

Round Table

NEW RISKS AND CHALLENGES OF STABILITY CONSIDERATIONS IN GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

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CHAIRPERSONS:

- I. O. ABRAMOVA *Director of the Institute for African Studies of the RAS, member of the Presidium of the RAS, corresponding member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Economics)*
- Al. A. GROMYKO *Director of the Institute of Europe of the RAS, corresponding member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Political Studies), Professor of the RAS*
- G. W. KOLODKO *Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance of Poland (1994–1997, 2002–2003), Director of the Research Institute at the Kozminski University (Warsaw), foreign member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Economics), Professor*
- A. MOUSSA *Secretary General of the Arab States (2001–2011), Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt (1991–2001)*
- L. RIVERA MARIN *Secretary of State of Puerto Rico*

SPEAKERS:

- A. A. AKAYEV *President of the Kyrgyz Republic (1990–2005), foreign member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Engineering)*
- E. BAĞIŞ *Minister of European Union Affairs of Turkey (2009–2013)*
- A. BEBLER *Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)*
- H. de CHAVAGNAC *Consul General of the Republic of France in St. Petersburg*
- V. A. CHERESHNEV *Chief Researcher at the Institute for Immunology and Physiology (the Urals Branch of the RAS), member of the Presidium of the Urals Branch of the RAS, Academician of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Medicine), Professor, Doctor honoris causa of SPbUHSS*
- B. DESGARDINS *General Manager of Banque “Eric Sturdza SA” (Geneva, Switzerland)*
- L. L. FITUNI *Deputy Director of the Institute for African Studies of the RAS, corresponding member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Economics), Professor*
- V. INGIMUNDARSON *Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Iceland (Reykjavík), Ph. D.*
- H. KÖCHLER *President of the International Progress Organization (Vienna, Austria), professor emeritus at the University of Innsbruck, Ph. D.*
- A. M. KRAMARENKO *Director of Development of Russian International Affairs Council, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation*
- A. V. KUZNETSOV *Director of the Institute of Scientific Information for Social Sciences of the RAS, corresponding member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Economics)*
- G. METTAN *President of the United Chamber of Industry and Commerce “Switzerland – Russia and CIS States”, Executive Director of the Swiss Press Club (Geneva)*
- R. I. NIGMATULIN *Research Advisor of P. P. Shirshov Institute of Oceanology of the RAS, member of the Presidium of the RAS, Academician of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Physics and Mathematics), Professor*
- V. PRODANOV *Director of the Thracian Scientific Institute, Professor at the University of National and World Economy (Sofia), corresponding member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Dr. Sc. (Philosophy)*
- H. M. REZNIK *Vice-President of the Federal Chamber of Lawyers, Cand. Sc. (Law), Honoured Lawyer of Russia, Doctor honoris causa of SPbUHSS*

M. SANAEI	<i>Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Russian Federation, Cand. Sc. (Political Studies)</i>
J. A. SCHOLTE	<i>Professor of Peace and Development in the School of Global Studies at the University of Gothenburg (Sweden)</i>
R. STEINMANN	<i>Consulate Attaché of the Swiss Consulate General</i>
I. TALUKDAR	<i>Research Fellow at the Indian Council of World Affairs (New Delhi)</i>
P. P. TOLOCHKO	<i>Member of the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Honorary Director of the Institute of Archeology of the NAS of Ukraine, academician of the NAS of Ukraine, foreign member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (History), Professor, Doctor honoris causa of SPbUHSS</i>
V. T. TRETYAKOV	<i>Dean of the Higher School (Department) of Television of Lomonosov Moscow State University</i>
Cs. VARGA	<i>Research professor emeritus of the Institute for Legal Studies at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Peter Pazmany Catholic University (Budapest), Dr. Sc.</i>
J. WIATR	<i>Minister of National Education of Poland (1996–1997), deputy to the Polish Parliament (Sejm) (1991–1997, 2001), Dr. Sc. (Sociology), Professor</i>
A. S. ZAPESOTSKY	<i>President of St. Petersburg University of the Humanities and Social Sciences, corresponding member of the RAS, Dr. Sc. (Cultural Studies), Professor, Scientist Emeritus of the Russian Federation</i>

A. S. ZAPESOTSKY: – Dear friends! We go on with our discussion of global manageability and stability. Please, do not read your reports as they were published but share your opinions and impressions of the reports presented at the plenary session.

Currently, four other sections started their work at the University. One of them is dedicated to culture in the age of global changes, the second to economy and law, the third to social and labour relations, relations of governments, trade unions and corporations, and finally, 750 schoolchildren will assemble for the fourth section to share their humanitarian ideas.

I hope that you will have an interesting and informative discussion. I wish your section to be a success!

Al. A. GROMYKO: – Alexander Sergeevich, thank you for opening the section “New Risks and Challenges of Stability Considerations in Global Development”. We’ll give the floor to everyone wishing to speak whenever possible, or, as they say in Germany, arrange impulsive speeches.

The floor is given to Anton Bebler from Ljubljana. There was a time when I found myself at the Bled Strategic Forum (Bled island, Slovenia), where the issues of maintaining stability of global development were discussed.

A. BEBLER: – I want to raise the question of the stability of the present system of relations between major powers, which is a system of arms control agreements and treaties, which is being dismantled by unilateral withdrawal from the system, from individual treaties and agreements by the United States. The United States have withdrawn from the ABM treaty in 2000 without accusing any state, including mine, and the Russian Federation, of violating the ABM treaty. Well, this time last year, in October 2018, Pres-

ident Donald Trump announced the intention of the United States to withdraw from the INF treaty. This time the United States accused the Russian Federation of violating the INF treaty without producing any evidence to support this accusation. There is also a related movement by the United States to withdraw from the nuclear agreement with Iran, which falls into the same category.

Now, there is a high probability that President Trump will announce the refusal of the United States to extend the New START treaty, which expires in 2021. All this is part of a pattern by the US to deny or to undermine multinational diplomacy.

Now, as far as the INF treaty is concerned, there was no need for the United States to accuse the Russian Federation of violating the treaty because as a number of other treaties, the INF treaty has become obsolete. It was true also of the ABM treaty, it was true of a number of agreements, bilateral agreements, which were concluded between the United States and the Soviet Union in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Indeed, a number of these treaties, including the multilateral treaty on conventional forces in Europe, have become obsolete because of radical changes in the geo-political situation, i.e. the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, then the expansion of NATO eastward. As far as the INF treaty is concerned, the additional element, which caused the problem with the treaty, was development of various high technologies, including IT technologies, and the spread of these technologies to other countries, particularly in Asia, to North Korea, India, China, Pakistan, Iran and so on. And for this reason, for the combination of these reasons, there was indeed a need to do something about the INF treaty, but notwithstanding the position of the Russian Federation supported by the position of a number of European members of NATO, there was a need to renegotiate the treaty.

So, I think there was a need to renegotiate the treaty, but even had it been renegotiated by the United States and the Russian Federation, it would be of no use without China and India and Iran joining the treaty. The rise of the People's Republic of China, technological and military rise China has produced, gave China certain rights. But as far as Europe is concerned, it had a negative impact on the security situation in Europe because the INF treaty has become obsolete mainly because of the development of the Chinese missile might. And that was the main reason for the United States to withdraw from the treaty, not violations, presumed violations of the treaty by the Russian Federation. Thank you.

Al. A. GROMYKO: – Professor Csaba Varga is invited to take the floor.

Cs. VARGA: – Ladies and gentlemen, my remarks address first the relationship between law and the understanding of predictability and manageability of the future. My answer from a legal-philosophical perspective offers quite a negative message unfortunately. Historically speaking, in the final analysis, law is not a master but a servant of upcoming events. Law is considered to be an autonomous actor by political rhetoric, by legal professionalism exclusively. That is, it may appear as a standing and ultimate mediator at times when the underlying law and order is not shaken, not challenged. As a matter of fact, historically speaking again, law has ever been calibrated to correspond to consolidated conditions of given states. If this is not the case, if disintegration overrules the integration of people and order in a given state, the psychological disposition to obedience evaporates. Freed from the balance achieved hitherto, motifs and manners, unbound from the rules of the game not prevalent any longer, will concur in rivalry. Roughly speaking, during the whole course of history, law was backed by a common belief and a common moral ground. If they vanish for whatever reason, then law becomes impotent. Or, to put it differently, law has only a symbolic power. Law is not more than just a tool, a means of societal mediation. International law and domestic law, as well as human rights were referred to here several times. If international law deals with two countries quarrelling because of their conflicts of interest, all that the law can do is only to reshift the conflict in real terms into its own abstracted language. Ontologically expressed, that's all it is able to do. And we are to see that the one who is stronger – either in power or in rhetoric – will eventually win. So, according to my first consideration, law is one of the most important civilizing agents for our culture, but not more. Our security, our future cannot be trusted solely to law, only to ourselves. Otherwise speaking, it is us who finally act behind the noble facade of the apparently depersonalized human objectification, called “law”.

The second point relates to the oldest history of law. I mean Mesopotamia and its Jewish constituent, a rather small but important part with the prophets, where the idea of reshaping and remodelling human life via law, with conscious planning through the law, may have emerged. Then, in the 19th century, there was Marxism and so on, and positivism and Auguste Comte. As their output, the idea of social engineering also emerged. Now, what we can see is that the most intimate identity cores of our personal pres-

ence has already become targeted by political actors aiming to change the very roots of people's common sense, and thereby also their personal identity within human society. I am just citing Hillary Clinton's words from her presidential campaign: “And deep-seated cultural codes, religious beliefs and structural biases have to be changed.” (National Review, April 24, 2015). Or, interventionist ambitions are escalating uninterrupted, with deeper dangers to the human species growing.

The third component of my contribution concerns technology and globalism, factors which were referred to here as a good and important – helpful – potential. Whether it is important, yes, it is; whether it is good, no, it is neither good nor bad, it's neutral. There may be good reasons for bad purposes as well. So, my conclusion is that what is primarily important is the quality of human beings, now and in the future. And in this sense I may perhaps add that all of us, who are, let's say, idealists believing in humans and in our humaneness, are right. Thank you.

Al. A. GROMYKO: – Professor Varga, you raised several fundamental issues in your speech: about strategic stability, law as a tool that should not replace human activities, social engineering and globalization as phenomena that bring both good and evil to the people.

The floor is given to corresponding member of the RAS Alexey Vladimirovich Kuznetsov.

A. V. KUZNETSOV: – When we are speaking about challenges and risks of development, we can't help but pay attention to economic aspects and geopolitical challenges, which we run across in the field of international law and security and which have an impact on development of economic relations.

One of the interesting aspects is activities of transnational corporations (TNC). When globalization developed progressively in the late 20th century and the early 21st century, there was an optimistic opinion that transnational corporations were becoming more and more autonomous from political life. This was really confirmed: many big TNC lost their ties with their national roots because they became controlled by portfolio investors from other countries. Thus, Nestlé or Nokia are not controlled by the Swiss or Finns respectively as shareholders, though they have their national management. Value chains have become global, because of that there was even an opinion expressed in mass media and academic papers that the biggest corporations because of their economic volumes could take part in international relations as independent players on equal terms with small countries.

However, recent events demonstrated that the state does not intend to die, and what is more, companies turned out dependent on what is taking place in politics. We are first of all speaking about the sanctions war, because of which exactly private TNC suffered, having no relation to political events, in connection with which sanctions were imposed (lawfully or not).

The second aspect is not related to the conflict situation but it is very important in politics, and not only for non-Western countries – this is Brexit. Companies were faced with the fact against their will: the common economic space, in which they worked for decades, is disintegrating. It may be that only a small piece broke away, but judg-

ing by extraordinarily high dynamics of economic growth in Ireland, we understand that British business is running away from the United Kingdom jurisdiction.

The third aspect is related to armed confrontations and loss of comfortable markets by TNC that just started their foreign activities. In case of the Russian business, this is the loss of the Ukraine that was a comfortable region for us in the past. In case of the Arab business from the Persian Gulf monarchies, this is the loss of an opportunity to invest in many Arab countries after the Arab Spring. It's required to look for other markets, and that casts back transnational corporations of respective countries – new players in their competitive struggle.

As a result, transnational corporations are being reformatting, and that will go on for over ten years more. The role of transnational corporations at least partially controlled by the state is revived: a public-private company is associated with its country, and it's better to enlist state's support. TNC-migrants originate, when firms intentionally leave the country with "bad" jurisdiction for doing international business. And finally, besides TNC, non-transparent investment funds, natural persons who start investing like global players are becoming more and more active, and at the same time the role of sovereign foundations is increasing. That is, complete reformatting takes place, and we have to comprehend what that will give to global development.

AI. A. GROMYKO: – Alexey Vladimirovich, you touched upon a big section of the global world's life. Not just evolutionary processes but quick transformation of the situation takes place in this field.

The floor is given to Professor Jerzy Wiatr.

J. WIATR: – What I would like to concentrate on are the reasons for the destabilisation of the world order after the end of the Cold War. 25–30 years ago, after the end of the Cold War, there was a widespread expectation that the world was entering a long period of stability. The basis for this was essentially the belief that the American hegemony would remain a lasting factor. So, the term "Pax Americana" was often used after the ancient term "Pax Romana". Probably, nobody believed that Pax Americana would be an ideal solution for the world, but it was widely believed that, at least for one or two generations, that would provide a kind of stability. Now we know that that illusion was wrong, and the question is why. I see three principle reasons for the end of stability based on American hegemony.

The first reason concerns the mistaken policy of the United States, particularly under George Walker Bush, the intervention in Iraq, and continuation of this policy now, even worse strategies used now by Donald Trump. The United States, in a sense, abdicated from their role as the leading world power. The second factor is the rapid and unexpected at that time repairs, growth of two alternative great powers; Russia and China. In the early 1990s, very many specialists believed that it would take China at least two generations to reach the level of a world power. China did it much faster, and the CIA speculated that the crisis of Russia would not only continue but would deepen. Both predictions turned out wrong and now the world lives in the conditions of the rivalry between regional powers, weaker at this point than the United States but strong enough to prevent American hegemony. Then there is the third fac-

tor, it is the destabilisation of several countries because of their domestic reasons. One group of such countries is the Arab countries. The disastrous consequences of the supposed Arab Spring resulted in destabilisation of the Middle East and North Africa, civil wars from Libya to Yemen, Syria etc. The Ukrainian crisis of 5 years ago is another example. The domestic crisis in the Ukraine, which was not produced by any outside force, resulted in an international conflict, which involves, on the one hand, the Russian Federation, on the other hand, the United States and the European Union.

So, the combination of these three factors destabilised the situation, and the conclusion is that we should be careful and not overoptimistic, and not predict a better future prematurely. Thank you very much.

AI. A. GROMYKO: – Another topic not touched upon by the previous speakers was raised – the civilizational aspect of international relations. Professor Wiatr used the term of "destabilization" and called us not to be too optimistic, though I think that this appeal is not much in demand today as there are no optimistic moods.

The floor is given to corresponding member of the RAS Leonid Leonidovich Fituni.

L. L. FITUNI: – I'd like to react to what was said at the plenary session. I'll come back to the topic of the Likhachov Scientific Conference – "Global Development: Challenges of Predictability and Manageability". I'd like to ask everyone present the following questions: how deeply are we plunged in a hardly predictable situation and do we need manageability in the world? Manageability supposes that someone controls somebody else, and when there is someone controlling, there is a state of affairs when someone controls and someone does not – hence the conflict of interests.

One of the population's complaints against the Soviet Union at the time of its disintegration was enhanced predictability of the country. We called it stagnancy or still waters, lack of movement forward, as a result we got what we got.

A question arises in connection with predictability: what is to be done? I'm engaged in African studies, I've been to the jungle. In places with wild animals and especially in the jungle, they caution you: the jungle is unpredictable and full of the unexpected. As a rule, that is not an obstacle for us during safari to attain our aims no matter that the jungle is unpredictable. We proceed from the fact that predators behave in a certain way: there is a model of predators' behaviour, and we behave and act proceeding from what we are to expect from them. If it is safari with hunting, you come back with the killed lion's hide notwithstanding that lion is unpredictable, and without negative consequences.

I'll bring my deliberations to the politics level. We have to know habits and behaviour of today's predators and understand the state of affairs in the modern political world. Currently, we have come close to the situation when the leading global powers are trying to divide the world between themselves, and not territories as in the past but divide markets and influence. Proceeding from that, we have to adapt our foreign-policy behavioural pattern.

I'd like to mention V. Lenin's paper *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, in which he scolds Social

Democrat Hildebrand as he actually switched over to advocates of imperialism speaking about “the United States of Europe” without Russia, joint actions against African Negroes, Islamic movement, Japan and China coalition, keeping strong Army and Navy, etc. It turns out that the first item is united Europe without Russia; the second item is confrontation with Islamism and African Negroes that migrate to Europe and occupy places there; the third is the threat of Japan coalition that transformed today into the threat to the West that needs to resist Russia and China; the fourth is the necessity to increase military expenditures up to 2% of GDP. The question arises: have we come back to the jungle?

Al. A. GROMYKO: – Leonid Leonidovich, thank you for your metaphors and reference to history. I remind you that the last thirty years of the 19th century were the time of the “struggle for Africa”, struggle for division of territories that had not been divided yet. It is possible that another region, the Arctic, will be viewed from the military policy perspective in the 21st century.

Professor Valur Ingimundarson is invited to the microphone.

V. INGIMUNDARSON: – Ok, thank you, I am dealing – in my paper – with the backlash against globalisation by focusing on the current state of the radical right in Europe. This is a particularly salient topic these days with the elections to the European Parliament taking place at the end of May. I am not going to rehash my main arguments here, but I want to emphasize a couple of points.

I believe that it is not enough to study populism as an ideology, although it has undergone some changes, for example, by turning increasingly away from a neoliberal agenda towards the protection of the welfare state. One does not have to mention that the populist parties are only thinking about the protection of the majority population, not the immigrant population. I want to emphasize that apart from ideology, there is a need to focus on the behaviour of these parties within political systems. They have benefited in liberal, democratic systems from the dislocation between personal identities and political party affiliation. The decline of social democracy and also many central liberal parties has also strengthened them.

But I want to point to one contradiction: these parties are, on the one hand, a disrupting anti-elitist force seeking to reverse mainstream policies on immigration, welfare, multiculturalism and European integration; on the other, they are an accommodating political vehicle prepared to work with conservative elites based on nationalist and traditionalist agendas. So, the attention should not exclusively be devoted to the populists themselves but also to conservative parties, which have parroted some of the agendas of the populists by moving further to the right. And because we have been discussing the future, I predict that a future struggle will take place between the populists and the conservatives or the radical and conservative right. The political outcome will much depend on who will win this struggle. I am reminded here of the current crisis in the conservative-populist government in Austria. It may be the start of a change in the way how conservative parties view populist parties. We will see. Thanks.

Al. A. GROMYKO: – The floor is given to Mr Guy Mettan.

G. METTAN: – So, thank you very much. I just wanted to underline two points. The first point is the environment problem because we didn’t speak about that. But look at the speed of climate change, deforestation, acidification of oceans, disappearance of agricultural lands and air pollution, which is killing 7 million people a year, not here but in the third-world countries. You’ll see that the environment problem and climate change will be the main topic in the coming years. I can predict that in 5 or 10 years we will speak here about that and not about other problems because it will be problem number one. It is not the question of only oil and gas energy resources, but all natural resources will be scarce, more and more scarce, and there will be struggle for these natural resources, for land, for food, for fish, any kind of natural resources will be the main problem for the main states and powers in our future. And I think we have to keep that in mind, otherwise we cannot understand what will happen to the Earth in the coming time, in the future. Because there is no future for mankind without nature.

The second point is the definite death of the multipolar world. I think that the multipolar world has never existed, it was a dream, but now we can assess the definite death of this dream because in the last 10 years we saw the emerging of the new bipolar world between, to put it roughly, the USA with Europe and Japan, on the one hand, and China with Russia, Iran and other countries, on the other hand. And that’s, for me, is a really big concern because we have, if we want to save our lives, to avoid this kind of division of the world in the two competing parts. If you read newspapers, every day we have an escalation of the struggle between these two new poles. It’s artificially made, nobody wants that. China is trying to break their containment through the Belt and Road initiative, but anyway we are assisting this rising of the new bipolar world. And the problem is we have no account of power. The European Union has completely disappeared from the scene so it cannot play the role of a balancing power between the two poles. It’s the natural mission of Europe to lead this world but it has been completely vassalized by the United States, which is not good for the United States in my view either, because we need some counterbalance in order to keep cool or to cool this coming confrontation. So, those were my two points I wanted to emphasize this morning.

Al. A. GROMYKO: – Thank you, Mr Mettan, for the masterfully described alignment of forces in the world. Mr Steinmann, you are welcome.

R. STEINMANN: – So, hello, I am the Consulate Attaché of the Swiss Consulate General here in St. Petersburg. I am here on behalf of Mr Roger M. Kull who is the Consul General. And it’s very nice of you to invite me to this remarkable Conference. Unfortunately, I was called only yesterday and so I didn’t have time to prepare anything, any speech. But I am delighted to be here and follow the interesting discussion. Thank you.

Al. A. GROMYKO: – I invite corresponding member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Vasil Prodanov to take the floor.

V. PRODANOV: – The name of our section is about new risks and challenges of stability. There are two types of risks; old and new risks. The old risks are well-known; growing inequality, geopolitical risks connected with the transition from a monopower to a multipower world, the same as it was a century ago. But there are also new risks. According to me, the new risks are connected with the peculiarities of the post-industrial revolution.

I would like to point to several characteristics of these new risks. The first one is the speed of the social and economic time, the exponential character of the changes as a result of the speed of innovations. Now, there are so many changes in one day that, over a century ago, happened in several years. The result is a feeling of risks and insecurity for a growing number of people and an increasing divide of losers and winners in this society.

The second characteristic is the convergence of physical, biological, social and digital world, of different disciplines; knowledge, realities are the main characteristics of the post-industrial revolution. The result is a much more complex system.

The third characteristic is the disruptive character of the new technologies and disruptive consequences for the economy, social structure of the society.

The fourth characteristic is the compression of space as a result of globalisation, communication and transport technologies, the growth of the Internet space, and, as a result, growing dependence of every local event on the rest of the world. These are the new risks, and they originate because all that drastically complicates the system of governance based on the representative multiparty system of liberal democracy, which is losing support everywhere. Politicians are losing confidence, there is a growth of stress in societies and it is difficult to understand what is going on. A growing number of people think that their society is not going in the right direction. The opportunity to influence the accelerated unfounded changes in national states from every part of the world dramatically complicates the management process. Systemic parties are losing ground, but newcomers are faced with gigantic difficulties. They are not able to make the right decision in the stream of continuous changes. These are the new risks according to me. Thank you.

Al. A. GROMYKO: – Mr Prodanov touched upon the topic of social injustice and tension, its impact on relations between various parts of the society and states.

We listened to nine impulsive speeches, and the speakers did not repeat what the others were saying even once. There were many topics for discussion offered, each of which is important. From now on, Irina Olegovna Abramova will moderate the debate instead of me.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Dear colleagues, I offer to focus the discussion not on the issue as to who is guilty but on what is to be done. The task of any conference is not just to raise this or that issue but to find answers to certain questions.

The floor is given to Vitaly Tovievich Tretyakov.

V. T. TRETYAKOV: – Like Professor Fituni, I am not satisfied with the topic of our discussion. What stability do we need? Professor Fituni was right to say that there was stability in the USSR and it was called stagnancy or still

waters. There was stability in the European Union, people were happy but as a result this formation is disintegrating like I predicted, in contrast to many others who believed in infinite stability of the European Union. Do we need such stability? I think that we don't, because we require normal life and not stability.

But if we need stability, what do we understand under it? Polycentrism, bipolar system or something else? I stick to a not very popular point of view that great powers govern the world, and the balance between them is the basis for the global architecture, respective legislations, international organizations for the next 50–75 years. As soon as this balance is disturbed because of development, destruction of institutions begins, and instability comes, which we do not like.

It is required to determine the set of great powers that does not change significantly in the course of the human history. They are known in Europe. Some great powers are dying politically. It is required to determine great powers and demand sensible balance of forces and responsibility in order not for one of them to say that it can use nuclear weapons preventively. That is what is required to be done and not demand stability and not overcome risks. All our life is a risk, from the time of birth. The academic character and intellectual conservatism of deliberations on global or regional stability make me concerned. In my opinion, we are moving in the wrong direction in our discussion.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – What are the criteria of a great power? Economy? But from the point of view of economy, the West lost its leadership in the world. Having nuclear weapons? The system that served as the basis for the UN Security Council is changing. More and more states originate with a nuclear arsenal. It being legitimate is another matter. Stronger political influence, global governance institutions? To my mind, the notion of “great power” is shifting. The economic basis moves from the West to the East, and all tools to control this basis are concentrated in the West. It may be that this is the reason of conflicts: the West does not want to let the tools go, but they are being taken from it. I offer to speak about it as well today.

The floor is given to Askar Akayevich Akayev.

A. A. AKAYEV: – In my speech I'd like to develop the topic of inequality. Usually, a black swan bringing big risks appears unexpectedly. It seems to me that the black swan of the 2020s is inequality. Professor Prodanov touched upon this topic in his speech. There was a peculiar record set in 2018 – 1% of rich people in the world owned over 50% of global wealth, and 50% of poor people have to do with 0.6% of global wealth. As Al. A. Gromyko mentioned, there is growth of inequality witnessed in all advanced countries of the world (except social Scandinavian countries, Germany, Switzerland, etc.).

New technologies of Industry 4.0 (the Fourth Industrial Revolution) will aggravate inequality and exponentially eliminate the middle class. And the middle class is the support of political and social stability of the society. There will be no middle class in developed countries in ten years. Who will support stability?

Social innovations, progressive taxation were introduced after World War II. But not a single government in the world uses social innovations today, all choose intro-

duction of flat tax rates instead of progressive rates. That is, the social policy of global government at the national and global levels is focused on the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer.

The first signal about the unfavourable state of affairs came from France, and we are witnessing that now. If we do not fight these risks, the same situation as in France, or even more pitiful than in France, will be witnessed in all well-to-do advanced countries in the 2020s. This risk seems to me to be the main destabilizing factor in the world.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – I give the floor to Robert Iskandrovich Nigmatulin.

R. I. NIGMATULIN: – I agree that if we understand the word “stability” nominally, it turns into “stagnancy” or “still waters”. We want the world to advance, notwithstanding origination of new problems. Irina Olegovna asked what was to be done, and I ask the question: how? Had I controlled the world, I’d give the countries the opportunity to be more open because openness is trust. I think that R. Reagan’s principle “Trust but verify” should be spread not only to the military sector, but also to civil society’s institutions, mutual control and not just by journalists but more official, in particular, economic ministries. Everything should be official but with representatives of the academic community taking part in everything. To my mind, control over institutions and the civil society can help advancement. I love my country, but I think that it needs advancement.

It’s necessary to study the countries that can serve as examples. The more money is spent on education, science, health, environment, raise of the people’s standard of living, the better. The more people are imprisoned, the more money is spent on weapons, the worse, because of that we should advance.

Inequality will intensify further – that’s how capitalism is made. I am for capitalism and socialism: there should be approximately 50% of capitalism and 50% of socialism. We should establish and adjust the mutual control system not only in case of armed forces but also other indicators of activities. Then we’ll be able to move in the direction of building a global community of trust.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – A representative of France Hugo de Chavagnac is invited to the microphone.

H. de CHAVAGNAC: – I will speak English, it will be slightly better. I was not intending to speak so soon, but I heard two words, which made my blood curdle, and I had to intervene before I could cool down. They are the words about “vassalized Europe”. That will not be the main point of my intervention, these words which made me mad. I know that we hear that kind of speech quite a lot here, but when a number of European countries opposed the US in case of the intervention in Iraq, they were not vassalized, and now we see that as well over Iran. There are very big tensions between Iran and the United States. It doesn’t mean that it’s easy to resist the very heavy pressure on this issue from the United States presently, but certainly we Europeans are not aligned with the US on such issues, and I could not let it pass without reaction.

But my main point was not about that. It is actually about the story that we are going unavoidably towards a bi-

polar world. Commenting on that, I believe that we should not be too quick to go to that conclusion because many countries are not happy about such a state of affairs. I believe that Europe is at all happy with that state of things. But I also think of another country, its representative will speak later, India, which is the second most populated country in the world, is not happy about something like that. And so, first of all it is not a sure thing at all, so it’s right to worry about it, but it’s not right to consider it a given fact. And the reason for that is that there are self-fulfilling prophecies and there are self-fulfilling descriptions; the more you speak about it, the more you install the idea that it’s unavoidable and the more you encourage those who want a policy of force, of “let’s strengthen ourselves because the others are doing the same”, and a policy of confrontation. So, there is a very big risk with these self-fulfilling prophecies.

On a quite different point which was raised by one speaker, about globalisation and using unequalities, France and the *Gilets Jaunes*, have been on TVs around the world. One of the things that *Gilets Jaunes* were asking for is the reinstatement of the wealth tax, which has been done away by our President. France was about the only country in the developed world, and perhaps in the whole world, to have a wealth tax. Actually, the result, which the President was trying to fight, was that many companies, including start-up technological companies, were fleeing from France because of it. So, it’s not an easy world. There is globalisation, there is mobility of capital, and globalisation and liberalisation are very bad on some aspects because they increase unequalities hugely. On the other side, they drew out of poverty hundreds of millions of people around the world, especially in countries like China and India, but also they are starting to do that in Africa, so it is really a very mixed picture. We shouldn’t say that it’s only bad, there is a balance to be found, an imbalance now on these issues, but it’s not simply saying “capitalism and international trade are bad, they are only creating poverty.” This is absolutely not true actually.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – The floor is given to Bruno Desgardins from Switzerland.

B. DESGARDINS: – Good morning, thank you very much. I’ll try to be very brief, and just comment on six or seven previous discussions. First about Mr Bebler’s words. You were speaking about military treaties, I agree with you, it’s a problem, and I will add on that matter that over the last few years we have seen over the world, again, that spending on weapons is increasing and it’s first increasing in the US. As you know, they’re spending 650 billion a year, it is increasing elsewhere: in China, which is spending 250 billion a year, and also Russia is spending more than 60, France is spending 63, Germany about 50. These are the figures from the Stockholm Institute, as we know they are probably not exact, but we have to mention them.

Then, I would like to speak with Mr Varga. You say that law is impotent. I think that today one of the main problems in the world is extraterritoriality, which is used and overused by the US. I mean, when we look at Iran for instance, the US are playing with that. And where the US are putting penalties against BNP in France, against major banks in the world because they are working with a country, against Airbus for instance, I think this is a problem. And as you are

looking for solutions, I think as long as the US dollar stays the main currency in the world, they will have this privilege, nothing will change.

Third aspect. I would like to say to Mr Mettan, who spoke about Europe as a vassal, that I totally agree with Mr Chavagnac. I think that we cannot say that Europe is in the same field as the US. We have seen many times discussions between Germany and the US, between France and the US, between Europe and the US, and at the same time you can say that Russia is on the side of China. I cannot accept this approach to the world. And I would like to say to Mr Mettan that when you say that stability is a dream, I totally agree with you. I think that the world is going from a moment of stability to a moment of instability, and this has always been the case and this will continue and we can survive with that, it's not a problem. And definitely there are fewer conflicts between states in the world today than we have ever seen, than we saw in the past. We have many conflicts within countries and involving foreign partners, but wars between countries are very rare nowadays.

At last I would like to say a couple of words to Mr Akayev, who spoke about the middle class. I think that I am in favour of globalisation but there are problems with globalisation and we need to tackle these problems. And, definitely, one of the problems is the impact of globalisation on the middle class in the Western world, and it is true that inequality went up but at the same time, as Mr Chavagnac was mentioning, since 1990, the number of poor people in the world has gone down by 700 million, of which a good part live in China, and of which a good part also live in India. So, the middle class is developing in emerging countries when the middle class is suffering in developed countries. And I think that if we want to find a solution in that field, I think education, coming back to meritocracy could be a solution, maybe we have to speak about minimum income. Ok, I will stop here.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Mr Desgardins, you said that until the dollar stays the primary means of payment, we won't be able to solve our problems. What solution do you see as the General Manager of a bank? Returning to the gold standard, more active use of national currencies or something else?

B. DESGARDINS: – Ok, two points, first of all regarding gold. We cannot come back to the golden exchange because production of gold is limited. Gold production is growing by about 2–3% a year and definitely has no relation with the growth of GDP in the world, that's my first point. Then a breakdown of gold owning in the world is unequal. Some countries like the US, like France, like Italy, have a lot of gold and will be advantaged tomorrow. Some countries like emerging countries, even if they have gold, for example like India, like China, have a very small percentage of the reserves in gold. So, I think looking back that we raised two points. First, inequality, and then, the price of gold cannot be in line with the growth of the world economy, so in the end of the day it will deflate.

Then, coming back to the dollar. What is the picture nowadays? The dollar is 62% of the world reserve, the euro is about 23%, then you have the yuan, which makes 2% or 3%, you have the pound sterling, which is about 3–4%, then you have the yen and the Swiss franc making

1–2%, it is absolutely nothing. So, the only alternative today could be the euro. The yuan is not yet convertible, so it's definitely too early to speak about the yuan, and we cannot do anything about that. And I think the Chinese do not want that, because if tomorrow they decide to make the yuan freely convertible, the reserve of China, which is above 3 trillion, will go down very quickly, and people will put money outside China. So, unfortunately, we will have to keep the dollar in the next few years and that's it. So, the privilege of the US is easy to understand. This country is not saving enough and is benefitting from international savings, especially Chinese savings, to finance the account deficit.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Had there been representatives of China in our audience, they in contrast to Mr Desgardins, who advertises the Euro (notwithstanding the Euro being subjected to considerable risks now in view if many countries wishing to leave the European Union), would have said that the Yuan will be the primary means of payment. But I would not like to bring our discussion exclusively to the currency problems.

The floor is given to a representative of Turkey – Mr Bağış.

E. BAĞIŞ: – Thank you very much. Now, you asked what makes a country a superpower, and naturally the defence capability, the military strength is very important, the economy of a country is very important. The soft power, the cultural influence of a country is very important. The population of a country is very important, and we realise that with China with a huge population and now increased economic strength, this country is really coming along. But looking at the world I see a new trend. The leaders that are calling the shots right now, the guys like Putin, Trump, Xi Jinping, Modi, Erdogan, Macron, Orban, Sisi, Mohammad Bin Salman Al Saud, even Mahathir, who recently came back. If you think, you'll see that they have similar personality traits. They are very charismatic, they are very strong at home, and they are loved by their own nation and not much by the others. And this is bringing us to a new era, where the communication among the leaders is going to determine the future. They will decide on how to achieve stability in the world. I would say, with all the weaknesses and shortcomings, the European Union has been the most successful peace project in the history of mankind. Because since its establishment, it has ensured putting an end to all historical debates and wars in continental Europe. None of the members of the EU had a war or even fired one single bullet at another member. But that doesn't mean they aren't interfering in other countries in other parts of the world. But among themselves they have achieved this.

So, how can we learn from this and expand this concept to the others? It was said earlier that because defence is very expensive, there is no offence. Military capability requires a lot of investments, which could go easily to other needs of our nations like roads, hospitals, better schools, better piers, airports, educational capabilities. But with this era of all these threats, all these leaders, every country has to invest a major portion of their available resources into arming themselves as deterrents. So, we are at a dilemma: on the one hand, people in democratic societies, even in non-

democratic societies, expect better services from their governments, on the other hand, the governments feel a responsibility to spend an important portion of their resources on military capability. And I think that's going to be a very important dilemma for the next decade that is going to make a lot of us think and write about it. Thank you.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Mr Bağış, it is clear from your speech that the future determined by leaders will bring about new risks. On the one hand, I agree with that, on the other hand, it means dependence on a certain individual at the head of state. This is the eternal question of the role of personalities in history. History of the 20th century, at least in European space, certifies the aspiration to achieve the system's functioning notwithstanding who heads the state. Our ability to build such a system is another issue.

You said that we spend much money on armaments while it's better to build roads, develop education. We understand that perfectly well. But why do people understanding it, do it differently? Who is guilty of it? Leaders? Imperfect system? Can we create the system originally basing on social development principles? Will new technologies and new relations between states provide stimuli for that? Unfortunately, this still does not happen.

Mr Köchler from Austria is invited to the microphone.

H. KÖCHLER: – I have two points, and I'll speak very briefly. The first concerns the nature of law and the question of the importance of international law. A legal norm is defined by its enforceability. If there is no mechanism to enforce it, it is a moral law, or it may be a wish, or whatever. The problem is at the international level that enforceability is very limited as I tried to explain yesterday at the plenary meeting. At the United Nations one cannot enforce even the ban on the use of force. Why not? Because any permanent member can act as it pleases. No action can be taken. A permanent member cannot even be condemned for an act of aggression because it can vote on its own aggression. It means it can prevent any action. What that implies we saw in 1999 in the war against Yugoslavia, we saw in 2003 in the war against Iraq.

And my point is, as long as this is the case, the only chance for a kind of respect to the rule of law is a balance of power. The only thing that works is deterrence. If one of the major players or the hegemon is aware of serious repercussions for violations of the rules, that power may be more prepared to play by the rules. And my hope is that gradually such a balance of power is now in the making. A balance of power as it existed in 1945, when the Organization was built around the balance between the 5 winners of the Second World War.

And that brings me to the second question: what will be the nature of that power, will it be bipolar, or will it be multipolar? As far as I can see, certainly, the duality between the United States and China is overshadowing all the other, so to speak, competitions around of power. But still there are now emerging centres of gravity in different parts of the world. Emerging countries, such, for instance, as India, but also, more nearby, Turkey that will not be totally absorbed into, in this case, for instance, the Eastern fold. And the rivalry and the competition between China and India means that there will be some kind of multipolar structure in the future. The situation is very complex and one cannot make

any easy or precise prediction, but as far as I can see, the United States also, on the Western side, would not be able to absorb all these other traditional Western powers into their fold, because the parallelogram of forces is now becoming very complex. One sees it also in the case of India, for instance, which is a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and so on, but India with its present government has made considerable tactical overtures vis-à-vis the United States. So, this is my point. Thank you.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – I agree that there should be the rule of law but law should be the same for all. The problem is that law is applied only in case of a certain group of countries, and it is not in force in relation to other countries. The guilty should be punished. If the guilty is not punished at least in one case, it is a precedent that can be repeated, and we witness that today. If we really return to the rule of law – and the Russian Federation regularly calls for restoration of international legal norms, avoiding double standards – the world will become much safer.

The floor is given to Director of Development of Russian International Affairs Council Alexander Mikhaylovich Kramarenko.

A. M. KRAMARENKO: – I think that it is rather problematic to speak about manageability today. The issue is about correlation of manageability and freedom inside the state and in international relations. We are living in the age when everything is disintegrating, global governing structures are nullified, those that Americans have not managed to make inclusive as they strived for total control. Striving for total control leads to system's self-destruction, and we are witnessing exactly that.

I prefer to use a more neutral, politically correct term “the leading powers” instead of “the great powers”, with which many will agree: it has no negative connotations related to history. Even H. Kissinger wrote in his book *Diplomacy* (1994) that there would be 5–6 leading powers in the world, with the United States being the first among equals. Washington did not want to accept this reality – hence exactly is the crisis of the liberal world order system.

I think that we'll witness two triangles among the leading powers. One of them is Russia, the United States and China. Russia will play the moderator's role because China and the United States will never agree with each other, especially as both understand force similarly, rather severely, and the way it should be projected. The second triangle is Euroatlantic. We are witnessing restoration of bipolarity in the Western world: the Anglo-Saxons on the one side and Germany/the European Union on the other side. Thus, the Americans think that the Euro is the German Mark in “sheep's clothing”, i. e. they accuse the Germans in manipulations with their currency by creating the Euro zone. Because of that it is possible to suppose that the Washington–Berlin–Moscow triangle will be formed here, and the Germans will be the moderators here as Europe found itself in the trap of anti-Russian policy, forced upon it by the Americans (that was not concealed by the former Vice-President Joseph Biden).

The crisis of Anglo-Saxon capitalism rooted in the Reformation is evident as well. Economists say that 45 years after World War II there was some aberration in capitalism development, for which it is characteristic to work in favour

of investment classes, as a result of which inequality growth is inevitable in the society.

Development crisis on the whole is evident in connection with the crisis of Anglo-Saxon capitalism. A vivid example is Venezuela. The majority there with Maduro at the head is poor classes, they will never give up power, because they know that they will get what already was. It's required to think about new variants, new development models, about which Mr Galbraith spoke at the plenary session. Those who did not dismantle the social state that had become the result of World War II and "the answer to the Soviet Union's challenge" – Germany and a considerable part of European states, the European Union as a whole as well as Japan and South Korea – will stick to it, opposing the Anglo-Saxons' pressure. Those who decided to try capitalism of the period before 1929 are in deep crisis now, which they are trying to overcome by protectionism, "closing" globalization. This does not mean that the Anglo-Saxons will not succeed in their attempt to dismantle what was created by them but started raising other powers, first of all China. Actually, a lot has already been dismantled, in particular the regulation system for the financial sector, etc. Special features of national character, culture, etc. are reflected in that: what suits some players is unacceptable for the others.

A few words about Brexit. Theresa May, who announced her resignation, had wanted to virtualize the exit from the European Union, i. e. to exit and stay at the same time. But that can't be done. The English will cut down taxes on business like the Americans, and will try to compete on these terms unacceptable for the continental Europe. They will tighten the belts, and that will be the national mobilizing project of elites like Trump's project "Make America Great Again!"

Development crisis is manifested in education crisis (the quality of human capital deteriorated drastically). And the higher education system crisis was related to capitalism crisis in the West, deregulation of the financial sector, degradation of the school system (I witnessed that in Canada already in the middle of the 1980s) and the middle class crisis. Atomization of the society began on this basis. It was already evident then that the higher education does not guarantee employment according to the studied profession with respective income level. Because of that what the middle class is, is also a subject for discussion – it turned out to be subjective to changes up to half-disintegration.

As for science, Vitaly Tovievich, I won't agree with you. Science in principle and the Enlightenment laid the foundations of ideology as such that is basically inconsistent with freedom, claiming like religion to be called the truth. It is difficult to say what science can do in the present environment, because elites and trust to them are "worn out". Elites controlled traditional mass media via political correctness and at the same time appealed to the expert opinion – and because of that it is not trusted now. Western elites abused averaged, non-alternative policy too often in recent decades. Because of that I doubt the efficiency of science in the established environment.

It is another matter that there is freedom and lack of freedom. It is not accidental that Bonapartism originated after the French Revolution. Currently, everything is unsupported and flimsy, is in the state of disintegration and consequently chaos, but chaos and freedom are compatible.

I think that we have no grounds to worry about that. Disintegration of armaments control was also inevitable within the framework of such common trend.

Strong persons like Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin will agree on the existential issues of war and peace. And when the environment, including technological, is established to control the armaments, talks will start, and their new architecture will originate satisfying the requirements of the time.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – I give the floor to Professor Jan Aart Scholte from Sweden.

J. A. SCHOLTE: – Thank you very much. I was just pondering as we were talking about risks in the future. And I thought: what would our grandchildren want us to be really paying attention to in our discussions here? I am sure we would not all have the same answers, but I think it is an interesting question to pose. Would our grandchildren want us to focus on Brexit? Would they care about which country or which state is more dominant in the world? Would they care about who is the leader? I suspect, probably not so much. My guess would be that my grandchildren would be more concerned about the emerging technologies that raise fundamental questions about human being and human dignity. Think of genetic modifications, biotechnologies, nanotechnologies, digital technologies: already now we feel a number of their implications. I think our grandchildren would probably also be especially concerned about ecological changes, for example, what is done in terms of climate change. There was a report a few weeks ago from the United Nations on species loss. For me the forecasts were overwhelmingly troubling. A few generations down the line people will be asking what these ecological changes do to humans and to life on the Earth – and ask what our generation did about them. A third thing in my mind – besides technology and ecology – is the whole societal complexity we have. How can we, for our grandchildren, understand the dynamics of complexity and the accelerated society that Vasil was talking about earlier on? Understanding that complexity is necessary, so that we can restore some kind of intentionality and deliberation in politics. At the moment growing complexity and speed mean that so many things at the moment are beyond our understanding and control. Anyway, I am just trying to take a longer-term perspective, about these risks, and to wonder what our grandchildren would want us to be doing today. Thank you.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Thank you, Mr Scholte. Mr Guy Mettan, the President of the Union of Chambers of Industry and Commerce "Switzerland – Russia & CIS", is invited to the microphone.

G. METTAN: – Thank you very much, Professor Scholte, because I think we are the eldest people here but if we ask the younger people, I am sure they will take the environment problem and the total collapse of biodiversity and climate change into account. And as we are older, we don't speak a lot about that. I wanted also to thank Mr Chavagnac and Mr H. Köchler for their interventions. In my view, the bipolar world is not a wish, that's fear. That's a threat and I'm not defending this vision of the world, I'm trying to avoid such an escalation. But what can we say if

we look at Europe? Sorry, Mr Chavagnac, if you look at Europe, you can see that Europe is totally submitted to the United States in terms of military defence, in NATO. Who is commanding NATO? It's not Europe, it's the US. Maybe it's not bad, but it's total vassalization, militarily speaking.

Another thing. Now, the US are also imposing extra-territorial law as Mr Desgardins said, and economic sanctions. And Europe is imposing sanctions against Iran, they are just doing the agreement about Iran, and Europe is saying "No! No! No" and isn't doing anything, they are just words. Because the economic sanctions are imposed and Europe is just obeying what the US are saying, for instance, in case of Russia. So, the economic submission of Western Europe is growing and I will be very happy if France recovers its Gaullist attitude and makes some counterbalance to this influence in terms of intervention. Look at Venezuela, Cuba, Iran that are arranging changes. It is not Russia or China that are trying to make a change in Venezuela. And what is Europe doing? It is totally following the US direction. Doesn't follow the Mexican President's proposal to be a point of force in order to find a solution there. So, that's the problem. For me a superpower, to answer your question, is a power, which has the capacity to impose its will on other powers in terms of military issues, culture, economy, technique, science, human values and preservation of natural resources, which will probably be the main topic in the future. Thanks.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Now, Honoured Lawyer of Russia Henry Markovich Reznik will speak in front of us.

H. M. REZNIK: – The longer I live, the more I am amazed by the wisdom of the Ancient Greeks who, I remind you, made measure the main philosophical category. Local difficulties originate from time to time in any system – turbulence features *exist* to this or that extent in many systems, and they disappear when circumstances, leading to changes in the country's politics, change. But how can we fix the state's obligation to spend more on butter than on cannons in all times? It's a pity that it is impossible. But what happens today in Russia? Why more is spent on "cannons"? It's clear that these are the consequences of the 2014 events – the Ukrainian crisis, events in Donbass, annexation of Crimea. The latter is assessed in different ways, and I'd be happy with Crimea joining Russia had I not been a lawyer. Probably, the prevailing military expenditures are a temporary decision, and there is not enough money for this and for that. But all politics is changed in connection with that, state propaganda is activated, and now the notion of patriotism is being filled with the content that was precisely and wittingly worded by Mikhail Mikhaylovich Zhvanetsky: "Patriotism is a precise, clear, well-proved explanation why we should live worse than the others."

The world has been developing in the competitive struggle of two ideas for many centuries already: liberal and social. One of them eats the other from time to time. And what happens? Absolute liberalism without any corrections by the state leads to problems, which we know not by hearsay. I remind you that Lenin announced the utopical aim – universal equality – in his paper *The State and Revolution*. But he did not know how to achieve that, acknowledging that people are not the same in various qualities – diligence, conscientiousness, finally, wits. Another extremity is the so-

cial idea. Economic stagnancy begins where it triumphs, because it has been proved by experience of many countries: if we want the country to develop and economy to grow, it should be based on private initiative. Private initiative as such can't obligatory provide economic development in all countries. The colleagues were fairly right to pay attention to the fact that historical traditions, legacy, national character, etc. are also important. But there is not a single country in the world that became rich and prosperous not basing on private initiative. To my mind, Askar Akayevich was right to determine the problem that won't be solved for a very long time. The world has become open, and many countries compare themselves with others, and inequality has become a fertile soil for populists. How it was in past? Everything the state riches belongs to the pharaoh, and people think that this is right, it can't be otherwise.

One of the most important issues of our times is the system of values. Naturally, it is required in international politics to consider the established world order, not to humiliate other countries and build peaceful relations between them. But this does not mean that people are inclined to accept the values on which life is based in other countries. For example, the home policy of some states horrifies us – totalitarianism, suppression of dignity and freedom of individuals, etc. How to cooperate with them? The way was named by Irina Olegovna: there are no other means to regulate relations between countries besides international legal institutions.

We can criticize the United Nations as much as we like – but do we have an alternative structure? And I give a big plus with a tiny minus to the European Court of Human Rights: by its decisions it helped to advance law enforcement and judicial systems of all member states of the European Council. The order in the past was maintained via religious values, and later the significance of religion reduced greatly. And it seems to me that we have only one efficient tool in the modern secular world – international law. We should not refuse from it, never. On the contrary, it should be strengthened. And great powers should be pointed at it regularly, in order for them to obey laws on equal bases and moderate their appetites.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – A small comment about values. I think that everyone will agree that there is no universal idea of values. For example, there are 10,000 various nations living on the African continent, and each of them has its values. To my mind, it is a big mistake to try forming some ideal system of values that could become common for the whole world.

H. M. REZNIK: – Really, each society has its values. But we have common values with Europeans, who are not recognizing suppression of human freedom and dignity. This should not determine the state's foreign policy but you can't cancel them in home policy.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – I agree. I won't argue either that there are moral and ethic principles common for the whole mankind. The majority of those present in this hall are representatives of Christian civilization, we live in European culture, and we would not like to leave our zone of comfort. However, there are other cultures and civilizations, which we should respect and whose values we should acknow-

ledge, notwithstanding that they sometimes differ from ours greatly.

It's a pleasure for me to give the floor to exactly a representative of another culture, Mrs Talukdar from India.

I. TALUKDAR: – What are the solutions towards creating a multipolar world order? The solution to create a multipolar world order is to understand the concept clearly. The understanding that multipolar world order is an illusion as multipolarity does not exist is itself problematic. Multipolarity has been existing and at the same time the other poles (unipolarity, bipolarity or polycentricity) also existed. There is a constant tussle amongst these poles. In the current narrative on world order, many confuses between multipolarity and polycentricity. Both are seen from the same angle. However, there is a difference between the two concepts. In fact, polycentricity and multilateralism are similar whereas multipolarity is different. There will always be competition between polycentricity/multilateralism and multipolarity. Understanding of these concepts in the proper manner helps in putting international relations in the right perspective. Countries reflect the nature of human beings. The collective reflection helps in building a nation. Hence, the personalities of people reflect in a country. This understanding is on a more philosophical aspect. For instance, in a protracted conflict, it becomes difficult to reach a resolution because national interests get involved. Countries get bound by their country's laws and interest which makes it difficult to rationalise and move in a harmonious direction. In addition to it, civilization and culture further complicates the matter. Even though culture and civilization is supposedly to bring out the good part however, the subtle superiority complex that all countries have does not allow them to come to a constructive solution. One of the biggest problem humanity faces is the loss of ethics and morality based on humanity of dignity, respect, love and tolerance. Even though the message of all religion and philosophies is about spreading love, embracing every one, equality etc. there are everyday examples where people are killed on the name of religion, ethnicity, culture and civilization. National interest of countries stops the country from taking the right decisions based on humanity. Even if a country would want to think about this so-called philosophical aspect, it will be unable to as the country will be taken as a weaker country. It is seen as if it defers Realpolitik. This understanding is problematic. Addition to this, the trust deficit amongst countries also stops countries from engaging and resolving issues from a positive angle.

On reaction from India on the world order, New Delhi's policies have been multivectoral, mutual cooperation, inclusiveness and of balancing power, even during the Cold War times. The Non-aligned movement (NAM) is one example. New Delhi, under the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru wanted to take along all countries together, including China. When the Soviet Union and the United States were talking of a permanent seat to India in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), India gave up its seat to China, trusting China. However, till date it has been seen that Beijing, not only is willing to include India as P6 member but also keeps vetoing against India. Hence, there is a trust deficit issue from the Indian side. China is an example. Any country which breaches India's or others' trust is not trustworthy. Though Russia and China are very close

friends. However, there are problems emerging in many fronts such as in the Arctic. China, being a non-Arctic country, is claiming its stakes in the Arctic. In 2018 Defence Paper on the Arctic, Beijing claimed its stake and has justified its claim which is worth noticing. Questions that arise from this claim is whether the permanent members of the Arctic like Russia, the United States etc, will be fine with this claim or not. There is increase militarization happening in the Arctic. India is concerned with such kind of claims as well as militarisation in the Arctic. New Delhi is also concerned with the militarization in space. Though countries, including India, Russia and China talk about non-militarization in space, however it is taking place and there is competition in this which creates a dangerous atmosphere for the world.

Apart from these, there are future problems in the multilateral organizations such as the UN, SCO etc. The SCO is a positive initiative but there are issues amongst the member states which is of great concerns. For example, SCO members face water sharing problem amongst each other – be it India-Pakistan, India-China, China-Central Asian countries or within the Central Asian countries. The problem is because of the upstream and downstream arrangement amongst the member states. The members (usually) do not want to resolve this crisis multilaterally rather bilaterally. Understanding and the approach adopted by the members against terrorism is another challenge. Though the members condemn terrorism however they are not ready to condemn the member state which is sponsoring terrorism against another member. India which is raising this issue against this particular member is not getting the proper support within the SCO. It is a kind of isolation for New Delhi. This shows the divisive lines, greater evil supported by the other members.

The global climate change is another issue which needs to be given proper attention. Most of the countries, including the Asian countries see it as an obstruction to their development. However, the global climate change is an immediate and a big threat not only for certain countries but for the world. It needs real attention and concrete solution.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – We are worried that the consumer's attitude to life is formed in case of the majority of young people, because of that it's a pleasure to find out that the young generation is interested in environmental problems. And I agree that people should think more about love and not material benefits. This is not easy if we take into account that the consumer society standards are forced on us. Alexey Gromyko spoke about that. I think that the ratio of the material and the spiritual is the issue that is very important for the future of humanity.

Now, I'd like to give the floor to Mr Prodanov.

V. PRODANOV: – You have told us that there are two most important questions. The first is who to blame? And the second, what is to be done? But it seems to me that there are different questions for different social groups. For us, as scientists, the most important questions are the descriptions and the explanations of things. What is going on? What are the objective reasons for what is going on? For politicians the most important question is what is to be done, it's true. There is also the question of who is to blame. It seems to me that this question is the most im-

portant for the mass consciousness in some situations, it is also for politicians in some situations. These situations are connected with the crisis in the society and the task of scientists is to explain why. And it seems to me that we live now in a situation where more and more politicians and more and more usual people in the mass consciousness will have the question, who is to blame? And for me the reason for this question is the growing inequality, growing poverty of the societies, growing sense of insecurity, lacking confidence in existing elites, growing number of people declaring themselves precariat, and that's the reason. 30 years ago, you know, Gorbachev declared an end to the image of enemy, but the irony of history, [as Hegel thought], is that we live now in a world with more enemies. Different enemies in different directions. Two types of enemies; foreign states and immigrants. There is a growth of anti-Semitism in Europe, in the United States, there are Russophobia reports, there is a growth of Sino-phobia in the United States, Islamophobia, and that becomes a characteristic of the new Cold War. And also, internal enemies increase, there are religious, ethnic, racial separations, conflicts, and the feeling of danger and uncertainty in this situation leads to the rise of several types of reactions: requests for more borders and control in all spheres from the borders of the European Union and the United States, to the virtual borders and digital security, requests for a strong hand in the centre to protect us. That is why the structure is once again centralised in place of the crisis of liberal democracy.

Now, this new centralization is facilitated by the new technologies of the so-called surveillance capitalism; Big Data, facial recognition, digital government. And many studies today suggest that there is global growth of nationalism and opposition to the liberal marketing globalisation. We already have Brexit, and the desire of Donald Trump to create a wall between the US and Mexico, and also a growth of protectionism, and it is now, it seems to me, the direction of the governments in the world, where the enemies are most important for the mass consciousness and politicians. Thank you.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Thank you very much, Mr Prodanov. I invite Petr Petrovich Tolochko to speak.

P. P. TOLOCHKO: – Dear colleagues, the following questions have been asked here today several times: what is the greatness of the country? How is it measured? Who should rule the world? Do economy, culture, military strength make the greatness of a country? To answer this question I'd like to offer you to remember certain historical facts. Magnificent Rome was destroyed by barbarians, Byzantium fell under the Turks, Kiev Russia under the Mongols. So, think what determines the country's greatness. Vitaly Tovievich said who would rule the world: the great countries. Only we have to ask them to make this governance more or less sensible.

Colleague Kramarenko tells us: do not worry, Putin and Trump will come to an agreement, and everything will be fine. But it should not be like that in the world. And what if they won't come to an agreement? Besides, no matter if we want it or not, but the world is returning to bipolarity. Because of that I agree with Mr Mettan: we need the third power that will balance the strength of blocs.

Let's remember at least the Non-Alignment Movement (I spoke about it yesterday). There is also the World Peace Council, the voice of which we have not heard for a long time. Henry Markovich said about the United Nations. We should not say that all regulation tools in the world are outdated. The existing institutions should be strengthened and the ones that lost their power today, should be revived, and we should not only hope that the Presidents will come to an agreement between themselves, or that sensible behaviour will be demanded from great powers. Who will demand it? I repeat: the United Nations, Non-Alignment Movement, World Peace Council – these institutions should be returned the former authority. And surely they should be governed by international law, otherwise there will be chaos and complete destruction in the world.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – The floor is given to Alexey Vladimirovich Kuznetsov.

A. V. KUZNETSOV: – Today, everyone is speaking approximately like this: "There was stability in the past, and there is none now". However, instability is a transfer from one fairly sustainable condition to the other. Sure, absolute chaos is possible, but that is highly improbably on global scales.

Such a transfer is required from time to time, when the main features of the present regulation that maintains this relative stability, start opposing the needs of global development, being obstacles for rising powers. Unfortunately, humanity usually solved this problem by arms, a great number of victims and economic losses. Had people learned to avoid wars in the past, global development would have been much more dynamic. And now, strong economic opposition takes place most often instead of armed conflicts because of a threat to use nuclear weapons and thanks to development of international law. That makes the situation more humane but does not change it principally. Respectively, the question arises: what is to be done? Many concepts originated after World War II, they were often ideal but sometimes fairly realistic as to humanity's movement to peace. Now, because of information openness we really have an opportunity to include common people in international processes more. Nevertheless, we continue speaking about leaders and elites, and still view people just as a mass that it is easier to mobilize today thanks to new technologies. However, if we speak about European values, democracy, we should address the population that in the IT age should be responsible for its development. The population of the countries losing their influence like the United States and the European Union states, but also the rising leaders such as China.

Russia is a special case because there is no doubt that it is to expect reduction of its influence in the long-term, though in the short-term it definitely strengthens its role. There is some boost when someone is looking for its place in the world. Where is it – close to the West or Asian countries? And respectively, the question arises again: what is to be done? In particular, what should be done by the European Union and Russia?

It is often possible to affect the mass consciousness because the population is insufficiently educated, so it is required to advance the educational level of the people. But

there are also wishes for elites. It is necessary to create the objective picture in mass media using all the possible ways and means, and mass media should be first of all unbiased for that. This can be fairly well achieved by elites if they stop using the image of foreign enemies in their political interests, or some other scarecrows that worked in the previous epochs and finally led to wars. Besides, the issue of foreign relations is important for the agenda of internal political struggle. The population in many countries, especially small ones is mostly concerned with domestic problems – social inequality, economic development with the help of foreign capital or the country’s own resources, etc. At the same time, international relations are left for great powers, thus helping formation of their “supreme power”. Because of that the population – every person! – should think about their role in international affairs in order not to become victims of economic wars another time. And representatives of elite should be more responsible in understanding that they should not only think about their own survival as political elites but also think somewhat wider.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Thank you, Alexey Vladimirovich. I invite Leonid Leonidovich Fituni to speak.

L. L. FITUNI: – Some remarks about the presented opinions.

First – about academician Akayev’s words about the disappearance of the middle class. I won’t argue with it as it really happens. Askar Akayevich connects that with Industry 4.0 (the Fourth Industrial Revolution) and the new technological pattern. I agree with his opinion but I’d like to mention that disappearance of this or that class is the result of any revolution. Aristocracy disappeared in the middle of the 19th century. They exclaimed during the Spring of Nations in 1848: if aristocracy disappears, the nation’s honour will disappear! But today, if some of us have additions to our family names left, for example, de or uni (Eastern variant) like in mine, we have not been aristocracy for a long time, we are common citizens and we don’t regret that the status was lost. Possibly, because of that we should not worry about the disappearance of the middle class. Something else will appear, and that will become the basis of the new development stage.

Second – about Mr Scholte’s words about the young generation. Will today’s children care about Brexit? Most likely, they won’t because Brexit is already in the past. If something like that is on the agenda, young people will think about that. And what is more, to my mind, even environmental problems do not worry young people much. Are we really worried that dinosaurs disappeared? We do not remember that often, mostly when watching movies. Do we care about the Little Ice Age in the 16th–17th centuries in the Netherlands? I can’t say with assurance but I think that we overestimate today’s problems, in any case in the context of thoughts about the future of our children.

The third remark is about values. To my mind, this is really important. The problem is that great values (love, peace, etc.) are important when we perceive them not as values but as something that just exists in the human society and for people. As soon as we start saying that love and peace are values, which we should pass over to somebody, this becomes a religion at first and ideology later, which is hammered in the heads.

And the last thing – not a remark, just a thought in connection with Mr Reznik’s idea that the only right way of development is to give an opportunity to the most conscientious, clever, hard-working people to take decisions. The problem is that it is also connected with values. Someone has to say: “This is a value” and confirm that by his/her behaviour, demonstrating his/her attitude to this value. But a question arises – who has the right to judge about that? Second, it’s not rare that rich people are not the most conscientious, clever and hard-working. Many of them got their fortune just robbing someone, or they were just more insolent. Because of that the category of values is useless practically, we can’t be governed by them in Realpolitik.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Academician Chereshev, you are given the floor. You are welcome.

V. A. CHERESHNEV: – May in Russia is full of significant events. We just celebrated the Victory Day, today we have the University birthday, in two days we’ll be celebrating the 316th anniversary of St. Petersburg, etc. In that connection I’d like to say a few words about history, to be more exact, its honest, truthful presentation. Students asked me: “Valery Alexandrovich, why did the whole Europe meekly surrender to Hitler? Actually, only we and the Yugoslavs really resisted him”. “Yes, it was exactly like that”. “And did you read this?” – and they show me an article in which it is written that it was possible not to resist in Leningrad and Stalingrad, and we should have given up Moscow. The French managed to preserve Paris undamaged and the rest European capital cities practically did not suffer. I ask them: “Did you read what Hitler planned to do in place of Moscow and Leningrad? A giant lake”. “Really? Valery Alexandrovich, please take a look. Japanese schoolchildren from Hiroshima and Nagasaki write papers about that war, and 20% of them don’t know that they were bombed by the United States, they name other countries. And they ask: ‘How can the United States, the best partner and ally of Japan, bomb us, and throw nuclear bombs, and in the end of the war?’”. Young people should know history.

Next year, we’ll be celebrating the 75th anniversary of the great victory, and they are making the memorable exhibition about Sobibor in Poland, where the majority of prisoners were Soviet, who organized a riot and ran away. But are there representatives of Russia as the USSR successor in the organizing committee? Alas, there are none.

Going on with the speech about history, I’d like to note that Russia was lucky that the Academy of Sciences that will soon celebrate its 300th anniversary, was set up by outstanding scholars, with Mikhail Vasilyevich Lomonosov among them. When his 100th anniversary was celebrated, it was said that he was a great poet, and 50 years later he was called a great chemist, and he turned out to be the Leonardo da Vinci of the 18th century. He wrote in his historical paper *On the Preservation and Reproduction of the Russian people* that the might, greatness and richness of the whole state was in the preservation and reproduction of the Russian people and not in expansive territories useless without inhabitants. Lomonosov thought that the numbers of people were important, and their quality was even more important: “And above all instill the thought in everyone by education that... a deceiver, robber, the unjust, bribe-taker, thief and others distorting the image of the surrounding

people, will not find forgiveness, no matter if he eats wood chips, bricks, soaked bast fibers, clay and coal instead of the common Lenten food for seven weeks, and most part of the time stands on his head instead of bows and prostration”.

And the last thing. I have many friends on the Crimean peninsula with whom I grew up together, and they studied in the Nakhimov Sevastopol Naval College, and now they are Captains 1st rank and even Admirals. I meet them often. And they ask me the question, “Why aren’t you explaining the state of affairs as to Crimea? It was 2014. They had Maidan in Kiev, the Verkhovna Rada (Ukrainian Parliament) cancelled the law on the status of the Russian language. The Crimean Parliament allowed the referendum, and it took place”. The Ukrainian authorities say, “The Rada’s agreement was required according to our Constitution”. But how was it to be done if there was actually no Rada? It was anarchy. 93% voted for becoming a part of Russia at the referendum. My friends from Sevastopol tell me, “If you conduct a referendum now, you’ll get 99%. What occupation? Did they think what laws they approved? They cancelled the Russian language in the region where it is the mother tongue for nearly everyone – what did they expect after that?”

I repeat, first of all, truth is important in any information.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – I invite Mr Ingimundarson to take the floor. You are welcome.

V. INGIMUNDARSON: – Thank you, I’ll just give a brief comment on the two references here to the Arctic and the geopolitics of the Arctic. The Arctic Council was turned into a geopolitical venue recently by the Americans particularly by attacking China and Russia. So far the Council has been a non-political, non-military forum; so this was a new tone, which also echoes US national defence strategy. It involves the abandonment of the war on terror and a refocus on state-based threats and rivalries, particularly with China and Russia. The Arctic used to be defined in terms popularized by the Norwegians, who talked about “High North, Low Tension.” This characterization may not apply longer. But at the same time, I think we should not be overly alarmist about the state of the Arctic. As for the comment on China’s Arctic policies, it should be pointed out that it was not only China that was admitted as a member of the Arctic Council in 2013 but also India. And China’s Arctic strategy basically echoes what the Chinese have been saying for the past four or five years; indeed, there is very little new in it, and the Chinese are abiding by the Law of the Sea Convention. Having said that, it is true that a new geopolitical reality is emerging in the Arctic, which has witnessed increased militarization in recent years, as Mr Alexey Gromyko mentioned in the beginning. I was wondering whether Mr Gromyko sees this militarization, in the near term, as a major geopolitical development; I believe that it warrants, at least, inclusion in this dialogue. Thanks.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – The floor is given to Mr Wiatr. You are welcome.

J. WIATR: – I’ll speak very briefly on the raised issue, the importance of values and ideologies. There are various

ideological conflicts. One mentioned is between liberal and socialist values. But this is the kind of controversy, which can be compromised, so democracy, for instance, unlike the communist movement, moved considerably closer to the liberal values, but there is one ideological conflict, which, practically speaking, cannot be solved through a compromise. This is between aggressive nationalism and democratic values.

Nationalism has two aspects: the internal and external. Internal means hostility towards values, groups, particularly minorities within the state. That does damage to domestic policy. External means hostility towards other states. And here there is a very clear situation; the bigger, the stronger the state, the more dangerous is its nationalism. One can say all nationalisms are bad, that’s true. But some are more dangerous than the others. And the danger of nationalism depends directly on how strong a state is. Thank you.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Henry Markovich, I invite you to the microphone.

H. M. REZNIK: – “Ignorance is a strong force, and we are afraid that it will bring humanity more tragedies.” This is a quotation from Karl Marx who is not in fashion now.

But I’ll conclude on the idealistic wave. Colleague Kramarenko made the right emphasis, colleague Kuznetsov developed his thought: we live in the mass society, and we should not allow this mass to turn into a crowd, electorate that is being manipulated in order for it to vote “in the right way” and not care about enlightenment. I think that the task of the academic world’s representatives is to talk to people, on the one hand, and to insistently talk to politicians on the other hand, in order for absurd statements to be impossible, such as “It would be nice to introduce obligatory state ideology into the Constitution”. The things we tried to get rid of after the USSR disintegration, did not disappear, they are here, close to us. And we have to develop enlightenment and transmit adequate ideas of the world.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – I invite Mr Desgardins to speak.

B. DESGARDINS: – Very short, I would like to come back to something very important, which was mentioned by Mr Kramarenko, when you were speaking about education. I think that all people around the table, we all agree on the necessity to develop education, but at the same time, we see the difficulty for educated people, young people to find a job. We see this problem in India, we see this problem in the Middle East, we see this problem in Europe, in the US. Every government is insisting on this but in the end it’s not always easy, and this is creating some frustration for the young, and I think it’s a key aspect. The second aspect I’d like to speak about is crises of the Anglo-Saxon world. I am not a supporter of the US but I have to be honest, there is a social crisis, there is the opioid crisis, there is a decline of life expectancy in the US, but at the same time, I have to be honest and to see that on the technological side they are still running, they are still ahead, and I think that this will continue for the next few years. And at last, regarding NATO and Europe, I am sorry to say that Mr Trump is right when he asks European countries to spend 2% of their GDP and there is only Poland doing that, the UK doing that and France, which is not very far from that, but the others

are not spending and it's not normal, but I cannot accept the idea that Europe is lying, even if on the issue of Iran it was a little shy, but it's real politique.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – And now I'd like to address His Excellency, the Ambassador of Iran. Could you comment on the today's discussion?

M. SANAEI: – I've been listening to all speeches with great interest. It's a special pleasure for me that we are speaking about Iran among other things. I treat the opinion that the great powers rule the world and many globally significant issues are settled by personalities with respect. But I think that the current state of affairs in the world is the result of our being used to it, while new players appeared on the international scene. I do not agree with the argument that the world is returning to the bipolar model because Asian countries are quickly developing and building up their strength. Today, we can't ignore social networks, we have to listen to young people who no longer trust the existing system. This distrust is justified to a large extent because force is playing a bigger and bigger role in world politics and not law and not the set up in their time international organizations. Why did these structures lose their efficiency to a considerable extent? There are two reasons. First, the founders and the most influential parties from these organizations worked for their destruction, first of all the United States that started using force and unleashing wars, including in Iraq. It's interesting that now the United States are dissatisfied that the area for Iran's influence has been freed, though it was them who greatly weakened Iraq – our main rival in the region. I think that the world should call to account those who destroyed stability that had existed, interfered in the affairs of Libya, Iraq, Syria. Second, not only great powers and personalities take important for the world decisions. I think that a big task for institutes and universities is to create new structures, new theories and academic schools. As it is evident that the present global system, regulating international relations, is no longer in conformity with the new realities.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Askar Akayevich, you are given the floor.

A. A. AKAYEV: – Mrs Talukdar spoke about India's relations with China and Pakistan, and I felt her pessimism as to the prospects of their development. And I'd like to add some optimism. All three countries – China, India, Pakistan – are the members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), besides China and India are also BRICS members, and they are nothing else but new inter-state associations based on local civilizations. After India and Pakistan joined SCO, the intensity of their conflict started decreasing. I'm sure that these states will be able to solve the problems of their relations within the framework of SCO and BRICS. Let's wish them to show the world an example of solving inter-state and inter-civilization problems basing on dialogue and partnership of civilizations (and representatives of five local civilizations live in these countries). SCO and BRICS though they are not perfect, are samples of the future multipolar sustainable world order based on dialogue and partnership.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Now, Mr Kolodko will speak. You are welcome.

G. W. KOLODKO: – I would say that this is the end of the end of history. The end of history lasted for only one generation, and during this decade we may say that this is the time of confusion, or if we are in Russia, maybe, this is the time of troubles. 400 years ago, you did have the Time of Troubles here in Russia, and now we have the time of troubles in the world. And it's a very big problem. I would say the biggest challenge for the future is to attempt to manage, but I would prefer to say to govern this, lasting time of troubles, in our generation or two. This is the beginning of the time of confusion in a peaceful way, to avoid the war. And when you are talking about what the next generations will be looking after and for what we will be responsible, say, in 20–25 years from now, the first question is the time between now and, say, 2050, 2060, 2070. Will it be a peaceful one or not at all? It's not a given. We have to work hard to make the world relatively peaceful. So, to conclude, I would say, I would repeat that the biggest challenge for everybody, who is trying to make a point on the issues we're talking about, is reinstitutionalization or irreversible globalization in a world that will be absolutely multipolar and multicultural. So, there is the great cry for tolerance, and we must answer the question, this is amazing that during the two days of live discussion, maybe I missed it, but we haven't heard about the crisis of liberal democracy. Another part of this time of confusion, time of troubles is that liberal democracy has failed. Liberal democracy has brought Brexit, has brought Donald Trump, a man who is entirely unaccountable and irresponsible as the most influential global leader. So, reinstitutionalization that is setting the new rules for irreversible globalization, for growing humanity, is the biggest challenge. And I think that this is what is bringing us together, the sociologist, the political scientist, the economist and the people concerned about the future, which is very different from the past. Thank you.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – The floor is given to Vitaly Tovievich Tretyakov.

V. T. TRETYAKOV: – In such discussions as we're having today, I am always worried about dogmatism and too much political correctness.

Sure, I am for law, including international, to be observed by everyone without exception, but let's be realistic. One of the favourite maxims of international lawyers is that agreements should be fulfilled. But had all agreements been always fulfilled, we'd still have the Roman Empire. If an international agreement is not fulfilled by this or that state, it means that it stopped being profitable or advantageous for it, and no measures of compulsion will help in that case. Because of that I ask you to get rid of dogmatism in international law.

As for political correctness, it has become indecent and improper today to speak about the role of the great powers in world history. Many people think erroneously that to head a small country is the same as governing a big country, a continent and the whole world. But this is not so, as there are different systems and models of governance in different states, combining command-administrative and democratic methods. If someone wishes to rule the whole

world, e. g. the United States, I agree to tolerate that, to be patient for a while as Russia still can't lay claims to that – not enough strength. Only I think that the American President in this case should be elected by the whole world and not only the US citizens. Let's elect the American President by the whole globe, and I'll resign myself with the United States leadership.

G. W. KOLODKO: – Then, a Chinese will become the American President.

V. T. TRETYAKOV: – May be, that's good, isn't it?

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Robert Iskandrovich, you are welcome.

R. I. NIGMATULIN: – Dear colleagues, we established the state of affairs but we spoke little about what is to be done. I'd like to add some observations and information. How much did transfer to democracy cost Russia? Before 1992, death rate in Russia and Western Europe was approximately the same, and after the well-known reform, this indicator started growing in Russia and came up to 16.7 people per one thousand residents by 2003, while it had not exceeded 10–11 in the past. On the whole, democratic reform cost Russia 16 millions of additional deaths. That is what a wrong transition is.

We have fairly grounded claims against Europe but they have claims against us as well. I think that it is necessary to finally refuse from them and start thinking what we should do. First of all, it is required to cooperate and not stake on isolation. Improvements are impossible without that. Unfortunately, we should state that the world is becoming less and less suitable for a happy life, notwithstanding the fact that happiness is a relative notion. When we are moving forward, we are happy. And a far from rich man can be happy if his position is improving, though slowly. But it is worsening now, so the world on the whole is not very happy and Russia especially.

I. O. ABRAMOVA: – Thank you very much, all of you who took part in the discussion. We expressed our opinions and suggestions, we spoke a lot about new economic relations, building new legal norms and preservation of already acting norms, about the need to take various opinions into account, listen to young people, pay big attention to education and science, especially when taking political decisions.

We did not have time to discuss regulation of information space. Currently, it's not rare when new rules of the game are dictated by Internet-technologies, which can be more effective than real weapons. Legal norms for information space have not been worked out yet, there are no generally accepted rules. To my mind, this issue is one of the main ones for legislators today.

L. RIVERA MARIN: – Well, first of all, good afternoon to you all. It has been a great job by those running the panel, and certainly, even though by reactions I can say that something is missing in the translation, I can say that it has been such an enriching experience listening to all the different opinions and your propositions. I think openness is certainly a requirement for trust. I come from a small island in the Caribbean, but that doesn't mean that we have small

problems and small dreams. And coming to this forum, I listen to what's expected of the leaders of the world, how the world order is transitioning. I believe that we should all expect from world powers to act as leaders and promote the relationships that are built precisely on trust, that this dialogue shall always be present, so that those of us that may not be exerting power around the world are considered. And I think that it's the duty and the responsibility of the leaders of the world to close those gaps and think about the next generations and how the quality of life can be improved, because it's obvious that everybody seeks better opportunities, prosperity and freedom for their people. So, I am very optimistic. As leaders, we recognise the importance of promoting freedom, promoting better health, promoting education, promoting opportunities for all of us around the world, because in the end we are all citizens of the world and we all share responsibility. So, it has certainly been an enriching experience for me and I hope to continue to collaborate and continue this dialogue with you. Thank you for that.

Al. A. GROMYKO: – Dear colleagues, we have discussed various topics, expressed our opinions on many most important issues. At the same time, no matter how strange that may sound, the topic from which Professor Bebler started, did not become one of the main ones. That's the topic of strategic stability's destruction. This issue is very important from the perspective of life and death of not only individuals or certain nations but the whole human civilization.

The discussion of Realpolitik and international law seemed very interesting to me. Which of them is more important, or should there be a permanent balance between them? Each country has its law, the Criminal Code in particular. Nevertheless, hundreds of thousands violate it. But does it mean that we do not need it at all?

It seems to me that international law should not be made absolute, but international law as well as the United Nations is not guilty that it is violated all the time, and there are political shows organized from time to time even in the UN Security Council.

The topic we spoke on a lot just 2–3 years ago was practically not raised either – that's international terrorism. Another important topic – the Arctic – was just touched upon in passing. Meanwhile, there won't be a single discussion in 5–7 years, where we won't raise this issue. In the 1990s, the world actively discussed globalization, in the early 21st century, practically all discussions referred to the Arab world, and now we can't do without the topic of China. Soon the Arctic will become the regular topic, and in 10–15 years no discussion will avoid India's problems. Currently, this is a "half-asleep" giant but everything will change in the not far-off future. There are countries that will play a much more significant role in one or two decades than today: Brazil, Mexico, Indonesia, Egypt, Nigeria, Vietnam, South Africa. According to various estimations, all these countries will rise much higher by 2050 than their present level. Currently, 7 out of 10 biggest economies of the world are European or economies of the countries that originated from the European civilization, and only 3 represent other continents. And by 2050, only 2–3 countries from the European civilization will be included in these ten, and the rest 7–8 will represent other power centers.