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**TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW OF**

**GUIDO de MARCO**

**BY**

**YVES BERTHELOT**

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YVES BERTHELOT: I believe it's important to demonstrate that a country like Malta can play a role. As president, you represent Malta, and personally you also play an important role. So, I think it's wonderful to have this opportunity to interview you. The interview will be organized as I indicated to you in my letter, but I have subtitled the formative years, if I can refer to them as such, from 1931 to 1966 to 1989, in politics, in the university, and as a lawyer, and then as the president of the GA (General Assembly) and then the role of Malta on the international scene. So, if you agree, we will proceed in this order, which is a natural one.

GUIDO de MARCO: Very natural. Very natural, having just celebrated my seventieth birthday two days ago, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July. I can go by a chronological approach.

YB: You have my congratulations. Thank you, well the first question is, what influenced your professional and political choices, maybe in the different categories—your family, teachers, the professors you had at the university, national or international personalities you met or you hear of, national or international events, World War II, in particular, and books you read? So, if you can just tell us what “made” you.

GdM: I think the advantage, which I had in life, was that I was born in 1931, which meant that I was a boy just before war broke out. On my mother's side, we came from a family, which had settled in Malta from Italy, from Sicily to be more precise, in 1902. So, therefore, the rumblings of the war were something which were not just an event of the news, but an event of the news which was apt to affect, to a certain extent, the family in which I was brought up—my mother, my father, my mother's family, my grandparents, my aunts and cousins, who, on my mother's side were, therefore, Italian.

So, the events leading up to the Second World War were very important in my childhood formation. I followed the events of the war of Abyssinia and those of the Civil War in Spain. I felt the family's concern during the crisis in Munich, and then something which stuck my mind very much was, I remember being with my maternal grandfather and he met a friend of his, in Old Bakery Street where my grandfather lived. And this gentleman whom he met told him "*Hanno sfrondato la linea Maginot*" (the Maginot line has been pierced). And I saw that my grandfather's face went white. He realized, as he explained to me, that this meant that Italy would now certainly join the war on Germany's side, which meant therefore that Italy would be at war with Great Britain.

Malta formed part of Great Britain as colonial possessions, and therefore, this would affect us very directly. Indeed a very short time after that Mussolini declared war, on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 1940. The bombs and the air raids started immediately on the morrow. As a boy, rather precocious, not being nine years old, I started asking myself and my parents "Why a war?" What are the vindications being sought through war? My house, my parent's house in Valletta was severely damaged. Our house was close to the law courts; we used to go to the shelter under the law court building. The building was almost completely demolished as a result of a cluster of mines exploding. This was early 1941. The Luftwaffe staged one of its many heavy air raids. Only one of the exits remained available. Were it not for this we would have been buried alive. When we left the shelter we went home, my father opened the door only to discover that the house was from the inside almost complete rubble. We then went to another place, in Hamrun, and again the air raids followed us, again the house of my parents was bombed, again we had to move to another house.

When the war ended in 1945, I was fourteen, having been born in July 1931. For Malta, war de facto ended when Italy surrendered, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 1943. And the war first in Europe and then in Japan ended in 1945.

And I was now getting on in years as a youth, following events, leading to the founding of the United Nations. Who would have told me that I would be present for the fiftieth anniversary of the Charter, in New York? As a young man, then, I started following the United Nations and what it really meant for us all. How the future is linked to the United Nations. I remember also, following the Nuremberg trials and watched the accusations and charges that were all so very serious. And the responsibility was also very clear. I found that, in law, the absence of an international criminal court can be substituted by ad hoc tribunals with a considerable credibility deficit. In the Nuremberg trials the victors were trying the vanquished. War crimes may be committed not only by the vanquished; they may be committed also by the victors. So these issues created in me a more a vivid interest in international law and international relations. In 1948 I started my university life.

YB: I am very interested in what you said about Nuremberg. You have spoken about the impact of the war. What were your feelings as a young man, a young student, about the fact that Malta was part of—was under the control of the UK (United Kingdom)?

GdM: Very humiliating. You see, my father's family had a nationalist background and they were adherents of the Nationalist Party. So the background was a nationalistic background. The knowledge that another country dominates you was for me an irritable humiliation. We had self-government if the British choose to grant us self-government. If the British decided to suspend and remove self-government, we were back to be ruled directly by the colonial office, by the British governor appointed from Whitehall in London. We were a colony. Now I am a

person with a great admiration for British culture, for British history, and for the principles of democracy, which Britain has been amongst the first to practice amongst its people. But I also noted that democracy was not for export.

And, therefore, as a student I started my first interventions in political life by doing what was then forbidden: forming a committee for nationalist students. At that time, it was forbidden in university to have any kind of political activity. All student activities used to end by the playing of the British national anthem. At the end, every time the British national anthem was played, “God Save,” as we used to call it, “God Save the King” or “God Save the Queen,” I, in protest, used to walk out. My wife, then my girlfriend, used to feel very embarrassed seeing this boyfriend of hers performing this unholy rite of moving out whenever the British national anthem was being played. She did not like it at all, that I take part in politics, and manifesting my participation in politics by being so anti-British. I was never anti-British but I never felt happy at being a British subject; I never wanted to be that.

YB: So, your first political commitment was as a student. You created this movement?

GdM: It was a committee of nationalist students. The Nationalist Party has been in existence since 1880. I later became president of the nationalist youth movement. So I started in politics quite early in the day. I want to tell you another thing. I was among the very first European federalists. Now it’s not a fashionable thing to be a federalist. I still believe in federalism, but I believe that the time is not yet mature for federalism. I think we have to wait more decades before we think in federalist terms, until the time when we start thinking we are first Europeans and then Maltese. We are first Europeans and then French, first Europeans and then Germans. We need more decades. I doubt if my grandchildren would live to see that time. So, therefore I think federalism is good as an ideal. And what you believe in when you are a

student becomes part of you all your life. I always say that I am neither a pessimist nor an optimist. I am a realist. But being a realist does not mean that you are not an idealist. I've had occasions to say a realist is an idealist who knows when the time is right for his ideals to mature. So this is my approach even to federalism in Europe.

YB: Then you joined the Nationalist Party. So there is a continuation between your involvement in this, as a student, nationalist committee, and the Nationalist Party, or was it different? The Nationalist Party has the same basic line of—

GdM: —of the whole party. Except that there was a split. When a group of us nationalists thought that there was not a strong enough social message in the Nationalist Party then, we formed what was called the Democratic Nationalist Party (DNP). And the Democratic Nationalist Party had as its leader a very good friend of mine Dr. Herbert Ganado, one who suffered internment and was later deported under the British. But when the issue of independence came, he was very lukewarm about it, and indeed said, "Yes but not independence now." And I told him, "I'm very sorry, but how can you call yourself a democrat and a nationalist and don't want independence now?" And I resigned from this party and rejoined the Nationalist Party of which the DNP was a splinter party. I continued political life in the Nationalist Party, and so renewed the link which I had had with the Nationalist Party ever since my student days. On becoming president of Malta I severed my participation in the party. I wrote to the secretary-general, informing him that as president I cannot in any way participate in any activities or be considered to be in the party.

YB: During this time, you have not mentioned names of persons who were sort of models because when you are young and particularly I guess in politics you have some—

GdM: Heroes and hero-worship? I think from the political parties I had as my hero Dr. Enrico Mizzi, leader of the Nationalist Party who was, during the war, first interned and then exiled from Malta and then sent to Uganda by the British. This was allowed through an illegality committed by the then British colonial government, in opposition to what the courts had ordered, that the Maltese can never be deported from their own country. You know what was the stratagem? Saying that Uganda is effectively part of Malta and, therefore, transfer these Maltese individuals to Uganda, which is so many thousands of kilometers away, and say that you are still in Malta. Sometimes, when one listens to these things one realizes the banality of certain tragedies of yesterday. Sir Ugo Mifsud was a person whom I admired very much. He was leader of the Nationalist Party, who died following a heart attack in the House, the Council of Government then, defending those nationalists who were about to be exiled from Malta. And Dr. Giorgio Borg Olivier too, another leader of my party who was a good leader and an even better diplomat in the way he handled and exploited situations.

In the international field, I was, as a secondary school student, very much influenced by Franklin Delano Roosevelt. I started reading what Roosevelt was proposing his freedoms: freedom from fear, freedom from want. These concepts were so much in keeping with my thinking as a young secondary school student. And when Roosevelt died in 1945—I was then thirteen years old—I remember I wore a black tie. I went to school with a black tie as a sign of mourning. So this to show you how much one was being influenced at the time by these events of history. And then obviously when one joins university, then one's vistas open up much more and, therefore, one started examining this United Nations as it was being shaped—Eleanor Roosevelt and human rights.

But the person who really impressed me most later in life was [Dag] Hammarskjöld because I saw that he was the one who wanted to change the Secretary-General from being a mere administrator of the United Nations into being a person who wants to ensure that the fieldwork of the United Nations is carried out, too. And therefore, I think that Dag Hammarskjöld was a person who, as I started moving along, I had great admiration for.

YB: I am very impressed with what you say, by the fact that a very young boy was interested by the creation of the United Nations because when it was created in 1945, you were not even fifteen.

GdM: Not even fifteen, fourteen years. And I used to be an avid reader of newspapers, of everything which came my way, and following the radio. Sometimes today I see my grandchildren getting on in years and nothing really impresses them. How different from me at fourteen, possibly all this was triggered by the war. And when one is triggered by war, one does really create a stronger awareness in events surrounding him. So, for example, as a boy I used to see the dogfights between the Spitfires and the Messerschmidts. I mean, these are the horrible things in life, which I used to follow with great interest. So it was a difficult boyhood, not at all like the boyhood of teenagers today, thank God for them. A European politician who had a lasting affect on me was Alcide de Gasperi of Italy. Because here I saw in him a great Christian-democrat, and there were at the time the three great Christian-democrats: [Robert] Schumann, [Konrad] Adenauer, and de Gasperi. These three started not only a strong Christian-democratic movement but also led to the concept of Europe. They influenced very much my thinking.

YB: So, very early you were very much interested by the interdependencies of events and nations. You have already spoken about your reaction at the creation of the UN. But then



came the decolonization process. Was it something that mattered? Because by 1966, most of the decolonization was done. Did you follow this in the Nationalist Party?

GdM: I became a lawyer in 1955, a young lawyer at twenty-four. Some events were determining. One is the Hungarian revolt, October 1956. It's as if it was yesterday. I'm hearing on the radio Imre Nagy asking for help. Asking for the United Nations to intervene. What did we find? Instead of helping Hungarian liberty, we found the British and the French trying to take over the Suez Canal, in conniving with Israel to stage an attack against Egypt. So it was supposed to be an intervention on the part of the French and the British in order to stop the Israelis, who had planned an attack on Egypt. And they intervened to "stop" them. And at this very important moment in the history of the free world, when heroic Hungarians were giving their lives, and Imre Nagy was appealing for help, and Cardinal Mindsenty has just been set free, only to find refuge a few days later in the American Embassy.

All these brought to fore the nakedness of the Cold War as well as tacit parameters set by Yalta. The Iron Curtain meant not only an iron curtain, but a sphere of influence, that the British and the French could do what they liked in Egypt and in the Mediterranean provided they let the Soviet Union do whatever it liked in Eastern Europe. This was for me a very important eye-opener in realpolitik.

Another factor was that the Nationalist Party to which I belonged wanted independence for Malta. At the time it used to be called a dominion status, like that enjoyed by Australia and Canada and New Zealand—independence within the Commonwealth as Malta is today independent within the Commonwealth of Nations. And at this time, Mr. [Dominic] Mintoff started the idea of integration, for Malta to form part of the United Kingdom just like Northern Ireland. And this again found me very active in politics against this integration proposal.

Because I found the integration proposal as closing the door for Malta's future independence. Had the integration proposal succeeded the course of events in Malta and life for Malta and the Maltese would have been much different. But as I was telling you at the beginning, with my frame of mind, I always saw that Malta had to move along as an independent country, with its European character, its European belongingness with the Mediterranean complex.

YB: Following just what you just said about the partition of the world between different spheres of influence. At least this time the U.S. played a very decent—

GdM: The United States was decent indeed. [Dwight] Eisenhower was president of the United States at the time. He dealt strongly and conscientiously with [Anthony] Eden, the then prime minister of the UK, as well as with the French prime minister.

YB: I'm afraid I don't remember—

GdM: I think that the United States on that occasion came out very positively.

YB: And the UN's role?

GdM: You see, the UN, in actual fact, is a reflection of the nations forming it. If the nations forming part of the UN want to give relevance to the UN, the UN is a very relevant body. If the nations forming part of the UN do not want to give it relevance, then the UN slowly moves into irrelevance.

YB: A little bit earlier—sorry for the disorder—but the Marshall Plan appeared to you as—

GdM: Oh, that was very important. The Marshall Plan was very important and it created, also here in Malta, some very interesting rifts. Mr. Mintoff then was a very up and coming politician who insisted—at the time the Labour Party was in government—who insisted that Malta should participate in the Marshall aid. The British government said, "Malta is a

colony and therefore Malta can't participate in Marshall aid. If anything, Britain receives the money and then Britain sees what to do with that money." And the then prime minister was Sir Paul Boffa, he was also the leader of the Labour Party, and Sir Paul Boffa managed to find some kind of assistance directly from Britain. This did not satisfy Mr. Mintoff, who set up his supporters within the Labour Party against Dr. Boffa. The result was that the Labour Party was split; Boffa was removed from the leadership. Mr. Mintoff took up the leadership of the Labour Party, but a divided Labour Party had also certain consequences. I am speaking now in terms of 1950. As a result of this, when an election was held, the Nationalist Party under Enrico Mizzi, whom I mentioned before, found itself in the relative majority.

And this is how the Nationalist Party found itself in government after the war, with a minority government of which Enrico Mizzi was prime minister. Enrico Mizzi died on the 20<sup>th</sup> December 1950. A prime minister from September to December, dying in office—so far the one and only Maltese prime minister to die in office. And he was succeeded by Dr. Borg Olivier, who then took over until 1955, when Mr. Mintoff was elected on an integration ticket.

YB: It's very strange because the image Mintoff has is more because of his relations with North Africa, and Libya in particular, which does not fit with the integration idea.

GdM: Mr. Mintoff believed that the British were not playing ball. They got him to follow this integration proposal but then did not give him enough money to back up this integration proposal. And Mr. Mintoff, whose power base was always in the dry-docks, discovered that the British intended to close the dry-docks as an admiralty concern and give it to a private firm, with eventual loss of employment. Then he turned against the integration proposal, agreed with the independence, as the Nationalist Party had long been asking, and here in the parliament in the Legislative Assembly, approved what was called the "Break with Britain

Resolution,” more in theory than in practice. This is how Dr. Borg Olivier managed by perfect timing of events to ensure that now integration was out and independence in. The British, after that, suspended self-government. When elections were eventually held in 1962, Dr. Borg Olivier with the Nationalist Party was returned to office. And he started working for independence, which Malta acquired on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 1964. Then Mr. Mintoff made full use of independence when he was elected in 1971.

YB: Among the other events, their impact on Bandung. Was it noticed in Malta?

GdM: Not too much at the time because we had our own problems. But later on, mainly because Mr. Mintoff brought an awareness of the Bandung conference and the Non-Aligned Movement that had started. And Malta passed through a very interesting experience. Dr. Borg Olivier had made soundings for Malta to join NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). The impression that I have, though I did not see the actual documentations, was that Luns, who was at the time secretary-general of NATO, was advised I assume by some other governments of NATO, that Malta in NATO would have considerable power as a political member. And the soundings, which Dr. Borg Olivier carried out, were negative to Malta’s interests. As a result, Malta had an arrangement with NATO. This arrangement was unacceptable in my view, at least, because we had here in Malta the headquarters of Allied Forces Mediterranean—it used to be called “HAF Med,” therefore a NATO HQ even though we were not members of NATO. This happened as a result of a defense treaty, which Malta has signed onto at independence.

So when Mr. Mintoff was elected in 1971, he removed the defense treaty with Britain and entered into something, which I did not like at the time, a lease agreement with Britain, leasing the military base up till 1979, in contrast with the defense treaty, which had to last up to 1974. And as a result, therefore, we found ourselves with this time extension under a lease agreement.

I think Mr. Mintoff did not do so because he liked the British, but because I think he wanted to have more money made available as a result of the lease agreement, which at the time was, I'm sure, very useful for Malta as a result of the finances which he managed to get from Britain. But this is to give you just background events and how Mr. Mintoff moved towards the Bandung policy of nonalignment.

Under the Nationalist government, Malta was more NATO-oriented. We're speaking now at the very important moment of the Cold War, we are speaking of the late 1960s, with Mr. Mintoff coming to power in June 1971 and making this very important shift from an arrangement with NATO, which the nationalist government has to a nonalignment policy. So this is how Bandung influenced events. And after this, Malta was sharply divided on this issue because in spite of the negative soundings vis-à-vis NATO, the Nationalist Party believed that NATO was important for Europe. And that within a context NATO and the Warsaw Pact, we saw that at least NATO stood for countries that like us believed in western values and freedoms. Therefore, that is why there was this difference in approach towards the Bandung conference.

YB: So, maybe we have covered the first part and we could move to the—

GdM: I was elected to parliament in March 1966.

YB: Yes, that's right. We move to this other period of your life. But before this, I forgot to ask you why, at the university, you started with philosophy and economics before moving to law?

GdM: Because there was a system at that time where you could follow more than one course. Therefore, I thought that I should dwell on three subjects I considered very important. Philosophy, because I think unless you have a very good philosophical training it's very difficult to understand the reasoning of life, the purpose of thinking, and how to put your thinking into a

positive shape of logic. I studied economics because I was always thinking that I would be in politics and that one cannot really be in politics without a good knowledge of economics. And thirdly, for another reason, I took the Italian language and literature because it's a language, which is very close to Malta. And the knowledge of Italian, I believe was very important for me too, because while I had the right formation of as far as English literature was concerned, I wanted to have an equally good formation in Italian literature. And, obviously, law, which as you can understand is not only my profession, but also much more than my profession; it is a love that I have for the law.

YB: Thank you. The reasons why you studied philosophy are very interesting. Turning to the second part of your public life, in 1966 what was your economic vision, your vision for the development of Malta? And what were the influences, what was the model in the world or among the theoreticians?

GdM: Keynes. I was very much influenced by Keynes. I always found Marxism to be unacceptable for human dignity. But I always believed in a social market economy. I could never agree with a market economy where those who have, can continue to have much more, and those who are the have-nots, most probably will lose even the little that they may have. So this is why my concept, whilst negating Marxism because I found that, in actual fact, it means a leveling down of people, I believe that a social market economy that has a social conscience, I think can be the solution to many of the ailments. And in this context, the teaching, the economic teaching of Lord Keynes I found very useful and very important. Indeed, I feel that I am still a follower of Keynes, notwithstanding all the changes that have taken place since. Certainly I was never a follower of Mrs. [Margaret] Thatcher. I don't like the way in which Thatcher is and was

interpreted. My vision for the economy is a market economy, but it has to be a social market economy.

YB: You had that in Germany and in France. During the 1950s and 1960s it was this model. We didn't call it a social market economy at that time; I think we called it mixed economy.

GdM: But the economy was having state-run enterprises with private participation, is a model which nowadays is no longer very much diffused. But when I say social market economy, I'm thinking in terms of having a market economy in place, but a market economy with a strong social conscience whereby the mechanics of the market have to be used, but not in such a way that the social element is forgotten. Indeed, to my view, I see no reason for myself to have been in politics since 1966 as a member of parliament if I did not feel that politics is a social engagement.

YB: So you were favorable to redistribution mechanisms and social safety nets?

GdM: I think so. They are a must.

YB: At this time, and since, Malta did all that was done in the UN economic area. I mean the Development Decade, you remember the first one in the 1960s, and the ILO (International Labour Organization) Employment Programme and even the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) has some recommendations for Southern Europe—was it useful, did it provide useful references? Or was it too far and too general?

GdM: I speak so far as I am concerned. I was much more influenced by two events: one, by the Council of Europe. I was elected to be one of Malta's representatives to the then called Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe, later to be called Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, in 1967. And I remained a member of this assembly till

1987. So for twenty years, I was in the Council of Europe, returning then as minister for foreign affairs in the Committee of Ministers. And then when the Nationalist Party went into opposition in November 1996, I again went to the Council of Europe, my first love, in January 1987, ending up as chairman of the Monitoring Committee of the Council of Europe, to monitor the states, old and new, observing human rights and the principles of the Council of Europe. I remained as chairman of the Monitoring Committee until the Nationalist Party was re-elected to government in September 1998. And then I became once again foreign minister. So this is how the position was.

The second great influence was the CSCE (Council for Security and Cooperation in Europe) as it was then called, because Mr. Mintoff started something very spectacular, with which I agreed, although perhaps I was not immediately in agreement with the way he started it—more on the method, rather than on the substances. Mr. Mintoff, in the Helsinki meetings, maintained that there is a link between security in Europe and security in the Mediterranean. You cannot have security in the Mediterranean unless you have security in Europe; you cannot have security in Europe unless you have security in the Mediterranean. And I was one of the very early converts to this theorem of Mr. Mintoff. And later on, as minister of foreign affairs, I continued this policy too. I also did something else, which I'd learned when I was then in the UN as president of the General Assembly. I proposed, Malta proposed—I did it on behalf of my country obviously—that the CSCE in Helsinki becomes the Regional Arrangement for Peacekeeping in terms of Chapter VIII of the Charter. It was Malta's proposal, and if today the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) can function as a regional arrangement for peacekeeping, it is a result of Malta's proposal in the Helsinki II that converts itself into the regional arrangement for peacekeeping in terms of the Charter of the UN.



YB: You have anticipated the question I wanted to raise now. Precisely that, from 1967 to 1987, you were in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. What were your views about the creation of Europe, and its evolution, and your attitude vis-à-vis the work of EEC (European Economic Commission) and the COMECON (Council on Mutual Economic Cooperation) on the other side on the Council of Europe, the CSCE, and the UNECE eventually. Then I will come to the North-South debate because you were involved, and your reaction to the oil shocks and the New International Economic Order. So, about Europe—

GdM: About Europe, I've always been a convinced European. I've always believed in the future of Europe—I told you, as a student I was a European federalist. I saw the wisdom of Germany's plan and I saw not only the wisdom of Germany's plan, but also the vision of Adenauer, Schumann and de Gasperi. So I was brought up as a student and later as lawyer, and later as politician, believing that the concept of a Europe which is united to be fundamental for the future. I have never liked this bipolar world, which we had. I found this bipolar world very threatening. The events of Cuba leading almost to a missile confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union were a strong eye-opener. So I believed very much in a multipolar world of which Europe has to have a very relevant part.

You see, I witnessed the end of the Cold War, when [Mikhail] Gorbachev and [George H.W.] Bush met in Malta in December 1989. At that time, I was not as yet minister for foreign affairs, but I was minister for the interior. The book of Eduard Shevardnadze, *The Future is for Freedom*, encapsulates what was the result of this meeting between Bush and Gorbachev: "In the midst of a Mediterranean storm in Malta, we buried the Cold War." I became foreign minister in May 1990, and I became president of the United Nations General Assembly in September 1990. So this gives you an idea as to how I found myself as president of the United Nations. It was a

United Nations in transition, trying to evaluate the effects of the Cold War, trying to think not within a Cold War corset only to find Kuwait invaded in August 1990 by Saddam Hussein, and a UN taking the necessary steps in a multilateral approach leading to the liberation of Kuwait. And here I found myself in the role of president of the United Nations General Assembly and all the events which followed as a result.

YB: So before the 1990s, Malta played an important role in CSCE as you mentioned already. But this question, to make CSCE responsible in—

GdM: The Mediterranean basket of the CSCE. I think Mr. Mintoff was a very positive force in creating awareness of the Mediterranean and its linkage to Europe, insofar as security and cooperation is concerned. It was the Mediterranean basket. This was a very important step, to my view, which was taken on Malta's initiative. As you know, in the meantime, Malta has been very active also in the United Nations. During this period, Malta was also for two years a member of the Security Council. Malta, in the first years of membership of the UN, under the Borg Olivier government, through Arvid Pardo, our first permanent representative, started what everybody considers to be a seminal idea, the concept of the common heritage of mankind insofar as the riches of the sea and of the ocean floor and the seabed are concerned. I think that was a seminal idea, which created a different approach also to what was previously the predatory concept into a common heritage of mankind. Unfortunately, Mr. Mintoff did not work on that idea at least for quite a number of years. He was negative to the idea. It was only very late in the day when he tried to bring the seabed authority to Malta. But then it was too late and the harm was done.

Another initiative taken by Malta slightly before I became foreign minister was a question about climate change and old age. I think these were two initiatives which we are

reaping the results also today. Positive results. It does happen that a country can punch beyond its size. So when you come to ideas and ideals, it is not true that a small country necessarily finds itself at a loss. A small country agitates itself with more difficulty. A small country may not have the right kind of back up. But if it has an idea, and it has a sense of direction with that idea, I think, within the United Nations it can work a great deal.

YB: Mr. President, Malta geographically is really well placed in the North-South debate. It played a role in the UN; it played a role by its bilateral initiatives. So, was the North-South issue a major problem for you?

GdM: I think in the Mediterranean, the North-South is a living issue. I think we in Malta witness this perhaps more than anyone else. We form part of this great divide, or with this great, unifying factor. To my view, we are to a certain extent at a crossroads. Is the Mediterranean going to be a great divide? Or is it going to be a strong, unifying factor? So far, to my view, it's been more of a divide than a unifying factor. The northern part of the Mediterranean is Christian, the southern part is Islamic. Now should this be a divide? It never is a divide, but acts as a divide. It is not just a question of religion; it is also a question of culture and civilization. So you find that the Christian north finds its soul culture in its Christian culture and the Islamic south obviously believes in its own Islamic culture. But instead of trying to see what is in common in the two cultures and build on that, we have so far exploited for good reasons or bad reasons what divides the two cultures. So we are also again at a crossroads there.

I remember suggesting that we should set up a Council for the Mediterranean. I still believe it to this day, that if we have a Council for the Mediterranean, something very similar to this Council of Europe in Strasbourg, then we can create for the arena which covers the Mediterranean a useful coagulant of activities. I believe that if the Mediterranean has its own

Council, bringing in the nations of the Mediterranean to plan together, to meet, to assemble at parliamentary, at executive, and at what I would describe as a people-to-people approach, then in what is today if not a formal but certainly de facto a great divide, we can build bridges. This is why I've always been advocating this Council of the Mediterranean. Through the Euro-Med process we may be giving a partial solution. I was one of the ministers who adhered to the Barcelona Declaration creating this Euro-Med space, having also as its economic pillar that of creating a Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area by the year 2010, which would bring roughly something around about six hundred million inhabitants participating in this free trade area for Europe and the Mediterranean.

I think that although six years have elapsed since the Barcelona conference, it has yet to make its great contributions. I think that events in the Middle East have complicated the process. The Euro-Med structure itself creates difficulties. It functions through the secretariat at the EU, and acts through the revolving presidencies of the EU. There is no ad hoc secretariat for the Euro-Med process. There is no alternating presidency between a country in the European Union and a country in the non-member states of the European Union within the Euro-Med process. I think that all these things hinder the correct approach to the Euro-Med process. At the moment, we are hanging on to what we have managed to achieve. But, frankly, I think that feet are being dragged, very much dragged. Euro-Med is a dream; it is not as yet a dream which has come true.

YB: That's very important. Malta will become a member of the EU. Do you think it will help to push the idea or will the EU continue to—which in my view is its approach—to prefer to address issues bilaterally rather than on a sub-regional basis? And will it continue to want to control everything? And so I guess the Mediterranean Council you had in mind was made of equal members around the Mediterranean which would be in a way independent from

the EC and EU because it's not the same membership and cannot be controlled by Brussels. So, what is your feeling vis-à-vis the approach of Brussels on the Mediterranean issue? What was the opposition to the creation of this Mediterranean Council?

GdM: I hold that there is no incompatibility between membership of the European Union and such a council. We have, for example, the Baltic countries getting together. Norway is not a member of the European Union and to my knowledge has twice refused to join. And eventually Russia may become a very useful member of this Baltic alliance. So my own feeling is that one is not incompatible with the other. I think you may have in mind CFSF, this common foreign and security policy. I think that Europe has to evolve its common foreign and security policy. But as you see, whilst we speak about the single market, a single currency, we are never speaking about a single foreign and security policy. We are very careful; the word used is "common" and not "single." So a common foreign security policy gives the possibility for countries to develop also other policies. Britain has its special relationship with the United States. Spain has a special relationship with Latin America. Britain has its Commonwealth, too. What I'm trying to say is that, although we are developing a common foreign security policy, no one is speaking about having a single foreign security policy, certainly not at this stage.

So, to my view, Maltese membership of the European Union provides, if the Maltese people, though sovereign will decide to join the European Union, no incompatibility between one and the other. Just as, for example, within the European Union you have neutral states, such as Austria, such as Ireland, such as Sweden, such as Finland. I think also Malta will be another neutral state if it joins the European Union. So Malta would be in good company as a neutral state as well. My own feeling, as I am seeing it, is that there will be no incompatibility. I remember [Esmat Abdel] Meguid, who used to be, as you know, secretary-general of the Arab

League up till a few years ago when Amre Moussa became secretary-general. Meguid used to tell me that it's important for the Arab world that Malta forms part of the European Union. Because if Malta forms part of the European Union, the Arab world knows that in Malta it has a country that understands the Arab world, and is in a position to put across the interests of the Arab world. If you are outside the European Union, your relevance and influence, according to Meguid, "are restricted." So this is the way in which the Arab world, through Meguid, was seeing Malta and its belongingness to the European Union. But ultimately, as I said, this is an issue which the people of Malta will have to eventually decide.

YB: Yes, because I heard that some parallels had been made with Switzerland, saying that Malta is a Switzerland, and that therefore it should keep its neutrality. You are demonstrating that no.

GdM: That is not exactly the issue; insofar as neutrality is concerned in the EU there are Austria, which like Malta has neutrality in its constitution. Sweden, Finland, and Ireland, they are all neutral states.

YB: Malta plays a very important role in the Mediterranean. People from the North-South are coming to Malta. You are one of the two places, with Cyprus, where Israel can come, and with others. And it is extremely important that you continue to play this role and indeed there is no contradiction, as you said.

GdM: I think it is important for Malta to be near to the Middle East and its problems. One, because it's only fair. Whoever can put in a good word in this difficult situation is doing a good deed. Blessed are those who try to bring peace. But a second reason is, even considered from an egoistic approach, if we want the Mediterranean to prosper and thus participate in this

prosperity, we can only prosper in peace. You cannot prosper with a war, which creates a negative situation in the Middle East.

YB: And the Barcelona Process you referred to and which does not give the impression of being extremely active. Why is it so? Is it lack of will from the West, the EU countries?

GdM: It will be unfair to put it solely on the EU members. I think we have to ask what brought about the Barcelona Process? I think two things brought about the Barcelona Process. The European Union countries are concerned about the large number of persons from the Maghreb and Mashreq who are migrating to the European Union. And therefore, they prefer to have a network of economy working in the countries concerned, rather than having this export of human resources from these countries into Europe with all the problems that this may cause. So first there was this issue, this on the part of the European side. And on the part of the Arab side, how much money are we going to get from the Europeans? So it was a cupboard love affair. But the philosophy behind it was not always grasped. Or even if it was grasped, it's not always applied. The philosophy is how are we going to integrate the Mediterranean? How we going to ensure that there be bridges and not piers? So this is why I think Malta does play a role. We are a European country within a Mediterranean complex. Speaking a language where the basic words are Semitic, although the majority of our vocabulary comes from the Romance words. And the syntax is Latin. This is Malta. But because Malta is what I am trying to describe, we have to ensure the Mediterranean represents a positive thinking not a negative thinking.

YB: Yes. And you will continue to have this role when you are in the EU and it's extremely important. I totally agree with your analysis of this.

GdM: This is Malta's future role.

YB: Coming back to the oil shocks and the New International Economic Order, which was discussed in Paris and the UN and Algiers. What was the feeling in Malta and your own reaction vis-à-vis the oil shocks?

GdM: I remember going to the Charter of Paris, November 1990. I was foreign minister for the signing of the Charter of Paris, which created the OSCE, and which contemplated two important points. An international economic order, for the first time. The Soviet Union and countries formerly belonging to the Warsaw Pact, even though at the time they were still perhaps in the Warsaw Pact, advocating an economy which no longer was the state-controlled economy, and giving rise to a New International Economic Order, it started developing a new security architecture for Europe. So these two ideas, the New International Economic Order and the security architecture for Europe, I think started putting also us in Malta within a context. We tried our best to give the OSCE relevance. But my own feeling is that it is being reduced to the monitoring of elections—useful in itself—rather than giving a more substantive political and strategic role.

Secondly, the New International Economic Order, this is coming into place. But then again, we follow the events in Genoa of the G-8. How can it be that an international economic order is creating so many negative vibes? Who is creating these negative vibes? To what extent is there a sense of concern at the many poor nations of the world and are the industrialized countries understanding the plight of the poor? There is this great debate going on between the New International Order and poverty. When I was at the United Nations, I did try to underline the issue of the poverty curtain. In my statement there, repeatedly I made reference to the poverty curtain, which can be a more difficult curtain to penetrate than the iron curtain itself.



YB: So, just before we stop today, I want to ask you about human rights. You played a very important role in the development of human rights in Malta. What are the circumstances that influenced your decision to espouse this course of human rights? And was the UN again a useful reference in your efforts?

GdM: I think I was strongly influenced by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I was even more influenced by the Charter of Human Rights of Strasbourg. Here we have a court for human rights whereby human rights are not only something for domestic application, but nations agree to subject themselves to a court of human rights, which has its seat in Strasbourg. Indeed, the very first act which parliament approved, when I became minister for justice and the interior, was that the Charter of Human rights, the Charter of Strasbourg, the European Declaration of Human Rights, became part of domestic law in Malta. I wanted to ensure not only that Malta is bound internationally through the Charter of Human Rights, but that Malta is also bound domestically by the Charter of Human Rights.

My own belief is this: that human rights are the concern of all humans. And within this context, however, what one has to be careful of is, here is a body, the court of human rights, and it is up to them to decide that human rights have been infringed. I am always afraid of the politicization of human rights. There is a line of demarcation, which is very flimsy. Those who believe in human rights, and genuinely believe in human rights, want to give their observance a structure. Those who politicize human rights find it very convenient to bring human rights as a political issue.

My approach is perhaps the approach of a lawyer—the legal approach. Because human rights are the rights of human beings, let's create a structure within which these human rights are going to be observed. That is why I don't like ad hoc courts for crimes committed in Yugoslavia

as we have now. A Maltese is a judge in that court. And there were the Nuremberg Trials. But why not have the International Criminal Court set up? I am prepared to work within a structure that applies to all. But having a singling-out approach—I think that can be harmful. I am all for the observers of human rights, to a structure that is created, not to the politicizing of human rights. Let us create a structure. Let us make the belongingness to this structure something in which we all strive, and sincerely strive for it to succeed.

So this is the way I think how we should advance. Obviously, it's easier said than done. But the more we work toward these issues together, as we did in the Council of Europe—today I think there are forty-five member countries in the Council of Europe, and all of us are subject to this international court, which is the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, which applies the law on the same convention of human rights, the ECHR, the European Convention on Human Rights.

YB: It's very interesting that in concluding the interview this morning, you refer to something you said at the very beginning, you referred to Nuremberg.

GdM: Because take, for example, Admiral Doenitz who was found guilty because he gave orders to shoot the crew of a torpedoed vessel. But a similar order was also given by Admiral Nimitz of the U.S. Navy in the Pacific. Now, I don't like what Doenitz did, but I equally don't like what Nimitz did. So where are we going? This is what I'm trying to say. This is why I believe in an International Criminal Court. And this is why I hope the United States approves this International Criminal Court.

YB: Yes, it has not been approved so far.

GdM: That is my point. Because then we always find ourselves put with our back to the wall, we who want so much these international justice structures. We want to have a structure in which we are all equal, all responsible, and all accountable.

YB: This reminds me what you said in Geneva\* about double standards.

GdM: Double standards. This is what we have to avoid if we want to achieve credibility. And this we have to be very careful of, because we create real structures in which we believe in and we want them to be observed, or we want to create structures of convenience.

YB: It's extremely important what you said. It's very nice to develop principles and norms as we do in the United Nations, but then if, in their implementation or monitoring, we create only a weak structure, it not only weakens implementation, but weakens the principles themselves.

YB: Thank you very much, Mr. President, for this morning

GdM: I enjoyed it to tell you the truth. The only problem with such things is that sometimes one does have very great difficulty finding time for them. But I hope that this is very useful to understand these issues and understand them properly.

YB: Your testimony and thinking are so clear. And, from where you sit, what you say is important. I can assure you that it will be very useful.

GdM: Thank you, thank you so much.

YB: This is the beginning of tape number two.\*

GdM: It is terrible. Sometimes, you go sit at the table to find what is your place name and you have to put down your specs and see the menu.

YB: That's a problem, yes.

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\* President de Marco chaired the Economic Commission for Europe's regional hearing in preparation for the Millennium Assembly of the United Nations in July 1999.

\* Ambassador and Mrs. Michael Bartolo and Mrs. Yves Berthelot are present during the interview.

GdM: You have to be able to choose. And unless you have the specs, you find yourself not able to choose. So I always take the specs, I carry them with me wherever I am. Even if I go from room to room.

YB: I forget them everywhere.

GdM: I have one of those things which I really make it a point always to have with me in my pockets, whether it's a pocket in my trousers, a pocket in my shirt, but I won't want to stay without my specs. Because I can't read properly without the specs, and so on, annoys me. Now, sometimes, I am annoyed being also with spectacles on. So that whenever I have to read speeches, they make them of a rather large type, so that if I can, I do it without specs. Because if it is large, I can do without specs. And even in normal print, if there is very good lighting, I can read without specs.

YB: Yes, here it is possible to read without specs.

GdM: Either there is very good lighting or—

GdM: But if they are slightly larger, I can do without specs. For example, when I read speeches I don't need them because the speeches are prepared for me in larger type. And this, I can manage to carry on.

YB: But Mr. President, you are better when you don't read.

GdM: Yes, I agree with you completely. Oh, yes, oh yes, I find myself, even myself better. One, because I don't type the prepared text.

MICHAEL BARTOLO: You speak from your heart.

GdM: No, from that intellectual capacity of responding to a situation.

MB: What do you do with your notes in the General Assembly?

GdM: I always enjoy departing from the prepared text. It is one of those failings, which I enjoy having, departing from the prepared text. Sometimes I put them in difficulties because they say I pronounce myself too openly and, sometimes, if you want to make an argument, you have to have the necessary force of making an argument. And going to the usual prepared text, this is the latest edition, I'm saying,

MB: Did you like the television program?\*

YB: Excellent. I think it was a very good program indeed. Michael was good. Salvo Stellini performed well. Fred Eckhart was fantastic.

YB: But was it a surprise for you, Mr. President?

GdM: It was almost a surprise. Why was it almost a surprise? First of all, no one knew that Fred Eckhart was interviewed. But I had here John Mizzi. And John Mizzi told me, "I am going to San Anton." "Why?" I asked. "Don't you know I am going to be interviewed?" And I said, "About what?" Then he said, "I don't know. And I'm letting the cat out of the bag."

So I asked, "What is happening?" "No, someone was saying just—" And then, who else came? Salvo Stellini who told me, "how much I enjoy speaking about you." And I very naively asked him where.

MB: Probably you saw the announcement.

GdM: Perhaps that is why. And I asked Silvana, or John Mizzi and Stellini. I said to Silvana, "What is happening? I hope it's not one of those things, which I hate very much." She told me, "I don't know, but it's up to you when you see it to decide." Thank you, I enjoyed seeing it. It was not an adulation process.

MB: No, it was fantastic. And it covered everything.

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\* This question refers to a "surprise" biographical television program broadcast in honour of the president's seventieth birthday.

SUSAN BARTOLO: It was fantastic. It showed when you were married and the beginning years in politics, which for me was fascinating.

MB: That part I missed.

GdM: That was very good.

SB: And I particularly liked what Eddie Fenech Adami\* said.

GdM: Yes. Very, very good.

GdM: You're leaving me?

MB: We have to let you work.

GdM: Please, you don't disturb me. You can only inspire me.

SB: You know, I am so happy that you are being interviewed for this project.

GdM: I know, I know.

DOSITHEE BERTHELOT : Good-bye, Mr. President

GdM: Bye-bye. Bye-bye. It was nice meeting you.

YB: Thank you for leading such a nice country.

GdM: Oh, thank you so much. Very nice of you. Thanks, indeed.

YB: So, Mr. President. Thank you for this second round of questions. So, we are in 1990 now and you are now minister for foreign affairs and you have been elected to chair the General Assembly. How would you describe the world scene in 1990 and the atmosphere in the UN when you assumed the presidency?

GdM: Let me put it this way. If one were to stop at the end of July 1990, we all thought that a wonderful world was unfolding. In December 1989, Bush and Gorbachev met in Malta. The Cold War ended at this meeting. The Soviet Union was in place, moving towards becoming

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\* Eddie Fenech Adami, the prime minister

a democracy. Relations at the international level were possibly at their best. Gorby, as Gorbachev used to be called, was a household name. Things were moving fast, although still very uncertain towards German unification. The bipolar world was no longer there. Nobody thought the Soviet Union as being hostile to the western world. Until that August morning we woke up to understand that Saddam Hussein had invaded Kuwait.

When I took over as president, I therefore had these two events. One was that the bipolar world had ended. There was this concept of consensus being built. There was much hope that now the United Nations would come into its own, freed as it has been from the Cold War mentality. And at the same time, an aggression has been committed. A member state has been simply obliterated because part of Kuwait was taken up as an existing province, and the other one, a new province was created of Iraq from another part of Kuwait. So this was the general atmosphere.

The Security Council was meeting, acting on a consensus basis. [Javier] Pérez de Cuéllar was at his best, very much respected by all. And we were trying our best that Iraq would withdraw from Kuwait in a form which would not necessitate war. I'm saying this for the first time. Through Malta's ambassador in Rome, we tried to contact the Iraqi president through the ambassador of Iraq accredited to Malta, trying to ensure some handing over of Kuwait to an Arab force, which then would eventually hand over Kuwait to the emir. But there was no reaction from the Iraqi front. This idea was being mooted out in UN circles.

And we had a problem. Should the General Assembly express itself on this issue? My own view was that it is important for the United Nations to speak with one voice. The matter was too delicate to have divergent voices. When the emir addressed the GA, he had a standing

ovation. I interpreted that standing ovation to the emir that the GA was behind the liberation of Kuwait. The support, which Kuwait had within the assembly, was almost unanimous.

But my problem was, should we debate it in the GA? Iraq obviously would be taking the floor, and others might be taking the floor, and I knew that some other countries had difficulty. How to express themselves on this issue? Very difficult was the position of the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization) at that time. So after some consultations, I thought it best that the General Assembly should not have an ad hoc resolution, which even though it would have been approved, it would have given the impression (and in such conferences you have to be very careful), that there were some kind of split within the United Nations itself.

And efforts were being made to try and persuade Saddam Hussein to leave Kuwait without the need of having any battles, least of all a “mother of all battles.” I have the feeling that Pérez de Cuéllar wanted to make some solo effort to try and persuade Saddam Hussein that there was no purpose in continuing with his occupation of Kuwait. I think the feeling in New York was that Saddam Hussein was simply a year too late. He did not notice that there was the Malta meeting of Bush and Gorbachev, which ended the Cold War. He didn’t notice that a new spirit had come over the United Nations and this was best manifested eventually in the Security Council resolution, which authorized the taking of such measures as were necessary for the liberation of Kuwait.

I noted that in the occupied territories there was great resentment. This resentment came out of the logic of desperation of the Palestinians who, after decades and decades of occupation, never saw the United Nations taking the matter up, nothing to try and liberate them from Israeli occupation. They had only paper resolutions. They had only some monies through the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Palestine, and the Palestinians felt that it condemned



them to continue as refugees in their own country. We were living a contradiction. Kuwait, a state occupied, and by another Arab state. Palestine, occupied by Israel against resolutions of the United Nations calling on them to evacuate from the occupied territories. And in the case of Kuwait, the whole apparatus of the United Nations was set in motion; in the case of the Palestinians, great abandonment, now the *leitmotif*, was “our blood is not oil.” And therefore, Palestinian blood is not worth Kuwaiti oil. We were living in the full first *intifada*.

So I wanted to ensure that the United Nations starts reaffirming itself. The United Nations was acting in defending the sovereignty of Kuwait, but at the same time, the United Nations should focus on the plight of the Palestinian people, too. As you may remember, the Security Council has a meeting where all the foreign ministers were present, under the chairmanship of James Baker. This was when the Security Council resolution authorizing use of force for the liberation of Kuwait was passed. But at the same time, I had a visit from the High Commissioner Giorgio Giocameli for the refugees in Palestine. He came to see me. He was telling me, “I have problems, very serious problems.” And I raised the possibility: “Is this not something which falls directly under the president of the General Assembly? How would you consider a visit from the president of the GA to the occupied territories?” “It would be a godsend. It would be the only thing which can make the Palestinians understand that it is not true that their blood is not worth the oil of Kuwait,” Giocamelli replied.

I made my consultations there. I got a negative feeling—but never expressed—from the Secretariat, the idea that we are going to an area, which the Secretariat believed to be on their turf. So I asked, “When was the Secretary-General last there?” “Oh no, Secretary-General was ever there.” Then I asked, “What kind of efforts are you doing?” “Except for Giorgio

Giocamelli, through perseverance and support, we are not doing any particular efforts there except to sponsor resolutions.” So that is insofar as the Secretary-General’s office is concerned.

Then I had a visit from Tom Pickering. And Pickering came to tell me that the State Department viewed negatively my proposed visit to the occupied territories. I said to him, “I am open to persuasion, if you given me the reasons why I should not go there. Obviously, I heed to words of caution and reason.” And he started saying, “Right, it would be creating difficulties for Israel. And it would be also a difficult situation for the Arab world and things of the sort.” After hearing him with great attention, I said, “You persuaded me that I have to go, because in so far as the Arab world is concerned, they find it difficult to fight for the liberation of Kuwait and completely absent to any attention on the Palestinians. And insofar as Israel is concerned, I think it is better that attention be also shared with the issue of Palestine. Because, otherwise, the question about the oil of Kuwait is worth much more than the blood of the children of the *intifada* can, in the long run, have very negative effects on Israel itself.” So I told him, “as much as I appreciate your coming to see the president of the General Assembly and express your negative view to my visit, your arguments have persuaded me even more that this visit has to take place.”

I want to add, in justice to Tom Pickering, that later on after my visit to the occupied territories, he came to tell me that State (U.S. State Department) had seen the result of my visit and they said what a good visit it was, and how good the purpose was behind the visit. I say this because otherwise I’ll give a lopsided impression of the whole picture. But the whole picture was of at first a negative stand at the proposed visit then a very positive approach at the results of the visit. This was the atmosphere.

I went to the occupied territories and to Jerusalem just a week before the start of the war for the liberation of Kuwait. Gaza was a forsaken land. Seeing Gaza was seeing what it means. Perhaps the last act of civilization was completed at the time when Samson brought down the temple, when he was prisoner there in the hands of the Philistines. Otherwise, there was nothing, except oppression and depression. I remember seeing in the Arab hospital in Gaza, young people with their bowels out as a result of the shooting that used to take place between the stone-throwing youths and the Israeli army. Once we were caught between the fire of the Israeli army and the stones, which were being thrown by the Palestinian youth.

I remember going to Ramallah. There also to see what the United Nations was doing for the Palestinian refugees, I had talks with Israel's Foreign Minister Levy at that time. And Levy told me that the Israeli government wants to make peace with the Syrians, wants to make peace with the Jordanians. It will continue its peace with Egypt and with all Arab states. And I said to him, "Am I thinking that you want to make peace with the Palestinians?" "Oh, no, that's something completely different." Because the occupied territories were referred to not as occupied territories but in the name that those territories used to have in Biblical times. So I had to go back I don't know how many thousands of years to try and see what they were to be referred to in Biblical terms.

What is perhaps even better is that I had the opportunity to fly from Jerusalem to Amman on a United Nations flight. And this was done in such a way that I could fly over the settlements. And the pilot very kindly started telling me, "You see, these are Jewish settlements in Palestinian territory. So then therefore there can never be a Palestinian state because these settlements are dotted all over with excellent routes of communication and, therefore the UN resolution which

created two states, the state of Israel and the state of Palestine, in actual matter of fact, cannot be put into practice because of these settlements.”

From there, I flew to Amman, where the foreign minister of the PLO, [Farouk] Khaddoumi, was there. I asked him, “What are you doing here?” He told me, “I am on my way to Baghdad.” “What are you going to do in Baghdad?” “Well, I am going to see Saddam Hussein.” “And what are you going to tell him? Are you going to tell him that he has to get out of Kuwait, that he has no right to stay in Kuwait, that Kuwait is a sovereign territory and a member state of the United Nations, and his presence there is something which is in violation of the Charter?” He told me, “No.” I remember telling him, “But how can you expect the state of Palestine if you are not prepared to defend the state of Kuwait? Because just as a nation can take over Kuwait, a small state, eventually also Palestine will be a small state.” And I added, “I come from another small state myself and I am not trying to offend anyone. If anything, my state is even smaller. But if you accept the principle that a stronger state can obliterate the existence of a sovereign state, you who are suffering so much to get the sovereignty of the Palestinian people—a stronger country, Israel, itself, as you can see, can continue occupying your country.” I’m afraid at the times, Khaddoumi, who was following the policy of the PLO, had made the wrong choices. But this will give you the background to events.

So the spirit in the United Nations was, one, the United Nations is going to function. Two, there is a future for the United Nations Charter. Three, the observance of the Charter as a guarantor for world peace. And I started, on my return, measures to reform the United Nations, in particular with the purpose of revitalizing the General Assembly.

The General Assembly meets substantially the months from September to just before Christmas. The great debate, monologue debate, takes place. Nothing is particularly done as a

result of these speeches. And I remember introducing the procedures to have these speeches analyzed. Much work is done in many chancelleries of the world to have a good statement made by a head of state, by a minister, whoever he may be. But what happens to these speeches? We publish them. But what comes out of these publications? Are we going to try and see whether there is some common ground in all these speeches, which we have to look into? And the secretariat started to analyze the speeches, trying to bring out points raised in the statements made, for some particular action to be taken.

I had a visit when I was there from President [Ramiz] Alia of Albania, and we discovered that both of us speak Italian. And through the common language, Italian, we discovered that we could not only speak at each other, but speak to each other. Not only at each other, but also to each other. And I remember President Alia told me, "We are starting things anew now in Albania. We are going to become a democratic state." I remember telling Alia, "That's fine." He said, "Why don't you come and see us?" I said, "Why not?" And I decided to visit Albania.

The war with Kuwait was on, the war for the liberation of Kuwait. And I had to fly to see James Baker at the State Department. These were the concluding days of the war. James Baker was a very good secretary of state. I told him, one, that he had managed to lead this great coalition of forces, including Syrian and Egyptian forces, for the liberation of Kuwait. In a matter of a few days, Kuwait would be liberated. The emir, who I had met in New York when he came to attend a General Assembly meeting, had told me, "Do you really believe that my country will be liberated?" I told him, "If I interpret the feeling, both of the General Assembly and of the Security Council, it will be liberated." And I remember the emir telling me, "If what you are saying is correct, if this happens, you will be among the very first to visit Kuwait, when it has regained its sovereignty."

I remember going to see James Baker in the State Department. And he told me, “You’ve just been to Palestine. What are your impressions?” I told him that the excellent work which he did for Kuwait could be ruined if there is not a parallel activity to ensure the implementation of UN resolutions insofar as the Palestinians are concerned. And he asked, “Then what is the greatest of obstacles?” I told him, “The greatest of obstacles are the settlements.” I had the opportunity to view the settlements from flying from Jerusalem into Amman and I told him, “If I may make a suggestion to you, do fly and see for yourself the settlements.” James Baker did this. And it was then that he froze all the monies that were going for the settlements, for increasing the settlements. This gave rise to a grave situation, a difficult situation between Israel and the United States. Because James Baker said, “No more money for any other settlement because this will complicate the peace process.” Immediately after, we had the Madrid meeting, which started a new approach towards the issue between Israel and Palestinians.

I told you about my visit to Albania. Again, we wanted to bring the image that the United Nations cares—cares to ensure that its resolutions are kept, cares to ensure that if a democracy is about to be born, it monitors and helps that country. And Michael Bartolo was with me in Albania. I had made it a condition that all political forces in Albania may come and see me, whether they are in government or opposition forces. I don’t know whether Alia liked it or not, but I know that he kept his word, even though I arrived a week or so after the monument to [Enver] Hoxha was removed by the uprising.

I remember a meeting with a young doctor called Dr. Selim Berisha. He came to see us at the villa where we were staying, a small villa. And this doctor, Selim Berisha, during my first encounter with him, told me, “It’s very nice of you, Mr. President, to come and see us, to see what’s going to happen to us.” He told me, “But unless you do something, now, now,” he said,

“by this evening I will be killed. So will many of our followers, and many will be thrown in prison.” I said, “Why, I’ve come here on purpose to try and see how the democratic process is maturing.” He said, “Rest assured that the officers in the army are staging a coup to force Alia to stop the democratization of Albania, and the only way how to stop this democratization is by ensuring that we are no longer about.”

I remember meeting Mohammed Kepplani, who was the foreign minister, and we were on very good terms. And I told him, “Listen, a doctor, Selim Berisha, came to see me and he told me this and this.” He answered me, “I’ll be referring to the president, and the president will be seeing you soon.” When I went there to see President Alia, and the matter was raised by me, he told me, “Yes, I know what you are going to tell me. What Selim Berisha told you may be very true.” I said, “What do you mean, may be very true?” “It’s because I have a problem. The officers are telling me that I should not continue this democratization process. The peasants in the villages are saying that if I start democratizing, it means that I have to return the land to the owners, so they are against it. And I’m losing my vocal chords.” And he mentioned that, in Albania, vocal chords are the same words used for swords. It is a pun on the word. But he said, “I prefer to lose my vocal chords and persuade them not to do that, rather than use the swords.”

And President Alia continued telling me, “But, anyhow, rest assured that so long as you are here, nothing will happen to Dr. Berisha and his men.” I said, “Does this mean, Mr. President, I have to camp in Tirana to stop such things from happening?” He said, “I’m dealing with the situation. Let’s see what can be done.” In reference to President Alia, I will just repeat this because it’s only correct for history that this be known. He sent me word with Kepplani telling me, “The crisis is over. Nothing will happen to Dr. Selim Berisha. The democratic process which I have started will continue.”

Back in New York, I started having these open-ended meetings for the reform of the United Nations because the United Nations either had to reform or would find its role model. I wanted to exploit the spirit of the end of the Cold War and the cooperation, which started between the Soviet Union and United States. There was a symbiosis between Eduard Sheverdnadze and James Baker, which worked very well. I should have mentioned to you that, in the very October 1990, we had the CSCE meeting in New York. It was in the first days of October. This was the last meeting attended internationally by the Deutsche Democratic Republic, the DDR. And on the eve of reunification, Genscher came to see me. He told me “Mr. President had anyone twelve months ago told me that Germany would be united in a year’s time, I would have thought that he is either pulling my leg or is a fool.” Then he continued saying “The Germany which is born tomorrow will have as its objective not a German Europe, but a European Germany.” In November, we had the very important CSCE summit, which adopted the Charter of Paris, fundamental to the new security architecture so let’s continue.

After Albania, we had the problem of China. China was moving in great international isolation following Tienanmen. But how to bring China more aware of its international obligations? China had at that time, and almost up to very recently, a great foreign minister, Chian Chi Chien, with whom I managed to have a very good working relationship. At the time, another important issue was that of South Korea, the Republic of Korea. There was some backing for the Republic of Korea to join the United Nations. The Republic of Korea could not join unless also North Korea, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea joined. The problem was President Kim Il Sung, who with his One-Korea theory could not eventually see the acceptance of having two Koreas join the United Nations. The South could not join because there would be the veto in the Security Council, both of China and the Soviet Union.



Prior to going to China, I had to stop in Moscow for discussions. I had a very good meeting with the then foreign minister of the Soviet Union [Aleksandr] Bessmertnykh. He told me, “We no longer have really any strong influence on Pyongyang. We are using whatever influence we can, but better try and see and discuss the whole matter with Chian Chi Chien. We’ll be backing you to have North Korea in so you can speak with Kim II Sung, telling him that the Soviet Union is in favor.” I had a meeting also with the vice president of the Soviet Union, a certain Yanaev. And this Yanaev—I was accompanied by Valentina Matvienko, who was at that time, ambassador to Malta of the Soviet Union. Today, she is one of the deputy prime ministers of the Russian Federation.

Instead of seeing Gorbachev, I met the vice president of the Soviet Union, [Gennady] Yanaev. And he told me, “Nice to see you promoting the United Nations, et cetera.” And then he said to me, “Mr. President, in the coming months you will hear a lot about the Soviet Union. If we carry on as we are, in the coming winter we will have a problem with the people, millions of unemployed, millions who cannot brave the cold. I want you to understand that measures will be taken, but we will not be moving away from *perestroika* nor from *glasnost*.”

YB: *Glasnost*?

GdM: *Glasnost*. “These things will remain in place; don’t think that because of actions to be taken, *perestroika* and *glasnost* will be imperilled. But we have to take serious action to ensure that there will be no poverty, there will be no unemployment.” And I thought, “But what is he speaking about?” I got to know it, some months later in August, when the coup was staged by Yanaev and others, but these were pleasures yet to come.

I went over from there to Beijing and had long talks with Chian Chi Chen and how best to persuade Kim II Sung. Those were hard days for a new China, as it tried to emerge from

events of Tienanmen. I remember very clearly a long discussion with Chian Chi Chen. He told me, "Listen, at the moment, our real problem is how to feed every Chinese, how to provide a roof for every Chinese, how to provide work and education for every Chinese. Do you think, Mr. President, that once a Chinese has a job, has a home, has an education, he would not want the freedom also of his brains?" So this does explain in part the events happening in China then. When we reached the airports, Chian Chi Chen, rather excited, told me, "Maybe if the latest information is right, Kim Il-Sung may tell you, 'Yes,' that he might join." I said, "That's fine." And as soon as I arrived, I went rather optimistically oriented with this last minute information, which he had given me.

In my meeting with Kim Il Sung and his foreign minister, Kim Il Sung started with several theories. One Korea: could we not both be as one Korea in the United Nations having one seat shared by the two Koreas? I said, "I don't know how that can work itself out. Here are two separate governments who act as two different states, even though you believe in one Korea. How could you share the same chair? I never saw that two can sit on the same chair; I think it's very uncomfortable." Then he told me, "Perhaps we can do it six months for the North, six months for the South. Or we will have the seat in turns." I told him, "I'm afraid that international events do not happen by appointment on who has a six months or on the other six months." So, as Kim Il Sung told me yes, I asked Kim Il Sung whether he will agree with my crossing to South Korea through Pongmu-yong to manifest that there is one Korea? He said, "Well, no. How can we do that?" He added, "We are still at war. So if you pass through Pongmu-yong, I'll be accepting that the struggle for the reunification of Korea is over." I had to fly back to China. From China, I think, I had to go to Hong Kong, and from Hong Kong, to fly to Seoul." I informed the president of South Korea what Kim Il Sung had agreed to. At the

time, it was a very rare bird that comes from the North to the South. So you can imagine the number of photographers and journalists present at Seoul when I had to address them.

And a problem was that the North is nuclear potential. I said, "It's better, if you want to exercise control, if they are members of the United Nations, rather than if the North is outside." The Korean governments were very grateful for the result achieved. A few months after, both North and South Korea became members.

YB: You have already answered many of the questions I intended to raise. You say that, first of all, the countries should implement the resolution of the UN. And in order to make it happen, you visited different countries, you had discussions with heads of state, and so on. I think it's a first lesson you are giving. It's wholly exceptional, no, that the president of the GA goes on and involves himself so strongly in a current event?

GdM: I think it was exceptional as a fact. But it was the logical outcome, because I believe then and I believe now that a president is not only the presiding officer of the GA. When Henri Spaak became the first president of the General Assembly, the purpose behind the presidency was not only of presiding, but also of representing the General Assembly. And the president who represents the General Assembly must be the voice of the General Assembly, and must take such action as he may think necessary to ensure that what the General Assembly has decided, has resolved, is seen to. So, I wanted to give a very visible presence to the General Assembly because, otherwise, how could I ask for a revitalization of the General Assembly if the president of the General Assembly is only a presiding officer?

YB: Yes, who gives the floor?

GdM: Who gives the floor? I remember there was one moment when it was suggested to me by one of the very high officials of the Secretary-General's office: "Let me see, the

presidency decides whether, for example, if [Yasser] Arafat comes, whether he addresses the assembly for the chair of a head of state or not.” And to this I answered, “That’s a very interesting situation. But to tell you the truth, I simply don’t care much which chair Chairman Arafat is given to sit on. What I care is the implementation of the UN resolutions, the General Assembly resolutions, that is something about which a president has to care because he is duty bound to report back to the Assembly what is happening to those resolutions.”

YB: So, if you were able to do what you did, it means, at least, that there were not obstacles to that. It was your personality and your will to do it. Others could have done it before, others could do it after. But did you, in trying to revitalize the GA, try to set up rules or practices that would improve the efficiency of the GA?

GdM: Yes, you see I came from my experience in the Council of Europe. In the Council of Europe we used to have at least three sessions. In my work, I realized the work of the United Nations was, by far, much larger than that of the Council of Europe. Only in the Council of Europe, we used to have three sessions per annum. Here at the UN, we have only one real session per annum. So I said, “Why not try to give a system to our meetings? The first session, or part session, will be from September to December, discussing political issues. A second session should be from mid-January or end of January towards Easter, where we discuss economic and social issues. And with a third session, which takes us to the end of June where we discuss legal issues, human rights, and social affairs within an international context.

So if we have the heads of state, prime ministers, and foreign ministers in the first session, in the second session we would be having the ministers for economy, ministers of finance, ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) functioning to the full, how to delegate to ECOSOC some of the responsibilities of the resolutions which we pass, how to have ministers

for social affairs coming over there, bringing up the issues, world issues, world social issues there, how to render this special session is very important to re-link with IMF (International Monetary Fund) and with World Bank, not as we have so far—they come, read the report, answer some questions, and just move out, without creating an ongoing debate. Michael's articles show why we want these very important institutions to have a real link with the General Assembly. This could be in the second part session, and then in the third part session the issue of human rights and legal affairs. So this may be examined and debated in extent.

YB: What happened?

GdM: Nothing substantial. I tell you, I don't know whether I should say it openly. I did not find, in many member states, the political will to affect change. I believe that these reforms would have brought to the fore the General Assembly. It is the only organ of the United Nations where we are all permanent members.

YB: Maybe a question then. The Secretariat said nothing, did nothing, was not informed, how was it?

GdM: My impression is that the Secretariat was not trying, was not liking this idea. The president had taken a role, which went beyond that of a presiding officer. Very mistakenly, they thought that this role of the president would diminish the role of the Secretary-General. I think that both are very complementary to the other. And anyhow, what we were doing was something which no Secretary-General had done before either. So therefore, we were not occupying the turf which was occupied by others. We were occupying simply abandoned turf. So my feeling—but this is a feeling, and you cannot quantify feelings—is that it was the Secretariat who were negative, not the Secretary-General. Pérez de Cuéllar always praised my efforts very openly.

But I have a feeling that those who thought that their real power was being queried, or exposed, or taken away—it is they who really I think did not support these measures.

YB: I find it a very interesting proposal, because if it had worked, it could have been a way to have the minister of finance or the minister of economy participating. Now they are not going?

GdM: That is what I wanted to ensure. And take this question about human rights, about Kosovo, and all these places. Then I will tell you more about the Trusteeship Council, too, that I wanted to mention to you. These are areas. I went to see also the refugee camps in Ethiopia; they were very bad, the worst imaginable place where to go. And there I had problems. I remember the time CNN (Cable News Network) was running their commentary on famine in Africa and this commentator, a burly-type of commentator, was lashing out at the United Nations. “What are you of the UN doing?” he started asking in challenging tones. “I am doing something; I am here on behalf of the General Assembly, to try and ensure that also you do something to popularize and bring the problems of these refugees in their peoples’ homes through CNN. But we have to realize another thing. The United Nations is as strong as the nations forming part of it want it to be. So don’t lash out at the organization; lash out at the nations that don’t want to give to the United Nations the capacity and the instruments to put these things into effect.” That is why I always used to try to distinguish between the United Nations as an organization, and the nations forming part of the United Nations that expect a lot from the United Nations but don’t give it the power, the policies, and the finances in order to put these policies through.

YB: You have set up the principle of no double standards that you mentioned both yesterday and again today. Then you propose something concrete in order to make the GA more

visible and take more responsibility. You also have this idea of the Trusteeship Council. Could you develop it?

GdM: I was saying that there were so many problems of countries facing a breakdown—Somalia, for example—the breakdown of a state. And other countries are on the way in the future in facing this break-up process. The notion of trusteeship—a concept derived from common law—has as its basis the concept of trust, a fiduciary approach. There are rights, these people whose interests are, in certain circumstances, held in trust by humanity. The old Trusteeship Council was dying a natural death, because there were no longer territories under trust. I believe that we have to move from a trusteeship of territories to a trusteeship of peoples. And this was the great change, which was being proposed—no longer trusteeship of territories, but a trusteeship of people. Trusteeship also of matters affecting peoples: the climate, the environment, the common heritage of mankind, and the rights of future generations.

This is what the Trusteeship Council has to be all about. It's about the future, which we hold in trust. There is an old Kenyan prophet who says, "Look after this earth because it is not yours, it belongs to your children." And this old Kenyan prophet, the wise men in some Kenyan village did not know about what is the concept of common heritage of mankind, but they put it very well, very apt. And this is what we want to hold in trust in this Trusteeship Council. This is the great change, which we want to bring—a Trusteeship Council which holds in trust these issues. It would become one of the most important organs of the United Nations to perform its work into tomorrow. It will bring alongside it what we call the civil society, these NGOs (nongovernmental organizations), who through the Trusteeship Council can participate with their ideas. So my own view is that if you want to give to the United Nations a new idea, which can

spark so much of the energies, which are today, spread out with no coagulant, the Trusteeship Council can be this coagulant.

YB: But again, what happened?

GdM: It's still being discussed. Now, what else was going to happen? [Boutros] Boutros-Ghali wanted to throw it out. Boutros-Ghali wanted to throw out the Trusteeship Council, even as an organ, no longer in existence, a part of the United Nations. We stopped that. I said, "You will not be able to amend the Charter because Malta will do its best to stop this from taking place." And so we stopped the idea of the Trusteeship Council being thrown out as an organ. And then we managed also to persuade Kofi Annan to propose it within his agenda for the United Nations. From then on, I'm afraid I can't tell you that much progress has happened. But I do hope that the Maltese delegation and other delegations will have the vision how to portray this proposal. At the moment, it is struck down: "We have so much expense." It is not a question of expense. This is a question of having a vision for the United Nations.

YB: Yes, I can see many obstacles, people saying that you have to reorganize a hierarchy of institutions and things like that. But I think the vision of taking care of the future and involving what Kofi Annan would like, involving the civil society—

GdM: Exactly.

GdM: I know that Kofi Annan wants it, but I don't know what action he has taken to see it being implemented once it is already on his agenda.

YB: He's at the beginning of his second term, he has no more problems concerning his reelection, so he should—

GdM: I'm sure that Kofi Annan feels better now than he was feeling a few months ago.



YB: But you may wish to take an initiative to push it again, because it's a very good idea.

GdM: The Malta delegation to the United Nations is doing something about it. I rang up to be informed of what is happening, but my feeling is that they are moving always against the waves, against the currents, trying to bring in something which they consider themselves lucky to keep it on the agenda. And here I get rather upset. These are issues which affect a lot of the developing countries. Either we are failing in putting ourselves across, or others are insuring that our putting ourselves across is finding crossed lines.

YB: You receive here many heads of state or ministers of foreign affairs from the Mediterranean area and other parts of the world. The president of China has just visited Malta. When you receive them, does the United Nations figure among the issues you raise?

GdM: It depends. With Jiang Zemin for example, I raised the issue of the United Nations in general, where the issue about the security structure of the United Nations has to be preserved. That moving out of the UN security structure may create a lot of problems, as well as a series of precedents. If the United Nations is marginalized, this will be a serious mistake. If the United Nations is only there to occupy itself with refugees and things of the sort, after the taking of unilateral action outside the security structure provided by the Charter, I'm afraid that it is making of an important, but secondary function, a substitute for the main purpose of having the UN.

YB: Precisely. You wrote this book, *A Second Generation United Nations*—

GdM: With Michael Bartolo.

YB: With Michael. And you made a speech in 2000, “A United Nations For All Seasons.” Maybe because it’s for the record, say a few words. What would be a new United Nations? What would be the difference with the present one?

GdM: I’m afraid that the present one is not a United Nations for all seasons. It’s a United Nations which acts on some issues, but gives the impression that it is bypassed on other issues. Sometimes people can get the impression that the United Nations is used for mopping up operations, but not on the real issues of peace and war. Not on the real issues of ensuring the sovereignty of states. Not on the real issue on the use of force and when the use of force is justified. But the reason is also the Security Council, which has a major role in such matters under Chapter VII, or VI and VII, I think. In actual fact, if involved in an issue directly or indirectly any of the permanent five, there is an in-built situation whereby nothing can be done to stop an aggression, if this aggression either is carried out by one of the permanent five, willed by the permanent five, or supported either overtly or covertly by one of the permanent five. So the whole issue comes back to the veto. Is there some new thinking on the veto? The composition of the Security Council? Is there really new thinking on the composition of the Security Council? Can we introduce vote weighting, as we have in the European Union? So, perhaps vote weighting can have a useful meaning.

YB: On some issues.

GdM: On some issues. But a veto creates an in-built system whereby the Security Council cannot operate. So this is the new approach, which need be taken. Ultimately, my own point of view is this. How are we going to view the future? Do we have the courage to change or not? Do we want the United Nations to meet the challenges of this century, or do we want the United Nations to be there as something that can be useful, an umbrella which we can hold in our

hands, but which doesn't open if it starts raining? This is what we have to be very careful about. There are some who would say, "Let's leave the United Nations as it is. It will find its role within a changing world." I respect this opinion; I don't belong to it.

YB: So, you belong to the opinion to be more active?

GdM: More active, more present, and more on a consensus-building approach. And I'll tell you why. The Cold War is over, but we have to be very careful lest, slowly but surely, a mentality which is a Cold War mentality starts coming back in diplomacy. If we accept the reemergence of a Cold War perception of international events, I'm afraid we are creating problems for ourselves and for future generations. I believe a multipolar world will be emerging in the process of time. The bipolar world was a situation where we risked all of us annihilation from nuclear weapons. A multipolar world is in being. The present mono-polar structure puts on a superpower a political responsibility as a result of which it cannot afford to make mistakes. Now I never know of any person, say less a nation, say less a nation wielding so much power that it may not make a mistake. In my view a multipolar world emerging, it balances itself.

The worst thing is, if we start perceiving the world with Cold War lenses, if we use these lenses, then I'm afraid the United Nations will fail to be useful. We have to start the process of reform as to render the United Nations more effective.

YB: A multipolar world. For the time being, we say we have a unipolar world, with a superpower. And how do you see the poles emerging and what poles?

GdM: I think that the multipolar world will be obviously the United States, the European Union, the Russian Federation, China, Japan, because of its advanced technology possibly India, and South America. I don't know as yet Africa, to tell you the truth. Africa is something which at the moment, may not be seen as emerging. But Africa has great resources within itself, great

resources in its people, and whilst today we may see no light at the end of the tunnel for the emergence of Africa as a continent, perhaps we are not realizing that the light may be not so far off. But at the moment, I'm not seeing it.

YB: And Asia?

GdM: Asia. Asia, when you have China and you have Japan, you have a good part of Asia. India has not yet come fully into its own, but it has managed to maintain two things. One, a democracy, and it is a vibrant democracy. Two, in IT (information technology) it has advanced very far. So there is this great contradiction: this India, a great democracy, very highly advanced in IT, and yet with so much poverty. That I don't know as yet.

Indonesia, which is the fourth largest country in the world, again, if we go by present events, we find ourselves in difficulty to see the light at the end of the tunnel. But then again, one doesn't know enough. We have not to be futurologists, and certainly never act like prophets. I always said that a politician who wants to be a prophet is a bad politician and a worse prophet. So one has to be using always logic. Why do you think so? What do you think should be done?

YB: But for the time being, the other poles of a multipolar world are very weak, and they don't seem to dare to have autonomous policy vis-à-vis the United States, except China and Russia. Europe does not seem to play a useful role.

GdM: Let me put it this way, as I think I told you during our last session. Europe, I believe, is on the move. This common foreign security policy is making more headway than it ever did before. Europe is a very patient continent. The wisdom of centuries, and the conflicts of centuries, has led Europe to be very cautious. But being cautious does not mean that Europe is not finding its feet. I believe that Europe is on the move. And if Europe manages to envelope within its context the Mediterranean region too, even though part of this would be within an

African region, if Europe would manage to blend within its context also the Mediterranean region, then Europe will be six hundred million strong.

YB: In all of our conversation, and when asking you at the beginning of this morning, what was the context, you hardly spoke of economic issues. Nevertheless, in the early 1990s, there was also increasing poverty, increasing inequality within countries and between countries.

GdM: You see, I was involved in the last stages in the WTO (World Trade Organization). In Marrakech was set up the WTO, and this would have a bearing on events. I have, more often than not, expressed my concern on this global economy. Now I don't want to be misunderstood. I think that the global economy is a *fait accompli*. We cannot change facts. We may like them or we may dislike them, or approve them or we may disapprove them. But the economy today is global. But what this global economy means, that certain countries may fall by the wayside. And when we say countries, we mean peoples, individuals, men, women, children. If peoples will fall by the wayside because of this globalization, then am I afraid we are faced with a fact, which is a very negative fact. I don't believe that this is going to be so. I believe that within the system of globalization, there should be corrective measures, which look after such situations. And I think that the G-8 should, within this concept of globalization, ensure this. But then again, I always, in addressing the United Nations, placed strong emphasis on the least developed countries.

Last night, I think I mentioned to you my emphasis on the poverty curtain. And I said the poverty curtain is even more impenetrable than the iron curtain was. So, don't get me wrong. The fact that I did not mention it this time does not mean that I'm not concerned. Indeed, I am very concerned about those things. When I speak about a Trusteeship Council it is because I am very concerned about the economic aspect. And if I speak about having a session of the United

Nations General Assembly to be devoted to economics and to social affairs, it is because I am very concerned about this matter. Ultimately, politics is a service to the individual peoples, not something in the abstract, but something very much actual.

YB: You know, I was not saying you were not interested, but it's important to bring it up and to have your view expressed. The United Nations Intellectual History Project, the project in which you are participating, and thank you, again, is based on the *a priori* hypothesis that the United Nations has played, and could still play, an important role in maturing ideas and making them accepted by the world. Have you an assessment of all this machinery? Is it indeed an efficient instrument to develop concepts, ideas, and to make them adapted to the needs of—

GdM: This reminds me of [Winston] Churchill saying that, "Democracy is the worst possible system, but not a better one has been devised." So to a certain extent, this also applies to the United Nations. I think we have to move by the logic of persuasion. But we have to go by this logic. There are three types of logic. The logic of desperation, where you believe that the situation is hopeless and your reactions are the result of a desperate approach to a situation. The second logic is that of abdication, whereby you say, "I cannot do anything about it; I just abdicate." Third is the logic of persuasion. I believe in this one, this logic. So the logic of desperation, the logic of abdication, and the logic of persuasion.

YB: And the United Nations is a place where the logic of persuasion is applied, theoretically.

GdM: Yes, it is important to apply this logic with particular reference to those individuals and states who abdicate to their responsibilities.

YB: You know, one of the things which struck me the most listening to you during these two sessions is that you convey the message that some developing countries are not using

properly the United Nations. They have expectations related to aid but they are not using the UN to make it their institution in which they develop ideas and concepts for the future. You give this impression that they are perhaps not so much interested, except for Latin America.

GdM: Perhaps they are interested. They may feel that if they were to be involved as promoters of change, they may incur some consequences, which they would like to avoid.

YB: You mean that some power would not like them to do things and they don't dare to do it?

GdM: They might feel that expressing a view on some issues may negatively affect their own country's interest. In which case I believe that every government, every diplomat, has to look after his own country's interests, too.

YB: But you are an example of the contrary. You took initiatives which were not welcome and, after that, they were recognized as positive.

GdM: But I have no right to criticize others. Malta has certain advantages in life. Namely, that we depend on so many, but we don't depend on anyone in particular. Other countries may not have this situation that we have. So, it's not for me to judge others. Others may have their own problems, too.

YB: The other day you mentioned the role of Malta in the Mediterranean area. I would have liked to ask you a question about how you see the future of the Mediterranean and what messages you would like to leave at the end of this interview.

GdM: The Euro-Mediterranean region has a meaning. The Mediterranean may not have as yet its own identity. But we share commonalities. We have common concerns, common interests and a common heritage. Today there are some who see in the Mediterranean the battleground for a clash of civilizations. I believe that we can make it a crossroad of civilizations.

I hope to see this great divide turn into a great coagulant. If we can make it a great coagulant, we all stand to win. If we make it a great divide, I think many of us will stand to lose.

So that is why I believe in this Euro-Mediterranean concept. I believe that this Euro-Mediterranean concept can help to bring about closer links between the riparian states and beyond. Let's not make strangers out of neighbors.

YB: Wonderful formula. In saying that, in all what you have said about distance, you believe also in the regions, and your book is very much favorable to the regions. There is always a problem for the United Nations to distinguish between what has to be global, and what has to be regional, or even national. The concept of subsidiarity is an invention of the EU rather than the UN. But I would have thought that the UN should have invented it and should practice it. And my impression was that New York is not taking care enough of the regional dimensions of things.

GdM: I think that this has always been the problem. You mentioned the question of subsidiarity. In actual fact, it is a Thomistic notion. St. Thomas in his *Philosophy*, maintained that what you can do at a lower level, don't do it at a higher level. The EU introduced in its political dictionary the notion of subsidiarity. I remember Douglas Hurd, telling me "What a fine word subsidiarity is. Frankly enough," he added, "I never thought it was a word used in the English language. But yet," he said, "It's the only way how I can persuade the Conservative Party in Britain to accept the European Union." I don't know whether he was successful or not because then, as you know, Douglas left the Foreign Office and was later elevated to the [House of] Lords. But this concept of subsidiarity is a concept which is applicable in life. We have village councils, local councils, municipalities, because subsidiarity brings governance closer to the people. And this applies to the regions, and certainly does apply to the United Nations.



At the United Nations, we were rather unfortunate. We started with the Cold War. Yalta, which gave birth to the United Nations, also gave birth to the Cold War. In actual effect, the United Nations was born with an original sin, the sin of the Cold War. Once we got rid of this Cold War, we found ourselves with other problems. We lack the political will to make of the United Nations a dynamic instrument to face changing times

When you get accustomed to something being as it is, you start lacking the courage to change and indeed being also afraid of change. So what I am trying to say is this. The courage to change is always very difficult in life. To change within the context of habituality is even more difficult. And then when we come to 189 countries, it always reminds me of what [Charles] de Gaulle used to say about France, a country which has hundreds of cheeses. “How can you persuade such a country?,” de Gaulle asked. Imagine if every other country has I don’t know how many cheeses and other things different from the other, how more difficult it is to persuade a line of action.

But we have to, well, go by the logic of persuasion. It’s a long logic—it’s a difficult logic. We have to be very careful, lest we lose heart. And I wind up with what we were thinking before. Those who have the logic of persuasion, and see that they are not making any headway, let them not fall into temptation, of the logic of desperation, or even worse perhaps, the logic of abdication. Ultimately, I think, you’ll have some result.

YB: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you for the hours you have spent with me. For me it was a great pleasure and also a source of inspiration and a way to go ahead. I think it would be extremely interesting for those who will use these tapes to listen to them and to the messages which are in them. I thank you very much, very sincerely.

GdM: I thank you very much. You gave me the occasion to think aloud. And, sometimes, thinking aloud is very, very important for us all. There's nothing, which is not open to question, not open to differences. But I think thinking aloud is better than not expressing one's thoughts. If a person does not think aloud, one never communicates one's own thoughts, and is never able to use them, to share them with others; and this is what I have done in the past and what I intend to do in the future.

YB: Thank you, thank you, again.

## INDEX

- Abyssinia, 2; *see also* Ethiopia  
 Adenauer, Konrad, 7, 16  
 Africa, 45, 50-52  
 Albania, 36-39  
 Algiers, Algeria, 23  
 Alia, Ramiz, 36-38  
 Allied Forces Mediterranean, 11  
 Amman, Jordan, 34-35, 37  
 Annan, Kofi, 47  
 Arab League, 20  
 Arafat, Yasser, 43  
 Asia, 50-51  
 Asian-African Conference (Bandung), 11, 12  
 Australia, 8  
 Austria, 20-21  
 Baghdad, Iraq, 35  
 Baker, James, 32, 36-37, 39  
 Baltic region, 20  
 Bandung, Indonesia, 11, 12; *see also* Asian-African Conference  
 Barcelona Declaration, 19-22  
 Bartolo, Michael, 33, 48  
 Beijing, China, 40  
 Berisha, Selim, 37-38  
 Boffa, Paul, 10  
 Boutros-Ghali, Boutros, 47  
 Brussels, 20  
 Bush, George H.W., 16, 29, 31  
 Cable News Network (CNN), 45  
 Canada, 8  
 Charter of Paris, 39  
 Chen, Chian Chi, 40-41  
 China, People's Republic of, 39-41, 48, 50-51  
 Churchill, Winston, 53  
 civil society, 46  
 climate change, 17, 46  
 Cold War, 8, 12, 16-17, 29, 30-31, 39, 50, 56  
     impact on UN, 39, 56  
 common foreign and security policy, 20  
 Commonwealth of Nations, 8, 20  
 Conservative Party (UK), 55  
 Council of Europe, 14-16, 25, 18, 43  
 Council on Mutual Economic Cooperation (COMECON), 16  
 Council for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), 15, 17, 39  
 Cuba, 16  
 de Gasperi, Alcide, 7, 16  
 de Gaulle, Charles, 56  
 decolonization, 8  
 developing countries, 48  
 development, models of, 13  
 Democratic Nationalist Party (Malta), 5  
 Development Decades, 14  
 Eastern Europe, 8, 49-50, 55  
 Eckhart, Fred, 28  
 Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), 14  
 Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), 43  
 Eden, Anthony, 9  
 Egypt, 8, 34, 36  
 Eisenhower, Dwight, 9  
 Ethiopia, 45  
 Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area, 19  
 Europe, 3-5, 7, 12, 15-16, 17, 19, 22, 23, 39, 51, 55  
     federalism in, 4-5  
 European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), 25  
 European Declaration of Human Rights, 24  
 European Economic Community (EEC), 16; *see also* European Union  
 European Union (EU), 19-22  
 Fenech Adami, Eddie, 29  
 Finland, 20-21  
 France, 8, 14  
*Future is for Freedom, The*, 16  
 Ganado, Herbert, 5  
 Gaza strip, 34  
 Geneva, Switzerland, 23, 26  
 Germany, 14, 16, 30, 39  
 Giacamelli, Giorgio, 32  
*glasnost*, 40  
 Gorbachev, Mikhail, 16, 29-31, 40  
 Group of 8 (G-8), 23  
 Hammarskjöld, Dag, 7  
 Hamrun, Malta, 2  
 Helsinki, Finland, 15  
 Hong Kong, 41  
 Hoxha, Enver, 37  
 human rights, 6, 15, 24, 43, 45  
 Hungarian uprising, 8  
 Hurd, Douglas, 55  
 Hussein, Saddam, 17, 30-31, 35  
 ideas, 1, 3, 6, 17, 53-54  
     and the UN, 53-54  
     biographical influence on, 1-3, 6  
     small countries and, 17  
 India, 50-51  
 Indonesia, 51  
 International Criminal Court (ICC), 25  
 International Labour Organization (ILO), 14  
     Employment Programme of, 14  
 International Monetary Fund (IMF), 44  
 international law, 3  
 intifada, 32-33  
 Iraq, 30  
 Ireland, 20-21  
 Israel, 8, 32-35, 37

- Italy, 1-3, 7  
 Japan, 3, 50-51  
 Jerusalem, 34, 37  
 Jordan, 34  
 Kepplani, Mohammed, 38-39  
 Keynes, John Maynard, 13  
 Korea, Democratic People's Republic of (North), 39  
 Korea, Republic of (South), 39  
 Kosovo, 45  
 Kuwait, 17, 30-37  
 Labour Party (UK), 9  
 Latin America, 20, 54  
 Libya, 10  
 London, UK, 3  
 Madrid, Spain, 37  
 Maginot Line, 2  
 Malta, 1-3, 5-6, 8, 11-14, 16-21, 24, 29-31, 40, 47-48, 54  
     independence of, 8  
     neutrality of, 21  
 Marrakech, Morocco, 52  
 Marshall Plan, 9  
 Marxism, 13  
 Matvienko, Valentina, 40  
 Mediterranean region, 15, 8-11, 15-21, 48, 52, 54-55  
 Meguid, Esmat Abdel, 20-21  
 Middle East, 19, 21  
 Mifsud, Ugo, 6  
 Mindsenty, Cardinal, 8  
 Mintoff, Dominic, 8-12, 15, 17-18  
 Mizzi, Enrico, 6, 10, 28  
 Moscow, Russia, 40  
 Moussa, Amre, 20  
 Munich, Germany, 2  
 Mussolini, Benito, 2  
 Nagy, Imre, 8  
 Nationalist Party (Malta), 3-6, 8, 10, 12, 15  
 New York, New York, 31, 36, 38  
 neutrality, 21  
 New International Economic Order (NIEO), 16, 23  
 New York, New York, 3, 55  
 New Zealand, 8  
 Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), 11  
 North Africa, 10  
 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 11-12  
 North Korea, *see* Korea, Democratic People's Republic of  
 North-South relations, 16, 18, 21  
 Northern Ireland, 8  
 Norway, 20  
 nuclear weapons, 50  
 Nuremberg trials, 3, 25  
 occupied territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip), 32-34  
 Olivier, Giorgio Borg, 6, 10-11  
 Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE), 15, 23  
 Palestine, 31-35, 37  
 Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), 31, 35  
 Pardo, Arvid, 17  
 Paris, France, 23  
 peacekeeping, 15, 49  
*perestroika*, 40  
 Pérez de Cuéllar, Javier, 30-31, 44  
 Pickering, Thomas, 33  
 poverty, 23, 52  
 Pyongyang, North Korea, 40  
 Ramallah, West Bank, 34  
 refugees, 32, 34, 45, 48  
 Rome, Italy, 30  
 Roosevelt, Eleanor, 6  
 Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, 6  
 rural development, 12  
 Russia, 20, 40, 50-51; *see also* Soviet Union  
 Schumann, Robert, 7, 16  
*Second Generation United Nations*, 48  
 Seoul, South Korea, 41-42  
 Shevardnadze, Eduard, 16, 39  
 Sicily, 1  
 Somalia, 46  
 South America, 50  
 South Korea, *see* Korea, Republic of  
 Southern Europe, 14  
 Soviet Union, 9, 16, 23, 29-30, 39-40; *see also* Russia  
 Spaak, Henri, 42  
 Spain, 2, 20  
 Stellini, Salvo, 28  
 Strasbourg, France, 18, 24  
 Suez Crisis, 8  
 Sung, Kim Il, 39-41  
 sustainable development, 46  
 Sweden, 20-21  
 Switzerland, 21  
 Syria, 34, 36  
 Thatcher, Margaret, 13  
 Tiananmen Square, 39, 41  
 Tirana, Albania, 38  
 Trusteeship Council, 45-47, 52  
 UN Charter, 3, 15, 35, 47-48  
 UN General Assembly, 1, 15, 16-17, 27, 29, 30, 31-33, 35-36, 42-45, 53  
 UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR), 31  
 UN Security Council, 17, 30-32, 36, 39, 49  
     resolution on Kuwait, 31-32  
 Uganda, 6  
 United Kingdom (UK), 2-6, 8, 9-10, 11-12, 20  
     *and* the Suez Crisis, 8  
 United States (U.S.), 8-9, 20, 25, 39, 50-51  
     as sole superpower, 50-51  
 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 24

Valletta, Malta, 2  
war crimes, 3  
Warsaw Pact, 12, 23  
World Bank, 44  
World Trade Organization (WTO), 52  
World War II, 1-3, 6-7  
Yalta conference, 8, 56  
Yugoslavia, 24  
Zemin, Jiang, 48