

6<sup>th</sup>  
EDITION

WORLD  
FORUM  
"NORMANDY"  
FOR PEACE



## THE ESSENTIALS

SEPTEMBER 28 & 29, 2023



# RESISTANCE!

BRING PEACE BACK  
TO THE PEOPLE



RÉGION  
NORMANDIE



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**Print run:** 400 copies (100 for the English version)

**Publication date:** January 2024



## Notice to readers

This book is a compilation of the summaries of the discussions of the sixth edition of the Normandy World Peace Forum. Comments made during this event are not the official viewpoints of the Normandy Region and do not reflect its position. Summaries are not scientific articles. They present the different points of view and the key elements identified in each discussion.

**‘Resistance! Bring peace back to the people’.** This theme of the 6<sup>th</sup> Normandy World Peace Forum took place in a particularly complex international situation.

Popular resistance is often in response to a situation of injustice or oppression experienced by society. The decline of democracy in the world has led to the increased mobilisation of its people. People play a major role, both in the prevention of violence and in the restoration of peace. They rise up in protest to assert their rights or to put an end to domination, which is exercised either by the regime in place or by a foreign power. We can cite several topical examples: the war in Ukraine and the revolts in Iran, China and Kurdistan. This resistance also revolves around fundamental social subjects, such as women’s rights or the climate crisis.

The sixth edition of this annual event was once again a chance for reflection and ex-

change, an opportunity to think about the world of tomorrow, thanks to the numerous speakers – political figures, representatives of international institutions, geopolitical experts and members of civil society – but also thanks to the members of the public who took part.

This year the Forum offered conferences, debates, workshops dedicated to young people, activities, screenings and exhibitions.

We hope that this work will make the discussions of this 6<sup>th</sup> Forum accessible to everyone.

**Summaries of the plenaries and debates, as well as interviews and summaries of the key moments of the Forum have been compiled, in order to transport you to the heart of this event, supported by the Normandy Region.**

## The Normandy World Peace Forum in figures:



The Forum has brought together thousands of participants, including around 2500 young people, who came to attend the plenaries and debates, including 10 dedicated to the youth, as well as exhibitions and other highlights of this forum.



131 panellists from 31 countries, including 2 Nobel Peace Prize winners, took part in the Normandy World Peace Forum, either in person or by video conference.



Finally, the Forum is supported by 23 programming partners, as well as by committed entrepreneurs who share the Forum’s objectives.

Happy reading and see you next year!

The Normandy Region

Find the recordings of the Forum plenaries and the latest news from Normandy for Peace throughout the year on the website, [normandiepourlapaix.fr/en](https://normandiepourlapaix.fr/en)

# NORMANDY FOR PEACE

at a glance



The Normandy for Peace initiative was born of the Region's desire to continue the major work of remembrance carried out since 1945 in Normandy in order to become a test bed for lasting peace.

Normandy for Peace has 4 main axes, each covering several topics which are present throughout the year in the actions of Normandy for Peace and the projects built with its partners.

## A SERIES OF INITIATIVES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS, SYMPOSIA, SEMINARS, UNIVERSITY EXCHANGES, ARTISTIC CREATIONS... : THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, NORMANDY FOR PEACE GIVES RISE TO MANY ACTIONS ORGANIZED BY THE NORMANDY REGION AND ITS PARTNERS.

### > 4 MAJOR THEMES <



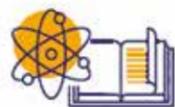
NORMANDY FOR PEACE CAMPUS



NORMANDY FOR PEACE RESOURCES



NORMANDY FOR PEACE DIALOGUE



NORMANDY FOR PEACE CULTURE AND SCIENCES

### > TOPICS PROMOTED BY <



THE FORUM



THE EVENTS



THE NETWORK

## A look back

### The Origin of Normandy for Peace

During the World Forum and throughout the year, initiatives, designated projects and events highlight the values of peace and freedom that Normandy holds dear.

The 'Normandy for Peace' days of 23 & 24 March 2017

Launch of the Normandy for Peace initiatives

The Launch of the Normandy Chair of Excellence for Peace

First publication of the European Parliament's Normandy Index

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Normandy World Peace Forum on 4 June 2019

The 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Normandy landings

The End of the European Programme Walk, The Global Walk and launch of the regional initiative EcHo

The 4<sup>th</sup> Normandy World Peace Forum On 30 Sept & 1 October 2021

6<sup>th</sup> Normandy World Peace Forum 28 and 29 September 2023

Under the theme 'Resistance! Bring peace back to the people', the 6<sup>th</sup> occasion of the Forum brought together 10,039 participants, including 7,440 young people for 3 plenary conferences, 15 debates, 7 youth workshops and 3 screenings for young people.

2<sup>nd</sup> seminar on Russia followed by a feedback session with the Collège des Bernardins.

In 2023, the Collège des Bernardins continued the work begun in 2022 with a new closed session which was held on Wednesday 27 September. The conclusions were presented the next day during the debate 'Who can resist Vladimir Putin?'

Highlight 'Between war and peace' organised in partnership with the think tank The Strategic Foresight Group.

In the presence of two Nobel Peace Prize winners, the existential risks facing humanity and the possible solutions to build lasting peace were discussed. This sequence was highlighted by the release of the book 'A World Without War - The History, Politics and Resolution of Conflict' by Sundeep Waslekar, founder of the Strategic Foresight Group.

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

The Launch of the Freedom Prize

The 1<sup>st</sup> Normandy World Peace Forum on 7 & 8 June 2018

Development of year-round events

The Launch of the Parliamentarians for Peace initiative

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Normandy World Peace Forum on 1 & 2 October 2020

Normandy P4

During the Forum, the Normandy Region, in cooperation with the Indian think tank, Strategic Foresight Group and the Geneva Center for Security Policy, organised an international round table on global security issues. In order to advance the ideas of the Normandy Peace Manifesto among the opinion makers of four of the permanent member states of the UN Security Council, the 'Normandy P4' initiative was launched to bring together experts from France, the UK, the US and China to address the long-term challenges of global security, nuclear disarmament and the reduction of the risks to human civilisation from weapons of mass destruction.

The Seminar on Russia with the Collège des Bernardins.

The Normandy Region hosted a seminar organised by the Collège des Bernardins which brought together Russian and European experts. It focused on the future of democracy in Russia in the context of the increasing control of Vladimir Putin's regime over Russian society, from the media to the universities. The seminar was held over the course of three round tables which examined Russian consciousness in relation to its past, the conditions for memorial justice and the future of the rule of law in Russia.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Normandy World Peace Forum on 23 & 24 September 2022

With the theme 'Down with the walls!' The 5<sup>th</sup> Forum involved 9,000 participants on 23 and 24 September, including 4,500 young people taking part in 2 plenary conferences, 17 debates and workshops for the general public, 4 youth workshops and 2 screenings for young people, 2 closed sessions and a continuous programme in the Peace Village.

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# PLENARY CONFERENCES

## WELCOME MESSAGE

Hervé Morin, President of the Normandy Region:  
*'There are decades  
when centuries happen'*

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Hervé Morin, President of the Normandy Region:

## 'There are decades when centuries happen'



Ladies and gentlemen, Ambassadors,

Ladies and gentlemen, members of parliament,

Ladies and gentlemen, elected representatives,

Nobel Prize laureates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Every year, I'm delighted and deeply moved to open the Normandy World Peace Forum.

Each year, this major event, which has been held annually since 2017, demonstrates that it has become a recognised event for peace and security issues. I'm very proud when speakers tell us that it's revivifying, more succinct, more invigorating and somehow freer than the Paris Peace Forum, which was created a few months after ours...

A huge thank you, of course, to the organisers in particular to François-Xavier Priollaud, Vice-President of the Region and Mayor of Louviers, who works tirelessly to

promote this major event and whose imagination and ability to carry it through are exceptional. As you know, Normandy for Peace isn't just about these two days, it's also about organising events and seminars throughout the year, a dedicated university chair, a digital educational resource centre, and the Normandy for Peace Index, whose 2023 edition will be presented at the Forum. Thank you also to Frédérique Bedos, who runs the event with understanding and charm. Thank you to the members of our Scientific Advisory Board, Nicole Gnesotto and Bertrand Badie. I'd like to thank them for their dedication, their availability and their commitment, as they've been by our side since the genesis of the great ambition that is Normandy for Peace. I'd also like to thank the 65 members of the Region's staff who've volunteered to ensure that these two days run smoothly, as well as our dozens of French, European and international partners with whom we've constructed the debates for this Forum and who'll be hosting the Village for Peace that I invite you all to visit. Last but not least, I'd like to thank the Europe and International Department and Julie Micolot's team, who pull off a remark-

able feat by organising this event every year. They should be proud.

Finally, what a pleasure it is to have created an open forum, unlike Munich, Singapore and many others, where the debates are far removed from the pompous diplomatic meetings with their certified waffle.

Our Forum reflects what we want the world to be: open, interactive, participatory, with a significant, passionate and committed presence of young people. For me and for the father I am, it's a great source of comfort to see the commitment of new generations to the cause of human rights, freedoms and peace. They're often said to be blasé, egocentric, consumers rather than citizens, connected to social networks rather than to each other. Here, young people are determined, responsible and idealistic, dreaming of a better world.

Since its creation, we've always wanted this event to offer our young people the keys to understanding the major issues facing the world today. So, I'd like to thank the 3,000 young people expected to attend, nearly 800 of whom are in the room right now. I'd like to thank the many media outlets that have agreed to cover and promote this event. And finally, of course, thank you to the 130 or so speakers from 25 different countries, in particular, the leading figures of peoples' resistance who'll be speaking throughout the Forum and sharing their analyses with us.

Lenin is credited, probably apocryphally, with the phrase 'there are decades when nothing happens and there are weeks when decades happen.' With the increase in the number of crises our world has experienced over the last three years, we could even add that there are decades when centuries happen. Since the beginning of 2020, this decade has already been marked by the worst global health crisis in almost a century, with Covid-19, an increase in deadly natural disasters

and Russian aggression in Ukraine. Having barely begun, this decade will undoubtedly go down in the history books, given the ever-increasing challenges we'll have to face, as the 'Dangerous Decade', as Richard Haas put it, marked by the accentuated decline of world order and the return of the worst geopolitical traditions: rivalries between great powers, deadly imperial ambitions, struggles for access to resources, especially water, nuclear proliferation and the emboldening of all forms of authoritarianism.

**'The brighter side is the awakening of people's consciousness to the seriousness of the threats.'**

These geopolitical tensions are compounded by new challenges such as overpopulation, migration, climate change and the digital revolutions and artificial intelligence that are upsetting the global balance.

That's the dark side. Then, there is the brighter side, which is the awakening of people's consciences to the seriousness of these threats. Like Doctor Mukwege in the Congo and his fight to protect and care for women who've been subjected to the atrocities of war. Like Hadja Idrissa Bah and the Young Girls Leaders' Club of Guinea, who are resisting and fighting to assert their rights and freedoms. Like the struggle of Iranian women who continue to fight against the repression of the regime. Like the tireless work of Pramila Patten at the United Nations on sexual violence. Like the struggle of minorities that we welcome to Normandy for Peace every year: the Rohingya in Myanmar, the Uighur and Tibetan in China, the Christian of the East and the Yezidi in Iraq. I'm also thinking of the peoples who are prisoners of old grudges and historical divisions, as the current situation in the Caucasus reminds us with

the military operation led by Azerbaijan. I'm thinking of the peoples who have to contend with the ever-increasing interference of the great powers that threaten the stability of their countries, as we can see from China's increasingly explicit threats to Taiwan or Russia's interference in Africa.

Finally, I'm thinking of the Afghans and their young people, left to the worst of regimes, and the Yemeni people, starving after 10 years of fasting.

### **'Global imbalances always come from authoritarian regimes'**

A few thoughts to open the debate on 'Resistance, the people's peace.' A beautiful and thought-provoking title, but I'd like to share just two such thoughts with you.

The first question is: why is democracy in decline, and consequently the risk of conflict and war increasing? It's obvious, but let's not forget that the existence of a democratic regime is the best guarantee of peace for a people. Why do the rankings drawn up by various institutions, the established indexes, show at the very least that the inauguration of democratic and liberal regimes in the world is stagnating, if not regressing, while a growing proportion of humanity has access to education and development? Why haven't the 2 or 3 billion people who have access to development and who've escaped poverty thanks to globalisation and the exchanges to which it leads, which aren't just economic but are also linked to understanding and knowledge between peoples, brought about the expansion of democracies? Why is it that, contrary to everything we learnt at school, the market economy hasn't generated democracy and freedom – I'm thinking of China, Russia and a number of Asian, African and South American countries? Worse still, why is it that where democracies have been in place for decades, or even centu-

ries, populism and nationalism are on the rise? In the world's largest democracy, the Capitol is being invaded by Trump's fanatics, populists are making headway in our own democracies with educated and literate peoples, and European states that enthusiastically joined the European space are going back on well-established principles in our nations. Why have twenty or so democracies, however imperfect, gone backwards or ended up in authoritarian regressions according to every index over the last 20 years?

It is probably because our representative democracies are imperfect and now require a good deal of participatory democracy. With the exception of Switzerland, we haven't yet found the right balance. The migratory shock can probably partly explain this decline in the old democracies. The effect of social networks and fake news, the acceleration of technological and scientific change, which lead to retreat and withdrawal when faced with fear of the unknown also bring explanation. Is this the Tocquevillian movement of trading freedoms for egalitarianism? If we want to appeal to the conscience of our compatriots, only democratic regimes and freedoms are their best guarantees. Historically, liberal democracy does not wage war.

The first line of resistance for the people's peace is the improvement of our democracies, without rendering them impotent, which is always a balancing act. I'd be happy to elaborate on what this means for a country like France, but every day we see just how imperfect our democracy is, based on the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man. What I do know is that global imbalances always stem from authoritarian regimes. China, where all the diplomats said that Chinese culture and the need for growth would make it less susceptible to warmongering, but where



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the arms race and disturbing rhetoric are the order of the day. I'm thinking of Taiwan and Hong Kong, whose autonomy and freedom have been stripped. Quite simply, China is driven by a desire for hegemony and primacy. Then there's Putin's Russia, of course, which is challenging the existence of the nation of Ukraine. This too is primarily the pathological expression of a dictator. We can look to NATO's mistakes, the sense of encirclement of the new Russia, the invasion of neighbours by Russian armies, but it's first and foremost the pathology of an authoritarian regime.

Yet I've heard former French heads of state, and even one I knew well, explaining that Putin would never invade Ukraine, that the United States was bluffing. We saw the outcome. As the Russian armies got bogged down, as the master of the Kremlin began to worry about his own fate, you saw the evocation of the worst, i.e., the use of nuclear weapons, because at the end

of the day, history has taught us that to remain in control, a dictator can go as far as the unthinkable, the unimaginable. This raises the question of nuclear power. We can argue that nuclear power has protected us from war, but we can also argue that nuclear power has not prevented war and the invasion of a country that is certainly not protected by the NATO shield. Nuclear power also raises the question of proliferation, and its proliferation in authoritarian regimes.

The statements by the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia calling for access to enrichment technologies and civil nuclear power, making no secret of the casus belli that Iran's access to nuclear power represents, show that the takeover of this weapon that is lethal to humanity by non-democratic regimes is nonetheless a threat to world order, particularly with the inevitable development of civil nuclear power to cover our energy needs.



I still think that the abolition of nuclear weapons is a prospect that makes sense in the long term. It's not up to us to disarm ourselves first, but it's a message that makes sense if we put it in perspective for the decades to come. The first form of resistance that I'd like to mention is democratic resistance which is the best guarantor of peace between peoples. Peoples, with their own energy and their capacity to act as strong counter-powers, are the best guarantors, as Bertrand Badie so aptly put it. The second is European resistance. To tell you the truth, I'm astonished at how much Europe's will has weakened on the international stage over the last 50 years, leaving the Russians and the Americans to deal with the world's major issues, including their own! Europe showed its dignity at the time of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Not everything was perfect, there were minor setbacks and hesitations, but the European bloc stood together in re-

sponse to the eminent courage of the Ukrainian people to save their independence. We demonstrated firmness, but, because we're democrats, we demonstrated responsibility in order to avoid escalation. I'd like to take this opportunity to say that the old man, Biden, who's been lambasted by many in the media, has shown great skill in managing this crisis, which the world can see is fraught with dangerous uncertainty.

Not only have we been able to do without gas (which costs us on a daily basis); not only have we helped the Ukrainians to defend themselves, but we've also determined the consequences in terms of strengthening our own security, which is something new. Until then, most countries sheltered themselves from NATO to avoid making any effort and to avoid debates in their own countries. Now decisions, if not intentions, are being made. For instance, the Germans have decided on a €100 billion plan for their defence. We too have stepped up our efforts. I'd like to take this opportunity to say that I've read and heard a lot of nonsense about French defence: 'We couldn't hold out for more than 3 days in a high-intensity battle, we couldn't hold a front line for more than 15 days with stretches as long as those in Ukraine.'

I'm telling you, this is idiotic, for at least three reasons.

The first is that France is at the isthmus of Europe, so the whole alliance would have collapsed! That a force – and it's not clear which one, since the Russian stalemate in Ukraine shows that it can't be Russia – would have succeeded in wiping out all the European countries without any American response. I'm not sure which country. China, India? Clearly, this is not a serious hypothesis. The second is that our deterrent would not have worked. The third is that the solidarity mechanisms in the European treaties and NATO would not have worked. Our defence is built within an alliance,

guaranteed by our deterrence programme. We're not alone in the face of an invader we can't even see! Yes, we need deeper stockpiles of ammunition and missiles, but no, there are no enemies threatening our borders, forcing us to replenish our stocks of tanks and artillery. I would add that, in my view, we should be focusing more on space, cybersecurity and biological weapons than on guns and aircraft.

What was a nice and pleasant surprise was the European resistance, our unity, which is not all that obvious given the geography of each country and its history, and also the position that the Commission has taken in the mechanisms, at least for financing. If this crisis gave Europe the idea of once again becoming a respected player in tomorrow's world order, that would at least be good news. So, my second point of resistance is the call for resistance from the people of Europe, because we're the only ones who've managed to create a peaceful order governed by the rule of law. A law that's binding in relation to States and independent nations.

It is a model that is unique in the world and should inspire the new world order which is clearly in need of rebuilding. In this new-found semblance of will, the nations of Europe would be well advised to make Africa their primary concern, even more so after what must be called the French debacle. Not only have we been asked to leave after realising our failures in bringing Operation Barkhane to an end, but putschist regimes are flourishing in all these countries, sweeping aside a president who was seeking to return to a normalised democratic framework, as in Niger. On the other hand, let's denounce these military putschists who justify France's withdrawal in the name of sovereignty. I know Niger well. I've been there many times. There's nothing there, there's no state, no army, and since nature abhors a vacuum, others more bel-

licose and invasive than us will take their place.

What is certain is that Europe should propose a plan to ensure the development and establishment of democracy with these countries. A kind of beautiful alliance that respects the sovereignty of states and promotes their development. Europe's GDP is 16,000 billion euros, while that of Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso is less than 60 billion euros. We have the means to do this through dialogue with this region of the world. A plan for agriculture, food self-sufficiency, economic development with significant European resources, the construction of freedoms and democracy, which would incidentally resolve a large part of the migration issue. Democracy isn't an abstraction, it's always an achievement. But it remains fragile while there are still freedoms to be won and consolidated. Peace between peoples is best guaranteed by our liberal democracies, imperfect though they may be, which allow social forces to express themselves.

***'Freedoms, on the other hand, still need to be won and consolidated'***

That's why, because our democratic model is so precious, I want the Normandy Region to invest even more in promoting it by creating a Young Leaders programme from next year, as part of the Normandy Chair for Peace. Each year, Normandy will host around ten high-potential young people from democratising countries around the world who are keen to serve their country. They'll be trained in issues relating to good governance practices, human rights and international law. The Region will give them the opportunity to experience how our democratic model works by offering them a paid internship with our local authority.

Thank you very much.



# RADIOGRAPHY OF RESISTANCE

Conference n°1 / Thursday 28 September / 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. / Plenary Room



Bertrand Badie, Niagalé Bagayoko, Michel Wieviorka and Delphine Allès

**What does it mean to resist in 2023? The first plenary conference of the Normandy World Peace Forum 2023 was based on the theme of ‘Radiography of Resistance’. The guests attempted to define the refusal of powerlessness and to take stock of the new sources of resistance, which, as dissidents and activists are there to remind us, always has a cost.**

September is the month of major world events. In the wake of the G20, the United Nations General Assembly and the International Day of Peace, the Normandy World Peace Forum was held. At Caen's Abbaye aux Dames, to rapturous applause, masters of ceremonies Frédéric Bedos and François-Xavier Priollaude thanked the prestigious guests of this sixth edition – some 130 speakers from all over the world. Hervé Morin, President of the Conseil Régional de Normandie gave the opening speech and expressed his delight at having created such an open forum, ‘open, interactive, participative, represented passionately and in significant numbers by the youth of Normandy and France.

***I don't believe in this absolute opposition between democracy and totalitarianism***

Bertrand Badie

Next, Bertrand Badie, Professor Emeritus and pillar of the Forum, prefaced his keynote address with the statement that *‘nothing is external to the human’*, demonstrating the need to move beyond old patterns, those *‘which proclaimed that everything is human except international relations’*, as one former minister put it: *‘Letting public opinion have a say on international issues would be like admitting the patient's family into the operat-*

*ing theatre’*. This, he said, has become a thing of the past. Gradually, a mysterious social energy has emerged that organises, controls and determines international relations. And this is nothing new, given that a few centuries ago, right here in Normandy, the Abbé de Saint Pierre explained that peace could only be built by taking social well-being into account. *‘I don't believe in this absolute opposition between democracy and totalitarianism; things are infinitely more complicated than that’*, added Bertrand Badie.

## The deep meaning of resistance

Refusing to be powerless and the driving forces behind resistance: this was the theme of the first round table, which asked the question: are the driving forces behind resistance the same as those we have seen in the past? The sociologist Michel Wieviorka believes that there are several levels of motivation: *‘There is the deep meaning of resistance. In the name of what value am I taking action? And there, it's very variable.’* The sociologist pointed out that



Bertrand Badie

OPENING:

**Hervé MORIN**,

President of the Normandy Region

MODERATION:

**Frédérique BEDOS**, Founding President of the NGO, the Imagine Project

**François-Xavier PRIOLLAUD**, Vice-President of the Normandy Region

SPEAKERS:

**Izzeldin ABUELAISH**, Doctor, author of ‘I shall not hate’

**Delphine ALLES**, Professor of political science and vice-president of INALCO

**Bertrand BADIE**, University Professor Emeritus at Sciences Po Paris

**Niagalé Bagayoko**, President of the African Security Sector Network

**Mikhail Khodorkovski**, Exiled Russian opposition activist

**Oxana Melnychuk**, Director of the centre for political analysis and communication Unified for Ukraine

**Shole Pakravan**, Iranian activist, mother of Reyhaneh Jabbari, sentenced to death and executed for the murder of her alleged rapist

**Pramila Patten**, UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflicts

**Michel Wieviorka**, French sociologist

**Nathan Law**, Hong Kong activist

resistance movements could bring together people from very different political backgrounds for the duration of a struggle. He was closely involved in the birth of the Solidarnosc movement in Poland in 1980, and remembers a remarkable impetus driven by a very positive, open, non-violent idea of nationhood, which has now been transformed into authoritarian nationalism. In these grassroots movements where inequality of forces often predominates, is



rise to bloody repressions. *'In the five other countries,'* she explained, *'waves of massive support accompanied the military's accession to power and constituted their best means of remaining there. This reveals a powerful revolutionary wave that Africa had not experienced before, as in the Arab world, but which is now taking on a nationalist character. The authoritarian practices implemented by these regimes are not condemned by the people, who consider that democracy, reduced to its strict electoralist version with no individual or collective progress, has not kept its promises.'* Bertrand Badie confirmed these statements: *'What is the value of democracy if it doesn't bring you anything?'*

### What is the value of democracy if it doesn't bring you anything?

Bertrand Badie

there a form of legitimate violence? In response to this question, Michel Wieviorka remained cautious. *'Yes, it is true that violence sometimes paves the way,'* he said, recalling the execution of Francoist President Carreiro Blanco by ETA in the 1970s, which contributed to Spain's transition to democracy.

And what about the African continent, the scene of numerous coups d'état since 2020? Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Chad, Sudan, Niger and even Gabon, where we have seen demonstrations of popular support for these coups d'état which are shaking up our conception of them. Niagalé Bagayoko, president of the African Security Sector Network, cited two scenarios: in Chad and Sudan, the accession to power took place against popular will and gave

### Reactionary wave

Delphine Allès, Professor of political science and vice-president of INALCO, stated her belief that the common point of resistance movements is that they express dissatisfaction with the lack of control over the destiny of populations. *'In the 50s and 60s, recently decolonised peoples felt that they were invited to the UN international table with a secondary position. This was formalised in 1961 with the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement, with a discourse that was not anti-establishment but universal and constructive. Gradually this*



*transformed into a certain bitterness and a questioning of the international order.'* Michel Wieviorka, who wants us to remain vigilant about the excesses of these mobilisations, and Niagalé Bayayoko outlined their concern about the reactionary wave, which seems to be reaching the African continent, and not just that. At the conclusion of this first round table, Bertrand Badie noted that the dialogue between social unease and social energy is structural. And, addressing the young people in the audience: *'If you want to understand international relations, it's no longer based on geopolitics, but on a new sociology of the world based on this infinity of social parameters.'* Pramila Patten, the UN special representative on sexual violence in conflicts since 2017 (see Zooming in on), gave a poignant testimony in relation to the rape victims she was able to meet in the field.

### Resisting: at what cost?

But active resistance also has a cost for those who embrace it. To illustrate this point, a second round table was held with activists and dissidents such as Nathan Law, a Hongkonger exiled to London since 2020 following his active participation in the Umbrella Movement. This young man in his thirties talked about the trigger for

his commitment and its consequences. *'The collapse of civil society in Hong Kong took only a year,'* he recalled. *It was a free place, like Paris, even if we didn't elect our leaders. Everything can collapse in a few months, that's an important lesson.'* Shole Pakravan – Iranian activist and mother of Reyhaneh Jabbari, who was sentenced to death for the murder of her alleged rapist – took over to tell the story of her commitment, which she owes to her daughter, who was executed in prison in 2014. *'She wrote every confession she was asked to write, but in 2014 the government and security services asked her to write a letter and say: "I was a teenager, I didn't know I can't identify right from wrong, and this man didn't want to rape me, in fact. And I made mistakes." I, as a mother, begged Reyhaneh: "Please write this letter." Because I wanted my daughter back and to come home. But my daughter told me: "No. I cannot close my eyes and I cannot wash the face of a rapist," she said, defining herself as a soldier for justice.'*

### The entire history of Ukraine is the history of resistance to Russia

Oxana Melnychuk

Oxana Melnychuk, director of the centre for political analysis and communication Unified for Ukraine, also gave her insight into the Ukrainian resistance, which she believes is ingrained in the DNA of the Ukrainian people. *'The entire history of Ukraine is the history of resistance to Russia,'* she said, recalling in passing that resistance was a very individual matter. In tandem, the Russian dissident Mikhail Khodorkovsky could only agree, reiterating his support for the Ukrainian people. Twenty years ago, when he was the head of an oil group, he sent a report to the Kremlin to report corruption at the highest



Izzeldin Abuelaish

© Pierre Galliot - Région Normandie

### Everything can collapse in a few months, that's an important lesson

Nathan Law

levels of the Russian government. He ended up in prison for 10 years and went on four hunger strikes to protest this injustice. *'Since the amendment of the Constitution in 2021, it has become clear that fair elections do not exist. A change in power is only possible through revolution.'*

Izzeldin Abuelaish, author of the book *I Shall Not Hate*, grew up in Gaza refugee camps before becoming the first Palestinian doctor in an Israeli hospital. In January 2009, Israeli tanks fired on his house and killed three of his daughters and one of his nieces. *'My response to this tragedy is my fight, not for hatred, but for peace.'*



Watch the full debate on YouTube

The message Bertrand Badie took away from these discussions was the cost of non-resistance and the need for strategists to move on. *'There are 8 billion players in this world, not 193 as is too often said. The new international relations are based on microsociology.'*

#### ZOOMING IN ON

## Pramila Patten Rape as a tactic of war

**Pramila Patten, a British-and Mauritian lawyer, was a member of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women until 2017, when she was appointed UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in conflicts. Her mission: to travel the entire world to track down these crimes and their perpetrators. She addressed the audience to give an overview of her mission.**

'The use of rape as a tactic of war, torture, terror and political repression is a difficult subject to confront openly and I welcome the initiative to highlight the issue of sexual violence in conflicts, which is one of the greatest secrets of history and one of the greatest atrocities of the world today. At the Security Council last July, I presented some examples documented by my office during the year. Ladies and Gentlemen, the reality is that we are meeting at a time when trends in conflict-related sexual violence are worsening, and its continuing brutality on the battlefields of the 21<sup>st</sup> century continues to shock the collective conscience of humanity. We are experiencing massive, global turbulence marked by multiple cascading crises, increased militarisation, a coup epidemic and a rollback of women's and girls' rights. In an escalation that was unimaginable just eighteen months ago, a violent war has erupted in the heart of Europe. The world is facing the great-



Pramila Patten

© Pierre Galliot - Région Normandie

est number of conflicts since the Second World War while the number of people forced to flee their homes has reached the grim record of 110 million.

In Sudan, since the start of the armed conflict on 15 April between the Sudanese armed forces and the rapid support forces, sexual violence against displaced women and girls has raged. Over the past three years, the war in northern Ethiopia in Tigray has become one of the most violent and deadly conflicts on the planet. Sexual violence in the form of rape or cases of sexual slavery, sexual mutilation or forced pregnancies are still being used as a real weapon of war.

According to the International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia, the conflict has created more than

### We are experiencing massive, global turbulence marked by multiple cascading crises

Pramila Patten

10,000 victims of sexual violence. It is a serious problem with detrimental effects on victims, their families and their communities. Protection from sexual violence is not just an aspiration, it is a legal obligation. Our goal in making these crimes public is to give rape a history in order to deny it a future. United action in this area shows that their lives matter and signals to potential stakeholders that the world is watching.'

# NO PEACE WITHOUT PEOPLE

Conference n°2 | Friday 29 September, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., Plenary Room



Nicole Gnesotto, Jacques Rupnik, Nicolas Normand, François-Xavier Priollaude and Frédérique Bedos

To celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations' peacekeeping operations, as well as the commitment of peacekeepers, honoured at the Forum through a photographic exhibition, Jean-Pierre Lacroix introduced this second plenary conference. The Under-Secretary-General for UN Peacekeeping Operations started by recalling the multitude of actions undertaken by the United Nations: 80,000 people deployed, including 65,000 military

personnel, different mission sizes, varied and complex mandates, from simple ceasefire enforcement in Cyprus to multi-dimensional missions in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). According to this diplomat, it is crucial to understand that 'peace can only be lasting if it is based on the commitment of citizens'. Peace-building is a continuum, from conflict prevention to the inclusive application of peace agreements so that

OPENING:

**Jean-Pierre Lacroix**, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations-UN

MODERATION:

**Frédérique Bedos**, founding president of the Imagine Project

**François-Xavier Priollaude**, vice-president of the Normandy Region

SPEAKERS:

**Frédéric Charillon**, French academic and political scientist

**Nicole Gnesotto**, vice-president of the Jacques Delors Institute

**Nicolas Normand**, former French ambassador to Mali, Congo and Senegal, author of 'Le Grand Livre de l'Afrique'

**Antonio Patriota**, Ambassador of Brazil to the United Kingdom

**Delphine O**, Ambassador and Secretary General of the Generation Equality Forum (Beijing+25)

**Jean-Pierre Raffarin**, former French Prime Minister, President of Leaders for Peace

**Jean-Maurice Ripert**, Ambassador of France, president of the French Association for the United Nations

**Jacques Rupnik**, French political scientist

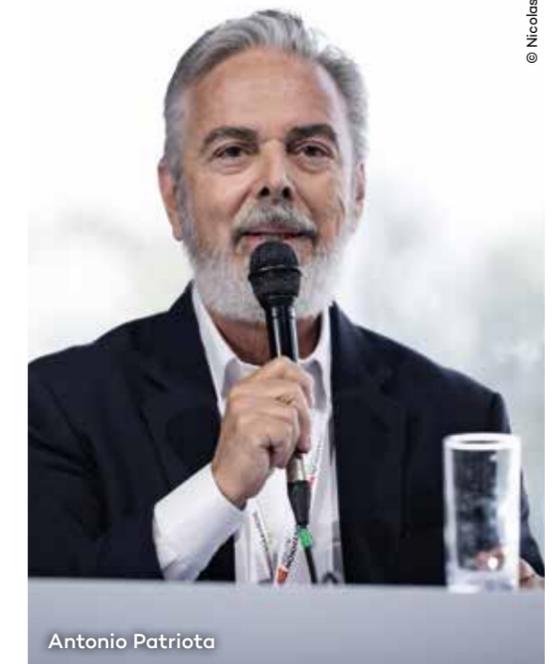


Jean-Pierre Lacroix

**Peace can only be lasting if it is based on the commitment of citizens**

Jean-Pierre Lacroix

these can take root and are accepted by the people. Peace-building also means accepting that peace agreements have imperfect and uneven starting points, and that we need to engage with different communities to explain the agreement, prepare for inclusive elections, develop accountability mechanisms and continue to protect civilians. Drawing on the examples of South Sudan, Kosovo, Cyprus and the Central African Republic, the diplomat stressed the importance of including women, who are often excluded from the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements. With *'the ever more serious impact of global warming, we must fight and propose alternative solutions. Building lasting peace requires preventing and addressing these global challenges,'* he concluded.



Antonio Patriota

Political scientists, Jacques Rupnik and Frédéric Charillon, as well as ambassador Nicolas Normand were invited to take part in the opening segment of this debate, which focused on the *"paper peace"* that ignored the people.

Jacques Rupnik, a specialist in Central and Eastern Europe, focused on Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina, where peace was imposed by force under the Dayton Accords. *'Criticism of these agreements is unfair'*, said the political scientist, going back over the chronology of the international intervention to stop the massacres and highlighting the important contributions of international justice, *'because the Serb, Bosnian and Croat leaders had the option of amending their constitutions to adapt these agreements'*.

Frédéric Charillon pointed out that 'for a long time we lived with the idea that states made war and the people suffered', before moving on to the idea that 'states make peace and the people refuse it'. While the reality is more complex than the opposition of bellicose peoples and pacifist

states, there is a great deal of resistance and mistrust on the part of populations during peace processes. To achieve peace between people, a positive peace that goes beyond a simple ceasefire, we must first and foremost work towards reconciliation.

**We are not heading for chaos – on the contrary, we are living out what we have always wanted**

Bertrand Badie

Nicolas Normand, a former ambassador to sub-Saharan Africa, explained that four types of conflict have emerged on the continent. The first takes place in these regions that have become the *'Wild West without a sheriff'*, where the state is absent, with no police or justice, and where human passions, whether resentment or the desire for conquest, can express themselves. The second is the struggle for power when institutions fail and allow the situation to be resolved by force, as in Southern Sudan or Ethiopia. The third corresponds to the advent of Salafist jihadism, which does not rely on a notion of people but on



Frédéric Charillon

a civilisational issue, based on a specific interpretation of divine law. The fourth type of conflict is separatist conflicts, when several peoples are no longer willing to live together in the same state, as in Mali. Nicolas Normand concluded this first part of the conference by citing the example of the peace agreement to resolve the conflict in Mali's Sahel region, a resounding failure because it was negotiated without the people and by foreign diplomats, and imposed by the international community.

The second part of this debate, entitled, *'Taking peace back into our own hands'*, featured contributions from Jean-Maurice Ripert and Delphine O, the French ambassadors and Antonio Patriota, the Brazilian ambassador. At the start of this discussion, Jean-Maurice Ripert reassured the audience that *'we are not heading for chaos – on the contrary, we are living out what we have always wanted, that no great power should decide on its own on behalf of the others'*. According to the ambassador, *'we're moving towards a world of blurred subsets that assemble and differentiate, and in this world multilateralism will have to be reinvented'*. While we often think of the recurrent deadlock in the Security Council as an example of the failure of multilateralism, we mustn't forget the UN's other actions, first and foremost *'the recognition of the rights of individuals as superior to the rights of States'*, which is fundamental to *'building the peace of tomorrow'*, he maintained.



Delphine O and Jean-Maurice Ripert

Antonio Patriota revisited the definition of the Brics group, which is *'not an alliance but a coordination platform for the emerging countries'*, because *'Brazil has neither allies nor enemies'*. While *'singularities co-exist'* within Brics, it nevertheless remains a group *'fighting for the democratisation of international relations and the promotion of a fairer and more open decision-making system'*.

Delphine O pointed out that *'historically, traditionally, systematically and structurally, women have always been excluded from peace-building'*. The figures cited by the ambassador spoke for themselves: *'Between 1992 and 2019, only 13% of negotiators, 6% of mediators and 4% of signatories were women'*, even though it is estimated that *'the inclusion of women in the process increases the probability that a peace agreement will last for at least two years by 20%, and for a duration of 15 years by 35%'*. While *'women are essential pillars of communities and the social fabric'*, the peace agreement with FARC in Colombia in 2016 is *'the only one that fully involves women, in particular, via a sub-committee on gender'*.

When asked about the recurrent deadlock in the Security Council, Jean-Maurice Ripert stressed the multiple roles of the UN, which is present *'in every conflict zone, in Sudan, Yemen, Burma and the DRC'*, and explained that although it has *'not restored peace, it has certainly prevented millions more deaths'*. Furthermore, the fact that the Security Council is deadlocked is *'in line with the wishes of the founding members, who wanted to avoid one of the major powers leaving the UN in the event of a challenge'*. Faced with *'the undermining of the UN by China, which wants to establish a bipolar Washington-Beijing architecture, we must continue to fight for the United Nations'*, the ambassador asserted.



Watch the full debate on YouTube



**Women have always been excluded from peace-building**

Delphine O

Antonio Patriota went on to point out that *'paralysis of the Security Council through unilateral action by one member is nothing new'*, that *'both Brazil and France are pressing for reform of the Council'*, but that the possibilities of *'going through the General Assembly should not be overlooked, as illustrated by the condemnation of the Russian invasion of Ukraine'*. The Brazilian ambassador believes it is vital to be *'optimistic about the renewal of multilateralism, at the risk of suffering a civilisational failure'*.

Nicole Gnesotto concluded this conference by noting that it is essential to think of a non-Manichean world and cited a famous phrase from the actress, Jane Fonda: *'If you want something said, ask a man; if you want something done, ask a woman'*.

## Jean-Pierre Raffarin :

‘Peace is a discipline’



**At the 2023 Normandy World Peace Forum, former French Prime Minister, Jean-Pierre Raffarin, expressed his concerns about the threats posed by populism and climate change, but stressed his confidence in democratic principles and the involvement of young people. Here is his speech.**

‘Hello and well done Normandy, peace is work and work requires continuity! I’m impressed by the culture and experience gathered here, as we’ve just seen in the debates, and I think it’s very important that you agree on a strategy to become a key place of reflection, understanding and above all action, to try to bring people together in continuity for peace. Many thanks to Hervé Morin and many thanks to Normandy.

### ***There aren’t just interests in life, there are convictions***

I am speaking to you today on behalf of Leaders for Peace, an NGO created six years ago, which has three main functions. We issue an annual report, we support causes that are not sufficiently highlighted, like that of Dr Mukwege against female mutilation in Congo, and we also support education and the spirit of peace in early childhood structures for which an annual prize is awarded. But our reason for being is to work on a pedagogy of peace. There are schools of war but there are few schools of peace. Peace must be learnable, peace can be studied, and all of this should be teachable. We are working on this by building a travelling school of peace that moves around the world and prepares the various players in life.

I’m speaking here between two round table discussions, the first of which is entitled ‘No peace without the people’. I think that everything that has been said is very true and I agree with this premise, but I think that we still need to make an effort to open up diplomacy to civil society, to all the rising strata. All this is still confined to too great an extent to expert debates. Young people need to become more involved in the diplomatic aspects of international relations, because together,

### ***Radicalism today means that people can carry this desire for war***

we need to overcome a real paradox in our societies: threats are increasingly foreign and our political debates are increasingly national. It’s a paradox that foreign affairs are often far removed from our concerns, so we find ourselves in a situation in which we don’t have the debates, the insights, the pedagogy and the contradictions. Democracy is about debate. There aren’t just interests in life, there are convictions, and they must confront each other to inform people’s opinions so that people can participate in peace.

I would still propose, my dear Hervé, an amendment: ‘No peace without pacified people’. I am quite struck by the populist mechanism that is developing today, of which President Trump is a prime example. We’ve been in politics for a long time, we were part of a school, that of former President Valéry Giscard d’Estaing and many others, in which one had to bring people together to govern. With Trump and the others it is not a question of bringing people together but of radicalising a proportion of people. It’s better to have 3 million people who are completely motivated and capable of taking action, sometimes reaching an irresponsible and unreasonable level of politics, but this hard core will be convincing in a political system where turnout is the key to elections. It is the one who radicalises his electorate who has the most voters. Radicalism today means that people can carry this desire for war. If you look at French society, the debates in the National Assembly and the television programmes, violence is becoming widespread. Violence and war are twin sisters and a country which sees violence increasing and which ends up accepting it,



***When there is war,  
there is resistance  
and when there is no war,  
there is dialogue***

Whether you're in Caen, San Francisco, Bangalore or Shanghai, you all have the same concern: protecting the planet. This is a very important point. When I started politics, we were talking about the conquest of the Moon but no one was talking about the planet. We see this concern today, with young people taking to the streets all over the world. The globalisation of politics is a new fact, something that can be a consensual force today. We'll move towards peace if we want to live, have a future and have perspective. If we're desperate, we will let the baser instincts of our temperament speak. The first step is to seek consensus, to work on this fundamental issue, to make sustainability central to our policy. After this, there is undoubtedly the possibility of building common desires.

The second orientation is that there's no peace without a balance of power – we must not deny forces and impulses. It takes strength to support a people and projects, and it's normal for them to clash in a democracy. Today we need to know what our balance of power is. For me, our strength today, that of Europe but also of the West, is democracy. Today, these democracies are weakened, European integration is fragile, there is a lot of powerlessness in our societies, and we can see that democracy isn't always able to engage the interest of the public. The participation rate is very worrying because a democracy that abstains is a democracy that condemns itself. We must defend and revive these democracies, but for that, we must work together. We have relatively few discussions with other democracies to im-

prove our processes and exchange good practices. We must endeavour to develop a democratic front that isn't opposed to others, but is more appealing, and whose number one objective is the electoral participation of citizens in the future of democracy. This is our primary challenge today, and I believe that there is a tremendous opportunity here, by building this strategic thinking, to position ourselves in the camp of democracies rather than in the camp of the West. The Western camp is seen as American today. When people ask me which camp I am in, I am in the camp of democracies.

The third orientation – whether this is a hope or an utopia – is the return of Europe. Europe was fundamental in history, it built it, but today it's on the verge of exit. The great powers won't wait for us and this Sino-American tension, the matrix of global governance, can end in two ways: by the escalation of tensions, a world war in Taiwan, or by understanding and negotiation at the expense of Europe. Everything is possible but the great danger for the EU is to be outside the system. My belief is that you are respected in the world when you are a leader of something. Where can Europe be a leader? We could have talked about agriculture or industry, but we represent every interest, since we are the first continent to mobilise on the ecological transition, in taking up this subject and being the best, so that after the Washington consensus, there is the Paris consensus that came out of COP 21. Even if we aren't going to play the leading role in all areas vis-à-vis the great powers, let's choose the strategic areas in which we want to excel and can speak to the world with authority, competence and legitimacy. It's important to think in this way, along with other related issues such as the Franco-German relationship, which is hugely relevant. Indeed, when the French and Germans are in agreement, we can often talk about powers and balances of power in the world. Perhaps we need to split relations with China between France and Germany, so that there are sever-

***Democracy isn't always  
able to engage  
the interest of the public***

al of us in the balance of power, so that we are more muscular in our discussions, and to achieve this we need to find common Franco-German policies rather than creating a global pairing. This is what can provide leadership today and ensure that our continent is also a continent of planetary development and democracy. It is in this balance of power that we can regain control of peace.

I end with an extremely difficult question that everyone is asked about every day: should we talk to the adversary? I think that to guide younger people, we should take the example of General de Gaulle. In his life, he gave us guidelines. When there is war, there is resistance and when there is no war, there is dialogue. It's this desire to speak to everyone, to try to anticipate crises, to build peace. Peace is work, dear young people, peace is a discipline to learn but peace is your business, it's up to you to build it because you're the ones who will live it. Thank you for your attention.'

# BETWEEN WAR AND PEACE

Conference n°3 | Thursday 28 September / 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. / Plenary Room



Sundeep Waslekar, Jody Williams, Ulysse Gosset, Hadja Idrissa Bah and Stefan Löfven

A number of prestigious guests were invited to debate by Ulysse Gosset, journalist and editorial writer, who was pleased that there was almost perfect parity with three women and three men around the table. So much has happened in the world since the manifesto was drafted four years ago, starting with the pandemic and the war in Ukraine, which have turned the world upside down. As we prepare to celebrate the

80th anniversary of D-Day, is this manifesto still on the agenda?

In his book, *A World Without War*, Sundeep Waslekar used Albert Einstein's clock as a reference, counting down the seconds left to the Apocalypse, 100 seconds according to the famous physicist. *'Since then,'* said Sundeep Waslekar, *'scientists have got together and adjusted their calculation to 90 seconds. This is humanity's most peril-*

## MODERATOR

**Ulysse Gosset**, Journalist

## HOSTS

**Frédérique Bedos**, founding President of the NGO, the Imagine Project

**François-Xavier Priollaud**, Vice-President of the Normandy Region

## INTERVENANTS

**Hadja Idrissa Bah**, Activist and President of the Young Girls Leaders Club of Guinea, winner of the 2023 Freedom Prize

**Stefan Löfven**, Former Prime Minister of Sweden, Co-Chairman of the UN High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, Chairman of the Board of SIPRI

**Oleksandra Matviichuk**, Ukrainian lawyer and activist, Nobel Peace Prize 2022

**Vadym Omelchenko**, Ukraine ambassador to France

**Sundeep Waslekar**, Co-founder and Chairman of Strategic Foresight Group

**Jody Williams**, Nobel Peace Prize 1997

*ous moment. In three or four years they'll get together again and I predict they'll go down to 80 seconds to midnight'* he opined, decrying the focus of major powers like Russia, the – United States and China on developing cutting-edge missiles, even as the pandemic hit the entire planet.

## 'We are the present'

For her part, Oleksandra Matviichuk, 2022 Nobel Peace Prize winner and human rights lawyer, questioned the relevance of the current rule of law system, given the circumstances in which she is trying to do her job in Ukraine. *'The answer, she said, 'will define not just Ukraine's future but everyone's.'* The Russian invasion has pushed Ukrainians, *'ordinary people'*, she points out, *'to do extraordinary things'*, like pulling people out of ruins, helping people survive under shelling or breaking blockades to deliver humanitarian aid. In Ukraine, the war has brought back a well-known scourge of conflict zones: anti-personnel mines. Jody Williams, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997 for her international campaign to ban anti-personnel landmines, is very familiar with the subject. *'We're the ones who allow our leaders to do this'*, she declared. *'I come from the United States, the most warlike and imperialist country, and we think we're a pacifist country, when we spend 57% of our annual national budget on the Pentagon and armaments, and barely 5% on education.'*

Hajda Idrissa Bah also deplored this lack of investment in education on the African continent, mainly in Guinea, where she has set up the Club of Young Girls Leaders of Guinea. *'Famine, lack of hospitals and lack of education are pushing these young people to cross the Mediterranean to come to Europe'*, she noted sadly. *'I reject the notion that we're the future of a country, no, we're the present.'*

Stefan Löfven, former Prime Minister of Sweden, is committed to the defence of effective multilateralism. At a time when the right of veto at the UN has become

## The Russian invasion has pushed Ukrainians, 'ordinary people', she points out, to do extraordinary things

Oleksandra Matviichuk

almost systematic, and many countries are asking to be included, does the organisation still have the capacity to reform itself? *'We need to switch to collective security; today's security being built on continuous military spending is not sustainable security. We need to come together under the UN flag and bridge the gaps between north and south'* he replied, adding the need to improve representativeness within the Security Council, for it to have more parity because *'a large part of the world is not represented as a permanent member.'* Stefan Löfven also proposed a moratorium on nuclear weapons by 2045, almost a century after of the concept of *'mutually assured destruction'*, believing that it should be replaced by a concept of *'mutually assured survival.'*



Sundeep Waslekar



Oleksandra Matviichuk

## War is not inevitable

Ulysse Gosset noted, before giving the floor to Sundeep Waslekar, that while there is indeed a general public awareness of the climate, there is none for nuclear power. Yet Sundeep Waslekar warns of the consequences of a global nuclear war that would come on like a heart attack, suddenly, whereas the climate crisis acts like a long and painful cancer. At the United Nations, 22 out of 139 countries have abandoned their military defences, more than 10%, and 122 voted in 2017 to ban nuclear weapons. But with the advent of artificial intelligence in every sphere of the system, killer robots are now emerging as a new threat on top of the nuclear one. Jody Williams expressed deep concern about this, especially as within the UN, if all but one country agrees to stop progress, then they will continue to develop these new technologies. But Hadja Idrissa Bah was optimistic. In her view, young people have the power to advocate and oppose armament, particularly if the UN proposes greater inclusiveness within the Security Council. Ulysse Gosset insisted on this point, arguing that in some African countries, young people represent up to 70% of the population. He went on to quote a passage from Sundeep



Watch the full debate on YouTube

Waslekar's book, *'War is not inevitable, it is a choice.'* To which Stefan Löfven added that we need to work on preventing wars by preventing situations that can lead to conflict. At the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), of which he is a member, he assured us that resources are being deployed to try to understand the deep roots of new conflicts. *'The African continent will continue to grow and reach almost the same level as Asia. So, if we mobilise the people in favour of peace, that can change the mindset of a dictator.'*

***I reject the notion that we're the future of a country, no, we're the present.***

Hajda Idrissa Bah

In conclusion, Oleksandra Matviichuk stated her belief that the current, ambitious challenge is to reform the system of international peace and security, and that young people have a very important role to play. As a Ukrainian, she added that a victory for Ukraine is necessary: *'This could lead to a democratic future for Russia and would impact the whole world.'* For her part, Jody Williams asked the young people in the room to try to change this world, *'even for those you don't like.'* Hadja Idrissa Bah ended with a message of hope: *'A world without war is indeed possible. We young people are ready and equipped to go for it and take action – just give us the space.'*

## ZOOMING IN ON

# Vadym Omelchenko

Ukraine ambassador to France

'Ladies, gentlemen, dear students, dear friends, thank you for this opportunity to be with you today and to participate in your very interesting and informative exchanges. Mr Waslekar, you said that we have 100 seconds left before the apocalypse according to Einstein's clock. Ukraine, my people, are already in the apocalypse. The question is whether this is reversible or not, whether peace can be restored or not. When you say that we must lay down our arms and demand that dictators disarm, my people have never wanted anything but peace. Yet the barbarians have razed our towns to the ground, destroyed our educational facilities, almost 1,000 of them. And now your peers, the Ukrainian students, are on the frontline putting up resistance, including 40,000 girls. Forgive me, but Ukraine is the first to want and seek peace, but on what terms? There are many formulas for finding peace, and we in Ukraine have our own. Let me read you some of the key points:



Vadym Omelchenko and Hervé Morin

- Radioactive and nuclear safety
- Food safety
- Energy security
- Release of prisoners and deportees (19,000 Ukrainian children have been deported according to the UN)
- Implementation of the United Nations Charter and restoration of the integrity of Ukraine and world order
- Withdrawal of Russian troops and cessation of hostilities
- Restoration of justice (80,000 war crimes in Ukraine according to some experts. Should we forgive this?)
- Preventing the escalation of war and repeated aggression
- Fixing the escalation of war.

***You said that we have 100 seconds left before the apocalypse according to Einstein's clock. Ukraine, my people, are already in the apocalypse***

Vadym Omelchenko

I repeat, Ukraine is the first country to want and seek peace. Thank you very much.

# Manifesto for peace



The Normandy Manifesto for Peace is an initiative of the Strategic Foresight Group and the Normandy Region, inspired by the Russell-Einstein Manifesto of 1955. At the height of the Cold War, mathematician Bertrand Russell and physicist Albert Einstein published a plea highlighting the dangers of nuclear weapons. Supported by several renowned scientists, they called for peaceful solutions to international conflicts by challenging people's consciences with the following question: 'Are we going to end the human race or will humanity give up war?'. In the face of new threats to humanity in an increasingly uncertain world, this question unfortunately remains relevant.

In 2019, Denis Mukwege, Nobel Peace Prize 2018, Leymah Gbowee, Nobel Peace Prize 2011, Mohamed El Baradei, Nobel Peace Prize 2005, Jody Williams, Nobel Peace Prize 1997, Anthony Grayling, phi-



Sign the Manifesto for Peace online

osopher and Sundeep Waslekar, President of the Strategic Foresight Group, wrote the Normandy Manifesto for Peace and called on everyone to take action for a sustainable peace, from citizens to representatives of civil society and governments. Indeed, the Manifesto stressed that war is a choice. If men and women everywhere become aware of their common humanity, they would make the right decision to cooperate for a better world.

Five years later, Jody Williams and Sundeep Waslekar were again present at the Forum this year, inviting every citizen of the world to take ownership of this text by signing and sharing it.



**Jody Williams**

I'm very impressed by the way that Normandy is taken on this issue of peace and all of the ways it is engaging. It's a lot of effort, a lot of commitment, and I think it's awesome!

**Pramila Patten**

For me, the best protection against sexual violence is peace. We find ourselves with the highest number of conflicts since World War II, so I think this Forum is very important.



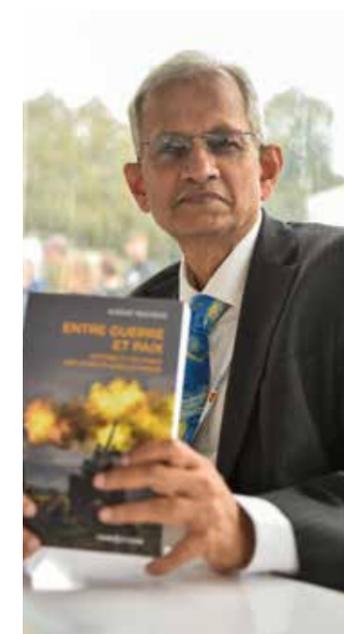
**Jean-Pierre Raffarin**

It's very important to understand that peace is work, that it requires resistance, willpower and above all, continuity. The Normandy Region created this dynamic, bravo!



**Nathan Law**

I think there is a particular historic value and importance of having a peace Forum in Normandy. It reminds all of us how precious and important peace is.



**Sundeep Waslekar**

What Normandy is doing is of tremendous historic significance. The region is taking active part in promoting peace. And I think it is really necessary for all citizens in the world to promote this work of Normandy for Peace.



**Emilie Aubry**

We listen to the world and we meet the world! This Forum which is taking place in Caen is very coherent. We're in a place that has been marked by war, and where we're trying to understand today's wars in order to invent tomorrow's peace.



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# WHO CAN RESIST VLADIMIR PUTIN?

Thursday 28 September, 4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m. - Plenary room



Evgenia Kara-Murza, Natalia Pouzyreff, Antoine Arjakovsky and Olga Prokopenko

## Giving Russian civil society the courage to rise up

The moderator, Antoine Arjakovsky, director of research at the Collège des Bernardins and co-organiser of the debate, explained that a press release had been drawn up following the seminar and would shortly be published on the Normandy region website. The aim of the meeting was for the anti-war leaders, gathered in Caen, to agree on a strategy for democratic transition in Russia. Antoine Arjakovsky outlined the five main points, which should help to *'build a civic, humanitarian and political*

### MODERATOR:

**Antoine Arjakovsky**, director of research at the Collège des Bernardins

### SPEAKERS:

**Evgenia Kara-Murza**, director of advocacy at the Free Russia Foundation

**Garry Kasparov**, 13th world chess champion, President of the Human Rights Foundation

**Natalia Pouzyreff**, French MP, President of the France-Russia group

**Olga Prokopenko**, Franco-Russian activist, spokesperson for the association, Russie-Libertés

*opposition'* to Vladimir Putin: *'The war in Ukraine must be condemned, Vladimir Putin's regime is illegitimate, Ukraine must regain its borders, we must work towards the necessary democratisation of Russia and finally, Ukraine must absolutely regain its borders.'*

A number of participants who were present at the closed-door meeting were brought together for this debate. Garry Kasparov, 13<sup>th</sup> world chess champion and president of the Human Rights Foundation, took part via video conference. Antoine Arjakovsky asked about the need to unite the Russian opposition around the five points mentioned. For Garry Kasparov, the things that unite us are reflected in these objectives. He pointed out that Putin's war was not just a territorial conflict, but the war of a dictator against people defending their freedom. *'We must come to their aid, because Vladimir Putin is a threat to Europe and to the world'*, he insisted. He believes that only a victory for Ukraine



Evgenia Kara-Murza, Natalia Pouzyreff and Antoine Arjakovsky

could bring Russia back into the community of free nations. *'The Ukrainian flag must fly over Sevastopol'*, said Garry Kasparov.

Asked what we can expect from the European and French governments in this fight against Putin's Russia, the chess champion lamented the blinkered positions of Emmanuel Macron in France and Joe Biden in the United States. In his view, the world needs to come up with a detailed, joint plan to *'de-Putinise'* Russia so that, at the end of the Putin era, the country has a chance of emerging from totalitarianism.

Evgenia Kara-Murza, director of advocacy at the Free Russia Foundation, was then asked about the usefulness of the closed-door meeting held in Caen. The anti-Putin campaigner began by saying that Russia's human rights violations were everyone's business. *'It's a common struggle for democracy, peace and freedom'*, she insisted. Evgenia Kara-Murza believes that the world is now paying for two decades of impunity, during which Putin was free to attack Crimea, Georgia, Syria and Chechnya without any international reaction.

The activist, whose husband is a vehement opponent of the Russian dictator, is saddened by the growing repression of civil society in Russia. Arrests are made every day: 7,000 criminal cases and 8,000 administrative cases have

been opened against people who have expressed their disagreement with the invasion of Ukraine. *'This means that many people are prepared to speak out, even though they risk prison and torture'*, she said. *'We must do everything we can to ensure that these voices are not suppressed.'* Evgenia Kara-Murza pointed out that her husband, who was sentenced to 25 years in prison, is being held in very difficult conditions. He has also survived two attempts to poison him. This fight for peace must succeed, so that Russia is no longer a danger either to itself or to the rest of the world.

### **We must work towards the necessary democratisation of Russia**

Antoine Arjakovsky

It was the turn of Olga Prokopenko, a Franco-Russian activist and spokesperson for the association Russie-Libertés, to give her opinion on the work carried out the previous day at the Normandy World Peace Forum. She mentioned that Russia's most repressive laws date back to 2012 and that since then, civil society has been increasingly stifled. *'We absolutely must support it to give it the courage to act,'* Olga Prokopenko pro-

claimed. We can do this by organising demonstrations for Ukraine, making donations, talking about the war, etc. She reminded us that many Russians refuse to allow people to be killed in their name and that we must not forget them. She also pointed out that in the last presidential election, France almost elected a candidate who, until recently, officially supported Putin's government: Marine Le Pen.



Natalia Pouzyreff

**Many Russians refuse to allow people to be killed in their name and that we must not forget them**

Olga Prokopieva

Natalia Pouzyreff, French MP for the Renaissance group and chair of the France-Russia group stated that *'it is absolutely essential to support the emergence of a democratic proposal for Russia'*. She added that MEPs are working together to reach out to Russian opponents, so that they can determine which type of opposition should be set up in their country. *'Over there, young people want their country to evolve democratically. We need to come together to create a common strategy.'* The MP explained that the opposition had been asked to work on a post-Putin project; they would need political support to implement it.

The debate continued with a question on the possibilities for action for Western democracies. *'How can they support the Russian opposition and help Ukraine?'* asked the moderator. Evgenia Kara-Murza believes that the most important thing is to continue sending messages of support, because Vladimir Putin and his regime are doing everything they can to demoralise the country's citizens, who see so much

repression that they could become discouraged and stop trying to oppose it. The activist also explained that evidence of Russia's war crimes must be gathered, so that the international tribunal can do its work. This requires the support of journalists, activists and NGOs, who are doing this work despite the repression.

Antoine Arjakovsky then asked the speakers about the need for French President Emmanuel Macron to meet opposition members of Russian civil society. Natalia Pouzyreff felt that this would be a good thing and pointed out that members of parliament were already reaching out to these opposition figures. However, she expressed her regret that diplomatic relations with Russia have become virtually non-existent. Support for exiled Russian journalists, to secure their status, is essential if they are to continue their work. *'We have to give them the means to work, and the French media must also help them to produce content for the Russian-speaking public here and everywhere. It's one of the only ways of getting information across and it's one of our only links.'* The ball seems to be in the court of the democratic opposition, which must do everything it can to get organised. This is the starting point for the international community to help the Russians regain their freedom.



Watch the full debate on YouTube

# ARE ECONOMIC SANCTIONS EFFECTIVE?

Thursday 28 September, 4:30 p.m. - 6 p.m., Auditorium



Lionel Fontagné, Pascal Boniface and Angelos Delivorias

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## Sanctioning without being sanctioned

With the focus of the debate coming back to the war in Ukraine, should the question of the effectiveness of economic sanctions be understood *'as a substitute for war, a graduated response or worse, a step towards war?'*, asked Lionel Fontagné in his introduction to the debate. The economist highlighted the difference *'between the economic approach and*

*the political approach, which assess the damage to the economy on the one hand, and the more complex consequences on the other.'* The Global Sanctions Database, which lists all sanctions from 1950 to 2022, shows *'a change in the nature of sanctions, initially fairly broad at country level, then more surgical after 11 September 2001, targeting individuals, companies and transactions instead, known as smart sanctions.'* The economist pointed out that *'sanctions are often accompanied by countersanctions from the targeted countries'* and that we need to *'look beyond the economic cost.'* In the case of the sanctions imposed on Russia after the annexation of Crimea in 2014, Lionel Fontagné explained that *'through the oligarchs, 600,000 compa-*

MODERATOR:

**Lionel Fontagné**, economist and member of the Cercle des Économistes

SPEAKERS:

**Pascal Boniface**, director of IRIS

**Angelos Delivorias**, analyst at the European Parliament Research Service (EPRS)



Angelos Delivorias

nies were affected, but the Russian authorities compensated their losses with public money, which makes the sanctions seem ineffective, but this economic distortion has a cost.'

## The dollar's international role is potentially being called into question

Pascal Boniface

Pascal Boniface started by detailing the reasons behind the sanctions, saying that 'the first reason is to satisfy public opinion.' The geopolitical scientist went on to explain that 'sanctions are always imposed by the West on other countries; the countries of the South don't impose them.' The United States, for example, 'imposes a staggering number of sanctions, thousands of them on nearly 70 countries', mainly because it 'has an extraterritorial approach to sanctions and doesn't hesitate to punish players who fail to comply with US law but are not active on its territory.' For Washington, 'sanctions are a relatively effective political weapon because companies need access to the US market.' Pascal Boniface then examined the case of the

European sanctions against Russia, which 'have hit the EU economies hard.' What is more, 'the sanctioned countries have reached such a point of fatigue that coalitions of pariah countries such as Iran and Russia are forming to circumvent them.' According to the geopolitical scientist, 'since the sanctions policy is Western and not global, the countries of the South are feeling the pinch of this unspoken economic imperialism.' Since these sanctions are 'an important element in the perception of the gap between the West and the rest', even the United States is 'starting to reconsider because the dollar's international role is potentially being called into question.'

Lionel Fontagné pointed out that it is 'difficult to withdraw sanctions' with the example of the Trump administration's decisions to punish Chinese technology theft, which is still in force. The economist then went on to look at the evolution of European sanctions against Russia, 'from simple condemnation during the war in Georgia in 2008, to light sanctions in 2014 following the annexation of Crimea and today's immediate heavy sanctions in connection with the invasion of Ukraine.'

Angelos Delivorias, who refuted any 'European weakness' in the progression of the sanctions against Russia, explained that relations with the EU were 'positive until 2008 under the 1994 cooperation agreement.' The analyst argued that 'European leaders were taken by surprise in 2008, just after the rather liberal Medvedev came to power, and in the midst of the subprime crisis', while in '2014, the EU was facing a sovereign debt crisis that would have been aggravated by economic sanctions.' However, 'by 2022, the EU had decided to follow the Americans and send a strong signal to other countries, notably China with Taiwan.'

While Lionel Fontagné reminded us that 'the Franco-German couple has long believed that trade softens morals', Pascal Boniface added that 'geopolitics often

## Geopolitics often takes precedence over economics

Pascal Boniface

takes precedence over economics, and this attitude bears witness to European hubris, which postulates that the whole world will become westernised.' When asked to define the types of sanctions, the geopolitical scientist explained that it was 'almost impossible since there are so many', differentiating between 'Western and non-Western sanctions, for example, the sanctions imposed by the Gulf States on Israel, which have not prevented its development.' He went on to say that we have 'a limitless imagination when it comes to sanctions; the Americans have hundreds of people working on this.' In fact, it is 'a modus operandi that has developed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the general trend towards prohibiting war, in addition to the rejection of war by public opinion.'

'Apart from extraterritoriality, European sanctions are quite similar to American sanctions', continued the European analyst. However, as decisions must be taken unanimously by the Member States, 'the process can easily be delayed, as was the case with Cyprus in 2020 during the sanctions against Belarus or Hungary today.' But once in place, 'the EU sanctions system is more flexible because sanctions have to be re-examined periodically.'

As for the issue of Russian and Belarusian athletes boycotting the Paris Olympics, 'the question arises because the Sochi Games in 2014 were an opportunity to demonstrate Russian soft power.' On the other hand,



Watch the full debate on YouTube

this question is only asked by the West and not the South, which was the case during the World Cup in Qatar', he continues. Today, the President of the IOC has made a decision: 'No national teams but athletes under a neutral banner, in addition to excluding athletes enlisted in the army or publicly in favour of war.'

Returning to the question of the effectiveness of sanctions, Angelos Delivorias stated his belief that 'until the 1990s, they were not effective', adding that it is essential to define the criteria for effectiveness. Indeed, 'just because Russia hasn't stopped the war or imploded doesn't mean that sanctions have no effect.' On the other hand, it is always worth ask-



Pascal Boniface

ing 'what is the cost to the sanctioned country and to the sanctioning country?' and 'how can sanctions be imposed in a globalised world?'

Finally, the geopolitical scientist pointed out that 'sanctions are imposed quickly, so we don't always have time to assess their effects.' Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that 'in dictatorships, it's not the leaders who suffer first but the population.' In conclusion, the analyst stressed that 'we don't know how the Russian economy will change, but it's currently a war economy, to the detriment of other sectors, and this will inevitably have long-term effects.'

# RESISTING INTERFERENCE

28 September, 4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m., Gold Room



Oliveira Injac, Gaïdz Minassian and Frédéric Charillon

## Disinformation, power and influence games

*‘Can you give your definition of interference?’* It was with this question that Gaïdz Minassian launched the debate. Nancy Snow chose a broad definition, including the many influences in our lives, from advertising to disinformation. She recommended that we *‘find moments of calm and meditation’* to distance ourselves from the constant noise and retain our critical faculties. Oliveira Injac focused on political interference. Since the end of communism, Montenegro, a country with a population of 600,000, has suffered a great deal of foreign interference: *‘Serbian politicians interfere in elections using a variety of methods, from online disinformation to corruption’*, she explained.

Frédéric Charillon drew a parallel between the terms *‘power’* and *‘interference’*: *‘In the same way that we speak of “hard power”, “soft power”, “smart power” (combin-*

*ing coercion and seduction) and “sharp power” (making others doubt), we can speak of “soft interference”, which consists of seducing an external audience by inviting elites to visit the country or take part in business conferences, or “hard interference”, which can range from intimidation to invasion. “Smart interference” is a mixture of the two, consisting of making another country understand that it has an interest in changing the course of its internal affairs, without necessarily using threats. Finally, “sharp interference” corresponds to the disinformation currently being organised by foreign regimes, which focus on internal dissent to create doubts among their populations and thus destabilise their countries’.*

In our globalised world, interference is becoming a multifaceted reality. *‘While the*

*threat of possible escalation through the use of nuclear weapons is the ultimate form of interference, we now have to reckon with the threat of climate and environmental change,’* said Nancy Snow. *‘There are so many possible disaster scenarios that we need to think about how we can keep a cool head and move towards sustainable change with optimism and hope’.*

***Interference is therefore a preferred method of action, which ‘enables the major powers to interfere with the weakest, by implementing strategies of influence***

Frédéric Charillon

In this multipolar world, no state stands to gain from the collapse of its rival; for example, the American and Chinese economies are mutually dependent. Interference is therefore a preferred method of action, which *‘enables the major powers to interfere with the weakest, by implementing strategies of influence’*, noted Frédéric Charillon.



Oliveira Injac

MODERATOR:

**Gaïdz Minassian**, journalist at Le Monde and teacher of international relations at Sciences Po Paris

SPEAKERS:

**Frédéric Charillon**, French academic and political scientist

**Oliveira Injac**, mayor of Podgorica (capital of Montenegro), doctor in international relations.

**Nancy Snow**, Professor Emeritus at California State University, specialist in propaganda and public diplomacy

*‘Faced with the interference of authoritarian states, aren’t democracies vulnerable?’* asked Gaïdz Minassian. Frédéric Charillon pointed out that democracies are vulnerable by definition. But while authoritarian regimes believe themselves to be stronger by blocking debate, democracies believe, in spite of everything, that a regime that allows freedom of expression remains superior because freedom will, in time, do damage to authoritarian regimes. The outcome of the conflict between these two ways of thinking remains unknown. *‘Whereas in the Clinton years, the “information superhighways”, provided by the Internet, were seen as an extraordinary asset for democratic and liberal regimes, today we see the way in which authoritarian regimes are turning them upside down, to use them for disinformation and destabilisation purposes’*, the researcher noted. But he also pointed out that these regimes don’t have a monopoly on interference. Indeed, the Radio Free Europe and Voice of America media can also be regarded as bodies seeking to interfere in third countries. Western NGOs, for their part, are sometimes perceived as forms of interference in certain societies, particularly in Africa.

Gaïdz Minassian then asked Oliveira Injac about the process of empowering civil societies in transition, such as Montenegro. The Mayor of Podgorica believes that her

**It's important to make all citizens of the world aware of the need to double- and triple-check information, because some of it is malicious and has toxic objectives**

Gaïdz Minassian

country remains a vulnerable democracy, where it is difficult to resist disinformation: 'Social networks are used extensively by our fellow citizens. What's more, most of them trust everything they see or hear. Conspiracy theories really came into their own during the COVID-19 crisis. Because people weren't aware of the risks, we suffered a high mortality rate'. She also pointed out that, in her country, most of the information channels come from Serbia, where the media broadcast Russian propaganda. 'That's why it's important to make all citizens of the world aware of the need to double- and triple-check information, because some of it is malicious and has toxic objectives'. Frédéric Charillon added a nuance: 'We need to be demanding about sources while remaining vigilant, without falling into paranoia and thinking that everything is a conspiracy'.

This critical spirit is undermined just about everywhere, not least because of the useless information that overwhelms us. Nancy Snow also emphasised the predominance of individualism, with influencers seeking, above all else, to have as many

followers as possible as a means of becoming famous. 'I think we would have a lot to learn from more collective cultures, to find a happy medium in the way we establish our social contract,' she asserted.

Gaïdz Minassian then turned the debate to wars of influence. Frédéric Charillon cited the example of the war in Ukraine, which he sees as totally anachronistic: 'Although Vladimir Putin's Russia had established a system of influence that was working rather well, with diplomacy that spoke to everyone in the Middle East, and had regained a foothold in some Central and Eastern European countries, he tried to gamble. However, the last major military interventions around the world ended



Gaïdz Minassian

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in fiascos, while at the same time, the influence strategies of Qatar and China were proving their worth', he pointed out. He noted that in the Ukrainian war, Russia chose to use both force and psychological weapons. The Western camp, on the other hand, has opted not to enter the war directly but to activate its networks and sanctions. 'We don't yet know the outcome, but I think this clash of methods will lead to a unique approach to conflict, combining the right mix of force and influence', concluded Frédéric Charillon.



Watch the full debate on YouTube

DEBATE

## INDIA: A NEW GLOBAL SUPERPOWER?

28 September, 4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m. – Azur Room



Christophe Jaffrelet and Archana Chaudhary

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### India, a non-aligned power

Philippe Le Corre initiated the debate by highlighting the ambivalent position of Narendra Modi's India, a major economic power that is both a member of the G20 and the Brics (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), which is caught in the middle of the Sino-American confrontation.

'Give us another fifty years, there's no question of us being a premature superpower,' replied Deng Xiaoping to Henry

MODERATOR:

**Philippe Le Corre**, university lecturer and researcher at Asia Society France

SPEAKERS:

**Archana Chaudhary**, Indian journalist

**Christophe Jaffrelet**, political scientist specialised in the Indian subcontinent

**Raja Mohan**, Indian academic, journalist and foreign policy analyst

**India must, above all, learn to use its size to maintain its economic growth**

Raja Mohan

ry Kissinger in the 1990s, when the American diplomat told him that China would soon become the second world power. It was with this anecdote that Indian academic Raja Mohan began the discussion regarding India's place on the world stage. As the fifth economic power, capable of developing a space programme while the average annual income *per capita* doesn't exceed \$2,000, India must, above all, learn to use its size to maintain its economic growth, the largest in the world today, and strengthen its position, he explained. While relations between India and the Western powers have been complex throughout the 20th century, the subcontinent has ma-



Philippe Le Corre

© Nicolas Broquedis

**If the Franco-Indian relationship is so important for New Delhi, it is because France maintains a certain Gaullist autonomy vis-à-vis Washington**

Christophe Jaffrelot

naged to build successful relationships with the United States and Europe in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For the Indian academic, the multilateral institutions born out of the fall of the USSR have largely disintegrated due to Sino-American rivalry, which redefines the rules of globalisation and pushes States to form more specific coalitions of interest, like Brics or Aukus (Australia, United States and United Kingdom).

For political scientist Christophe Jaffrelot, the expansion of the Brics group on the

initiative of China, as well as the notable absence of Xi Jinping at the G20 summit, very probably indicate a turning point towards a re-bipolarisation of the world. However, India, which is historically non-aligned, does not want a bipolar world and is instead trying to maintain a certain plurilateralism, i.e., an ability to make agreements without making alliances, in order to avoid having to choose between China and the United States. Since Modi came to power, Indian power has stood out for its national populism, its ethnic democracy and its electoral authoritarianism, noted the French specialist. Like other populist regimes such as those in Hungary, Brazil or Israel, Modi is first and foremost the spokesperson for a majority, the Hindus - in a democracy where other citizens are no longer represented by the institutions and are victims of lynching and ghettoisation - and maintains an electoral system skewed by wealth inequalities, with his party having the crucial support of the economic and media oligarchy. *'Should the 28 opposition parties form a coalition in the elections in Spring of 2024, in the hope of overthrowing the Indian leader, Jaffrelot pointed out that, even in the event of victory, the opposition will probably not be able to return India to its former multiculturalism, so strong is Hindu nationalism today.'*

Indian journalist, Archana Chaudhary was keen to point out that debate is a fundamental element of Indian culture and that no one governs this country without constant support from the population. As the world's leading economy in terms of growth, she added, India can now claim to be moving beyond its backroom status and at least partially replacing China as the world's factory. As the second-largest English-speaking nation and a huge reservoir of new scientists, India has many opportunities to seize, particularly when it comes to global warming. All that remains is to know which direction will be taken.

In light of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict and its geopolitical consequences, Raja Mohan

**Since Modi came to power, Indian power has stood out for its national populism, its ethnic democracy and its electoral authoritarianism**

Christophe Jaffrelot

affirmed that India has chosen its foreign policy orientation: thanks to the Chinese position, it remains non-aligned and has been able to forge unprecedented ties with the West. Moreover, for the Indian academic, this strategic choice is reciprocal, as the Western powers cannot do without New Delhi. If India has long had a special relationship with the Soviets and then the Russians, this was only due to the West's refusal to supply them with weapons. But today, Modi has initiated a process of attracting capital, mainly French, British and American, to develop an Indian defence industry.

Although Christophe Jaffrelot also stated his belief that the West has chosen India, by investing massively to counterbalance the Chinese threat, according to him, by abstaining from UN resolutions condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine, India isn't really choosing the West. According to this political scientist, it is more appropriate to speak of a rapid and significant rapprochement, with a view to remaining faithful to this heritage of non-alignment, of partnerships without alliances. Furthermore, if the Franco-Indian relationship, illustrated by the arrival of the head of the Indian government in Paris on 14 July 2023, is so important for New Delhi, it is, in particular, because France maintains a certain Gaullist autonomy vis-à-vis Washington.



Watch the full debate on YouTube



© Nicolas Broquedis

Beyond economic questions, Archana Chaudhary was keen to add that India is one of the most affected countries by the climate crisis and that there is a strong awareness of this issue in all strata of society. Without there being any concrete results to date, India has managed to impose clarity on this subject during diplomatic summits like the G20 or the COPs, and is trying to raise specific funds to resolve these problems.

Raja Mohan then took the opportunity to emphasise that most of India's promises, made during these multilateral meetings, have not been kept and some countries are even backtracking on their commitments. For the academic, the solution for global warming is above all technological. *'We need to change the energy-economy equation,'* he insisted. The global balance of power has brought India closer to the West, and there is a real need to create an international governance structure that compensates for the relative decline in the influence of Western powers. We must find agreements with each partner and this is the trajectory that India has taken today.

# THE STATE OF THE WORLD IN 2023

VIEWED BY MAJOR REPORTERS AND EDITORIALISTS OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS  
Thursday, 28 September, 4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m. – Nacre Room



Isabelle Lasserre, Céline Lussato, François-Xavier Priollaud, Ousmane Ndiaye and Ulysse Gosset

## Democracy in decline around the world

This debate on the state of the world in 2023 was launched by François-Xavier Priollaud, who noted that everyone had been stunned by the return of war on European soil, *'something we thought was impossible'*. This has revealed 'much deeper' underlying trends: rivalries between powers, the crisis of democracy, the race to rearm, and more. He asked the speakers about the ability of international organisations to meet these challenges,

### MODERATOR:

**François-Xavier Priollaud**, Vice-President of the Normandy Region

### SPEAKERS:

**Isabelle Lasserre**, diplomatic correspondent for Le Figaro

**Céline Lussato**, foreign policy reporter at L'Obs

**Ousmane Ndiaye**, Africa editor and former Sahel correspondent for TV5 Monde

**Ulysse Gosset**, foreign policy editorialist at BFM TV

and Ulysse Gosset, more specifically, about how the world has changed since the end of the Cold War.

For journalist Ulysse Gosset, the return of war to Europe signals *'the end of illusions'*. The specialist in foreign policy explained that we have lived through a long period of peace that we thought would last. Many experts, he continued, are probably imagining a Third World War. The very fact that they are contemplating it *'says a lot about the state of the world, which is like a boxing ring'*. The journalist talked about a double divide: West-Russia on the one side, West-Asia on the other, *'How will Europe be able to exist between these two blocs? Are we going to have an independent policy or are we going to embark on a new military adventure against our will?'* he asked.

## The very fact of contemplating a third world war says a lot about the state of the world, which is like a boxing ring

Ulysse Gosset

François-Xavier Priollaud then posed another question: should we pit the West against the rest of the world? 'Yes', replied Isabelle Lasserre, diplomatic correspondent for Le Figaro. The war in Ukraine is said to have accelerated this opposition, highlighting the crumbling of democracies. The southern part of the world is now claiming *'a new place'* in opposition to Western order. The journalist explained that the war also shows how Vladimir Putin is fighting against democracy *'because it sets an example, a model, that could end up being extended to the former USSR, which he rejects'*. Regimes (along with China, Turkey and India) that aspire to eternal power are busy, she observed, portraying a decadent image of European democracies.

The debate then turned to the decline of democracy around the world. The example of Turkey was cited by Céline Lussato, a senior reporter at L'Obs. *'This country is a member of NATO, it is referred to as a democracy and yet it is an illusion: no freedom of the press, no control of elections.'* She referred to these countries, *which look like democracies but where dictators take root over the long term, as 'a great danger'*. *'So when we know that Erdogan wants to stay in power, can his foreign policy, with one foot in NATO and one in support of Vladimir Putin, lead to anything else?'*



Ulysse Gosset

François-Xavier Priollaud went on to talk about the numerous coups d'état in Africa since 2020 and the rejection of France in part of the continent. Ousmane Ndiaye, editor-in-chief of TV5 Monde and correspondent in Mali, sees this as the end of a cycle of decolonisation gone wrong. *'The military presence is one of the last avatars of colonisation, and its rejection is the result of the politics of the last decade'*, the journalist argued. He sees the demand for the departure of military forces, which has also been voiced by democratic forces on the

**Turkey is a member of NATO, it is referred to as a democracy and yet it is an illusion: no freedom of the press, no control of elections**

Céline Lussato



Isabelle Lasserre, Céline Lussato and François-Xavier Priollaud

## We are showing up unarmed in the face of global players who have been arming themselves for thirty years

Isabelle Lasserre

ground, as a demand for a redefinition of the relationship between Africa and France. François-Xavier Priollaud asked: 'Should we redefine our foreign policy, then?' 'Clearly,' said Ulysse Gosset. However, he maintained that we should do so by listening to what Africans have to say and what they want.

The journalist believes that the rise of populism, observed in Europe, Asia and India, is forcing France to adapt if it wants to retain its influence and power of intervention. 'Because a paradigm shift is taking place on a global scale, and new conflicts could reshuffle the cards', posited François-Xavier Priollaud: a possible war between China and the USA if the latter were to invade Taiwan.

'This is the illustration of the impotence of France and Europe', noted Isabelle Lasserre. 'We are showing up unarmed in the face of global players who have been arming themselves for thirty years.' In her view, it would be in Europe's interest 'to reconstitute itself politically, culturally and militarily, so that it can then assert itself on the international stage and re-establish healthier alliances'. Otherwise, history could well be written without it.



Watch the full debate on YouTube



Ousmane Ndiaye

DEBATE

# XI JINPING, HIS DRIVE FOR POWER?

Friday 29 September 2023, 2p.m. – 3.30p.m., Plenary Hall



Stéphane Corcuff and Emilie Aubry

## China and Taiwan, patience and militarisation

In the run-up to Taiwan's presidential elections in 2024, where the main issue is the island's tension with Xi Jinping's China, a 'symbolic opposition between the small democratic territory and the world's largest dictatorship', Emilie Aubry kicked off this discussion with a screening of the latest episode of her programme "Le Dessous des Cartes", fleshed out by a report from Taiwan in June 2023 to ask: will the war take place?

After asserting in an introductory answer that China will be content with the status quo 'as long as the USA remains the guarantor of Taiwan's security', the sinologist endeavoured to explain the origin of a discourse that assigns respon-

sibility for tension to US provocations, reminding us that 'it's perverse to justify Russian and Chinese policies by denouncing American imperialism.' On the issues at stake in the current Taiwanese presidential campaign, Stéphane Corcuff pointed out that there is 'essentially a political debate in Taiwan, with candidates setting themselves apart primarily for electoral reasons, because you can only really govern from the centre, despite the political leanings of the parties.' Since the end of the Kuomintang dictatorship (1949-1990s), which looked towards mainland China, more and more Taiwanese 'see their future in the Taiwanese identity.' However, 'this fault line

**A rational Xi Jinping is applying a strategy of military reinforcement to be ready if the geopolitical situation were to change**

Stéphane Corcuff

MODERATOR:

**Émilie Aubry**, editor-in-chief and presenter of Le Dessous des Cartes, Arte

SPEAKERS:

**Stéphane Corcuff**, academic, internationalist political scientist and sinologist



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**China believes that the world is against it, that it's being denied access to its rightful status as the world's leading power**

Stéphane Corcuff

*is gradually diminishing because it's not possible to propose reunification or independence de jure.*

When asked about the issue of 'reunification by nibbling', i.e., the growing influence of Chinese capital and soft power on the island, the academic asserted that it has 'already been at work for a long time, but Taiwan is holding out.' Beijing 'isn't barring itself from any options; a rational Xi Jinping is aware of the American presence, reaffirmed under the presidency of Joe Biden, and is therefore applying a strategy of military reinforcement to be ready if the geopolitical situation were to change, particularly in the event of a change in the American executive', he explained. However, 'since he has set 2049 as the deadline for this reunification and has stated that we won't pass the buck to another generation of leaders', this raises a number of questions.

Responding to the recurrent description of a 'new Cold War', Stéphane Corcuff preferred to raise 'the methodological problem of using the term: it's better to characterise the content of the risks than to compare expressions', a point echoed by Émilie Aubry on the 'multipolar dimension of the world which renders the Cold War vision obsolete today.' In this vein, the academic responded to questions from the audience about the possibility of supporting neither the American nor the Chinese side in this debate, saying that 'fortunately the question has not yet been asked, but it's important to maintain intellectual independence and to make rational assessments of the two countries, bearing in mind: if China were to act without an American response, what would be the consequences for the world?' 'In the face of the persistent idea of a 'Chinese cultural aversion to war', the French sinologist explained that 'there's no greater prejudice about China than this. Its entire history is made up of war and the assimilation of conquered populations', he continued, and this prejudice is nothing more than 'a discourse skilfully disseminated by the Chinese to appear less worrying, and wrongly repeated by certain observers.' He also pointed out that 'China's current borders are inherited from the Manchu Empire, which was in power from 1644 to 1912, a period during which China didn't exist as a subject of international law.'

Returning to the question of contemporary Chinese expansionism, which is 'grudgingly accepted by the West', Stéphane Corcuff drew an 'important distinction between the immediate environment and the rest of the world.' In the first case, 'China has an imperial vision, reinforced by its emergence on the world stage' and 'believes that the world is against it, that it's being denied access to its rightful status as the world's leading power.' In the second case, 'although the structure of the New Silk Roads gives an impression of expansionism, the Chinese have understood that being the world's leading power, the world's policeman, has a political and financial cost that they don't want to assume.' Today, 'Xi Jinping's China is putting elements in place to advance the country's power, but does not want to play this role and has no interest in doing so.'



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Before raising the question of the participation of other states in a Sino-Taiwanese war, the academic pointed out that the likelihood of a conflict is still low because 'everything is being done today to dissuade China from invading Taiwan and there are many stages to go through before that happens: the failure of alliances, the reversal of policy in Washington, Beijing's rational determination or otherwise, the success of an air and sea blockade and then the deployment of troops.' However, 'Japan would be directly affected by an attack, since the Nansei archipelago, where Okinawa is located, is claimed by the Chinese government, which covets all the lost borders of the Manchu empire.' Despite this, Stéphane Corcuff stressed that 'the sensitive issue remains the preparation of an Indo-Pacific response without offering casus belli to Beijing.' 'The balance of power remains unfavourable in relation to China to date', he continued, 'because it's a power with which we

want to trade not wage war, even if it's preparing to do so.' However, 'no one's in a position of strength on their own, even the United States.'

To understand all the geopolitical issues, it is 'necessary to analyse China's domestic policy', maintained the sinologist. Indeed, as 'the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has been obsessed with the issue of regime stability since 1949, and the Chinese leader must, in his own personal interest and that of the party, ensure that the CCP consolidates its power over China, the case of Taiwan is very dangerous.' As a result, 'unless he is cornered, Xi Jinping will not take the decision to attack until he's certain of victory, because a defeat would shatter his legitimacy to lead the party and

**Everything is being done today to dissuade China from invading Taiwan and there are many stages to go through before that happens**

Stéphane Corcuff

the country.' However, 'with the cynicism peculiar to the CCP, one might think the regime capable of inventing a far-fetched casus belli in order to claim to have defended China's vital interests in the event of defeat.'

When asked about the Taiwan issue, he stated that the Chinese are 'in principle in favour of it, as economic issues take precedence in practice.' 'The air and sea blockade that an invasion would require would be immense and would bring China's economy to a standstill', concluded the sinologist, adding : 'and now is not the time - the CCP would be heading for disaster.'

# NUCLEAR DETERRENCE: AN OBSTACLE OR A LEVER FOR LASTING PEACE?

Friday 29 September 2023, 2.00 p.m. - 3.30 p.m., Auditorium



Jean-Marie Collin, Héroïse Fayet, Xavier Chemisseur and Nicole Gnesotto

## Security through the threat of annihilation

'Since the end of the Cold War, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence has been put forward to explain the balance of world order', began Xavier Chemisseur, journalist, and moderator of this debate. Just when we were beginning to imagine a world without nuclear weapons thirty years ago, the invasion of Ukraine on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2022 raised this crucial question: is nuclear deterrence still an effective tool for ensuring our collective security?

### MODERATOR:

**Xavier Chemisseur**, Editor-in-Chief, France 24

### SPEAKERS:

**Jean-Marie Collin**, director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons for France (ICAN France)

**Héroïse Fayet**, researcher at IFRI (French Institute of International Relations) and coordinator of the Dissuasion and Proliferation research programme

**Nicole Gnesotto**, Vice-President of the Jacques Delors Institute

Nicole Gnesotto began by redrawing the broad outlines of the fight against nuclear proliferation, following the collapse of the USSR. Indeed, with '*a Soviet arsenal spread across several Soviet socialist republics, Washington had to negotiate an agreement with Moscow so that Russia would be the sole inheritor and repatriate it.*' Wanting to avoid proliferation at all costs, the Americans also set up '*a financial programme to host Soviet scientists to prevent nuclear brains from being sold to the highest bidders such as Iran or North Korea.*' The historian also explained that '*the demise of the USSR led to a deprogramming of arsenals on both sides.*' The war in Ukraine, '*via bellicose statements by Russian leaders threatening the use of tactical nuclear weapons*', brought this forgotten issue back into the spotlight. After Presidents Biden and Macron responded, indicating '*that they would not allow themselves to be pushed around and that they would defend every square*

*inch of NATO's territory*', no more public threats were heard. Nicole Gnesotto argued, however, that '*while we cannot say that there are no more risks, we can continue to rely on the strategic reasoning of rationality*', which assumes that Vladimir Putin '*won't attack because nuclear weapons deter any fighting and the cost of an attack is always greater than the result of a possible victory.*' She concluded by recalling an anecdote told by General de Gaulle in the early 1960s during the development of this policy of deterrence, when the Soviet ambassador warned him that '*a French attack would lead to the destruction of Paris*', to which he had replied: '*then we will die together, because I will have destroyed Moscow first.*'

**While we cannot say that there are no more risks, we can continue to rely on the strategic reasoning of rationality**

Nicole Gnesotto

Héroïse Fayet pointed out that only nine countries hold atomic weapons today, and these are divided into two categories. The first category includes the five countries that tested it before the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was signed in 1968, none other than the permanent members of the UN Security Council (the United States, China, Russia, the United Kingdom and France). The other category includes countries that have not signed the treaty: India and Pakistan, which carried out tests in 1998, Israel, although it does not officially recognise it, and North Korea. But to understand the current context, it is '*important to know that in the 1970s, some thirty countries were conducting*



Héroïse Fayet

*nuclear programmes*' she noted, before explaining that it was '*ensured that the cost of development remained far greater than the benefits a state could derive from it.*' Today, '*the main candidate remains Iran, although the United States believes that there's been no sign of militarisation since 2003*' but the public debate on nuclear weapons has, in particular, '*been rekindled in South Korea and Japan.*'

In contrast to the two experts, the director of ICAN insisted on the definition of the term nuclear deterrence, not guaranteeing a balance but '*constituting a permanent threat of the use of weapons of mass destruction against civilian populations.*' This deterrence, explained Jean-Marie Collin, is '*the acceptance of a president going against international humanitarian law*' but also '*maintaining a large budget for this sector without democratic debate.*' '*To see nuclear deterrence as a lever for peace means to agree to threaten, to be threatened and to proliferate*', he concluded.

Nicole Gnesotto recognised an important paradox here: '*the flaw in nuclear deterrence is its amorality since it's col-*



Nicole Gnesotto

lective security is based on the threat of the annihilation of humanity.' Moreover, atomic weapons, 'enshrine an unjust world order that accepts these unequal rights between countries.' But if nuclear weapons should be abolished, it must be

**The Russian nuclear arsenal will never be removed from the outside and it's unthinkable to force Russia to destroy it itself**

Nicole Gnesotto

borne in mind that 'conventional deterrence has never existed in history' she warned, 'that nuclear deterrence is such an absurd and real threat that it annihilates any desire to start war.' This is why 'Putin's actions came as a surprise to everyone.' He is implementing 'an aggressive sanctuarisation doctrine, which consists of using Russia's status as a nuclear power to guard against Western reprisal.' A 'strategy that's working' according to her.



Watch the full debate on YouTube

Disagreeing profoundly, Jean-Marie Collin insisted on the uncertain nature of this doctrine, which is merely a 'bet on the opponent's rationality, a rationality that can be questioned in the case of Putin, the Kim family or even Trump.' If today 'the majority of states don't want atomic weapons, it's because they know it's a bad defence system', he explained. What's more, the example of Colonel Stanislav Petrov in 1983 shows the fallibility of this doctrine in the face of mistakes or accidents. When the Soviet officer, in one of the 'hottest years of the Cold War', detected American missiles aimed at the USSR, he warned his hierarchy that he did not believe his computers and avoided a nuclear apocalypse.

Héloïse Fayet adds the Chinese question to the debate, a new major player in the nuclear issue with '350 warheads in 2022, 410 in 2023' and 'refusing any discussion on limiting its armament.' This 'change in the global nuclear balance must call for a great deal of effort if deterrence is to work and we are to avoid a nuclear Third World War.'

Nicole Gnesotto pointed out that 'European nuclear deterrence doesn't exist.' The European Union is 'disunited on this issue, between the countries that have renounced it and rely on the NATO umbrella and France, which only protects its vital interests.' Asked how the Russian-Ukrainian conflict might be resolved, the historian stated her belief that scenarios of Russian capitulation and disarmament are unlikely because 'the Russian nuclear arsenal will never be removed from the outside and it's unthinkable to force Russia to destroy it itself.' While Nicole Gnesotto acknowledged that 'there's no debate worthy of French democracy on this subject today', she asserted that 'if China and Russia are allowed to keep their atomic weapons, why would France give theirs up?'

DEBATE

**SOCIAL NETWORKS, WEAPONS OF MASS MOBILISATION?**

Friday 29 September 2023, 2p.m. - 3.30p.m., Gold Room



Feurat Alani, Oxana Melnychuk, Julie Clarini and Gildas Leprince

A potentially dangerous but essential tool

'The same conference organised ten years ago would surely have been more optimistic, showing that social networks are transforming movements, making them visible and giving them strength', said Julie Clarini in her introduction, 'whereas today we're more measured in the face of these vectors of disinformation and destabilisation, which were supposed to help fledgling democracies but in the end are attacking old democracies.'

MODERATOR:

**Julie Clarini**, Editor-in-Chief, Ideas Department, l'Obs

SPEAKERS:

**Gildas Leprince**, YouTuber 'Mr Geopolitix'

**Feurat Alani**, reporter and film-maker

**Oxana Melnychuk**, director of the political analysis and communication centre, United for Ukraine

**The fundamental thing is to always ask yourself what the level of deception is**

Gildas Leprince

Oxana Melnychuk started by recalling the 'crucial role of social networks at the start of the war in Ukraine, while waiting for the traditional media to adapt.' Social networks made it possible 'for the President and the government to immediately reassure and organise 40 million people who were in the dark via Twitter.' Since then, 'President Zelensky has been speaking to Ukrainians every evening, in Ukrainian and English, talking to them directly on his phone, and that makes him human, which is part of our resilience.' The communicator explained that 'the government had to ask itself very



Gildas Leprince

**Certification was used to authenticate people who were credible in their field, but now you can simply purchase it**

Gildas Leprince

Feurat Alani took up this argument from his point of view, saying that *'you can't do without the Internet and social networks, especially when you're a journalist'*, before going on to talk about his relationship with these digital platforms as part of his work in Iraq. *'I noticed that there were all sorts of things on Twitter that weren't cross-checked or verified, especially after the arrival of Isis'*, so *'I decided to go against the trend of the app, speed and superficiality, and I started to tell the story of Iraq in a different way.'* In concrete terms, *'I went against the cold, numerical analyses and told a subjective story, with colours and smells, over a long period of time, to take my readers by the hand' and 'from these texts my graphic novel was born.'* Today, the reporter believes that *'Twitter is an indispensable tool, for better or for worse, but you have to take the time to cross-check the information and not just stay on the social networks.'* Oxana Melnychuk went on to quote a Socratic principle that requires *'three filters to receive information: Is it true? Is it beneficial? Is it useful? And you have to be wary if one of the three is missing.'*



Watch the full debate on YouTube

Mr Geopolitix warned the young people present about the chang-

quickly what channel to use' but also *'had to call on all its contacts in the media world where Zelensky came from to spread the President's messages to the whole world.'*

Gildas Leprince, aka Mr Geopolitix on YouTube, described his arrival on the platform *'at a time when it was booming, at a turning point when we were really starting to make a living out of it'*, but before *'deliberately misleading content began to proliferate'*. To understand fake news, the YouTuber explained that *'journalists have established a classification of all this information, ranging from content that is false for commercial rather than political reasons, to journalistic errors, to the soliciting of headlines, to manipulation and propaganda.'* *'The fundamental thing is to always ask yourself what the level of deception is, because it's better to learn how to protect yourself than to give up the Internet'*, he argued.

es at Twitter, where *'certification was used to authenticate people who were credible in their field, but now you can simply purchase it.'* On the other hand, *'the platform now specifies the origin of certain information, for example that Russia Today is financed by the Russian government, or notes the real dates of certain videos.'* The videographer then called on everyone *'to follow several fact-checking accounts and to always check whether a piece of information is mentioned in other media before taking it at face value.'* Moderator Julie Clarini noted, however, that *'fake news can also be a way of finding out about the propaganda techniques of one's opponents'*, adding that *'fake news say a lot about the situation in a country.'* Oxana Melnychuk returned to the link between information and military strategy, which led the Ukrainian general staff to *'withhold information about the war so as not to create panic and endanger its units.'* As a result, *'the Western media began to use Russian sources to make up for this omission, which contributed to disinformation on the subject, forcing the Ukrainian army to train official spokespeople.'*

Gildas Leprince went on to explain the issues involved in information warfare, when *'countries use false information to destabilise their enemies, pushing them to make bad decisions and causing people to lose hope.'* Some countries, such as Russia, *'have specialised in this, setting up troll farms.'* One example of *'this pernicious war'* is *'Wagner's alleged discovery of a mass grave left by the French army on its base in Mali, which France was able to deny with the help of drone footage showing Russian paramilitary forces digging the grave'*, he continued. Feurat Alani also pointed out that even *'the Islamic State has used social networks in innovative ways to attract recruits'*, which *'shows that information can be as much a blessing as a war-triggering weapon.'*

The French videographer then took time to explain the different moderation methods used by digital platforms: *'YouTube is pretty strict on nudity, even when it's nothing more than a Greek statue, while TikTok is pretty permissive, preferring to restrict violence, weapons and drugs.'* Returning to the original subject, the Ukrainian communicator pointed out that *'British intelligence admitted themselves at the last Paris arms fair that their primary source of information was social networks.'* In an attempt to offer some grounds for hope on this issue, Mr Geopolitix defended the analogy that *'social networks are a tool like a knife – you can cook and kill with them'*,

**Fake news can also be a way of finding out about the propaganda techniques of one's opponents**

Julie Clarini

but we must not forget that *'you can do anything with the Internet; it's incredible.'* Even if *'the new generations face more challenges, they'll be that much stronger, they will question themselves more, develop their critical eye and find their cognitive biases.'* Oxana Melnychuk was keen to *'thank Westerners for their support on social networks, the wings of our victory and our resilience.'* Indeed, *'this solidarity is possible thanks to the immediacy of social networks, which enable financial support and the formation of humanitarian organisations.'* *'We must be careful not to fall into the trap of social networking'*, she concluded, *'but it remains a contemporary tool that's changing the world.'*

# 75 YEARS OF THE BLUE HELMETS: BUILDING INNOVATIVE AND EFFECTIVE PEACE OPERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Friday 29 September, 2p.m. - 3.30p.m., Azur Room



Satu Koivu, Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Valérie Gauthier, Caroline Ziadeh and Lise Howard

## Keeping the peace in the face of new challenges

Following the showing of a video celebrating 75 years of United Nations peacekeeping operations, journalist, Valérie Gauthier, opened the discussion on the 71 missions set up between 1948 and 2023.

Jean-Pierre Lacroix began by highlighting the long list of countries that have benefited from these missions, from Cambodia to El Salvador, including East Timor and Angola. He pointed out that the failure of some operations was partly because the ambitions of certain mandates did not match the reality on the ground. Caroline Ziadeh went on to describe the successes of the UN operation in Kosovo since 1999, which has *'stopped the war and the killings and facilitated the return of displaced persons, although there*

*are setbacks today with the population losing confidence in the mission.'* Satu Koivu, Police Commissioner for the mission in Cyprus, which has been in place since 1964, explained that *'the cessation of fighting and the opening of crossing points in the previously hermetic buffer zone are successes, but we have to recognise that the presence of UN forces, which is still necessary today, is a sign of failure.'* American academic, Lise Howard, drew on numerous academic studies to assert that *'two out of three peacekeeping operations achieve the objectives of their mandate'* and that *'the presence of peacekeepers unambiguously reduces the number of deaths, injuries and conflicts.'*

Jean-Pierre Lacroix made the point that *'every day that the ceasefire is maintained is a success'*, before admitting that *'in the face of the challenges imposed by new methods of warfare and disinformation in often vast territories, the allocated resources are insufficient.'* The Special Representative in Pristina, the capital of Kosovo, continued her analysis by explaining that *'the nature of the conflict and the populations have changed, and the analysis and administration of the mission must also evolve.'* *'We must remain attentive to secure the four pillars of the 1999 resolution, which are the cessation of hostilities, the deployment of NATO forces, the management of community affairs by the OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and economic affairs by the European Union'*, as well as *'maintaining dialogue at local and national level in order to restore confidence.'*

### **The nature of the conflict and the populations have changed, and the analysis and administration of the mission must also evolve**

Caroline Ziadeh

*'All members of peacekeeping operations are ordinary people, but they serve in extraordinary places'*, added the policewoman. *'Our security is called into question, our buildings and property are damaged and sometimes we're attacked directly'*, she explained, *'and we must be able to meet increasing expectations, adapt and develop new skills.'* When asked about the broadening of the missions' responsibilities, Satu Koivu assured the audience that, in the case of the Cyprus mission *'the main aim is to listen to and support the local communities, but the situation has changed over six-*

MODERATOR:

**Valérie Gauthier**, France 24 journalist and TV presenter

SPEAKERS:

**Jean-Pierre Lacroix**, UN Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations

**Caroline Ziadeh**, Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

**Lise Howard**, Professor of Domestic and Foreign Policy at Georgetown University

**Satu Koivu**, Deputy Police Commissioner, Senior Police Advisor UNFICYP (United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus)

*ty years; the military incident has been resolved but there are now major civil and criminal problems.'* Lise Howard added that *'governments are asking for increasingly complex mandates, and everyone is making demands.'*

Reacting to the accusations of sexual abuse by a number of peacekeepers, Jean-Pierre Lacroix accepted his organisation's responsibility: *'It's unacceptable and it undermines the positive work done by everyone. We've taken action, entire contingents have been fired and the national authorities have been warned.'* *'We must do more to get to know the territories and populations better, go everywhere, diversify the staff and never stop working so that these crimes don't go unpunished'*, he continued. *'The UN is increasingly targeted by attacks, the uniform no longer protects and fake news exacerbates the violence'* he concluded to counterbalance his earlier statements. Satu Koivu added that *'the integrity of the mission is continually challenged, working in a blue beret carries a risk, but we also have equipment and technology to help us.'* Her colleague in Kosovo recounts the latest attacks in May 2023 against NATO soldiers in the north of the country, along with the deterioration of UN offices in the capital. *'Faced with these threats, we must continue to engage in dialogue and find solutions*



Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Valérie Gauthier

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### Statistical studies show that the more women there are, the better the results, with less exploitation and abuse

Lise Howard

with local allies, political and religious leaders and young people to change the public discourse', she says.

The American political scientist briefly recalled the multidimensional mission to Namibia in 1989-1990, the aim of which was to 'change the political atmosphere in a country with a complex history (genocide, apartheid, civil war) but with a lot of resources and a difficult post-colonial democratic transition.' 'That's why it was important to talk directly to the Namibians and see what they expected from the Blue Helmets', she concluded.

Faced with the growing misinformation made possible by NICTs (New Information and Communication Technologies)



Watch the full debate on YouTube

and social networks, Jean-Pierre Lacroix maintained that 'we need to communicate proactively, tell positive stories and do a better job of detecting information.' Caroline Ziadeh looked back at the disinformation campaign against one of her colleagues, who was wrongly accused in 2018 of being a Russian spy. This 'required a campaign of clarification and investment in fact-checking to develop defence mechanisms.' Satu Koivu echoed the arguments of other international officials, stating that 'we have a responsibility to lead the narrative, to check the facts, so that people understand the action of the Blue Helmets.'

The diplomat, based in Pristina, went on to detail her efforts to rebuild confidence in her mission, including the meeting with Kosovar civil society stakeholders to inaugurate 'the Barabar centre, a place for dialogue and inter-community exchange.' In turn, the Police Commissioner justified the setting up of various 'committees on health, crisis management, etc. to find solutions to all the challenges.'

Lastly, Jean-Pierre Lacroix stressed the importance of including women in all these processes, 'because it considerably improves the working environment of the missions and because the vulnerable populations are mostly women who no longer want to see armed men.' 'Statistical studies show that the more women there are, the better the results, with less exploitation and abuse', continued Lise Howard. 'Unfortunately, China and Russia often block Security Council resolutions that include women's rights, so we have to go through the General Assembly to vote on them.'

The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations concluded the discussion by explaining that 'although the missions are not equipped to combat global warming, the resulting scarcity of resources is having a major impact on conflicts, and we must take this into account.'

DEBATE

## AFRICAN RESISTANCE

29 September 2 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. - Nacre Room



Drissa Traoré, Niagalé Bagayoko, Sonia Le Gourrielec, Didier Awadi and Newton Ahmed Barry

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### Fight against imperialism and dictatorships

While coups d'état have multiplied in Africa - Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger, Gabon - in the last two years, the continent is experiencing a new wave of popular protests, announced Sonia Le Gourrielec. But 'how and against whom is this resistance being organised today?'

Senegalese musician and activist, Didier Awadi, pointed out that all forms of resistance are different, whether cultural, political or armed. Having long fought for political pluralism in his country, the rapper explained that today we must fight against all the models being imposed, against imperialism, against populism and for Africa.

To understand the political unrest in Africa, Newton Ahmed Barry said we must look at

the profile and rhetoric of the insurgents and their partners. In Burkina Faso, three insurrections have marked the country over the past 25 years: the first in 1998, following the assassination of journalist Norbert Zongo, was linked to attacks on press freedom; the second in 2011-2014 was motivated by the need for democratic accountability; the third in 2022 was an insurrection of despair in the face of the onset of terrorism in the country.

### All these military coups are the consequences of institutional coups

Didier Awadi

## MODERATOR:

**Sonia Le Gouriellec**, Lecturer at the Catholic University of Lille

## SPEAKERS:

**Didier Awadi**, Senegalese musician and activist

**Niagalé Bagayoko**, president of the African Security Network

**Newton Ahmed Barry**, journalist committed to freedom of expression and former president of the CENI (Burkina Faso)

**Drissa Traoré**, responsible for the Sahel programme in the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

In this tense political context, Drissa Traoré is primarily concerned about the repercussions on respect for human rights. Even if coups d'état officially use security and imperialist threats as a pretext, in addition to the failure of political elites and the failures of democracy, we need to ensure that the civic and democratic space is not too narrow. Resisting means *'finding how to stop the harmful effects of these coups and multilateral policies'* he explained.

According to French political scientist, Niagalé Bagayoko, each political event must be analysed in its own context and without generalisations. The coup d'état in Chad in April 2021, however, marks a turning point because it was not recognised as such by France and the African Union (AU). The non-intervention of the French armed forces in Chad and the absence of sanctions imposed by the AU have created a precedent for the continent. The coups followed very quickly afterwards: in Mali in May 2021, in Guinea in September 2021, in Sudan in October 2021, in Burkina Faso in January and September 2022, in Niger in July 2023, in Gabon in August 2023, etc. These latest reversals also benefit from a certain amount of popular support, which suggests a major authoritarian and nationalist wave. These soldiers in fact embody a break with the liberal democratic order imposed from the outside, in addition to a patriotism which turns a blind eye to measures that are detrimental to freedom and a strong social conservatism. We must also stop seeing Russian

interference in all these events, as this echoes the neo-Pan-Africanist speeches, which systematically blame France, but this is insulting because it suggests that African actors are only puppets yet they have their own agendas and their own opportunistic calculations. According to Niagalé Bagayoko *'we must read the attractiveness of the powers which constitute foils to the West in the light of this conservatism and this nationalism'*. Whether it is Russia, armed Islamists or religious conservatives, Muslims, Pentecostals or evangelicals, the influence of alternative players is growing in Africa.

### ***We must let African people decide on their democracy, their values and their principles***

Drissa Traoré

*'All these military coups are the consequences of institutional coups,'* added Didier Awadi. In Mali, Guinea-Conakry or Burkina Faso, democracy has not been respected by those in power and when a president wants to stay in power, the new



Niagalé Bagayoko

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African youth say no. But although the military always takes advantage of this to claim the right to resolve the problem, the musician quoted the Burkinabè leader Thomas Sankara: *'A soldier without political and ideological training is a potential criminal.'*

Drissa Traoré pessimistically underlined the cyclical nature of these coups in Africa, which are repeated despite periods of political transition and democratic elections. *'Without violating human rights, we must let African people decide on their democracy, their values and their principles,'* he insisted.

Newton Ahmed pointed out that each of these upheavals must be assessed on a case-by-case basis, that there are no matrix elements that allow us to argue and highlight common points of division. *'There is no African or Western democracy – it is only a value of governance; the real problem is that Africa has democracies without democrats,'* he concluded.

In these difficult contexts, *'music is a tool of combat'*, underlined the Senegalese musician, *'we defend the ideas of Sankara, Nkrumah, Fanon or even Malcolm X, and the people in power today are fed up with it'*. These are the same people who are using these ideas to define a new populist Pan-Africanism. The same populist tendencies can be found in Europe and the United States, who accuse us of an-



Newton Ahmed Barry

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ti-French sentiments, when, in fact, they are first and foremost anti-Françafrique. We oppose the neocolonialist model, not France and the French.

In response to a question from the audience, Niagalé Bagayoko returned to the general rejection of Africa's political classes, caused by the perpetual interplay of alliances and the back-and-forth between those in power and those in opposition, revealing the endless recycling of the same elite. In addition, there is a certain lack of programmatic function for African politi-

### ***Most of the opponents of African regimes have become dictators themselves, hence the distrust of citizens***

Drissa Traoré

cal parties, which play as much on identity and community belonging as on the international relations or socialist and liberal allegiances. *'Most of the opponents of African regimes have become dictators themselves, hence the distrust of citizens,'* added Drissa Traoré. In Africa, we do not vote and the people don't really participate in the choice of president, as evidenced by the participation rates, which don't exceed 30% in Mali. *'We haven't found the formula to interest people, and especially young people, in the elections'* added Newton Ahmed Barry, saying this means that *'the buffer of legitimacy of elected officials isn't thick enough'*. Sonia Le Gouriellec concluded this debate by noting the importance of pedagogy in overcoming these crises: *'to educate oneself is to resist,'* she asserted.



Watch  
the full  
debate on  
YouTube

# RESIST! AGAINST WHOM AND WHY?

Debate - 29 September 4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m. – Plenary



Bertrand Badie, Kléber Arhou, Eve Minault and Fabrice Rousselot

## Universal resistances

'From the struggle of Breton mayors against the State to protest against the deterioration of their retirement homes to that of an Iranian mother whose daughter has been executed, resistance is diverse and varied', began Fabrice Rousselot as he opened the conference. The discussions were guided by three episodes from an INA web series, representing three different types of resistance: that of people, that of women and finally, that of environmentalists.

The first film pointed out how resistance enables people to defend themselves against invaders, who want to dominate them, symbolically or militarily. The images show old men and women in Ukraine ready to defend themselves from the start of the Russian invasion in February 2022. This resistance enabled the Ukrainians to recapture much of the territory they had lost. But many lost their lives, sometimes in monstrous conditions. In 1940, France was also called upon to resist the German occupiers by General De Gaulle. Once

liberated, France, in turn, saw resistance groups organised against it to claim their right to independence. The film showed that this resistance continues to exist in the four corners of the globe, as in Iraqi Kurdistan in 2014.

Bertrand Badie sees an extraordinary similarity between these forms of resistance, despite their extremely varied situations: **'They show that, deep within every human being, there is an absolute free-**

#### MODERATOR:

**Fabrice Rousselot**, Editorial Director, The Conversation France

#### SPEAKERS:

**Eve Minault**, director of the web series, Résister ! Contre qui et pourquoi? produced by INA.

**Kléber Arhou**, Director of the Caen Memorial.

**Bertrand Badie**, Professor Emeritus at Sciences Po, a specialist in international relations.

dom which, combined with individual inventiveness, is capable of routing an entire army, like elderly Ukrainian women throwing balls of wool into the carburetors of Russian tanks. Then there's the pride of doing something oneself that the collective or political community to which one belongs is not capable of doing, and the idea that we would no longer be fully human if we allowed ourselves to be deprived of our rights', added the professor, who was joined by Kléber Arhou on one point: While history is too often told as the story of great leaders, the resistance, on the contrary, reveals the encounter of the individual, the anonymous person, with history.



Kléber Arhou and Eve Minault

***In resistance, the most important thing is not victory or defeat, but the effect it has on transforming human mentalities, albeit quietly***

Bertrand Badie

The film shows that each individual, courageously committed, is convinced that democracy is not immanent. **'It can die by force of arms, by the ballot box, but also by silence, which is a form of complicity. That's why the images show first and foremost a commitment to expressing oneself**, noted Eve Minault. The director nevertheless reminded us that we need to identify what we want to talk about and what we can talk about. To create a montage that is historically accurate without being overly influenced by your own vision of things, you also have to consider the point of showing certain images, always

bearing in mind who is filming and what political subconscious is driving this.

'Can we evaluate resistance on the basis of its success or failure?' asked Fabrice Rousselot. **'As soon as there is resistance, there is victory'**, replied Bertrand Badie, using the example of the failed Arab Spring. While teaching in Cairo at the time of the Tahrir Square revolution, he saw his students emancipate themselves from fear, prejudice and imposed traditions. **'In resistance, the most important thing is not victory or defeat, but the effect it has on transforming human mentalities, albeit quietly. A single ticket to freedom!**' he exclaimed. Added to this is the contagious dimension of freedom and courage, which is all the more potent today, with images travelling around the world in a matter of minutes.

The second episode focused on women's struggles. Having won the right to vote in many countries in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, women are gradually making societies more egalitarian. It's a struggle that must be constantly renewed. In 2022 alone, the US Supreme Court decided to give states

the right to legislate – and therefore ban – the right to abortion, just a few months before a wave of anger broke out in Iran, following the death of the young woman, Mahsa Amini. Iranian women then vociferously demanded the right to dress as they pleased. Wave after wave, movements for women's rights are part of a never-ending process. Witness the #MeToo movement, launched in 2017, calling for an end to sexist violence. Today's universal struggles echo those of yesterday.

**The strength of women today lies in the fact that they are fighting not just for their rights but also against the very essence of arbitrary domination**

Bertrand Badie

Once again, Bertrand Badie noted similarities between very different situations. Firstly, a feeling of humiliation linked to an awareness of centuries of hidden domination. Secondly, an objectivisation of the female cause around the right to control one's own body. *'Finally, there's a desire to impose a marker of political domination on women. In Iran, an unveiled woman is a direct challenge to Ayatollah Khamenei. The strength of women today lies in the fact that they are fighting not just for their rights but also against the very essence of arbitrary domination'*, was the analysis of the international relations specialist.



Watch the full debate on YouTube

Kléber Arhoul noted that with #MeToo, a voice was set free, sweeping all other voices into its wake. Bertrand Badie was delighted that the movement was illustrated in the film by processions of demonstrators. After all, demonstrating means making visible in the public arena a phenomenon that is intimate in nature, taking resistance to a higher level.

Resistance to government inaction on climate change is also moving up a notch. The third episode served to remind us that climate change is generating new forms of conflict, making communities more vulnerable and exacerbating inequalities. From Kenyan biologist, Wangari Muta Maathai's fight against deforestation in 1977, to Vandana Shiva's struggle in India for food sovereignty based on the principles of sustainable agriculture, preserving our resources is becoming a fundamental issue. That's why more and more citizens are occupying places of power and the media in the hope of galvanising as many people as possible, by adopting the codes of civil disobedience used in the struggles for women's rights and certain independence movements.

Kléber Arhoul expressed his disappointment that, despite the warnings issued by the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) nearly 20 years ago, no coherent global policy has been implemented. However, there are still glimmers of hope, thanks to the many initiatives around the world. Bertrand Badie noted that this is the first resistance that unites the whole of humanity, with national security taking second place to the global interest. Eve Minault remarked that the demonstrations filmed in the series reveal an admission of powerlessness. This feeling was reinforced by the shocking images of burning forests and collapsing icebergs. Bertrand Badie concluded: *'We now need to translate this growing public awareness into concrete and difficult, collective decisions'*.

# ART AND CULTURE OF RESISTANCE IN UKRAINE

29 September, 4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m. – Auditorium



Ed Vulliamy and Cécile Hennion

Cécile Hennion introduced the speakers. The two artists were not physically present, but took part via video conference: one in exile in the United States, the other in Kiev. The moderator pointed out the major issues surrounding art, which, in times of war, can be both spoils of war and something to be destroyed. She emphasised the vigour of the artistic movement in Ukraine. The first question addressed was that of the role of artists, who take over from journalists who have run out of words, to describe the evils and emotions of war.

Iryna Tsilyk points out that the culture of resistance is inherent in Ukrainian culture, and that artists have always played their part in these struggles. After pointing out that the war with Russia began in 2014 – with the invasion of the Donbass – she said that her husband, who is also an artist and, like many other artists, joined the front line in 2015, is still there. With all the artists on the front line – not to mention those who died there, such as Wassyl Slipak, a singer at the Paris Opera, who died in 2016, and

## We are losing our greatest talents

Iryna Tsilyk

Volodymyr Vakoulenko, who was killed in 2022 – Ukrainian culture has come to a standstill, she asserted. *'We are losing our greatest talents. Survivors feel an even greater responsibility to collect testimonies and disseminate them throughout the world,'* she said, expressing her hope that this conference would allow the creation of bridges between people.

MODERATOR:

**Cécile Hennion**, Senior reporter for the newspaper, 'Le Monde'

SPEAKERS:

**Lesia Khomenko**, Ukrainian artist

**Iryna Tsilyk**, Ukrainian artist

**Ed Vulliamy**, British journalist and writer.

Having had to resign herself to exile in the United States when she left Kiev, Lesia Khomenko asserted that this distance allowed her, as an artist, to create something more global, more universal. She wondered about the representation of war, at a time when everyone can represent themselves on social networks. Having fought against her prejudices about war, she wondered how she could transform her experience into an artistic testimony, without yet having found an answer. This is because war is experienced *'in the body'* and generates *'vulnerability'*.

## The culture of resistance is inherent in Ukrainian culture

Iryna Tsilyk

After praising the exceptional nature of the Forum, Ed Vulliamy emphasised the term *'resistance'* in the title of the debate. Speaking of *'just resistance'* in the face of the genocide, particularly of a cultural nature, that Russia has been carrying out since 2014, the journalist criticised Russia's dishonesty in denying the existence of Ukrainian culture, while at the same time seeking to destroy it. The music specialist then went on to say that culture is flourishing in Kiev and Kharkiv, despite the bombings. He even pointed to an artistic resurrection in the face of war, despite the proximity of the trenches. He described every poem read and every piece of music played as a *'ball'*.

As a reminder of the importance of artistic testimonies, Cécile Hennion projected the painting, *'Guernica'*, by the Portuguese

artist, Vasco Gargalo, who used the style of Picasso's original canvas to protest against the crimes of Putin and Bashar El Assad in Syria. The trailer for Iryna Tsilyk's documentary, *'The Earth is as Blue as an Orange'* was then screened. Iryna Tsilyk, who won an award for her documentary at the Sundance Film Festival in 2020, described how she was deeply affected by this family living through the war in the Donbass region, while doing their utmost to continue living as normally as possible. She explained how she met this single mother and her children, who were themselves making a film about their lives in wartime. It made her wonder what artists



can do without being on the front line. *'We can tell stories and that counts,'* she said.

To explore the angle of *'art as a weapon'*, Cécile Hennion showed the works of Lesia Khomenko. They represent the military outfits worn by Ukrainian fighters. The artist described how she created them, mixing several images and giving them the look of superheroes, like the Marvel ones, she explained. She asserted that, through her paintings and their distribution, she is participating in the war of images on the



Internet. For the painter, punishing Ukraine for Maidan and its Orange Revolution is also one of the driving forces behind Russia's war. After all, a revolution that works is not a good sign for Putin. She evoked the *'festival'* aspect of Maidan, with concerts and pianos playing twenty-four hours a day, and the more recent importance of techno music as a weapon of rebellion.

To underline the importance of music in the resistance, Ed Vulliamy talked about the group, Boombbox, whose popular songs called on the people to rise up. The journalist recounted how leader, Andriy Khlyvniouk, went from being a rock star to a soldier without question, because of the attacks on Ukrainian children and people. He added the current creations of the group, Antytila, the composer, Evgueni Stankovitch, and the revival of folk music, as facts of cultural resistance.

In conclusion, Iryna Tsilyk thanked all the Ukrainian artists who are resisting with different tools and who, for her, are incredible. She didn't want to forget anyone: those on the front line, but also all those who fundraise, those who share the Ukrainian culture with as many people as possible and even the poets who



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the full  
debate on  
YouTube

make camouflage tools for the front. She also wished to thank those who highlight these processes, such as the Maidan Festival.

## Every war has given rise to many artistic works, whether in music, literature, painting or photography

Ed Vulliamy

Lesia Khomenko stressed the importance of the role of artists as witnesses to what she called the murder of a people. She went on to say that we will have to see what happens in a year's time. Finally, Ed Vulliamy wished to point out that every war has given rise to many artistic works, whether in music, literature, painting or photography. Asked by the audience how she was able to earn a living when she was in a country at war and her husband was at the front, Iryna Tsilyk explained that she was still a film producer and writer, and that she had also received offers from newspapers to write articles. She said that this was ultimately part of her healing process, giving her the necessary distance from the violence of everyday life. Even on the front line, her husband had recently written a new novel.

After living in Miami, Lesia Khomenko is now based in New York, where she admitted that it is difficult for her to sell her creations. She said that before her exile, she survived in Kiev as a teacher. She added that her husband spends his meagre pay just on food, clothing and military supplies.

# ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN: THE CULTURAL CHALLENGES OF A LASTING CONFLICT

Friday 29 September 2023, 4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., Gold Room



Grégory Rayko, Taline Ter-Minassian, Régis Genté, Anita Khachaturova and Gaïdz Minassian

## The brutal end of an ancestral conflict

Grégory Rayko, a journalist at The Conversation France, indicated in the introduction that in the context of the dazzling attack carried out ten days earlier in Nagorno-Karabakh, the theme of the cultural issues of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan would be treated in light of the current geopolitical situation in the Caucasus.

Historian Taline Ter Minassian was invited to retrace the broad outlines of the history of the conflict between the two countries in *'the former margins of the USSR'*. The researcher pointed out that *'Nagorno-Karabakh has been a predominantly Armenian region for hundreds of years, which evolved in the Russian, Persian and Ottoman spheres of influence'*. Living *'next to the Tatar populations,*

*ancestors of the Azerbaijanis, in varying proportions'*, the historian explains that *'inter-ethnic relations were often conflictual, particularly during the Armenian-Tatar wars of 1905-1907'*. With Georgia, the two Caucasian countries *'acquired their independence in 1918 before being integrated into the USSR in 1920'*. The Bolsheviks, *'who needed to have good relations with Atatürk's Turkey'* let Stalin, then Commissioner for Nationalities, *'arbitrate over these new republics and create a big Azerbaijan, a small Armenia, and give a gift to the Turks by founding the autonomous republic of Nakhichevan on Armenian territory but now populated by Azeris'*. In addition, the Soviet leader of Georgian origin *'gave Nagorno-Karabakh a special administrative status in which it was separated*

MODERATOR:

**Gregory Rayko**, Chief of International Section at The Conversation France

SPEAKERS:

**Anita Khachaturova**, ethnographer of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and Armenia-Azerbaijan relations

**Taline Ter Minassian**, historian, Inalco, associate researcher at the Centre for Studies on the Russian, Caucasian and Central European Worlds (EHESS)

**Gaïdz Minassian**, political scientist and journalist au Monde - Régis Genté, independent journalist based in Tbilisi (Georgia)

*from Armenia'*. It was not until *'the 1970s that we heard voices criticising Baku, which led to a political movement for the self-determination of the peoples of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, adding to the great movement of nationalities that was part of the break-up of the USSR'*.

Régis Genté, independent journalist, took up the rest of the chronology after the fall of the Soviet bloc in 1991, after which *"two principles of international law clashed: the right of people to self-determination and respect for territorial integrity'*. Unable to resolve the situation, the *'international community, which places these principles on an equal footing, allowed the situation to be settled de facto by force'*. Today, with *'the end of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, Azerbaijan will be able to take advantage of UN resolutions and leave the international community in a state of embarrassment'*. The journalist recalled the Armenian victory during the 1988-1994 war between the two countries, which saw *'Armenia take Nagorno-Karabakh as well as seven surrounding districts'*. One of the reasons for this operation was *'the importance of the 1915 genocide in people's memories and the historic opportunity to reclaim this land'*. After this victory, *'Armenia would live 'happy' for 30 years, while Azerbaijan, its larger neighbour with significant oil resources, patiently rearmed itself, to the point*

*that the Azerbaijani military budget ended up being worth the total budget of Armenia'* the journalist stressed. At the same time, Baku was *'developing a very anti-Armenian racist discourse'* while waiting to be able to launch the offensive *'planned since the 2000s' in 2020*. This *'44-day war'* saw Putin's Russia intervene as mediator in order to *'leave Nagorno-Karabakh out of the agreement'*. But as soon as the agreement was signed, *'Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan put pressure on Armenia'* then imposed a blockade on the region from December 2022, before attacking in September 2023 and obtaining the final concession from Yerevan.

Ethnographer and specialist in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, Anita Khachaturova looked back on the progress of the clashes between 2022 and 2023. After the defeat of 2020, Nagorno-Karabakh was *'surrounded, the districts were occupied and only the Lachin corridor, the lifeline to Armenia through which humanitarian aid passed, remained as an exit to the outside world'*. *'In a position*



Taline Ter-Minassian

## The Caucasus is on the outskirts of three empires and the empires don't have borders but fronts

Gaïdz Minassian

of strength with the conflict in Ukraine which occupied Russian forces' Baku decided to block the corridor while Moscow had to 'guarantee passage'. Quickly, 'the Azeri soldiers, under the supervision or laissez-faire of the Russians, set up a checkpoint and tightened the noose'. The expert specified that 'during the last three months, no one could pass through'. On 19 September, 'after ten months, faced with weakened forces and a starving population, the attack was launched and the enclave fell in 24 hours'. In addition to hundreds of military and civilian deaths, 'numerous testimonies of abuses and war crimes' were reported, preceding a massive exodus since '100,000 of the 120,000 inhabitants fled Nagorno-Karabakh, or 90% of the population'. Anita Khachaturova also stressed that President Aliyev has always expressed this 'intention of ethnic cleansing' without any reaction from international players.

Gaïdz Minassian endeavoured to demonstrate the international scale of this local conflict since 'the Caucasus is on the outskirts of three empires and the empires don't have borders but fronts'. The two countries are in fact between Turkey, Russia and Iran, 'heirs of three empires which still think of themselves as imperial powers, which each consist of one country and play out rivalries'. Whether it's Georgia and

Russia, Armenia and Turkey or Azerbaijan and Iran, each relationship maintained is 'equivocal' assures the political scientist. But the neo-imperial powers aren't the only ones looking closely at the Caucasus, he continued. European Union, United States, China and India have interests there. Europe is also eyeing 'Baku hydrocarbons', while the Americans seek to weaken Russia, and China and India to expand their zone of influence. 'Two approaches to resolving the conflict are on the table', explained Gaïdz Minassian: 'Western peace and Russian peace' but in both cases 'the blind spot remains Nagorno-Karabakh'. While Yerevan wants 'a peace of law, respecting territorial integrity and minorities', Baku advocates a 'peace of punishment to take revenge on 1994', he lamented, and 'the international community is still caught up in the war in Ukraine'.



Régis Genté

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Following this presentation, during the discussion with the public, an Armenian refugee from Nagorno-Karabakh who had arrived in France a year earlier asked to speak to describe her traumatic experience. In Armenian, the woman recounted her birth during the 1988-1994 war, her difficult childhood and the loss of her home in 2020 which forced her into exile. 'We survived by helping each other', she said. 'My grandparents told me that they had already experienced this, that it was a second genocide under the gaze of the international community', before showing photos of her family, survivors of this genocide who were still in Nagorno-Karabakh.



Watch the full debate on YouTube

DEBATE

## IRAQ: BEYOND THE WAR

29 September, 4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m., Azur Room



Feurat Alani, Zoubida Debbagh, Adél Bakawan and Nagham Hasan

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## A country and an identity to rebuild

While 2023 marks the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the American invasion of Iraq, taking stock of contemporary issues in Iraqi society seemed essential to Zoubida Debbagh, the moderator of this debate. The war and US occupation, justified by the lies of the Bush administration, left a failed Iraqi state, dysfunctional institutions and rampant corruption, she said.

The Franco-Iraqi sociologist, Adél Bakawan, first provided a summary of the thousand-year-old history of Iraq. The current Iraqi territory corresponds to Mesopotamia, he noted – the cradle of civilization, religion, writing and even the first constitution. When Baghdad was founded by the Abbasid dynasty in the 8th century, the city was as central as the American capital is today. The region was invaded and occupied by the Ottomans in the fol-

lowing centuries, becoming part of their empire until the arrival of the British during the First World War. The latter then founded the first modern Iraqi state, the Hashemite monarchy of Iraq. This would then be overthrown by the coup d'état of General Abdel Karim Kasseem in 1958, who proclaimed the Republic of Iraq and distanced himself from the pan-Arabism promoted by Egyptian leader Nasser. Coming to power a few years later, Saddam Hussein succeeded in building a strong Iraqi state, equipped with a robust social and educational system, dynamic economic infrastructures and a competent army, while consolidating a harsh dictatorial regime. However, the Iranian revolution of 1979 and the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988) completely destroyed the country, its infrastructure and its economy. The beginning of the end of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship began with the failed 1991 invasion of Kuwait.

MODERATOR:

**Zoubida Debbagh**, Meetings, debates and publications programme coordinator, Institut du Monde Arabe (IMA)

SPEAKERS:

**Feurat Alani**, reporter and director

**Adel Bakawan**, director of the French Research Centre on Iraq (CFRI)

**Nagham Hasan**, doctor, general director of the Hope Maker's Organisation for Women

He thought that the United States would stand aside, but they formed an international coalition to repel him.

### Iraqis have demonstrated every year since 2003

Feurat Alani

In 2003, the Americans decided to overthrow the Iraqi dictator, relying on lies that the Bush administration would only admit to after the fact: the possession of weapons of mass destruction and the links between Hussein and Al Qaeda. The figures put forward by the sociologist regarding the consequences of the war were unequivocal: in the 1990s, 49% of Iraqi doctors were women, while 80% of Iraqi women cannot work today; in the 1970s, 95% of the Iraqi population was literate while today 59% of them are illiterate. Current Iraqi society is completely at odds with corrupt elites. Daesh was able to emerge and prosper because of the American occupation and demographic growth, while the desertification of the country is ongoing. Iraq has become the territory of confrontation between the great powers, from Iran to Turkey and the Gulf States, not to



Zoubida Debbagh and Adel Bakawan

© Nicolas Broquedis

mention the presence of the Islamic State and the Kurdish armed forces.

The Franco-Iraqi journalist and director, Feurat Alani, looked back on the major demonstrations which swept across the country in 2019, triggered by the sheer precariousness of the population, continuous power cuts, the absence of running water and significant unemployment. Iraqis have demonstrated every year since 2003, he emphasised, but in 2019, it was the Shiite youth, in particular, who were taking to the streets to express their desire to rediscover an Iraqi identity and distance themselves from Iran. According to the journalist, the Americans have forcibly imposed new identities on Iraqis, who are now divided between Arabs, Kurds, Shiites, Sunnis, Muslims or Christians, thus destroying the notion of being Iraqi. As well as access to food and electricity, young Iraqis are now asking the government to return to



Watch the full debate on YouTube

this common identity. Although the movement has almost disappeared due to violent repression, these mentalities are still present in 2023. Iraq is a 'mosaic country' recalls Feurat Alani, united by its different components and histories, and must take up the challenge of reconstruction, both of its infrastructure and its identity.

### Of the 1.25 million Yazidis in the world, 700,000 are in Iraq

Nagham Hasan

The rise of Daesh in Iraq, facilitated by the American occupation, has had devastating consequences on the Yazidi ethnic minority, announced the moderator, as she gave the floor to Dr Nagham Hasan. The Yazidi gynaecologist explained that her people have been victims of 74 genocidal campaigns in their history, the last carried out by Islamic State in 2014. Of the 1.25 million Yazidis in the world, 700,000 are in Iraq, she went on to specify. Daesh, which has targeted them with numerous Islamist car bomb attacks since 2007, triggered a serious humanitarian catastrophe in 2014 by occupying the Yazidi region of Sinjar, executing more than 6,000 men and reducing 6,500 women and girls to sexual slavery. The doctor has worked with these women for nine years to ease their suffering. With the help of the UN and the German government, she was able to set up a medical centre for Yazidi survivors. These women have lost everything, she insisted, and today they live in squalid and unsanitary camps in Iraqi Kurdistan but the crimes of Daesh are still not punished and the Iraqi government refuses to recognise the term genocide.



Nagham Hasan

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In this system plagued by corruption, Feurat Alani believes that hope lies in the young Iraqi generation, who are proud and capable of demanding a rule of law, protection of Iraq's mosaic of identity and a strong constitution. Adel Bakawan reminded us that 'Iraqiness' is a political construction and that it can and must include the religious and ethnic micro-identities that make up Iraq's diversity. 'To establish a new social contract, we must support Iraq and not invade it,' he added, 'and remain optimistic.' 'The gates of hell opened in the Middle East in 2003 with the American invasion,' insisted Feurat Alani, 'and it is in the interest of the international community to understand this, because without closing them, the world will never be at peace.' Rather than stabilising Iraq in order to do business there, which seems to be the current priority of the international community, it is absolutely necessary to help open a dialogue between all the components of Iraqi society, concludes Adel Bakawan.

# ACTING FROM EXILE

Friday 29 September, 4:30 p.m. – 6 p.m., Nacre Room



Marc Semo, Ahmet Insel and Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean

## The diversity of diasporas

The academic, Ahmet Insel, introduced the discussion on the modalities of action in exile, specifying that *'we must not confuse economic migrants and exiles, as the latter are created for socio-political reasons'*. Through the examples of Russia, Turkey and the Kurds, the debate must shed light on the issues facing exiled populations, *'the theoretical means of action and real practices, as well as incorporation into host societies'*.

Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean started out by addressing the case of Russia, *'where we have the impression that nothing is happening, that people are passive, accept or support the current situation'* but affirms that there is *'also a Russia that resists, abroad or in prison like Alexei Navalny or Ilya Yashin'*. If these *'networks of Russians who are resisting the war are not visible, it is because the regime is doing everything towards this end'* explained the Russia specialist. The situation is very difficult in Russia today, there are *'more than 20,000 cases*

*of detention for protest against the war in Ukraine'* because the targets are *'those who seek to escape mobilisation, those who help Ukrainian refugees and artists'*. The number of Russian exiles since 24 February 2022, which is difficult to establish with any certainty, due to *'rapid departures, in less than 24 hours, often to visa-free countries, with returns to Russia shortly afterwards, due to a lack of resources'*, is estimated at *'between 300,000 and 1.5 million'*. All of these people form *'a patchwork of exiles because not all of them are politically engaged, some simply believe they no longer have*

### MODERATOR:

**Marc Semo**, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the 'ideas-debates' pages, Le Monde

### SPEAKERS:

**Hamit Bozarslan**, Historian and political scientist

**Ahmet Insel**, Academic, author of *La nouvelle Turquie d'Erdoğan*

**Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean**, Director of the IFRI Russia-Eurasia Center

*a future in Russia'*. As for the *'hard core of opponents who carry the anti-Putin, anti-dictatorship and anti-war message'* life is very difficult, explained Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean. Between the problems of *'residence permits and access to money because of sanctions'*, the opponents must also find solutions *'to remain legitimate and to speak for those who are inside'*. In the current context, *'it's up to the diaspora to find the right words, to do the information work'* and *'to show that there is another Russia, for peace and democracy'*.

After pointing out that a *'diaspora is formed over a long time, with moments of rupture and reconfiguration'*, Hamit Bozarslan returned to the complex history of the Kurdish people, *'exiled since the 1930s and 40s'*. Although a Kurdish intellectual community was formed in Europe as of the 1960s, *'the 1971 coup in Turkey heralded another wave of departures'* explained the historian. But the decisive turning point was the year 1979, he explained, the date when *'our world was refounded'*. The examples are legion: *'end of Maoism in China, first victory of neoliberalism with the election of Thatcher, Iranian revolution, intensification of the Lebanese war, Soviet invasion of Afghanistan'*. From the start of the Iranian Islamic regime, Ayatollah Khomeini launched a *'jihad against the Kurds'*, and they were victims of *'chemical bombs at the end of the Iran-Iraq war, which left more than 100,000 dead'*. Following the 1980 coup, the Kurdish language was banned in Turkey, repression ensued and *'hundreds of thousands of Kurds had to flee'*. Also coming from Syria, Iraq and Lebanon, the very diverse Kurdish populations then *'transformed Europe into a Kurdish cultural capital'*, giving rise to Kurdish literature and cinema, which were non-existent because they were censored everywhere. With the establishment of institutions in Paris, London or Stockholm, *'the diaspora also became the political capital, the focus of organisations that want to escape state control'* and



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***If these 'networks of Russians who are resisting the war are not visible, it is because the regime is doing everything towards this end***

Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean

would seek *'to break the absolute silence of crimes against the Kurds and to raise awareness among international public opinion'*. Hamit Bozarslan ended his speech by specifying that *'if we have been talking about the Kurdish diaspora since the 1980s, it has only been effective since the years 2000–2010 since a diaspora requires generational differentiation, internal heterogeneity and diversity of classes and genders'*.

Ahmet Insel, in turn, detailed the conditions of exile of Turkish citizens, particularly since the two putsches of 1971 and 1980, which caused *'a massive exile of politically persecuted people'*. However, the exiles of this generation *'had the prospect of rapid return to Turkey, as soon as political and legal conditions permitted'*.

At the same time, the Alevi population, a heterodox branch of Shiite Islam in the country, formed *'an exile of people persecuted socially and not legally'* in the direction of Europe. However, the most significant exiles have taken place since 2016, *'following the failed coup d'état against the Erdoğan regime,'* explained the Turkish economist. These exiles fled *'for socio-cultural reasons'*, when faced with an *'Islamist-nationalist autocratic power that has become unlivable'*. The Turkish president and his party are waging *'a devious cultural war, to make Sunni Islam dominate in the public space and form a pious and docile youth'*, which is push-

**Diasporic nationalism is often exacerbated by the fear of a loss of socio-religious identity**

Ahmet Insel

ing all *'secular citizens on both the right and the left to leave the country, as they refuse to send their children to a public school system that imposes strong religious instruction'*. These exiles *'who left without being chased'* can therefore maintain links with Turkey, returning there regularly because *'they do not engage in political activism and want to integrate sustainably into their host country'*. Paradoxically, the European Turkish diaspora still remains *'the majority pro-Erdoğan'*, being largely composed of *'immigrant workers from the 1970s with close ties to their hometown'*. Generally speaking, explained Ahmet Insel, *'diasporic nationalism is often ex-*



Watch the full debate on YouTube



Hamit Bozarslan

*acerbated by the fear of a loss of socio-religious identity'*. As a result, two Turkish diasporas *'that are totally divided between pro- and anti-Erdoğan and do not speak to each other'* live in Europe today.

Asked about the fear of people who have fled a repressive regime, Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean explained that only active political leaders have something to fear. For example, the journalist Marina Ovsianikova, who publicly opposed the war in Ukraine, now lives under close protection in France. For less identified exiles, *'the problem arises when we want to return to Russia, she explains, 'the repressive laws are very strict and are aimed at scaring everyone.'*

Ahmet Insel concluded the debate by indicating that, with the exception of the president's personal enemies, Turkish exiles do not live 'in fear of seeing their loved ones hunted', as they are protected by 'Turkish ambivalence, which considers the exiles as traitors but not those close to them as allies through contamination, like the Nazi and Stalinist regimes did'.



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SCREENING

# I SHALL NOT HATE

28 september - 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 a.m. - Auditorium



Izzeldin Abuelaish

© Nicolas Broquedis

The documentary is adapted from Palestinian-Canadian professor Izzeldin Abuelaish's book, *I Shall Not Hate*, and recounts the loss of his three daughters, Bessan, Mayar and Aya, and their cousin Noor following the Israeli bombings on 16 January 2009. This suffering gave rise to his commitment to forgiveness and an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The film raises numerous questions about the notions of resilience, justice and peace.

Alex Szalat, founder of Doc's up Fund, an association dedicated to screening human rights documentaries, thanked his partners, The Normandy Region and in particular the World forum Normandy for Peace.

*'This film is a perfect example of the projects we support'*, he said, before asking Israeli director, Tal Barda, how she came across the story and decided to make a

#### MODERATOR

**Alex Szalat**, writer-director, Doc's up Fund

#### SPEAKERS

**Izzeldin Abuelaish**, Palestinian-Canadian doctor, human rights activist and author of the book 'I shall not hate'

**Tal Barda**, director of Tal Barda Films

film about it. Tal Barda explained that this story was the very reason why she wanted to make films, even though she knew that it would be complicated for an Israeli woman to do so. Tal Barda did not want to apply for a subsidy for this film so that it would be as objective as possible. She initially thought of co-directing the film with a Palestinian, but the project did not come to fruition. So, she turned to a Palestinian team. As the territory of Gaza was too dangerous for her, discussions were held



Izzeldin Abuelaish

via a French number, and many members of the technical team did not want their names added to the film's credits for fear of reprisals from Hamas.

According to Alex Szalat, Dr Izzeldin Abuelaish would like to take his complaint about the death of his three daughters to the international courts, as this is unlikely to succeed in Israel, which currently refuses to accept responsibility for its mistake. The director confirms that the aim of this documentary is to raise public awareness and have an impact everywhere, particularly in schools, festivals and synagogues, to help Dr Izzeldin Abuelaish get this crime recognised. 'He lives for this, for the memory of his daughters, and he'll continue to the end and we'll follow him. I think he'll get an apology from the Israeli government', she anticipated. Dr Izzeldin Abuelaish's commitment, if only to the education of girls and women in Arab countries, is very important.

Pupils and spectators were the first to see the film, which the director admitted is not yet fully edited. Versions in Arabic and other languages will also be made available so that it can be shown everywhere, including Gaza. When asked by an audience member about solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Tal Barda said she

***I distinguish between the Israeli government and the Israeli people. We have a far-right minister, but half the population is against him***

Tal Barda

has none, and is not very optimistic about the future of her country. 'I distinguish between the Israeli government and the Israeli people. We have a far-right minister, but half the population is against him [...] Hamas won the elections with a narrow majority. I think it's a question of education that will take 20 or 30 years; it's the children who grow up in the camps who see the Israelis as enemies.' Alex Szalat added that the extremists on both sides are not helping to change things. In conclusion, Tal Barda believes that the situation in Israel is so difficult that she has no intention of making another film about the conflict with Palestine.

# UPROOTED

28 September 2023 from 2.00 p.m. to 3.30 p.m., Gold Room



Emmanuel Davidenkoff, Olga Prud'homme Farges and Pramila Patten

In September 2017, the Rohingya minority, who lives mainly in the northern Arakan State in western Burma, was the victim of ethnic cleansing and was forced to flee to the Kutupalong camp in Bangladesh. Today, one million refugees live in this 13 square kilometre camp. It is the most densely populated camp in the world. Filmmaker Olga Prud'homme Farges went there to interview women who had been abused, in most cases raped, with complete impunity. The film tells their stories

#### MODERATOR

**Emmanuel Davidenkoff**, Deputy Editorial Director – Le Monde – President of the Prix Liberté 2020 Jury

#### SPEAKERS

**Pramila Patten**, United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict

**Olga Prud'homme Farges**, Documentary filmmaker, journalist and author

and gives a voice to these women who are otherwise ignored.

After the screening, Olga Prud'homme Farges began by talking about a multi-faceted reality. She revisited the term '**Muslim minority**' and explains that the reality is more complex, since the Rohingya are not all Muslims. In particular, she interviewed Hindu Rohingya.

What's more, the causes of the ethnic cleansing are mixed: '**Burma needed to clear the Arakan region in the north-west because they discovered hydrocarbons there to exploit, as well as build a pipeline to take oil from the Arabian Peninsula to China that was inaugurated six months after the aggression that began in August 2017. Within three months, the entire population had to flee to neighbouring Bang-**

ladesh and cross the border. The army arrived, burning everything.'

Although she wanted to address the persecution of the Rohingya in her film, the director did not expect so many women and children to want to speak so freely. 'This film is a bit of a serendipity story', she explained. While she was looking for children and their families in the camp to hear what they had to say, she had not anticipated that a 9-year-old child would want to testify about the rape she had suffered, nor that, the next day, ten women would also want to speak out, demonstrating that no one in the camp cares about them. Emmanuel Davidenkoff explained that sexual violence is often hushed up.



Olga Prud'homme Farges and Pramila Patten

ones demanding that the Rohingya return home. Pramila Patten added that the situation has deteriorated even more since the documentary was filmed. These people are still living in temporary shelters made of bamboo and tarpaulins, and the Bangladeshi government is systematically refusing to renovate and reinforce the camps. Emmanuel Davidenkoff pointed out that Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in the world. Citing a report in Le Monde, published a few months ago, he explained that these camps are absolute lawless zones, where from 4pm onwards, NGOs are no longer allowed to intervene and must leave the camp until the following morning. 'Even in the Far West they must have had more laws than that', he concluded.

At the end of the sequence, the audience, mainly young people, were invited to ask questions. 'If there are a million refugees in the camps, what's the total Rohingya population?' asked one of them. Pramila Patten replied that she didn't have any precise figures, but in Bangladesh the government estimates that there are 1.2 million. To conclude, Olga Prud'homme Farges added that most of the community has fled Arakan, around 80%.

**Burma is home to 126 different ethnic groups, but if there's one stateless community, it's this one**

Pramila Patten about the Rohingyas

Pramila Patten, the United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, is very familiar with the case of the Rohingya, an issue she has been tackling since 2002. She explained this silence about the violence suffered in part by the largely unfavourable political situation, particularly in 1982, when a law was passed abolishing their nationality and therefore their rights. 'Burma is home to 126 different ethnic groups, but if there's one stateless community, it's this one', she said. Before 2017, there was an outpouring of solidarity and compassion from the Bangladeshi people, but now they are the

# BLUE ISLAND

29 September 2023, 10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Auditorium



Serge Gordey

## To be Hong Kongese, to be free and Chinese?

Serge Gordey introduced the screening of the documentary film directed by Chan Tzewoon, entitled *Blue Island* (2022), without revealing the subject, preferring to highlight the Normandy region's partnership with the Docs Up Fund agency which produces 'films that come from countries where the question of human rights is being raised, where filmmakers are taking it up.' Before launching the film, the producer specified that it is 'not a report or a classic film but a particular way of seeing the world, an author's view which takes the time to reflect, which tells us much more than the images that flood us every day.'

After watching the film, Philippe Le Corre said that 'this documentary seems to reflect three things: the complexity of the

feeling of belonging to Hong Kong, between the relationship with China and the territory of Hong Kong; the difficulty of dealing with the Chinese Communist Party, illustrated by the way the production mixed actors and real people; and the ambivalence of being both a spectator and a player in history.' The researcher then briefly reviewed 'the complicated history of the Rock, which was a British colony

MODERATOR:

**Philippe Le Corre**, researcher at the Asia Society Policy Institute and geopolitical advisor, Asia Society France

SPEAKERS:

**Serge Gordey**, Producer, Docs Up Fund  
**Nathan Law**, Hong Kong democratic opponent



© Pierre Galliot - Région Normandie

Serge Gordey

Asked about the question of Hong Kong's identity, the dissident explained that *'it is a very important, unique and crucial component for the resistance because it reflects values and an understanding of History in the face of the orthodox narrative of Beijing and the authoritarianism of Xi Jinping.* He added that *'it's a difficult identity to define, but we resist when China tries to erase it.'*

***These images aren't allowed to be shown there because of the heavy censorship***

Nathan Law

for 150 years before being handed back to the People's Republic of China in 1997.' But while *'the contract stipulated that Hong Kong would remain autonomous until 2047, China broke it by stepping up its repression of this special region, most recently in 2019-2020.'*

Nathan Law, leader of the 2014 Umbrella Movement and now in exile, is an embodiment of Hong Kong's troubling identity, caught between a desire for freedom and Chinese origins. The activist, who explained that *'a lot of films have been shot in Hong Kong to talk about the 2019-2020 protests but these images aren't allowed to be shown there because of the heavy censorship'*, admitted that *'watching this film was very difficult.'* Indeed, *'it brings back traumas from the events of 2014 and 2019; I witnessed terrible acts, friends were injured and arrested.'* Fortunately, *'this film shows important people from the resistance movement, it's important, it helps to understand the situation.'* Nathan Law asked the audience: *'What would you have done if you were from Hong Kong?' 'These films are essential for understanding the sacrifices made by our people'*, he said.

Having left Hong Kong in 2020 because he knew he was *'wanted and risked several decades in prison'*, Nathan Law reflected on the difficulty of resisting China from abroad *'because you have to mobilise crowds locally.'* *More and more people have left the country in the last three years, almost 20,000 for political reasons,* he lamented. *The United Kingdom is helping Hong Kong refugees and we can organise events to ensure that China does not succeed in erasing our history.'* Before concluding: *'Even if the situation isn't going in the right direction because so many people are in prison, I remain optimistic; there's no point in despairing, you have to remain courageous even if 9 out of 10 social movements are going to fail.'*

## THE NORMANDY INDEX: UNDERSTANDING THREATS TO PRESERVE PEACE

28 September 2023, 10.30 a.m. – 12 p.m., Azur Room



Branislav Staniček, Elena Lazarou, Bénédicte Feuger, Valérie Drezet-Humez and Salomé Limery

© Nicolas Broquedis

### Multiple threats, universal peace

The three moderators working for Europe Direct, co-organisers with the European Parliament of this youth event based on the Normandy Peace Index, a tool *'used to*

*guide the actions of the European Union, to decipher what's happening in Ukraine and to understand the threats impacting states and populations'*, introduced the discussion in the form of an interactive workshop, giving the high-school students in the room the opportunity to express their opinions via a live digital quiz.

#### MODERATORS:

**Ophélie Bouin**, Head of Communications CRIJ Normandie

**Salomé Limery**, European Projects Officer Maison de l'Europe de l'Eure

**Bénédicte Feuger**, Head of the Carrefour Rural Européen des Acteurs Normands (CREAN)

#### SPEAKERS:

**Valérie Drezet-Humez**, Head of the European Commission Representation in France

**Elena Lazarou**, Head of the External Policy Unit, European Parliament Research Department

**Branislav Staniček**, European Parliament External Policy Researcher

With 78% of them admitting to being unfamiliar with the index, its creator Elena Lazarou set out to explain this indicator *'which measures threats to peace and democracy around the world.'* *'It was launched in 2018 thanks to an agreement between the Normandy Region, the European Parliament and the Institute for Economics and Peace in Sydney'*, she continued, *'it's an index based on the European definition of peace found in the 2016 EU*



Bénédicte Feuger, Valérie Drezet-Humez and Salomé Limery

© Nicolas Broquedis

## The question of enlargement makes it possible to renew the importance of the democratic fundamentals of the EU

Valérie Drezet-Humez

*Global Strategy:* The strategy sees 'peace and security as holistic concepts' and therefore includes eleven main criteria: 'Violent conflict, terrorism, crime, cybersecurity, state fragility, energy insecurity, economic crises, the democratic process, weapons of mass destruction, disinformation and global warming.' These elements are evaluated in 136 countries in addition to the EU (counted alone) 'every year and available to all online.'

Asked about the position of the EU – 7<sup>th</sup> in 2023, while it was in 11<sup>th</sup> place in previous years – the European researcher noted that 'it isn't just a question of war, as the improvement is explained by the positive trend among European States on

energy, climate and cybersecurity issues among others'. In response to the public's surprise at this improvement in light of the rise of the far right on the Old Continent, Branislav Staniček pointed out that 'the index doesn't look at political trends, but rather at fundamental freedoms and economic and social reforms.' The European researcher also noted that 'the top 5, robust democracies and economies, and the flop 5, unfortunately, remain static in the rankings.'

Branislav Staniček then looked back at the trends of the indices for Russia and Ukraine since the tool was created in 2019. He noted 'slight improvements at the beginning. Russia had stabilised its budget with the increase in the price of raw materials, while Ukraine, with the election of Zelensky, promised to manage the situation in the East of the country.' Both countries have 'obviously fallen sharply, especially Ukraine, which has lost 38% of its GDP, 20% of its territory and nearly 7 million inhabitants as a result of the mass exodus that followed the invasion.'

When asked about the apparent contradiction of a Europe at peace but actively supporting the Ukrainian war effort, Valérie Drezet-Humez explained that 'the Russian invasion is a violation of international law and the EU is responding within the legal framework of that law by helping to rebuild peace through this unprecedented strategic aid.' Faced with the 'myth of European disunity', the international diplomat recalls 'the eleven unanimous votes of the 27 to impose economic sanctions on Russia', before emphasising that 'the question of enlargement makes it possible to renew the importance of the democratic fundamentals of the EU' and to call on the young people in the room 'to inform themselves so they can have all the facts in mind as the 2024 European elections approach.'



Watch the full debate on YouTube

YOUTH SEQUENCE

# THE COMMITMENT OF WOMEN TO A MORE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

28 September 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. – Nacre Room



Zoé De Mones et Ludivine Delaite

© Eric Biernacki - Région Normandie

## Women must decide for themselves

To open the debate, moderator Lauriane Clément asked Nicole Ameline, President of the International Institute for Human Rights and Peace, to take stock of the inequalities suffered by women around the world. She pointed out that only 25% of the world's parliamentarians are women. This means that they have little say in the decisions that affect them, and yet women are among the main people affected by climate change. Nicole Ameline explained that her role at the UN is precisely to drive this change and create a requirement for parity everywhere. 'Women must be able to decide for themselves, that's the first freedom', she explained.

MODERATOR:

**Lauriane Clément**, head of the news section for Phosphore magazine

SPEAKERS:

**Nicole Ameline**, President of the International Institute for Human Rights and Peace, member of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

**Zoé De Mones**, high school student, participant in the ecHo programme

**Ludivine Delaite**, former member of the Conseil Régional des Jeunes de Normandie who helped formulate the project on training eco-delegates

**Delphine O**, ambassador, Secretary General of the Forum génération égalité.



Delphine O

***We defend what is already recognised, so much so that we are unable to fight for new rights***

Delphine O

whether or not she was optimistic about women's rights. Like the audience invited to answer the same question, she expressed perplexity. In France, women's rights are recent and we still have to fight to preserve them. The Secretary General of the Forum, *génération égalité*, pointed out that we need to protect these rights, which are often under attack all over the world. Her job as a diplomat, she explained, is to promote these advances internationally. *'I also negotiate and coordinate with other countries to remove discriminatory laws and help women gain access to education and entrepreneurship'*, she maintained. She explained that in recent years, all the *'no defeats'* on this issue have been victories. *'We defend what is already recognised, so much so that we are unable to fight for new rights'*, she laments.

Between speeches, the students present were encouraged to take part in the debate by answering questions on gender inequality. In particular, they were asked about the date of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, written in 1979, and which countries they thought were the most advanced in terms of women's rights.

Nicole Ameline went on to explain that Europe, once a leader in women's freedoms, is now stagnating. Some countries are even going backwards by questioning the right to abortion. She explained that every year, the UN invites thirty countries to verify their application of the 1979 treaty. Laws on violence, education and the status of women are all scrutinised to ensure that real progress is being made. A roadmap is then drawn up for the next four years.

Delphine O, the youngest ambassador in French history, then joined the panel. Moderator, Lauriane Clément, asked her

The debate ended with contributions from Zoé De Mones, a secondary school pupil and participant in the EcHo programme, which aims to raise young people's awareness of sustainable development objectives, and Ludivine Delaite, a former member of the Normandy Regional Youth Council (CRJ). They presented their work and their commitment before stressing the importance of young people taking up all issues relating to gender equality.



Watch the full debate on YouTube

## MUSIC AND RESISTANCE

28 September 2023 | 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 pm -| Auditorium



Arnaud Marzorati, Anthony Millet and Déborah Livet

### When music becomes a saviour

**Accompanied by the musical ensemble, Les Lunaisiens, Déborah Livet, a researcher in music history, presented a set of texts and songs from resistance fighters now preserved in various museums and municipal archives, in order to raise public awareness of the use of art and music as a means of free expression in times of war.**

Déborah Livet introduced her talk by recalling that when Germany invaded Poland on 3 September 1939, the French had only one weapon: satire. Thanks to the meticulous work of composers like Paul Arma, more than 1,300 songs and poems from the Second World War have come down to us, bearing the scars of resistance under the occupation. Arma, a Hungarian Jew, managed to flee the Nazi regime on 16 March 1933, first to Switzerland and then to France. With his wife Edmée, he collected songs, now preserved in the archives of the town of Thionville. *'Because we sang during those tragic years, and we wrote, to*

*mock, to wait, to evoke, to explain, to forget'* explained Déborah Livet. In this way, folklore was born out of fear and human effort, misery and love, pain and hope. The Doctor of Music History was accompanied by two musicians, Arnaud Marzorati and Anthony Millet, who gave a poignant performance of songs by members of the Resistance, accompanied by an accordion. Déborah Livet then evoked the title of a poster preserved at the Hauts de France Coupole Museum, entitled *'L'homme libre'* with this inscription: *'We are against dictatorship and make no distinction between that of Berlin and that of Vichy, that of*

**Let's put an end to the resistance that cries, because the real one is the one that sings like the future**

Déborah Livet

Rome and that of Madrid or even Moscow.' Déborah Livet then added: *'Let's put an end to the resistance that cries, because the real one is the one that sings like the future. Like a morning of sunshine, like the coming youth, like a free and blue sky. True resistance is one that sings of the men of tomorrow.'*

## A recipe book to give people hope

In 1943, the Nazis decided to set up a secret organisation on the island of Schlei-munde in the Baltic Sea to create a secret weapon, consisting of huge 13-metre torpedoes. In August 1943, the Royal Air Force landed on the island and bombed part of it. The Nazis then recreated a factory at Dora, which was a labour and extermination camp. The prisoners had to live there with almost no water, without seeing the

MODERATOR:

**Déborah Livet**, Doctor of music history and musicology from Paris Sorbonne University.

SPEAKERS:

**Arnaud Marzorati**, a musician with the Compagnie Les Lunaisiens

**Anthony Millet**, a musician with the Compagnie Les Lunaisiens

sun and on a meagre ration of food. From testimonies preserved in Caen, at the Division des archives des victimes des conflits contemporains (DAVCC), we now know that 10% of the prisoners slept without blankets, for no more than 5 hours a night, that water was 1 km from the dormitory, that their underwear could only be changed every 4 to 7 weeks and that a small piece of soap had to suffice for several weeks. *'At Dora,'* said Déborah Livet, *'they were entitled to coffee in the morning, soup and the same thing in the evening.'* One of the inmates had a book of recipes left behind to give himself hope. Among them were those for clafouti, fish soup and macaroni with jam.



Watch the full debate on YouTube

The texts performed by the duo came from the archives of the town of Thionville and had been found in Dora. Others came from the Hauts de France Coupole Museum and the Shoah Memorial. *'We wanted to show you how the French, the maquisards, the partisans, the prisoners resisted in their own way, through music and poetry.'* This highlight for young people ended with a discussion among high school students. One of them wondered about the melodies, which were often reminiscent of well-known tunes, such as the Internationale, a revolutionary song written during the repression of the Paris Commune in 1871. Musician Arnaud Marzorati then replied that for these resistance fighters, using a very well-known and universal tune in order to copy original and committed lyrics was a way of uniting and asserting their political choice. *'If you were singing melodies in the street, even just an excerpt while whistling the Internationale, for example, and a troupe passed by, you'd be imprisoned, tortured. And that still happens, it's human barbarity'* he explained.

YOUTH SEQUENCE

# IRAN: THE DEATH PENALTY AS A TOOL OF POLITICAL REPRESSION

28 September, 2p.m. – 3.30p.m., Azur Room



Taimoor Aliassi, Nicolas Perron and Shole Pakravan

© Pierre Galliot - Région Normandie

## Execution to terrorise

*'Iran is the country that uses the death penalty the most and is one of the last to publicly implement it as a form of repression'*, announced Nicolas Perron to begin the conversation.

The screening of a short film documenting the consequences of Mahsa Amini's death in September 2022 preceded Taimoor Aliassi's talk, briefly re-explaining the origins of the Women, Life, Freedom movement in Iran and the revolution that has been sweeping through the country ever since. The Iranian state *'uses repression to control the population and consequently carries out hundreds of executions every year, all the more so when it feels threatened.'* He then returned to the ethnic aspect of the repression in Iran, which directly targets Kurds and Baluchis, *'discrimination that dates back to 1979, when Khomeini made people choose by referen-*

**Iranian law is based on Islamic Sharia law, which favours men in all areas**

Taimoor Aliassi

*dum between a monarchical regime and an Islamic regime; the Kurds opposed it, triggering a jihad against the population.'* The Iranian activist also pointed out that *'women from these minorities are subjected to this discrimination even more violently.'* If women suffer particularly in Iran, it is *'because Iranian law is based on*

Islamic Sharia law, which favours men in all areas.' For example, 'during a stoning, while men are only buried up to their pelvis, women are buried up to their necks before fifty stones are thrown at them, drastically reducing their chances of survival.'

**I'm fighting so that this doesn't happen to other families, so that Iran recognises the death penalty as a violent act against humanity**

Shole Pakravan

After this analysis, Shole Pakravan returned to her tragic personal journey, which led her to oppose the Ayatollahs' regime. Indeed, 'in 2007, her daughter was raped and, while defending herself with a knife, killed her attacker.' Unfortunately, 'it was discovered that the man in question was a member of the Revolutionary Guards', so 'the regime supported his family and demanded Al-Qisäs, i.e., retaliation in kind.' 'After seven years of fighting', she continued, 'my daughter was executed.' After that, 'I didn't want to live anymore' but fortunately, 'a woman who had lost her son came to see me and helped me heal.' 'Thanks to her', said Reyhaneh Jabbari's mother, 'we met other be-



Watch the full debate on YouTube

MODERATOR:

**Nicolas Perron**, Director of Programmes, Ensemble contre la Peine de Mort (Ensemble against the Death Penalty)

SPEAKERS:

**Taimoor Aliassi**, Executive Director and Representative to the United Nations of the Kurdistan Human Rights Association - Geneva (KMMK-G)

**Shole Pakravan**, Iranian activist, mother of Reyhaneh Jabbari, sentenced to death and executed for the murder of her alleged rapist

reaved mothers and I told myself that my daughter wouldn't have wanted me to go under, so I picked myself up and found a reason to live.' Agreeing with the theme of the discussion, she stated that 'the death penalty is no normal punishment because it punishes the family of the condemned person forever.' In addition, 'before being executed, prisoners are in isolation, and the family is in the dark; personally I was becoming paranoid, I saw my daughter everywhere in the street.' Today, 'I'm fighting so that this doesn't happen to other families, so that Iran recognises the death penalty as a violent act against humanity.'

Pointing to the title of the documentary – *Seven Winters in Tehran* (2023) – which tells the story of Shole Pakravan's fight to free her daughter, the moderator invited the Iranian to describe the workings of Al-Qisäs. The law, which has been in force since the arrival of the mullahs in 1991, gives families the right to 'demand reparation through blood, i.e., the death penalty.' 'Sometimes it's possible to make a deal with the family by paying them', she continued, 'but in my case, they were rich and demanded this revenge.' This law of retaliation 'is just a law of hatred and blood', asserted Shole Pakravan. She insisted that 'this tool is used to repress', adding that she 'has hope in the new generation fighting for its abolition, mobilising in the streets and on social networks.' The Iranian activist ended this discussion by saying that 'the situation is becoming radicalised; the regime is determined to repress the youth but the youth are determined to change the regime.'

## AT THE HEART OF THE CONFLICT: THOSE COMMITTED TO PEACE IN AFRICA

29 September, 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m., Gold Room



Drissa Traoré, Binta Sidibe-Gascon, Ousmane Ndiaye, Niagalé Bagayoko and François Hericher

### Defending human rights, without distinction

'How do you perceive the role of clichés in conflicts?' asked Ousmane Ndiaye to kick off the discussions. Niagalé Bagayoko noted that the force of communitarianism is one of the main levers manipulated by those involved in conflicts in Africa. She cited the example of the Rwandan genocide, which claimed almost a million lives in 1994. The massacre was made possible by the Hutu community's use of media tools, such as Radio télévision Libre des Mille Collines, to call for the murder of the Tutsis.

How can such a tragedy be explained? 'In Africa, there are very homogeneous communities, which can be explained by the existence of highly compartmentalised dynamics, based on a caste logic. Lifestyles and occupations, such as farming and herding, have been perpetuated over the centuries, leading to a number of painful confrontations', explained Binta

Sidibe-Gascon. These dynamics are now being revived. The Fulani, who are mainly herders, are now targeted on the basis of the blue colour of their clothing, their physical features or their behaviour. 'In a Sahelian region that is plagued by armed groups and terrorist organisations, there is a facial prejudice that identifies the Fulani as terrorists, which in turn leads to a call to get rid of them. The community's civilians, targeted by the various armed groups and armies of the Sahelian countries, are paying a heavy price', warned the vice-president of the Kisal Observatory ('protection' in Fulani). The organisation works to protect civilians suffering this type of discrimination in the Sahel, whatever their community.

In these conflicts, the role of NGOs in defending human rights is vital, as they take the place of weakened states by providing

Moderator:

**Ousmane Ndiaye**, Africa Editor-in-Chief and former Sahel correspondent at TV5 Monde

Speakers:

**Binta Sidibe-Gascon**, Vice-President of the Kisal Observatory

**Niagalé Bagayoko**, President of the African Security Sector Network

**Drissa Traoré**, Head of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) in the Sahel

**François Hericher**, Director of Security and Safety at the NGO, Acted

assistance to the people. 'We intervene in areas that are sometimes difficult to access, providing emergency responses: we distribute food aid and blankets, and we build wells. We provide basic education and vocational training. We also work on mediation and conciliation, to reduce tensions between communities', explains François Hericher.

Having set the scene, Ousmane Ndiaye asked the speakers to explain the reasons for their humanitarian commitment. Binta Sidibe-Gascon, who was born in a Sahelian village in Burkina Faso and lives in France, wanted to speak on behalf of people working in the field. Drissa Traoré believes that a human rights defender is committed to helping others at all costs, without counting their working hours, and sometimes risking their own life, because the risk of being imprisoned, taken hostage or even killed is very real.



Watch  
the full  
debate on  
YouTube

As an academic, Niagalé Bagayoko has taken a theoretical approach to these conflicts, focusing on peace studies\*. These approaches take a different view of human security from the traditional one, where security is often synonymous with the use of military

means. But this latter vision provides only partial solutions to conflicts. 'We need a much broader approach, one that focuses on people and not just states. It was while making this remark that I met peace activists. That's when I realised that I could contribute to advancing these causes by sharing knowledge and disseminating detailed information', said the researcher.

### **My involvement is bound by a refusal to stand idly by**

François Hericher

François Hericher discovered the world of humanitarian aid while working as a civil engineer in Chad, before joining Acted to rebuild houses that had been demolished in the Central African Republic following the conflict that broke out between Selekas and anti-Balakas in 2013. This assignment eventually led him to take on a mediation role to help the various communities to coexist once again. 'My involvement is bound by a refusal to stand idly by,' he confided.

Humanitarian action is highly complex because it has to take account of the many players on the ground. 'We can't do our work without the agreement of governments', warned Drissa Traoré. 'That's why we lobby national and international decision-makers, such as the African Union, to

Peace studies\* = Peace studies is a sociological discipline that aims to provide an intellectual framework for finding non-violent solutions to national or global conflicts.

try and influence practices. But our action sometimes gives rise to misunderstandings and even tensions, because governments may choose to defend themselves when we expose abuses committed by the defence and security forces.'

### **Humanitarian workers are sometimes taken to task when we try to negotiate access to certain areas**

François Hericher

Binta Sidibe-Gascon noted that the recent coups d'état in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger have led to a narrowing of civic space. 'Our colleagues are being pressured and intimidated into self-censorship, sometimes to the point of kidnapping', she warned. 'Humanitarian workers are sometimes taken to task when we try to negotiate access to certain areas. Especially as, in recent years, we've been trying to get as close as possible to conflict zones', added François Berricher. This can lead to arrests and even detentions, even though, in theory, international principles such as the Geneva Convention protect humanitarian operators.

'The principles of international humanitarian law must be taught to all military personnel in order to spare civilians and non-combatants, whether they are pris-



Drissa Traoré

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ners of war, doctors or humanitarian workers', urged Drissa Traoré. Nevertheless, conflicts in the Sahel involve not only regular armies but also other armed groups. NGOs are, consequently, forced to cooperate with the various factions, which makes their task all the more complicated.

For Binta Sidibe-Gascon, we need to stop trying to resolve conflicts at all costs by 'going all military', whether through the intervention of foreign armies, mercenary groups or the distribution of arms to civilians, which only serves to inflame the situation. This is why the Citizens' Coalition for the Sahel, which brings together various civil society organisations in the region, is trying to develop a strategy based on four pillars: protecting civilians, tackling the root causes of conflicts, allowing humanitarian access to the various areas of operation and fighting impunity for abuses committed, which only drive more civilians into the arms of armed groups. 'It really is time to listen to the distress of these different communities and take action', concludes Binta Sidibe-Gascon.

# INDIGENOUS RIGHTS: STORIES OF PEOPLE'S RESISTANCE

29 September 2023, 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m., Azur Room



Leslie Cloud, Brijlal Chaudhari, Gert-Peter Bruch and Natalya Saprunova

## Indigenous peoples, resisting to exist

*'There are more than 476 million Indigenous people, spread across 90 countries or 6% of the world's population, belonging to more than 5,000 different peoples and speaking nearly 4,000 languages,'* announces Leslie Cloud in her introduction to

the debate. While indigenous peoples have struggled for centuries to survive, they have been excluded by the international community during the development of international legal norms, and have suffered violent policies of assimilation and the dispossession aimed at their disappearance. The publication of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007 was the first major victory for indigenous peoples in gaining recognition. However, despite this, these peoples, whose territories account for 85% of biodiversity, are still not included in decision-making processes at all levels.

Sara Olsvig, President of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) and former elected official in Greenland, explained that she is

### MODERATOR:

**Leslie Cloud**, legal researcher, member of the Justice and Indigenous People's Rights (JUSTIP) network

### SPEAKERS:

**Gert Peter Bruch**, President of Planète Amazone

**Brijlal Chaudhari**, Indigenous rights activist

**Sara Olsvig**, President of the Inuit Circumpolar Council

**Natalya Saprunova**, photographer

working for the recognition of Inuit rights. The Inuit, who live in Canada, Alaska, Greenland and the Russian Far East, have struggled for centuries against the Westphalian borders, for recognition of their highly resource-dependent way of life, and for their voices to be heard on issues such as biodiversity and global warming. Founded in 1983, the ICC aims to bring these

### *Taking care of Indigenous peoples means taking care of your own future*

Gert-Peter Bruch



Gert-Peter Bruch

Amazon remains seriously threatened and action must be taken. *'Taking care of Indigenous peoples means taking care of your own future,'* he declared.

voices to international summits, particularly the Arctic Council, which brings together 8 countries and 6 indigenous organisations, and to defend their right to self-determination.

Brijlal Chaudhari, an indigenous rights activist from the Tharu nation in the Himalayas, shared his experiences as a member of an ethnic minority in Nepal. Forcibly assimilated and continually criminalised by the monarchy and then the young Nepalese democracy, the Tharus have had to fight for their autonomy and territory in order to secure the creation of a Tharu state within Nepal's federal system.

Gert Peter Bruch founded the NGO Planète Amazone in 2012, after more than 20 years of work with Brazilian indigenous peoples. The French journalist and director works to rally global citizens to the indigenous cause by demonstrating the need for collective mobilisation. Although Brazil's Constitution, dating from 1988, theoretically protects indigenous lands, the

Natalya Saprunova, a Russian photographer from Kola Bay on the Finnish-Norwegian border, works on the issue of the Saami people. Through her reports, she tries to give a voice to these people who are victims of settlement and are losing their culture every day. Today, there are only 1,500 Sami left in Russia, of whom only 200 still speak the language, she explains. The photographer has also worked with the indigenous people of Siberia, in particular the Yevens of eastern Yakutia, who are suffering from mining, global warming, deforestation and soil pollution.

The question of territory is fundamental for all these indigenous peoples, the moderator stressed. Brijlal Chaudhari explained that the Tharus' connection to their land is more than spiritual: *'It's our school, our pharmacy, our grocery store, and it's being stolen from us even though our way of life depends on it.'* The activist argued that the world needs to accept that humans belong to the Earth, not the



© Pierre Galliot - Région Normandie

Natalya Saprunova

other way around. Understanding this interconnectedness is crucial to understanding the sound management of resources by indigenous peoples.

Gert Peter Bruch then addressed the crucial issue of border demarcation, which is urgently needed to protect indigenous peoples and their territories. Despite legal progress in Brazil, the turbulent presidency of Jair Bolsonaro has shown the limits of legal protection and the major threats posed by agribusiness, which is seeking to take over more and more Amazonian land. The recent re-election of President Lula, despite his promises, is not enough to protect the Amazon, although it is unanimously considered vital for humanity. The director asserted that giving a voice to indigenous peoples also means thinking differently about borders and the use of natural resources.



Watch the full debate on YouTube

The Evenes and other peoples Natalya Saprunova met are also deeply attached to their ecosystem. But, while they have a deep respect for nature, they are the first to suffer

from global warming in Russia. The Inuit are also suffering from the rise in average temperatures, added Sara Olsvig. While the Inuit word for Arctic literally means 'frozen place', the melting ice is radically changing the way of life of the Greenland's indigenous people, whether it is traditional fishing or travelling on the ice in winter.

**Today, there are only 1,500 Sami left in Russia, of whom only 200 still speak the language**

Natalya Saprunova

Beyond the representation of indigenous peoples, Brijlal Chaudhari advocated taking an example from their resource management. Their knowledge of biodiversity conservation is invaluable and the world needs indigenous climate leaders. Gert Peter Bruch analysed the importance of the legal concept of ecocide, which is key to holding those in power accountable for their actions and defending places.

Leslie Cloud summed up the arguments by inviting the audience to think for themselves about the issue and the law as it relates to indigenous peoples, who are pioneers in the fight against global warming through their holistic analysis of the past. In turn, the speakers detailed the emergence of a real awareness and desire for commitment among indigenous youth who are determined to fight against the humiliation of central governments and their continued invisibility.

Brijlal Chaudhari also noted that the concept of illegality, as defined by those in power, is inevitably biased and fluctuating. *'If we don't fight, is the only options are assimilation or exile,'* he asserted in conclusion.

## FOR THE PLANET AND PEOPLES, A COMMITTED YOUTH

29 September, 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. – Nacre Room



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Tara Goodwin, Laëtitia Helouët, Thomas Friang and Juliette Hurier

Thomas Friang presented the main themes of the debate: is peace possible without a protected planet? How can we manage geopolitical and ecological chaos at the same time? He conceded that giving in to anxiety is easier than making a com-

### MODERATOR:

**Thomas Friang**, Director General and founder of the Open Diplomacy Institute.

### SPEAKERS:

**Tara Goodwin**, head of the French Open Diplomacy delegation at Y20 2023 in India (G20 for Youth)

**Laëtitia Helouët**, President of the Observatoire national de la politique de la Ville

**Juliette Hurier**, student on the Master's programme in International Business and Diplomacy at ESCP Paris, part of the French Open Diplomacy delegation at Y7 2023 (G7 for Youth) in Japan

mitment. On the subject of commitment, Juliette Hurier urged us to remain hopeful, assuring us that being informed is already being committed. She referred to the local level (municipal youth councils), where solutions are already being devised. Laëtitia Helouët reviewed the history of youth involvement. She particularly emphasised the democratisation of access to education, which has broadened the social diversity of young people who can get involved. She expressed her disappointment at the fact that only 52% of 18/24 year-olds took part in both rounds of the last presidential election.

Tara Goodwin, who was appointed head of the French delegation in India at the Y20, recalled a very enriching experience in terms of this commitment, which took shape following an Instagram post. She carried out consultations in France before

defending the concerns of young people at this international summit. She pointed out that young people were heard 'to a certain extent', adding that some elements of their communiqué were taken up by the G20. Still, she was disappointed that the idea of a treaty on the non-proliferation of fossil fuels was not adopted. Questioned by a student, she noted that governments are not in the habit of listening to young people, and stressed the need to create spaces for this to change. 'That doesn't mean we should keep quiet', she said.



Tara Goodwin, Laëtitia Helouët, Thomas Friang and Juliette Hurier

### At the last UN General Assembly, the idea of a method of calculating the economy, other than GDP, was gaining ground among the 193 member countries

Thomas Friang

this doesn't lead to the drafting of legislation that can be adopted. At international level, Laëtitia Helouët questioned the current system of regulation, which was established after 1945. With the current sense of 'winners and losers' in the ecological transition, she raised the question of changing the mechanisms, by giving young people and certain countries a greater role in the decision-making process. To make the transition, she called for a reappropriation of values and a more meaningful way of life.

Thomas Friang agreed on the win/lose theme, but reminded us that there can be no transition without social justice, and that the effort must be spread fairly if it is to be well supported. He explained that at the last UN General Assembly, where he was present, the idea of a method of calculating the economy, other than GDP, was gaining ground among the 193 member countries. Finally, Tara Goodwin hoped, on behalf of all the speakers, that she had been a source of inspiration. Her advice to young people is to be more ambitious and innovative. Some high school students then spoke of their personal commitments as the conference drew to a close.

Thomas Friang reminded us of the purpose of his institute: to ensure that the voices of young people are heard and to highlight the need for intermediary bodies in a democracy. He also said that, to him, priority should be given to whispering rather than shouting in order to achieve progress. When asked about resorting to radicalism to be heard, Juliette Hurier wasn't convinced. In her opinion,



Watch the full debate on YouTube

## A VILLAGE FOR PEACE

# The village that is the beating heart of the Forum!

Throughout the Forum, visitors were treated to entertainment organised by the Village for Peace. Meetings, exchanges and sharing experiences were the order of the day!

### Exhibitors

## Committed to Peace

Within the Committed to Peace space, the numerous visitors, including a large number of high school students, interacted with different associations and NGOs who act for peace and fight against injustices in the world. ACTED, the French Red Cross of Normandy, Amnesty International, Ensemble contre la Peine de mort and the Oeuvre d'Orient presented their activities and demonstrated their commitment to Peace.



## La web-série de l'INA

In a five-part web series on the theme of 'Resistance against whom and for what?', the INA offered a thematic exploration of moments of resistance that have taken place in the four corners of the world throughout history, and have sometimes, with a gesture or a word, changed the face of the world and upended the course of millions of lives.



**A VILLAGE FOR PEACE**

# Exhibitions that have left their mark



Natalya Saprunova explaining her work to the young

**'As Saamis, we lived in the tundra'**

by Natalya Saprunova,

in partnership with the Les Femmes S'exposent festival:

'The Saamis – the last indigenous people in Europe divided between Finland, Sweden, Norway and Russia – lost their autonomy on Russian territory with the arrival of Soviet power in the 1920s. These nomads, who made a living from reindeer herding and fishing in the tundra, were forced to live in apartments, work in kolkhozes and abandon their traditional practices. Now their main village, Lovozero, 170 kilometres southeast of Murmansk, is considered a reserve. Of the approximately 1,500 people who live on the Kola Peninsula, only two hundred, mainly the elders, speak the Saami language. The inhabitants are fighting to preserve their identity, so that their culture doesn't die out. Tourism could possibly give it a second wind if it doesn't reduce it to folklore.'



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**'Their resistance, our History'** in partnership with Paris Match

'For almost 75 years, Paris Match has featured portraits of men and women on its covers and throughout the magazine, everyday heroes and heroines who, sometimes in spite of themselves, have shaped our contemporary history. For the 4<sup>th</sup> year running, the Normandy World Peace Forum has commissioned Match to produce a photo exhibition of thirteen large-format prints, looking at events of resistance that have left their mark on world history.'

Gwenaëlle DE KERROS,  
Paris Match's Development Director

**'Peace begins with me'**

Photographic action carried out by the UN Department of Peace Operations as part of the Inside Out Project.

The Inside Out Project is a participatory platform created by the French artist JR in 2011. As part of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping, Inside Out organised an art project as a tribute to those working for world peace.



**MurMurs**

an interactive work by the sculptor Anilore Banon

With her monumental work, Anilore Banon proposes another approach to walls: walls do not separate, they bring people together. You have to get closer to listen to the murmur of the work; sounds and stories interpreted by symbolic and anonymous voices.



### Bookshop and signings

Organised by «Au brouillon de culture» (the Culture Notebook) a pop-up bookshop offered works by several authors, along with novels, including comic books. The signing sessions, which were organised with several speakers in attendance, were followed by a number of debates and talks which were a huge success.



Pascal Boniface



### Studio Agora

Through a rich programme dedicated to youth and the general public, Studio Agora, in partnership with the editorial staff of the SIPA Ouest-France group, provided the opportunity for extending discussions with Forum speakers. These discussions, focused on current international events, provided an opportunity to decipher major issues such as media education, the importance of resistance through press cartoons and the role of girls and women in the fight for peace. The audience was also able to hear from war reporter Patrick Chauvel and Dr Izzeldin Abuelaish, who spoke to the students about his commitment to dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians.



Patrick Chauvel



## Acknowledgements

This sixth forum, organised yet again in the context of a complex international environment, was another great success, thanks to all those who worked so hard to ensure that it could be held in the best possible conditions. I would like to thank them warmly for their involvement, with special thanks to:

- ▶ **The public, especially the young people**, present at the Abbaye aux Dames in large numbers or who followed the Forum remotely
- ▶ **The speakers and partners** of the Normandy for Peace network, who offered many avenues for action and reflection to reconcile peoples with peace
- ▶ **The services of the State and the City of Caen**, which made it possible to hold this event
- ▶ **The elected representatives of the Normandy Region and the teams mobilised every year around the Forum:** staff from the regional authority, service providers and volunteers, all of whom fully contributed to the success of this event
- ▶ **The European Parliament** for its continued support.

Hervé Morin

President of the Normandy Region,  
former French Minister of Defence



The Normandy Region invites you on

**26 and 27 September 2024**

for the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the Forum on the theme

**THIS WORLD THAT ESCAPES US**

**How to win peace in the face of new violence?**



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