

**ADDRESS BY H.E. MARIE LOUISE COLEIRO PRECA, PRESIDENT OF MALTA
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SESSION**

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**STABILITY AND SECURITY VS UNPREDICTABILITY AND INSECURITY
TOWARDS NEW GOVERNANCE: HOW TO FORESEE AND BUILD? IT
REMAINS TO REBUILD TRUST BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT BECOME MORE
DIFFICULT AND RISKY**

**It is an honour to be able to address the Crans Montana
Forum in Brussels today. I thank Ambassador Carteron
and his team and I am positive that we will have a
successful and fruitful meeting.**

**The Crans Montana Forum provides an excellent
opportunity to highlight the urgency of some very
relevant issues confronting the world today.**

**We are living in a world afflicted by wars in different
parts of the globe.**

**It would be difficult to identify the one global factor that
foments threats to peace. As always in history, there is
not a single variable, causing such strife.**

However, conflicts frequently arise out of the struggle for resources, which, though abundant, and capable of nourishing each person on planet earth, twice over, are concentrated in the hands of a few.

Widespread poverty plays its part in fomenting such constant threats to peace sometimes in the form of terrorist organisations.

There can be no peace anywhere when stark differences in access to resources are manifest everywhere, with wealth concentrated in the hands of the few, the so-called 1%, at the expense of the many.

One cannot expect to sleep peacefully and securely when there is misery all around. Furthermore, widespread racism, as well as denial of human rights, can lead to a sense of 'disorientation' and an acquired 'new sense of belonging' by yielding to overtures by terrorist organisations made through the all pervasive social media.

Poverty is alas also rampant throughout Europe itself. When I addressed a conference on poverty in this very same city last autumn, the overall figure for absolute and relative poverty, in the EU, stood at 80 million.

There was hope that the figure would be reduced substantially by 2020 according to an EU strategy meant to combat this scourge.

At that conference, however, outgoing EU Commission President José Manuel Durão Barroso told us in no uncertain terms that, rather than moving forward, we have been moving backwards with the amount expected to rise to a staggering 100, 000 by 2020.

This terrible situation is not acceptable. A purportedly 'social Europe' needs to intensify its efforts to tackle this situation head on. We require 'root and branch' social restructuring to fulfil the pledges and commitments made.

The world, including the Mediterranean region, of which my country forms part of, is witnessing a tragic situation as people are leaving Africa in their thousands risking, and many times losing, life and limb to seek a better life in this continent.

They are fleeing the terrible situations of war and despair, often compounded by violence, extremism droughts, famine and widespread disease.

And one can add to these a myriad of other factors including stark poverty with little possibilities for development and employment in countries of origin.

The tragedies witnessed for the last twenty years or so around the shores of my country and the rest of the Mediterranean, with stark images of human carnage, underlining the sense of desperation involved, and compel me to raise the issue of migration and its tragic consequences time and time again.

The recent agreement, pushed for by Italy and Malta, to clamp down on unscrupulous criminal human traffickers is a step in the right direction but of course, this is not sufficient to stem the tragedy.

The call for the issuing of humanitarian visas for people to exercise their right to asylum, a right etched in the 1951 Geneva Convention on Human Rights, should take us further in confronting a carnage which has, according to *The Guardian* in late 2013, claimed more than 20, 000 lives in the Mediterranean alone during the previous twenty years, that is prior to 2013.

The United Nations Refugee Agency has estimated that more than 100,000 migrants made the perilous crossing over the Mediterranean to Europe this year.

Tragedies across the Mediterranean in 2015 were described as among the worst ever, with around 800, including small children, drowning in a single week in April.

Poverty, wars, conflicts, persecution and climate change are the cause of much migration across the desert of Africa, through the turbulent state of Libya and across the Mediterranean, all turning into land and watery graveyards for thousands of human beings like us.

The international community needs to go beyond sporadic decisions to designing a holistic and comprehensive action policy on migration.

Once again terrorism which has been rearing its ugly head in the impoverished places of origin and in unstable regions renders the situation of migrants much more tragic.

Among those who suffer in this regard, there are children. They feature alarmingly among the victims of the 'war culture' in which the world is engulfed, suffering from all kinds of 'collateral damage,' direct bombings in what is diabolically dubbed 'low intensity warfare', malnutrition from blockades such as that surrounding

Iraq during and after the first Gulf War, abandonment and the desperate attempts by parents to allow children to travel unaccompanied to take their chance and hope for the best.

All this lends credence to a statement by a prolific American writer, Henry Giroux, that a war is being waged against children. Those who should hold out the promise of a better future are denied the chance of ever reaching that future. The dream of that future is, for many, suddenly turned into a nightmare from which they cannot wake up.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Planet Earth has been lent to us by future generations. Let us not continue to plunder and ravage a planet which we have to restore to those who will partake of it in future.

Climate change is not just an urgent environmental issue; it is having a devastating effect on the health of all of us, particularly of children.

Finally, I hope that members of this forum will join forces with others in ensuring that the much cherished democratic process which Europe claims to be the hallmark of life within its contours extends beyond that of mere parliamentary representation to permeate all spheres of life and all sectors of society, thus becoming the kind of substantial democracy advocated by many thinkers and philosophers that have emerged from this continent.

We owe even this kind of political environment to future generations.

Thank you for your kind attention.