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OPENING WORDS

I would like to congratulate Prof. Momir Djurovic, my good friend, for organising this conference at a critical moment in the European Union's history.

The Global Round Table is delighted to be among the organising partners. It is a fact that — Great powers rise and fall.

They rise for reasons of fortuitous circumstance, they crumble because they overlook or underestimate warning

signals. History has shown that neither economic- nor military might prevent civilisations from vanishing.

This is equally true for the European Union.

The EU has arrived at a crossroads and must decide on how to best meet the new challenges of the 21st Century, including the transition to a new global order, global migration and global terrorism.

The EU is witnessing an unimaginable human drama and facing a — in modern times — not-experienced monumental challenge of uncontrolled human migration from another cultural region. By early 2016, more than one million (maybe close to two) legal refugees and economic migrants are in- and on the route to Europe. The end of the migration flood isn't in sight as indicated by the subsequent illustration.

This dramatic development is stretching political cooperation, public opinion and resources to breaking point within the EU, and could have wide-ranging consequences for the European social fabric.

But the uncontrolled migration is just one of the challenges the EU is facing. The other key challenges include:

— The foundations of civilisations in the 21st Century is under attack by criminal forces from the Middle-East and Northern-Africa;

— The perceived post-Cold-War geo-political stability is under threat; and

— The key challenges from the end of the 20th century remain — notable global warming and global financial volatility.

Regrettably, it must be acknowledged that current responses of European political leaders are temporary fixes.

European leaders must recognise that solutions to the monumental challenges will never be found in naïve humanitarianism nor political correctness or selfish economics. European leaders must remain faithful and steadfast to values that represent European society.

The situation is crying out for a realistic vision for the EU's future in the new World order followed by determined political leadership.

It is my hope that this conference will contribute with innovative ideas and implementable proposals to which I wish every success.

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* The Global Round Table is a unique non-party political initiative with the aim to improve the level and quality of information available to economic- and political decision-makers. The secondary aim is to provide inspiration to civil society leaders and the young generation.

Its Protector and High Patron is H. E. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, UN Secretary General (1992–1996) and President of the International Panel on Democracy and Development. Its International Board include Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, former Heads of State, former Prime Ministers, former European Parliament Vice President, former European Commission Vice-President, former President of UNESCO General Conference, former President of World Academy of Art and Science.

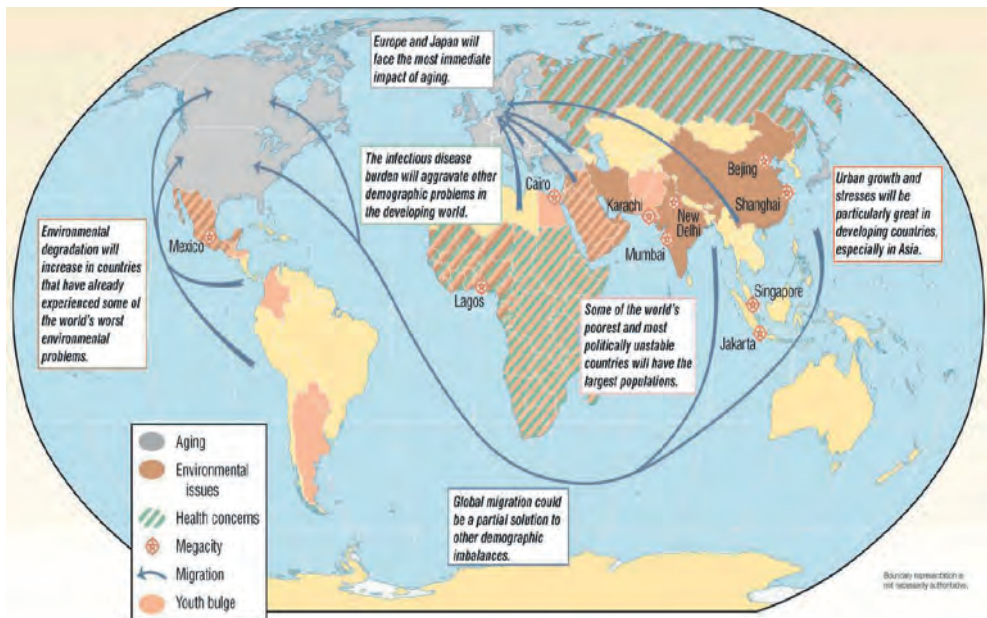


Illustration:

Snapshot of Global Demographic Trends at the turn of 20th to 21st Century.

Source:

https://www.cia.gov/library/reports/general-reports-/Demo_Trends_For_Web.pdf (July 2001)