

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

you will forgive me if I forgo the titles, but I am painfully aware of the time constraints. Not least of all I am reminded of the alleged conversation between King George V. and Mahatma Ghandi, when the leader Mahatma was received by His Majesty King George. He said to him: "You are rather underdressed for the climate of England, are you not?", to which Mahatma apparently replied: "Her Majesty is wearing enough clothes for both of us. And then everything that you've said about me today, you have said enough for all of us." But effectively I feel extremely moved.

It was the Danish philosopher Kirkegaard who said you should take other people subjectively and yourself objectively. It was Michael Fountain who said you should only take other people seriously and yourself not too seriously. And having been married to my wife for 38 years, blessed with four children and six grandchildren, I think one has to take life by counting the sunny hours. I also have to take life very seriously when I am making a speech in her presence.

This is why I took my watch off to make sure it is not more than ten minutes.

Meine Deutsch ist eine große Kuddelmuddel. Die Hochgeschwindigkeitsdynamik... how could you invent a word like that? Unsere gegenwärtige Welt pfercht die Individuen hinein in ein Geflecht aus Interaktion, Information und Austausch, das den Einzelnen überwältigt und verwirrt. In diesem Zusammenhang sollten wir uns daran erinnern, was Mahatma Ghandi als die sieben Todsünden der Welt bezeichnet hat: Firstly, Reichtum ohne Arbeit, Vermögen ohne Gewissen, Wissenschaft ohne Humanität, Wissen ohne Charakter, Politik ohne Prinzipien, Wirtschaften ohne Moral, Anbetung ohne Opfer.

You said... the 11th of September! I would also add Madrid, London, Amman. Most recently I was visited by the Danish Ambassador after the „Caricature crisis“. And he said to me, how can you advise me on damage control? I said, this has nothing to do with Denmark and Islam.

I believe in generic names: the Levante, Mesopotamia. I was in the office of a curator, actually the curator of the British Museum four days before the military intervention in Iraq, and someone asked him, an American friend of ours asked him, what is archaeologically significant about Mesopotamia? And the answer was: „Everything!“.

I believe in Scandinavia. Hansa, Baltic Co-operation, Solomon and Shiban, the Levante. These are the generic names that are supranational. And I believe in Berlin, you have a moral authority which is supranational. If an architect would visit the chapel at your Parliament here in Berlin, he would see a straight line from Berlin through Jerusalem to Mecca. Coincidence or reality, who knows?

When I visited Oswiecim [Auschwitz] as the elected moderator of religions for peace, I went to Krakow, and there - to my surprise - was a black stone, and I said, I have seen one like that before, and they said, yes, in the Kaaba [in Mecca]. There is a third one in the northern hemisphere and I can't remember where. What I am trying to say to you in the presence of a Jerusalemite from Palestine, Dr. Mundib Daghani, the president of the Arab University of Jerusalem, in the presence of the ambassador of goodwill, the scholar diplomat, my dear friend Avi Primor, from Tel Aviv . We had several conversations about seeing ourselves objectively. We have tried economic conversations between the western hemisphere and the rest of the world, and today we are confident in the fact that the real security council is the G 8 – or is it the G7, I can't remember. I never was very good at figures.

We are confident in the fact that poverty is increasing and that our West Asian, North African region needs one hundred million job opportunities by 2015, or we will continue to hothouse, the terror that we fear. The terror of 70 per cent of our population under the age of 15, and when I say our population, I refer to that Greater Middle East, as I did in the presence of a Senator at the American Foreign Relations Committee. I have to get this right. It's foreign affairs for Congressmen and foreign relations for Senators, because Senators don't have affairs.

I said to them, here you are talking about a Middle East that stretches from Calcutta to Casablanca, from Marrakech to Bangladesh. More populous, poorer and more dangerous than any other region in the world, more populous than China. So why don't we talk more specifically about West Asia and that central trunk of oil? Someone said to me the other day, how do we exorcise the devil oil, running as it does from the Caspian to the straits of Almus. How do we call for a weapons of mass destruction – free zone? And I said, only by recognising that what applies in international law to other regions of the world should apply to this region.

In 1918, before the first shot was fired between Jew and Arab, my great uncle King Fesal met Ephraim Weisman. And the dream was of a multicultural Near East: Persians, Turks, Arabs, Muslims, Christians working together in an ethic of human solidarity for peace in the Holy Land. Well known to us, Clemenceau had said to Winston Churchill: „Our boys will shed wide in the fields of Flanders. We deserve our share of the price, not of war, but of peace. “

Oil funded the industrial development of the United States of America and the western hemisphere. After the Second World War with the introduction of millions of destitute Jews to our region we paid the price again – of conflict, of hatred, and when Menad Canes, the famous economist, drew

up the agreement with the United States of billions or trillions, I can't remember any more. I think a Texan was asked the other day how many zeros there are in a Brazilian. I won't mention which Texan, maybe it's one of those Bush jokes, I don't know. But we are not allowed to joke about Bush today, aren't we, because I received a nice message from the Assistant Secretary of State.

The choice was, will you give up Empire or take the money? Actually he gave up Empire, but he did not give up the oil producing Middle East. That did not come until 1962.

Why were we, the Arabs and the Jews, the Persians and the Turks, the Kurds, and the Armenians and the Caldians and the Turkmen and the Finitions, why were we - the heart of the Arab Renaissance - deprived of the chance to develop a model of progress, so it would not be critical of the manner in which oil was exploited from our region and from our soil? So we would not be critical of the way in which the world spends millions upon trillions on weapons, not least of all weapons of mass destruction. It is for this reason that I was motivated years ago to study the other. I am the only Muslim member of the board of the Centre for Hebrew Studies at Oxford University.

It is for this reason that I speak of the importance of MAS - mutually assured survival - rather than MAD - mutually assured destruction.

It is for this reason that I admire King Frederick II. who visited Jerusalem in the 13th century and uttered a beautiful sentence to the Muslims: „I would not expect you to pray in any other way, even if you came to my country I would not expect you to pray in any other way.“

It was Kaiser Wilhelm who visited our region as an ambassador of culture and goodwill. In the spirit of this beautiful new painting that has just been

raised in this wonderful historic hall, and I thank you for pointing it out to me. I am one quarter Turk, so in terms of bridge building I am a refugee, a refugee son – my father was born in Mecca, a city that believes in moral authority rising above politics. My great grandfather was buried in Jerusalem within the walls of the Halem, a man who believed in Arab Renaissance. My great uncle was the ambassador of Iraq to Berlin before the wall. I feel comfortable in both worlds. But many others who tried to cross that river of hatred like Pedro Ramadan (?), the much valiant scholar who has found refuge in the dreamy space of my old University Oxford, said: "In the middle of the river you feel the criticism of the people you left behind and the criticism of the people you have yet to meet."

We passed through three fears, fear of the other. The first time I met Jews and Christians it was Friday, Saturday and Sunday. If we had observed strictly we would never have seen each other.

Then, how will we get to eat together, how will we sit and talk together? My wife's family comes from the Indian subcontinent. Well, married to Sikhs, Parsis, Hindus, my house is a continuous railway station of comings and goings. I think you should encourage her – she's an excellent cook – to write a book entitled "Cooking for peace" because she has cooked for all tastes and all persuasions.

But the recipe that I was asked to produce going back to Denmark was the recipe of inter- intraregional co-operation. Involved as I am – I can't remember if I am a member or a patron or anyway, all these titles were already mentioned, as a servant of the servants. When we travel to reconciliation talks in Timor, in Yugoslavia, in Sierra Leone, in South Africa, we meet with all these contradicting figures – Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, Jews, Orthodox, Catholic, and I said to them you are the servants of the community, I am the servant of the servants. What can I do to help you promote peace and reconciliation?

The Scandinavian community and the Baltic community, their Prime Ministers and their Ministers attended a meeting of the Nordic Council where I was privileged to stand and address them as someone coming from the region. You mentioned sunshine, and we will talk, I hope, Minister Gabriel, at dinner about all the projects, your Apollo space project, TREC – transregional energy collaboration – Ulrich von Weizäcker, Franz-Josef Rademacher and their brilliant contributions to a global ecosocial Marshall plan. Gerhard Knies and his contribution to a desert TREC.

But I'd like to tell you a story about light and sunshine, taken from the tradition of the Sufi Dschalal ad-Din Rumi. It is said of the sage Nostradin Hoja that he was looking under a lamp for his quill, his pen, and a friend passed by and said to him, Mullah, what are you looking for? My pen, he said. Where did you last see it? Over there in the grass, he said. But why are you looking here? Because there is light here, he said.

I was asked to come from the darkness of the Middle East where we face the possibility and the likelihood and the hope in the minds of some, of Armageddon in our time. Between Ahmed Inaghad on the one side calling for the Muslim Saviour Demahdi to destroy the enemies of Islam, which presumably means killing them. And this confessionalist Christians in America who call for the coming of the Saviour to herald a thousand years of peace based on Jerusalem having converted or killed the rest of us. I suppose there will be somebody around to see the sequel. I assure you it will be much uglier than 9/11 when incidentally I remind you that 20 per cent of the dead were Muslims. But what I want to say is that in this election process there are five main challenges facing Scandinavia: the Baltic co-operation, the Asian dream of Europe, the European of Asia, the media terror, the terror media. We spoke to the following a language of coexistence. How can we develop a language of coexistence with so much infotainment and infoterror on our television sets? Principles of secularity

and religion, the impact of globalisation and global power structures on the options for dialogue. And after excluding many of the criteria we came down to five basic points:

Can we empower the powerless? And I don't mean just political power, I mean feeding, educating in terms of legal literacy and citizenship, stake holding and share holding. I congratulate Graham Bank on their well-deserved prize working with the powerless.

Then, insuring freedom of religion, freedom to believe or not to believe. If you say to a Jew or an Arab secular he will understand agnostic. So I was told, reliably, by a grand Rabbi René Sirat, who I saw yesterday, the former grand Rabbi of France, his name is Sirat, so the joke that we always share is "Qué Sirat, serat.", born in Nepon in Algeria, himself a refugee, the birth place of Thomas Aquinas.

Thirdly, can we create public spaces for coexistence? This is what I ask you in Berlin? Can you envisage on the 60th anniversary of multilateralism the United Nations system, Don Barton Oaks and Brethan Woods during your German presidency of the European Union a Berlin Congress for peace, for our children and our grandchildren? If it was possible in San Francisco, is it not possible in Berlin?

Speaking of Berlin, one of my mentors was Isiah Berlin – so I am a Berliner of the Isiah kind!

Speaking of walls, one of my great heroes is the prophet Joshua. So not only time brings down walls, but the loud voice of the silenced – not the silent, but the silenced majority can bring down walls of hatred and apartheid and division. But the walls that we have to bring down first are the psychological walls in what we like to call our brains. And the longest

distance in the world is between here – and here! [points from his heart to his head; translator's comment]

That is what we have to bridge if we are to be effective in building peace. Can we bring justice to development by ensuring the freedom of our tradition.

And lastly, can we overcome the security agenda? By a simple equation: hard security plus soft security basically means human beings: giving your grandchild a hug - I call that security. Looking after the ball and giving the greeting of peace is the greatest message of Islam. And I would like to see a construct where hard security and soft security equals wise security, or what our American friends would call smart security.

Today we are living a watershed. I am not a constituent of the American Congress. When they asked me what I thought of Ronald Reagan, I said, well, I really can't answer you, when they pressed me, I said, if I had been given the choice, I would have preferred John Wayne.

But all I want to say here is that the next few weeks are going to be very telling in developing a vision of the world in which we live, a vision that does not characterise me as a Muslim, an Islamist, a migrant, a terrorist and somebody of different coloured skin all at once. I don't know if the people who use these denominations or definitions really understand the difference between them all or whether there is just fear of peace. Let us deal with this fear of peace and overcome it and realise a partnership in our shared humanity.

Thank you for your patience and God bless you all!