building a future rooted in cooperation and mutual respect is not only desirable—it is essential for global stability for a region that stands at the axis of change.

This requires addressing the underlying drivers of conflict, from political grievances to economic disparities. It also demands a concerted effort to promote tolerance and counter the forces of extremism that seek to divide societies. Terrorism and extremism continue to threaten societies, demanding our unwavering attention and decisive action. The UAE remains steadfast in its commitment to its principles of tolerance and coexistence.

The challenges of the Middle East are not isolated from broader global trends. The shifting dynamics of international alliances underscore the need for multilateral approaches that are inclusive and forward-looking. These developments present opportunities to rethink how nations collaborate, emphasizing connectivity, shared prosperity, and mutual accountability.

This global interconnectedness, and the requirement for collaboration, is here to stay.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

If all of this sound like a lot, that's because it is.

But let us recognize that the challenges we face are not insurmountable. Humans are capable of crafting solutions to even the toughest problems, as history has shown us. These challenges require bold thinking, collective effort, and a firm conviction in the necessity of cooperation.

The UAE stands ready to play its part, as a partner, a bridge- builder, and a champion of peace and prosperity. We remain committed to fostering an environment where collaboration and innovation can thrive, guided by the values that unite us all.

As we begin this conference, let us engage with open minds, knowing even small steps can lead to meaningful progress.

I wish you a productive and inspiring conference.

Thank you, and may God bless you all.



Tiémoko Meyliet Koné

Vice President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire

His Holiness Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople,

Madam Minister, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates,

The President of the Institut Français des Relations Internationales and the World Policy Conference,

Ministers,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to take part in the 17th World Policy Conference here in Abu Dhabi.

I would like to thank Noura Al Kaabi, Minister, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, as well as the Emirati authorities, for their assistance in organizing this large-scale event.

Madam Minister, please transmit warm greetings from His Excellency Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, to His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates.

Lastly, I would like to thank Thierry de Montbrial, President of the Institut Français des Relations Internationales, for once again inviting Côte d'Ivoire to the World Policy Conference. This unique forum for economic and geostrategic reflection gives decision-makers, researchers and opinion leaders from around the world a platform to exchange views on the state of the world, share ideas and offer solutions for a better future.

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

This year's World Policy Conference takes place in a particularly critical global context. The myriad security, economic and political challenges facing the world require collective awareness and urgent, concerted action.

On the security front, increasingly recurring geopolitical tensions are fueling armed conflict in several regions. Violent clashes threaten to drag certain parts of the globe into an uncontrollable downward spiral, seriously jeopardizing peace and stability.

The scourge of terrorism is exacerbating the situation, especially in regions like the Sahel, where the gains achieved after years of effort are in jeopardy.

On the economic front, recurring financial crises, as well as extraneous shocks, are rocking the global economy, with a particularly harmful effect on developing countries. This turbulence is discouraging investments, increasing inequality and undermining socioeconomic stability.

The devastating effects of climate change are compounding these crises. Prolonged droughts, destructive floods and extreme heat waves leave no part of the world unscathed. These phenomena pose a major threat to the safety of people and property and are creating new refugees every year.

Unfortunately, the hopes placed on major international climate conferences such as COPs remain largely unfulfilled. The commitments made, particularly in terms of green financing for the least developed countries, fall short of enabling a fair and equitable ecological transition.

At the same time, the world is facing an unprecedented technological revolution, with artificial intelligence holding out the promise of major advances but posing major risks if safeguards are not quickly put into place.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This challenging international environment is jeopardizing development efforts worldwide. Countries are struggling to meet the Sustainable Development Goals, the SDGs, which have been adopted as a universal roadmap. According to a 2023 United Nations report, more than 80% of the SDGs are behind schedule, and there is little chance that they will be met by 2030.

The consequences for the world's populations are alarming. Millions of people are still living in extreme precarity. The situation is even worse in sub-Saharan Africa, where poverty, youth unemployment and lack of infrastructure continue to hinder development.

On the economic front, the post-pandemic recovery remains fragile and prospects in several regions are still insufficient to meet people's growing needs and expectations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Despite an international context marked by major challenges and numerous uncertainties, Côte d'Ivoire has managed to stay the course of economic growth thanks to the leadership of the President of the Republic, His Excellency Alassane Ouattara.

Under his aegis, sustained efforts have been made to accelerate the structural transformation of the national economy, with the aim of lifting Côte d'Ivoire into the group of upper-middle income countries by 2030.

Since 2011, three successive National Development Plans have served as a strategic framework to guide the reforms and investments required for this transformation. They have led to ambitious structural reforms and massive investments to provide Côte d'Ivoire with modern, competitive infrastructure in key sectors of its economy.

These efforts have helped to revitalize the country's economy and boost its average annual growth rate to around 8% over the past decade.

Côte d'Ivoire's performance is also based on the confidence of its development partners and the dynamism of the private sector, which plays a key role in diversifying and modernizing the economy. The investment rate, below 9% in 2011, surpassed 25% in 2023.

Your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

While progress can be made at national level, it nevertheless remains clear that the current challenges confronting the world require inclusive and ambitious global responses.

That was the goal of the Summit of the Future, held in conjunction with the 2024 United Nations General Assembly, which addressed the main issues and challenges facing the world's future.

Aware of the magnitude of the action required, Africa has adopted the African Union's Agenda 2063. This framework focuses on strategic priorities such as economic resilience, structural transformation, improved governance, human capital development, matching skills to labor market needs and financing flagship development projects. The President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, His Excellency Alassane Ouattara, has been appointed champion to oversee the Agenda's implementation.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is another key pillar in the implementation of the continent's strategic development vision. This project, a fundamental lever for strengthening regional economic integration, will revitalize intraregional trade, stimulate local industries and promote inclusive growth across the continent.

Ladies and gentlemen,

For African initiatives to reach their full potential and foster the continent's emergence, certain global issues must be addressed more effectively at global level.

Firstly, it is imperative to resolve the crucial issue of development financing by mobilizing resources tailored to the growing needs of developing economies.

An in-depth overhaul of the international financial architecture, as discussed at the Summit of the Future, could play a vital role in achieving this goal.

Likewise, the commitments made at COP to finance climate action must be implemented as soon as possible to help African economies adapt to the growing impact of climate change and accelerate their ecological transition.

Lastly, none of these efforts will succeed without a special focus on youth, especially in Africa, which has some of the world's fastest demographic growth. Young people, an invaluable reservoir



of talent and innovation, must be at the heart of our priorities, with an emphasis on education, training and employment, to make them a driving force for transformation.

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

We have a collective duty to turn global challenges into opportunities, to build a more inclusive, sustainable and prosperous future. By joining forces, we can lay the groundwork for a more consensual world for present and future generations.

To do that, instruments of dialogue and international cooperation, such as this conference, must fully play their part in fostering strong partnerships and implementing concrete commitments so that together we can create a fairer future for all.

I therefore salute the World Policy Conference as an ideal opportunity to engage in constructive exchanges on these major challenges and identify concrete solutions to solve them.

I would like to conclude on this note and once again thank Thierry de Montbrial for giving the world's leaders the opportunity to exchange views on the challenges to humanity's prosperity.

Thank you.

HH Bartholomew Ist

Archbishop of Constantinople - New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch

Your Highnesses,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Leaders and Participants,

Dear Friends,

It is with profound gratitude that we address this esteemed gathering of the World Policy Conference 2024 here in Abu Dhabi, a city that exemplifies how vision and wisdom can transform challenges into opportunities. Our presence in this remarkable setting, where tradition harmoniously coexists with innovation, offers an apt backdrop for our deliberations on global governance and international cooperation.

We bring greetings from the Church of Constantinople, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, an institution that has witnessed and participated in seventeen consecutive centuries of human history, adapting to changing circumstances while maintaining unaltered its fundamental principles and values. One of these core principles of the Orthodox Church is its conciliar nature. For this reason, it is also known as "the Church of the Councils" par excellence. This conciliar tradition offers valuable insights for our contemporary global challenges.

The upcoming year, 2025, holds particular significance as we commemorate the 1,700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea. In 325, Emperor Constantine the Great demonstrated remarkable foresight by gathering Christian bishops from all over the known at that time oikoumene, to primarily address pressing theological matters, but also closely linked to them questions of social cohesion and imperial unity. The issuance of the Edict of religious tolerance, also known as the "Edict of Milan," in 313, a turning point not only in the history of Christianity, but also of religion in general, as well as Constantine's victory over Licinius in 324 marked a profound religious milestone, "a new triumph of the standard of the cross over the sacrifices of the gods."

Later acts of Constantine, along with the convocation of the Council of Nicaea, such as his general exhortation to embrace Christianity, while preserving free conviction, and building a framework for theological debate, set the stage for a new relationship between the spiritual and the temporal power. His vision went beyond mere political calculation; he saw that true social cohesiveness needed institutional framework as well as spiritual basis. Like modern global difficulties, Constantine's problems needed careful balance between unity and variety, authority and freedom, history and progress. The way the Emperor approached social peace and religious pluralism provides an insightful perspective for our present quest for world understanding and collaboration.

Historical Wisdom and Contemporary Challenges: The 2025 Easter Celebration: A Symbol of Hope & A Path to Unity

The difficulties Constantine and the Fathers of Nicaea encountered – the preservation of

unity among variety, tackling socioeconomic injustices, and advancing peace – surprisingly resemble the challenges of our time as we assemble in this historic venue. The Church at Nicaea manifested sensitivity towards those who have severed themselves from communion with her and showed concern for those who do not understand her voice. This awareness helps us today to tackle modern problems.

When, for example, Orthodox, Catholic, Anglican and other Protestant Christian communities will celebrate Easter on the same date in 2025, we will see an amazing convergence. As we have repeatedly highlighted lately, more than a calendrical coincidence, this alignment offers a great opportunity for togetherness, especially since the way of celebrating the date of Easter was one of the issues that the Council of Nicaea resolved.

A real step towards repairing old conflicts is the call from the Ecumenical Patriarchate and our Modesty to the Roman-Catholic Church and our elder brother His Holiness Pope Francis of Rome to go back to the Julian calendar for common Easter computation. Based on our knowledge of the Church as Christ's body, this realistic proposal presents a clear road towards unity. Joint celebration can foster better mutual understanding and more significant dialogues amongst the Christian traditions. This timing reveals that, in our basic celebrations, we keep common ground despite long-standing divisions.

Celebrating Christ's Resurrection together helps us to acknowledge our common past and forward towards future unity. This joint celebration will assist us to overcome other differences by demonstrating that our shared faith allows us go beyond past divisions and cooperate for God's glory.

Recommendations for Global Leadership

Inspired by Nicaea's wisdom and contemporary experience, we propose a few doable actions we may take to honour our spiritual legacy while addressing issues of the current society. The wisdom of Nicaea teaches us that global challenges require global responses grounded in shared values and mutual respect. These recommendations come from thorough study of historical precedent and contemporary need, therefore integrating ancient knowledge with present necessity.

With links to climate change and global warming, the ecological crisis forces the Church to fully use its spiritual authority to guard God's creation from the results of human greed, since the roots of this crisis are spiritual and ethical, lying inside each man. Our answer then must be similarly thorough, combining more spiritual rejuvenation with pragmatic steps like the initiative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate for setting September 1st as a day of environmental preservation. In this spirit, first, we support the establishment of a permanent ecumenical environmental council directly under UN advisory authority to organise reactions of religious communities against climate change. Acting as a link between spiritual traditions and world government, this group would provide moral direction on environmental policies and support interfaith cooperation on climate action. The council would try to ensure that environmental policies reflect not only scientific understanding but also spiritual insight on mankind's obligation as carer of creation. The long-standing experience of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in promoting communication between religions and civilisations shows how spiritual insight could guide pragmatic government.

At the same time, the fast development of biotechnology and artificial intelligence calls for ethical systems anchored in ageless wisdom. For this reason, second, we support the development of artificial intelligence by means of a global ethical framework comprising religious and cultural points of view from different traditions. The Orthodox Church welcomes its responsibility to spread all truth contained in Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition, which naturally includes offering ethical direction for technological advancement. Based on millennia of spiritual knowledge about human nature and purpose, this paradigm would help to ensure that technological advancement serves rather than compromises human dignity. It would provide guidelines for the evolution of artificial intelligence that respect human uniqueness and optimise technological opportunities for the general good.

Third, we stress the importance of inclusive economic policies that, as the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church (June, 2016) reaffirmed, admit that "a sustainable economy is that which combines efficiency with justice and social solidarity." This concept asks us to welcome economic systems that balance social cohesiveness with production and human dignity, therefore transcending the exclusive market-driven solutions. By means of sustainable development, such actions will ensure that economic growth benefits the complete human family rather than merely a privileged few and helps to solve wealth imbalance.

The road ahead calls for answers that balance social justice with economic efficiency, scientific

development with human dignity, and world collaboration with cultural variety. These ideas taken together offer a whole plan covering global issues that respect our spiritual legacy and our responsibilities to next generations.

The Path Forward

The Orthodox Church holds a special place in addressing global problems since, although it does not participate in political campaigning, its testimony with regard to human dignity and spiritual freedom naturally bears political relevance. This subtle method allows the Church to remain committed to its spiritual goal while significantly add to public debate. Our interaction with contemporary concerns stems from our basic dedication to human flourishing and spiritual well-being rather than from political ambition. Maintaining this cautious balance helps us approaching urgent worldwide problems without becoming caught in limited political objectives. Focusing instead on universal values that advance human dignity and societal harmony, our responsibility mainly consists in providing moral direction and spiritual insight transcending political divisions. This strategy permits us to keep our spiritual integrity while nevertheless does not hinder us from participating in important conversations like economic fairness, technological developments, and climate crisis. By use of this lens, we can promote a more holistic approach to universal problems that respects divine wisdom as well as human dignity.

Conclusion

In confronting today's challenges, we must remember the enduring lesson from the Council of Nicaea: true success arises from the harmonious integration of spiritual wisdom and practical governance. The impending common observance of Easter in 2025 serves not only as a calendar alignment, but also as a significant symbol of the potential unification among Christian traditions. This unique convergence presents an opportunity to transform symbolic unity into tangible partnership. Drawing inspiration from the example set by Nicaea, we can collaborate to ensure that this event catalyses substantial action for the benefit of society. Like our ancestors seventeen centuries ago, the path ahead necessitates the integration of our spiritual heritage with practical solutions. Let us seize this opportune moment to establish collaborative connections between religious wisdom and contemporary knowledge that will benefit future generations.

Thank you for your kind attention!

Thierry de Montbrial

Founder and Executive Chairman of Ifri and the WPC

On the threshold of the 17th World Policy Conference, I would like to remind you of the four main pillars that I reiterate year after year, varying the wording but always reflecting the same ideas:

First, the WPC is intended as an objective and realistic reflection on the state of the world, with a view to strengthening its governance, its capacity to ensure structural stability. The idea of realism refers to understanding reality as it is, and not as we would like it to be from an ideological point of view. The notion of governance refers to creating rules of the game that is accepted by the States, which intentionally use these rules to ensure structural stability, aiming at developing international relations in the smoothest way possible in an ever-changing context.

Secondly, since our first conference in 2008, we have consistently distanced ourselves from neoliberal globalization and the "flat world" concept from American author Tom Friedman. The world may be falling apart, but we believe that the globalization phenomenon is irreversible because of its technological foundations. Increasing openness always makes interdependency more complicated, but it also makes decisions more complicated, and therefore solutions become more difficult to find and implement. Miscalculations are on the rise, particularly within political regimes which are more liable to emotions. According to the law of action and reaction, excessive openness frequently leads to the opposite direction, closure. In democratic states, governments are often unstable and unpredictable. Hence the need to search for forms of global governance that will enable to maintain manageable levels of openness.

Thirdly, from the outset, the WPC has been committed to promoting middle powers in the architecture of global governance. We're pleased to see that this simple idea has made great progress over the last 20 years.

Fourthly, it has become more apparent every year that technology can take both a constructive and destructive role in world order. It seems clear to us that a conference such as ours must

aim at identifying technology's potential contributions to global and regional governance (for example, to strengthen the European Union), thus helping to reinforce the structural stability the world needs to avoid moving towards chaos.

I would like to remind you the origins of some of the major problems facing the international system today.

Globally, we can see with hindsight that peace in the Islamic world ended in 1979 with the Iranian revolution, followed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The end of 1979 was also marked by the siege of Mecca, and the whole of the 1980s by the Iran-Iraq war. The collapse of the Soviet Union then led to the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein's regime. All these movements were behind the American support for the western Pakistan Mujahideen, which led to the defeat of the USSR and the overthrow of Saddam by the neoconservative President George W. Bush in 2003. Long story short: Al-Qaeda and ISIS. Then came the misnamed Arab Spring of 2011, which only served to increase the spread of fundamental Islamism and terrorism. On a different level, it can be said that from 1979 onwards, political Islamism replaced the ideology of nationalism that had spread with decolonisation.

The second major phenomenon that forged today's world was the collapse of the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1991. The main protagonists of the Cold War have shown themselves incapable of co-managing the end of a period that dominated world history for almost fifty years after World War II. They're jointly responsible for this failure, and we are all greatly suffering the consequences today. Instead of the advent of a new security framework in Europe, we have suffered the head-on collision of two antagonistic thrusts: the first towards what some consider as a desire to rebuild the Russian empire, and the second with the goal of extending what others call the American empire that is, in more neutral terms, the Euro-Atlantic institutions. Behind the emergence of BRICS and the Global South lies the desire for a majority of countries to avoid being caught between a rock and a hard place.

Another major phenomenon that also occurred at the end of the 1970s, which will perhaps appear to future historians as the most important, is the rise of China following the victory of its reformers. The West and China have gradually moved from friendly cooperation to confrontation. The major risk has been clearly identified as a "Thucydides trap" that could close around Taiwan.

I would like to end this short list by mentioning three other challenges: the future of the European Union, which has grown too quickly since the fall of the Soviet Union and is lagging far behind the United States and China in terms of technology; the economic and social consequences of Covid-19, which are still heavily felt; and climate change, which is becoming a global reality much faster than we anticipated, while the so called international community is struggling to respond appropriately.

Where do we stand now?

There is currently no sign that jihadism is coming to an end. The latest events in Syria are a reminder of this fact. What has attracted the most attention since we met last year in Abu Dhabi, however, is the war that began on October 7, 2023. The war is now well into its second year. We would probably be facing a bifurcation if, for example, Israel decided to annex the West Bank and intervene in Iran without or perhaps with the United States. In this case, it would be difficult to predict what the consequences might be in the region and beyond. Can we seriously imagine another way, a reset where Israel would go back to the two-state solution (Israeli and Palestinian) that emerged from the 1993 Oslo Accords and then collapsed following the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin? A two-state solution would obviously be favorable to Arab countries that aspire to peace and prosperity. In any event, if there's one country that will play a fundamental role in shaping the course of history in the region, it is Iran. These topics will be discussed at length during the conference.

There are also at least two main scenarios for the way the Russian-Ukrainian war will develop. In the first scenario, a negotiation process would more or less begin quickly after President Donald Trump's inauguration in the White House. Trump's first step would be to call for a ceasefire prior to peace consolidation being established in the region. This would potentially pave the way for reconstructing a European security system. Whatever happens, this would only be the beginning of a long and difficult process. The second scenario, which cannot be ruled out any more than a move derailing around Taiwan, would see the conflict escalate and spread to NATO. Can we trust the wisdom of the main players in this drama to judge that it won't come to that?

As far as the rivalry between the United States and China is concerned, everything currently suggests that neither the Chinese themselves nor the Americans are willing to risk a real war, even if they are preparing for one. Barring a major domestic crisis in China that is difficult to imagine happening soon, it is certain that the regime will continue to claim that Taiwan belongs to the



PRC, as it has always done since its establishment in 1949. The Communist Party is playing and will continue to play as in a game of Go, particularly by investing in the East and South China Seas. American and Chinese analysts are aware of the devastating global impacts of a real war between these two superpowers. In concrete terms, confrontation between the two countries is most visibly centred on technological and commercial matters. We will have to analyse the outlook.

I'd like to add a word about the European Union, which has been notoriously weakening, as I said, since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Since its inception, the European Union has remained closely linked to the United States, which has always referred to the Euro-Atlantic institutions. A new era is likely on the horizon with Donald Trump's return, and he is likely to focus China and the economy. American protection in Europe will no longer be guaranteed under the same conditions. The new period that is unfolding will be a decisive factor for the future of the transatlantic union and thus for the future of the European Union itself. It's said, and sometimes rightly so, that great shocks are an opportunity for great renewal. There are many of us in this room who hope so, because a strong European Union is in the interests of each of its members but also, I am convinced, in the interests of the whole world. Because of its history and civilisation, this union is destined to become a major balancing factor for the advent of a new international system more conducive to peace and prosperity.

When we look back on the history of the world, we realise how fragile peace is, locally and a fortiori globally. Generations of the happy globalization era, at least in certain countries, wanted to believe in the advent of perpetual peace and the universal extension of prosperity. Today, we can only conclude that we are already entering a Second Cold War. The first, says historian Niall Ferguson, was a peace that was not a peace. The cold war that is beginning might not be a war. It is now up to all forces of goodwill, and in particular all of us gathered here, to think and act intelligently to contain and reduce the toxic impacts of this New Cold War. The main issue is definitely to ensure that the New Cold War does not degenerate into a full-scale world war.

His Excellency Sheikh Salem bin Khalid Al Qassimi
Minister of Culture, United Arab Emirates

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, good evening. It is a pleasure to be with you on this very special occasion, and on behalf of the United Arab Emirates, I extend my gratitude to everyone for joining us tonight. This dinner provides a moment of reflection following this year's sessions at the World Policy Conference.

Tonight, I would like to reflect on the cultures' profound role in our shared future. Culture shapes our world, it connects us across borders, beliefs and generations. Ladies and gentlemen, through this rapid transformation, the UAE has stood its ground when it comes to culture, our anchor in this rapidly changing world. We are a nation that is enriched by diversity as a home to over 200 nationalities and united by its heritage and cherished tradition. Our heritage teaches us the importance of hospitality, generosity and mutual respect, values that are essential in a world that is often marked by division. These principles are not only shared by our domestic policies but also our approach to international cooperation. By preserving and celebrating cultural diversity, we have built a more tolerant, peaceful and prosperous future for all.

Culture also serves as a medium through which we can address some of the most pressing issues, such as climate change, one of the most urgent challenges of our time. The UAE has demonstrated leadership in this area from hosting COP 28 to championing international efforts, such as the launch of the Group of Friends of Culture-Based Climate Action at the UNFCCC, co-chaired by the UAE and Brazil. This Group of Friends was established last year to integrate culture and heritage into the pressing climate action policies. Through this Group of Friends, we continue to build very important momentum in recognizing the cultural dimension of climate solutions, from the arts and the creative industries, tangible and intangible heritage, to indigenous knowledge systems, reaffirming our commitment to preserving culture in the framework of environmental policy.

Culture inspires actions by connecting us to shared stories of resilience and adaptation, as well as serving as a pillar for society that influences policies and progression. Moreover, we continue to see the creative economy as a driver and enabler for growth and inclusive, sustainable development. In this spirit, the United Arab Emirates issued a federal decree law to empower the arts sector and to support artistic institution as part of a wider effort to enhance the UAE's artistic ecosystem and the creative economy. The UAE is committed to supporting the culture and creative industries known as the CCIs, at the core of the creative economy and nurturing

collaboration across national, regional and global platforms. Through initiatives such as the National Grant Programme for Culture and Creativity launched by the Ministry of Culture, we aim to support creatives, as well as foster talent and overall cultural production.

We also recognize the increasing importance of data across all sectors, including culture. As such, the UAE continues to promote the development of data indicators in order to measure culture, which is also vital to support the long-term growth of the sector and measure its impact on our societies and to inform future policies.

Ladies and gentlemen, the pursuit of peace and stability is another area where culture plays a significant role. In a world increasingly marked by polarization, fostering inter-cultural dialogue can build bridges and mutual understanding. By promoting the values of tolerance and co-existence, the UAE has demonstrated the importance of cultural exchange and inclusive solutions, and these principles come to life in our region. For example, the UAE's partnership with UNESCO and the government of Iraq and the Revive the Spirit of Mosul initiative exemplifies how cultural preservation can foster healing and resilience. The UAE contributed over USD 50 million to this ambitious project, which will soon be finalized, and continues to make progress by restoring cultural and religious sites in Mosul. These include the al-Nuri Mosque and the al-Hadba Minaret, and the al-Tahera and al-Saa'a churches. These efforts build more than just physical structures, they restore the cultural and communal bonds that are essential in the long-term development of societies.

The UAE's commitment to peace is interlinked with our values and promoting tolerance and cultural diversity, both in the region and globally. In this spirit, the UAE recently adopted the National Policy for Preserving Modern Architectural Heritage, a strategic initiative designed to protect the country's unique architectural legacy. This policy aims to enhance public awareness, promote education and research and advances in cultural growth.

Ladies and gentlemen, education is key to the UAE's vision for cultural and international engagement. By investing in arts and culture we empower future generations to flourish. Through UAE-led initiatives, like the recent UNESCO World Conference on Culture and Arts Education, hosted here in Abu Dhabi, we shed light on the importance of linking cultural dimensions and education systems. This enriches lives while equipping a new generation with the creativity and skills needed to address the contemporary world. This milestone event also saw the adoption of a new framework for culture and arts education fostering a deeper appreciation for the nexus between culture and education in our strategies and our global policies. An education rooted in the arts and humanities shapes thinkers who can empathize, innovate and adapt. The UAE's effort in integrating cultural education into its broader development reflects our commitment to fostering these qualities for the betterment of humanity.

Ladies and gentlemen, to conclude reflecting on culture, we not only find the connection to our ancestors but also a path towards a more inclusive, sustainable and prosperous future. Let us carry that purpose with us.

I would like to take a moment to express my gratitude to the organizers of the World Policy Conference for creating a platform that not only addresses global issues but also celebrates the diversity of perspectives and cultures that enrich our world. I also thank all the participants for your dedication. Thank you.



France – L'Express – 12/21/2024

"Mieux préparé que lors de sa première accession au pouvoir en 2016, Donald Trump agit avec plus de vitesse que ne l'ont fait ses prédécesseurs lors des périodes de transition présidentielle", remarque l'ancien "Speaker" de la chambre des représentants Kevin McCarthy, interrogé par L'Express dans le cadre de la 17e World Policy Conference organisée à Abou Dhabi par l'Institut français des relations internationales (Ifri) du 13 au 15 décembre.

Côte d'Ivoire – Abidjan.net – 12/14/2024

Le Vice-Président de la République, M. Tiémoko Meyliet KONÉ, a pris part, ce vendredi 13 décembre 2024, à Abu Dhabi (Émirats Arabes Unis), à l'ouverture des travaux de la 17e édition de la World Policy Conference (WPC) qui se tient du 13 au 15 décembre 2024.

Côte d'Ivoire – Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development of Côte d'Ivoire – 12/18/2024

En marge de la World Policy Conference à Abu Dhabi, la Ministre de l'Économie, du Plan et du Développement de Côte d'Ivoire, Nialé Kaba, a participé à un panel d'experts consacré au thème « Construire un futur durable en Afrique », le dimanche 15 décembre 2024, à Abu Dhabi.

Rwanda – Newsletter of Rwanda’s mission to the UAE December 2024 issue

On December 15th, 2024, Rwanda’s Minister of Interior Dr. Vincent Biruta joined a panel on "Building a Sustainable Future in Africa" at the World Policy Conference in Abu Dhabi. Minister Biruta highlighted the critical role of regional integration in achieving economic growth, peace and security in Africa, notably in the East African Community.

United States – The New York Times – 12/14/2024

"These are all indicators that are quite worrying," Mr. Gargash said on Saturday at a World Policy Conference in Abu Dhabi as his country's foreign minister attended the meeting in Jordan. He said he hoped that Iran, a staunch ally of Mr. al-Assad, which recently mended ties with the Arab nations of the Gulf, will now concentrate on domestic economic issues and "reasonable and rational concerns about its national security."

United States – Barron's – 12/14/2024

"We hear some reasonable, rational language about unity, not imposing a system on all Syrians" from the country's new rulers, said Anwar Gargash, a presidential adviser in the United Arab Emirates, in remarks at the World Policy Conference in Abu Dhabi.

Al Hurra – News website in Arabic financed by the US Congress– 12/14/2024

تصريحات نسمع" أبو ظبي في "العالمية السياسات مؤتمر" في كلمة خلال الإماراتي للرئيس الدبلوماسي المستشار فرقاتش أنور وقال ارتباطها الجديدة، القوى طبيعة أن أعتقد أخرى، ناحية من لكن السوريين، جميع على نظام فرض وعدم الوحدة، حول وعقلانية معقولة "الغاية ملقطة مؤشرات كلها بالقاعدة، وارتباطها بالإخوان،

Kazakhstan – Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan 12/16/2024

Kazakhstan's contributions to addressing global challenges and its emerging role as a growing middle power were in the focus of discussions at the 17th annual World Policy Conference (WPC), organized by the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI) in Abu Dhabi on December 13-15.

France – Les Échos – 12/16/2024

Incroyablement rapide, la chute de Bachar Al-Assad a rebattu les cartes et crée un certain flottement face aux nouveaux entrants. « C'est un séisme géostratégique », a ainsi constaté Anwar Gargash, conseiller diplomatique du président des Émirats arabes unis, le cheik Mohammed Ben Zayed, à l'occasion de la World Policy Conference qui se tenait à Abou Dabi en fin de semaine.

Israel – The Times of Israel – 12/14/2024

"We hear some reasonable, rational language about unity, not imposing a system on all Syrians" from the country's new rulers, says Anwar Gargash, a presidential adviser in the United Arab Emirates, in remarks at the World Policy Conference in Abu Dhabi.

Switzerland – Le Temps – 12/18/2024

« Israël a surréagi » en occupant le côté syrien du Golan, a déclaré le professeur Itamar Rabinovich, spécialiste de la Syrie et ancien ambassadeur d'Israël à Washington. Il s'exprimait devant la World Policy Conference – organisée chaque année par Thierry de Montbrial, président de l'Institut français des relations internationales –, qui s'est tenue le week-end dernier à Abu Dhabi.

Serbia – Politika – 12/13/2024

Брнабић је у Абу Дабију, након отварања World Policy самита на којем је учествовала на уводном панелу, истакла да је оно због чега свет поштује и цени самосталну спољну политику Србије уједно и разлог због чега из године у годину у Србији постоје покушаји унутрашње дестабилизације земље, баш као што је то случај ових дана.

United Arab Emirates – Raialyoun – 12/17/2024

وعدم الوحدة حول وعقلانية معقولة تصريحات مؤتمر" أبو ظبي في "العالمية السياسات مؤتمر" في كلمة خلال فرقاتش أنور وقال وبالقاعدة، بالإخوان وارتباطها الجديدة القوى طبيعة أن أعتقد أخرى ناحية من لكن" وأضاف . "السوريين جميع على نظام فرض "الغاية ملقطة مؤشرات كلها

United Arab Emirates – Raialyoun – 12/14/2024

تصريحات نسمع" أبو ظبي في "العالمية السياسات مؤتمر" في كلمة خلال الإماراتي للرئيس الدبلوماسي المستشار فرقاتش أنور وقال ارتباطها الجديدة، القوى طبيعة أن أعتقد أخرى، ناحية من لكن السوريين، جميع على نظام فرض وعدم الوحدة، حول وعقلانية معقولة "الغاية ملقطة مؤشرات كلها بالقاعدة، وارتباطها بالإخوان،

Lebanon – An Nahar – 12/13/2024

ظبي أبو في عشرة لسابعة دورته في "World Policy Conference" العالمي السياسات مؤتمر أعمال الجمعة صباح انطلقت العلم في العام والشأن الثوار أصحاب من كبيراً عدداً يجمع الذي الحدث الإمارة تستضيف التوالي على الرابعة السنة وهذه

United Arab Emirates – Al Etihad – 12/17/2024

العنف لوقف العالمية الجهود لترسيخ السعي مسؤولية تحملها مجدداً لتؤكد العالمي السياسات مؤتمر الإمارات دولة استضافة وتكفي العمل تقوية بالضرورة وتطلب ما وهو إليها، المحتاجين للأشخاص المساعدات إقبال وألوية الجهود، هذه وتمتيز والتسعيد السعيد هذا على المشترك ماونك ودعم الدولي السعيد على الدبلوماسي

Kuwait – Al Jarida – 12/14/2024

في «العالمية السياسات مؤتمر» في كلمة خلال زايد، بن محمد الشيخ الإماراتي للرئيس الدبلوماسي المستشار فرقاتش أنور وقال أن أعتقد أخرى، ناحية من لكن السوريين، جميع على نظام فرض وعدم الوحدة، حول وعقلانية معقولة تصريحات نسمع، أبو ظبي «جداً ملقطة مؤشرات كلها بالقاعدة، وارتباطها بالإخوان، ارتباطها الجديدة، القوى طبيعة

Kuwait – Al-Rai – 12/14/2024

تصريحات نسمع، أمس، أبو ظبي، في «العالمية السياسات مؤتمر» خلال الإماراتي للرئيس الدبلوماسي المستشار فرقاتش، أنور وقال ارتباطها الجديدة، القوى طبيعة أن أعتقد أخرى، ناحية من لكن السوريين، جميع على نظام فرض وعدم الوحدة، حول وعقلانية معقولة «الغاية ملقطة مؤشرات كلها بالقاعدة، وارتباطها بالإخوان،

Greece – Ekathimerini – 12/16/2024

"Στην επικείμενη επέτειο των 1.700 ετών από την Α΄ Οικουμενική Σύνοδο της Νίκαιας, η οποία θα εορταστεί κατά το προσεχές έτος 2025, και στον ισχυρό συμβολισμό που θα αποτελέσει η αποδοχή από όλες τις Χριστιανικές Εκκλησίες μίας κοινής ημερομηνίας για τον εορτασμό της Ανάστασης του Κυρίου, αναφέρθηκε η Α.Θ. Παναγιώτης ο Οικουμενικός Πατριάρχης κ.κ. Βαρθολομαίος, στην επίσημη ομιλία του κατά την έναρξη του Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου "World Policy Conference", που πραγματοποιείται στο Abu Dhabi των Ηνωμένων Αραβικών Εμιράτων.

Belgium – La Libre – 12/14/2024

"Nous entendons des messages raisonnables sur la volonté de ne pas imposer de système aux Syriens, mais d'un autre côté la nature des nouvelles forces (au pouvoir, NDLR), leur affiliation aux Frères musulmans et à Al-Qaïda, sont des indicateurs assez inquiétants", a déclaré Anwar Gargash, conseiller diplomatique du président des Emirati arabes unis, lors d'un discours à la World Policy Conference organisée par l'Institut français des relations internationales (IFRI) à Abou Dhabi.

Japan – Nikkei – 12/24/20243

12月13～15日、アラブ首長国連邦 (UAE) の首都アブダビに欧州や中東の要人らが集まり、国際情勢を議論した。

Kazakhstan – The Astana Times – 12/17/2024

Since gaining independence, Kazakhstan has pursued a multivector, pragmatic, and balanced foreign policy, Kazakh Deputy Foreign Minister Roman Vassilenko said at the 17th annual World Policy Conference (WPC), organized by the French Institute of International Relations (IFRI), on Dec. 13-15 in Abu Dhabi, according to the ministry's press service.

South Korea – Maekyung Media Group – 12/16/2024

"지금 세계는 그 어느 때보다 높은 불확실성에 직면해 있다. 모두가 아는 '게임의 법칙' 자체가 사라진 상황이다." 제17회 세계정책콘퍼런스(WPC)가 열린 지난 13일 아랍에미리트 아부다비 파크하얏트 이곳에 모인 세계 석학들은 "기존의 통상 질서는 끝났다"고 입을 모았다. 국제사회는 이제 기존 규칙들이 더 이상 통용되지 않는 새로운 국면에 접어들었다는 분석이다.

South Korea – Asia Business Outlook – 12/17/2024

In the 17th edition of the World Policy Conference, Hur Kyung-wook, Chairman of Seoul Financial Forum and chairman of the Board of the Korea Center for International Finance, shares his views on the political challenges faced in the Asian economy and the importance of laws that need to be consistent in the political level.

India – The Economic Times – 12/14/2024

We hear some reasonable, rational language about unity, not imposing a system on all Syrians" from the country's new rulers, said Anwar Gargash, a presidential adviser in the United Arab Emirates, in remarks at the World Policy Conference in Abu Dhabi.





“ Ana Brnabić

As the situation in the world gets increasingly complex and challenging, I think the decision made by the EU, regarding the Western Balkans, is not to enlarge but to encompass because the Western Balkans itself is surrounded by the European Union. So, it is not about enlarging, but it is about making the EU one whole.

“ Gabriel Felbermayr

As always, there are facets, different versions of the same story. It is true that, in relative terms, other places in the world are growing faster [than Europe]. But they are growing from lower levels. We should not forget that China, for example, has a GDP per capita that is of the size of Bulgaria. Bulgaria is growing faster than Germany and France now because it starts from a lower level.

“ Gidon Bromberg

Palestinians, Jordanians, Israelis, university students and young professionals that are engaged with us understand that these are issues that we have in common and that by working together to solve the climate crisis we may rebuild trust and diffuse the conflict and the violence that we are currently living in. All of us are human, and we need to see hope. Oddly enough, the climate crisis, in the sense that it will only be resolved through cooperation, can provide some of that hope.

“ Juliette Tuakli

We need to boost the number of surgeons within the [African] continent. Many skilled surgeons from the diaspora are working internationally. We need to bring them back, and we need to grow indigenous surgeons from within our program. We do provide education, but we need support from within the continent.

“ Nardos Bekele-Thomas

Building health infrastructures and boosting health systems in Africa necessitates cooperation with organizations like Mercy Ships International, creating a vital collaboration that enhances global co-development.

“ Kazuto Suzuki

We need to encourage those in influential nations, such as the United States or oil-producing countries, to take actions that prioritize the global common good over narrow national interests.

“ Kevin McCarthy

Since Putin has been in office and in power, with all the different US presidents, there is only one President under whom he never invaded another country. That was under President Trump. I think having a strong President like him sends a real message to Putin that he cannot be invading other countries.

“ Lasha Darsalia

For Georgia, European integration is a key foreign policy issue because we see Europe as a space of stability, prosperity, rule of law, and values. That is exactly how the EU can position itself outside of its borders as well; promoting its values and security based on international law.

“ Lee Tiedrich

Part of what we need to do is to educate people both of the benefits and the risks [of artificial intelligence], empower people to safeguard themselves against the risks and take advantage of the opportunities. That is something that we need to work on globally.

“ Mohammed Baharoon

What is currently happening in Syria is quite pivotal because it could launch us into a new area of potential and positive change. But there is also the risk of turning around and repeating some of the previous failures that we made. I think this is one of those moments that require a lot of people to work together.

“ Roman Vassilenko

We, in Kazakhstan and in Central Asia, are keen to work with the European Union as a bloc. The European Union is our largest trading partner, our largest investor, our largest market for the oil which we export. But it is also a source of technology and investment, and as Europe seeks to affect the double transition of green and digital transition, Kazakhstan has the answers, and we are working on those answers together.

“ Trudi Makhaya

It is a common feeling in the developing world that climate is a global public good and that all countries should be committed to dealing with climate change, but also that there should be a sense of sharing of resources and addressing its challenges.

“ Vuk Jeremić

Europe has been remarkably successful in overcoming some of the thorniest and bloodiest conflicts in human history. In fact, the European Union is undoubtedly the most successful peace project humanity has ever seen. There are ups and downs with everything and everyone, including national organizations and unions. I personally see the current moment in European politics as an opportunity to reflect and plan for recovery from significant challenges.

“ Yuichi Hosoya

As ASEAN and India gain more influence, they are likely to seek partnerships with the United States, Australia, the European Union, and other allies to counterbalance China's growing military power. This evolving geopolitical landscape presents a new and increasingly complex situation.

“ Bertrand Badré

We witness geopolitical events every day, but behind them looms the shadow of the planet's environmental and social transformation. We're all aware of this, but it has not yet translated into a real shift in our behavior.

“ Daniel Andler

In fact, currently, 75% of employees whose management requires them to use artificial intelligence tools say they feel somewhat handicapped. We therefore need to temper the prevailing ultra-optimistic discourse with a dose of skepticism and hindsight. [...] Artificial intelligence is still absent from many aspects of everyday life and the way we handle our day-to-day activities.

“ Gérard Mestrallet

From a political point of view, this project could be the day after, once a ceasefire has been achieved, when countries can start talking again and sit down around a table to build positive projects that create jobs, prosperity and a vision of a shared future. The IMEC is such a project.

“ Haïm Korsia

Security and peace are built together. No one can impose peace by force. That can never be true peace, but simply the absence of war. This region needs to find true peace, based on shared hope and going far beyond the mere absence of war.

“ Jacques Biot

New rules will certainly be needed. Writing a new Constitution is always complex, prompting the question of whether to adapt the current rules or to create an entirely new framework for the world order. In all events, it is crucial to improve the ability of states to engage in dialogue, come closer together and seek compromise.

“ Marc Hecker

Typically, in asymmetrical conflicts, an asymmetry of wills is observed with the “weaker” party demonstrating greater determination than the “stronger” party. This conflict does not follow that pattern. Israel's determination is incredibly strong. We need to take that into account.

“ Marc-Antoine Eyl-Mazzega

In the rest of the world, the priority remains the fight against pollution and the challenges linked to health, education and poverty. We need to remember that 700 million people in sub-Saharan Africa still do not have access to electricity and one billion do not have access to clean cooking. Climate change is not a future problem for them, but an everyday reality they have long endured, while in developed countries the sense of urgency has emerged more recently.

“ Robert Dossou

If those responsible for climate change fail to remedy the consequences, it will add to the long list of injustices throughout history, something that I won't go into here. This time, the repercussions of climate change will not be limited to those nations that have endured past injustices. Countries of the north will suffer with us too.

“ Robert Sigal

As one of Michel Kazatchkine's slides showed, faced with the risk of a new pandemic, the question of politics and leadership is crucial. As a hospital director, I fully agree with this: beyond pandemics, the absence of political leadership is the main threat to tomorrow's health.

“ Sabine Oueiss

All the indications so far are negative, but there's this [Lebanese] miracle that I've been talking about. It's the determination and the power to recover very quickly. Contrary to the World Bank's forecasts, which estimate a recovery time of at least ten years, I believe that the Lebanese could overcome this economic, social and financial crisis in a maximum of one to two years.



“ Stéphane Michel

It's worth noting that the world is now mainly focusing on renewable energies. To speed up the transition, the regulatory framework in some European countries needs simplifying and investment in grids needs stepping up. Grids are currently the weak link in this transition, in terms of delivering renewable energy production to consumers.

“ Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean

Before the war in Ukraine, a rate of 2% of GDP for defense seemed unthinkable, but now that figure is 3%. Previously, only two or three European Union countries achieved this target. Today, some have moved beyond it, aware that investing in Europe's collective defense is vital if we are to preserve peace and reap its full benefits.

“ Valérie Ducrot

There's a sense of urgency, but for a large part of the world's population, urgency means the end of the month or the end of the week. The question of cost and social acceptability is crucial. Perspectives on climate change obviously differ between Denmark, Bangladesh and Argentina.

“ Yann Coatanlem

Disruptive innovation at the cutting edge of technology inevitably implies repeated failures. Google has a failure rate of around 80%. The failure rate is even higher in the field of venture capital and for start-ups. So when you fall, you need to be prepared to get up again very quickly. It's really a question of agility. In Europe, however, cumbersome administrative processes and a certain resistance to change mean that restructuring - for example, moving on from business plan A to business plan B, can take years when it involves thousands or even tens of thousands of people. This situation cannot continue.





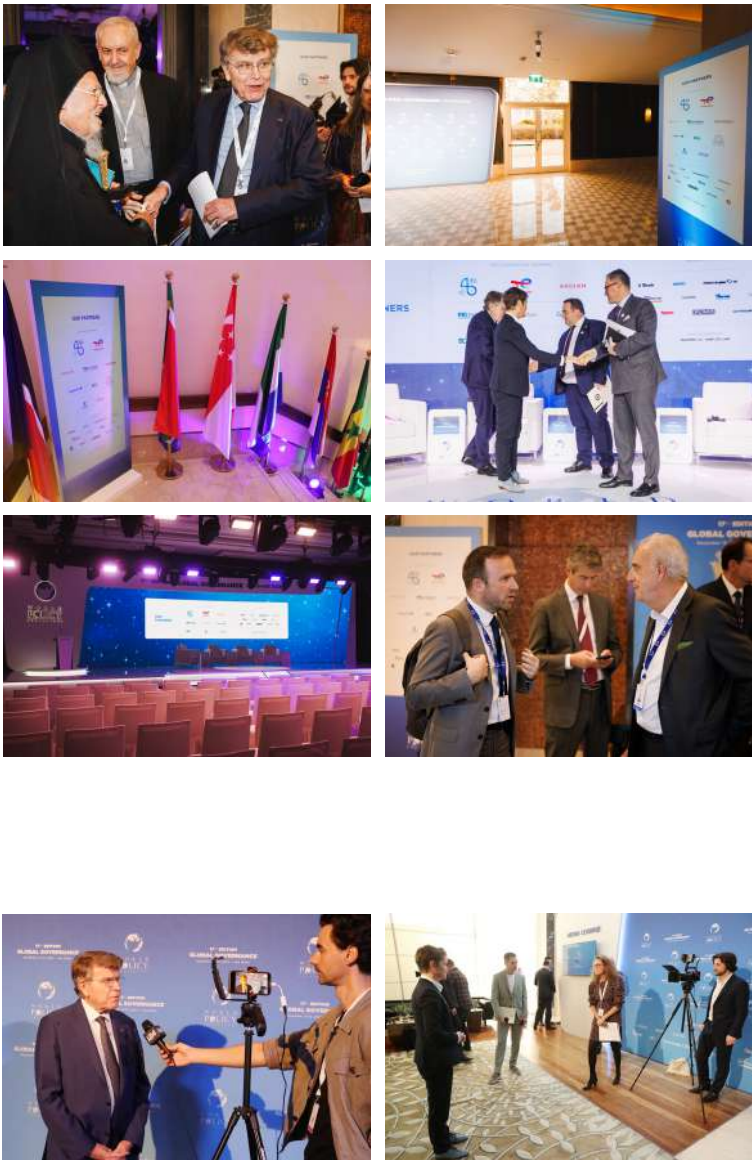
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