Mayapada Tower 1, 19th Floor, Unit 02 | Jl. Jenderal Sudirman Kav. 28, South Jakarta 12920
sekretariat @fpcindonesia.org | www.cifp2024.com

SESSION E2

"What are the Dangerous Fault Lines in the Emerging World Disorder?"

Bebas Aktif Room – Conference on Indonesian Foreign Policy 2024

Speakers:

1. **Ambassador Miroslav Wlachovský,** Distinguished Fellow of GLOBSEC; Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic (2023)
2. **Khairy Jamaluddin,** Co-Host of Keluar Sekejap Podcast; Former Minister of Health Malaysia 2021-2022
3. **Victor Gao Zhikai,** Chair Professor at Soochow University; Vice President of the Center for China and Globalization
4. **Michael Vatikiotis,** Senior Advisor at the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue

Moderator: Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping, Co-Founder and Senior Fellow of East Asian International Relations (EAIR) Caucus

---

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping

Thank you so much, for inviting me and fellow distinguished panelists, to join us discussing what are the dangerous fault lines in the emerging world disorder. And thank you, your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, for joining us and filling up this room and listening to what we have to say about the world in this array. So, the world today is very much crisis prone. There are a lot of uncertainties that fill up in the international politics, in foreign policy, and also in the military strategic dimensions. And not only that, we are experiencing a kind of fragmentation that we have never observed since the end of World War two.

So we have experienced globalization, the rise of multilateralism, but increasingly, we are witnessing the fragmentation, not only at the global level, in the United Nations, but also in our respective regions. So what, this means to, the several fault lines that we are going to discuss and focus on today, and that include the US-China strategic competition, Russia-Ukraine war, Israel-Gaza conflict, the Korean Peninsula, Taiwan Strait, and the South China Sea. So any other fault lines that we should be aware of, so I want to throw this out to our fellow panelists. Joining us today is, ambassador Miroslav Wlachovsky, Distinguished Fellow of GLOBSEC and the Former Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia. Thank you for joining us today.

And second, we have Khairy Jamaluddin, Khairy or KJ, Co-host of Keluar Sekejap podcast in Malaysia and also our Former Minister of Health in Malaysia. And thirdly, joining us also, from China, Victor Gao, Vice President of the Center for China and Globalization. And last but not least, Michael Vatikiotis, Senior Advisor to the Center of Humanitarian Dialogue. So, I want all of

you to pay attention to what they have to say. If you have burning questions, please raise your hand, and I would like to take on and collect your questions and include them in the discussion.

We wish for this session to be as interactive as possible. So, please also say your given name and your affiliation and given by, less than two minutes question. So nothing too elaborated. It should be straight to the point. So now let us begin the first round of questions that would kick start the conversation.

So, Ambassador Miroslav, so now the world is thinking about the new Trump administration. So the US presidential election shows that we are going to be thrown into another round of uncertainty. And, what does this mean for the United States and European Union relations and particularly on the Russo Ukraine conflict at the moment? And your country, Slovak Republic, is right next to Ukraine. So will Trump abandon Ukraine like some analysts have said? And, what role does China play in your opinion?

Ambassador Miroslav Wlachovský
Well, thank you very much, for this question. And first of all, let me say thank you for being here, and for the invitation to this fascinating conference. I see a very good vibe, a lot of young people, and hopefully, future foreign policy practitioners. As you said, I'm coming from Slovakia, from Europe next to Ukraine. And the Trump reelection or election of US president Donald Trump brings certain questions for some uncertainties. But I think in general, there are some characteristics which are very strong in relations between Europe and the US. We are the biggest trading partners, and, when it comes to investment, it also applies. So here are some numbers. The trading goods between the US and Europe is 1.2 trillion US dollars. Trade in services is 500 billion US dollars. When it comes to foreign direct investments, the US invests four trillion in the European Union countries, and EU countries in the US, 3.5 trillions of US dollars. I'm saying this because, while in the first Trump administration, people in Europe were scared, mostly about the future of NATO because there were some rumors and, he was famous for certain skepticism towards multilateral organizations in general and also about these particular defense alliances. I think in this term, we are much more worried about potential trade wars and tariffs and what it will be, the impact of it on Europe. And, to be brief, you mentioned the Russian aggression in Ukraine, the war. It's the biggest war we have in Europe since World War two. It's next to our doors, and it has a huge impact on my country, first, in a wave of refugees, and then also in the impact in security and economic areas. And, obviously, what we want is to secure just peace for Ukraine. And when I'm talking about just peace, that means, peace which will somehow, reflect who is aggressor and who is a victim in this war, that for me means justice in this case.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
And how about the role of China? What can it play in Europe?

Ambassador Miroslav Wlachovský
Well, China plays a big big role in Europe because it is one of the leading powers in the world, and it's a big trading partner for us. But what I feel is that the rules will slightly adapt to the new world and to the new Trump administration. But I would say, in general, what we see now is after the euphoria of globalization, we see the process of deglobalization and the rise of blocs in the world. And, also, it's clear now that we are somehow leading towards a multipolar world with all the consequences of it. Thank you.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you so much, Ambassador. So, next, I will come to you, Khairy. So given the rising right wing movements in Europe as we have seen, in the morning, when Dr. Dino Patti Djalal showing us the context that he had for us today. And yet, we also witnessed the unprecedented solidarity for the Palestinians. So how do you view the paradoxical simultaneous development of Islamophobia on the rise and also increasing solidarity and support for the Palestinian cause?

Khairy Jamaluddin
Thank you, Dr. Hoo. Thank you for the question. Happy to be here. Before I address doctor Hoo's question straight on, which was specifically on Islamophobia and on Palestine, Allow me two minutes to just set into context what I think are at least three of the biggest concerns when we think about fault lines in world disorder as FPCI has summarized this session. I think the first thing, and this speaks to some of the concerns that Miroslav mentioned in his remarks, is, of course, everyone is waiting for what happens in January. This is a consequential presidency in a sense that Trump is a consequential leader. He is not a leader that is just there to warm the seat. He's there to remake things in his image. He's remade the Republican Party in his image. The Republican Party of the United States today is unrecognizable from the center right Republican Party of Reagan and of Bush. So he will try to remake the United States now in his image and by extension, of course, the world. But the question is how interested is he in the world? We're not quite sure how interested he is in the world. Some clues have been given in the form of the appointments that have been announced, which are still subject to senate confirmation. So he's appointed a lot of hawks, Marco Rubio; he's appointed an ambassador, announced the appointment of ambassador to Tel Aviv, to Jerusalem, I beg your pardon, who doesn't even recognize the two state solution, Mike Huckabee.

So a lot of concern will be about how Trump sees the world and how interested he is in the world. And if he is interested in the world, what he wants to do in the world. And central to that is the most important contestation of our time, which is China and the United States. Now, Victor is a specialist here, but from my view in ASEAN, in Malaysia, it is a spectrum of three C's. One, Containment. Second C, Confrontation. And the last C, Conflict. We don't want to see conflict. Nobody wants to see conflict. It moves from containment, confrontation at sometimes, greyscale, not fully, frontal warfare, but these things happen. And it is of great interest to somebody like me from Malaysia or for us in ASEAN because ASEAN is at the geopolitical

sweet spot right now. We are benefiting a lot from this rivalry, from the containment. It's opportunistic but we benefit a lot from this and we are interested to see where this is going to go because the only thing you can say about Trump right now is that he's unpredictable, he's extremely mercurial.

Very quickly, two other things. Muhammed Jalal, who hosts this wonderful podcast called “The Thinking Muslim”, you all should listen to this, said in his latest episode that Gaza, the Gaza Strip is the graveyard not just of 40,000 Palestinians, but it's also the graveyard of the liberal rules based world order. So I want to talk about what happens to that rules based liberal world order. This retreat from globalism that Miroslav spoke about, whether or not it's even feasible for us to start thinking about a rules based multilateral world order, or is it completely defunct right now simply because of what we've seen in Gaza? To address your point, I don't think people believe in the rules based world order anymore. When there's a blatant, genocide with impunity, nothing being done about it, when resolutions have been vetoed, when, when the ICC has clearly come forward and, you know, when the Washington Post writes, actually, the ICC is not for people in Israel, It's for dictators in Africa. It's for people in Myanmar. It's for Vladimir Putin, anyone but our friends in Israel. So who believes in the world order anymore?

So it's worthwhile talking about that. So speaking to your contradiction, yes. I mean, you have a situation where we feel very strongly about Palestine because it's not just about Palestine because it's also about the liberal order. One minute left, Dr. Hoo. The third point is technology, and this is something about Islamophobia. I'm very concerned. I'm a podcaster like Miroslav, and we are very concerned because I see my own algorithms create, echo chamber amongst people who agree with me. And that exacerbates things like Islamophobia. If companies like Meta, companies like X do not open up transparently their algorithm and really fix this problem, then you are going to get into a world of greater polarization which doesn't just exacerbate Islamophobia, it exacerbates multiple phobias around the world. Thank you.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you so much, Kyrie. So using the term that you quoted, geopolitical sweet spot. So to Victor Gao, do you think that China remains in the geopolitical sweet spot? And, given how pessimistic Khairy’s view is that no one no longer believes in the rule based international order. So China has mattered for the world for, since the end of cold war at least, because of your rapid rise and also the made in China mechanism. So how can China continue to position itself in the world in this array and whether multilateralism can still prevail?

Victor Gao Zhikai
Thank you very much, Dr. Hoo. First of all, it's my great pleasure and great honor to come back to Jakarta. And congratulations on the tenth anniversary of FPCI. It's a great achievement. I really congratulate Dr. Dino and his team for making this a great success. And I also hope the CIFP 2024, the conference we're attending right now, will be a huge success. Now I would say the world we are going to is a world full of uncertainty and unpredictability, and, Mr. Donald

Trump wants to achieve MAGA. You know, I was educated in New Haven. I always thought America was a great country, so I thought you misspoke. I thought he meant to make America Greater Again, but he wants to make America Great. And he is now going to launch a revolution against the United States, and probably he will raise havoc in many quarters of the world. So we need to be aware of that. However, even though Mr. Donald Trump is controversial, not everyone likes him, I would say, if Mr. Trump can bring the war in Europe to a stop, and if he can keep his promise of launching no war against any other country for the four years when he will be the president, I hope you will join me in working very hard to nominate Mr. Donald Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize. Now it doesn't mean he's a perfect man or he has no failures, but I would say as the most important president of the United States since most likely President Roosevelt, one of the most important person in the world of today, if he can make peace for Europe and bring the war in Ukraine to a stop and refrain from war of all kinds against any other country in the world despite of the fact that he may create a lot of pressure, manhandling, unfairness to many countries including ASEAN, including China, and including many countries in Europe, for example. Many capital cities in the world are in shivers now as we speak about Mr. Trump becoming President Trump for the second term. So I would strongly urge that we work together to nominate him for the Nobel Peace Prize. Now I'm serious about that, really.

And, if, for example, the United States will stay out of the war for the coming four years, there are many other issues in the world. So we all know that while ASEAN is very important, and I believe while Indonesia is very important, much more important than the Middle Countries. Why? Because Islam is the megatrend in the world of today, And Indonesia is the biggest Muslim country in the world. Your population is getting close to 300 million, almost the size of the US population, about double the size of Japan's population. So I think there will be no limit for the expectation of the people here in Indonesia. And whatever we in China can do together with the people here in Indonesia, for example, for the, fast speed railway between Bandung and Jakarta, and I hope that railway can be extended both to the east and to the west, and the archipelago can be more and more interconnected because we believe connectivity is a must in order to be, achieving industrialization and stability. I also hope Indonesia will really become a member of the BRICS country. And I think with Indonesia as a BRICS member, BRICS will be more powerful and more impactful. Now you already have Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Iran as BRICS members. And you may know Turkey, which is a NATO member state, has formally applied for BRICS. So it is time for Indonesia to think about joining BRICS. I'll wrap up.

Now talking about the shift lines or the fault lines in the world, other panelists talked about it. Allow me to mention one thing which I really am very much concerned about. That is the AI revolution. I think AI is not a competition between China and the United States. AI, in the most important sense of the word, will be a competition between AI, on one hand, and mankind or Homo Sapiens, on the other hand. All of us will be involved. I will not be surprised if AI is scheming, gaining complete independence from us, and eventually they want to put us into a subordinated world. Therefore, I think it is time for China and the United States to really get together to think about cooperation rather than rivalry or competition or even war. And I think

Mayapada Tower 1, 19th Floor, Unit 02 | Jl. Jenderal Sudirman Kav. 28, South Jakarta 12920
sekretariat @fpcindonesia.org | www.cifp2024.com

only when China and the United States really get onto the same page can we expect peace, stability for our part of the world. And for China, as well as the ten ASEAN member states, Maintaining stability, keeping peace will be a precondition for any prospect of development and prosperity for our people. Thank Thank you very much. Thank you Dr. Hoo.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you, Victor. So we have heard pessimism. We have also heard optimism. So, Michael, as a long time observer of Southeast Asia and China, do you share the same optimism as Victor does? Or do you think that, with multiple conflicts and crises that are happening around the world and particularly in this region from the Korean peninsula to Taiwan Strait and also South China Sea, does, regional countries tend to move into unilateralism and bilateralism rather than fostering stronger multilateralism?

Michael Vatikiotis
Thank you, and very good to be here. Well, I think for as far as the Asia Pacific is concerned, the major fault line and the one that we all worry about is whatever happens if the United States and China go to war over Taiwan. I was just in Washington last week, and I was told in no uncertain terms by the Defense Department that every day they go to work, they go to work so that President Xi Jinping in China wakes up every morning on the other side of the world and decides that today is not the day to invade Taiwan. The fear of some kind of confrontation between China and the United States over Taiwan is my biggest fear. Related to that, we've probably never been closer in the world that we live in today, and I'm a child of the Cold War. I grew up in the Cold War. We've never been closer to the use of nuclear weapons than we are today. It's fair to say that Russia, the United States, and almost certainly China have moved their warheads much closer to the ability to launch them within a four to five minute window than any other time before. In the past, warheads were kept separate from missiles. There was the nonproliferation treaty. There was the concept of no first use. This has all been eroded, mostly rhetorically, by President Putin's lowering threshold, by the United States not really paying much attention to the preservation of the nonproliferation regime. It's possible that South Korea in the next five years will go nuclear. It's also possible that China would consider using a tactical nuke in the Taiwan Strait. The Indo Pacific commander, Admiral Paparo, used the word hellscape to refer to the Taiwan Strait. And so this for me is the biggest dangerous fault line.

It's true and I agree with my my good friend Khairy that, you know, the biggest threat to global order is, of course, the erosion of norms and values, the erosion of international law, and the casual way in which huge numbers of people are being killed by, you know, high capacity weapons, whether in, you know, Russia and Ukraine or in Gaza. The inability to stop huge levels of civilian death is a major problem. But at the other end of the spectrum, you have this increased willingness now to contemplate the use of weapons of mass destruction and that to me is terrifying, and it's terrifying for the coming generation who may have to live with that. Thank you.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you so much. So any of you here right now have some burning questions that you would like to throw out?

QnA 1:
Okay. So, I have this question of curiosity in where there are several news reports where, North Korean soldiers are being deployed to assist Russia in the Russo-Ukrainian war. And what I know is that usually when there are one or two countries that are actually being deployed in a war between two states only, it will actually increase the global tension, and it will because it heated up. So my question is, as North Korea itself is closer in proximity to China. How will China react to what North Korea is doing when it comes to deploying their soldiers to Russia to help Russia in the Ukraine war? Thank you

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you so much. And pass the microphone to the lady behind you.

QnA 2:
Okay. So, so good morning. My name is Achin Rosana, and I'm from FPCI Chapter UPN, Veteran Jawa Timur. And I want to ask about Dr. Victor's perspective. As he mentioned before, Donald Trump might be controversial for some people, but beside that, he also has a potential to bring peace and to bring peace and stopping war in any conflict in the future or in the meantime. So I want to know what's your perspective about what movement or through what Trump will bring peace will bring peace in a conflict? Thank you.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you so much.

QnA 3:
Okay. Thank you very much. I am Sarthaw Dafar from the FPCI chapter. Actually, my question is to KJ, Khairy Jamaluddin. My question is, in Malaysia, the Palestinian issue is moving up in the political arena, right? I mean, there is a lot of pressure for your Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim to do something for Palestine in the international society. You know, but there is also some criticism in your country that what your Prime Minister is doing for the Palestinian is not enough. I mean, like, what's happening in the I think, so, three weeks ago. When Anwar Ibrahim said Israel has the right in the CNN interview. And there are some people in Malaysia who criticize what he said on CNN. Because you know, as a country not recognized, Israel is a threat. You don't have the right to say Israel has the right, you know, as a country. So I want to ask your opinion. What do you think about what Anwar Ibrahim did for the Palestinian people is enough? Maybe there is something they need to do to fight for Palestine in the International Society. And my second thing is I'm also a big fan of the Keluar Sekejap Podcast. Thank you very much.

Mayapada Tower 1, 19th Floor, Unit 02 | Jl. Jenderal Sudirman Kav. 28, South Jakarta 12920
sekretariat @fpcindonesia.org | www.cifp2024.com

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you.

QnA 4:
Thank you so much. So my first question would be to his excellency, Mr. Miroslav. It has been reported a couple of days ago that your head of state has agreed to visit Moscow in May.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Prime minister.

QnA 5:
Yeah. The Prime Minister has agreed to visit Moscow in May next year, for the victory parade. Do you think this would open a window for some terms of, like, negotiation, maybe peace talks, or at least voicing the opinion of Slovakia. And, I guess, the question for the panel is what would it take for reconciliation? Would it take another, I mean, the war in Europe, of course, between Russia and Ukraine. Would it take another conference on Ukraine held elsewhere? Would it take some other form of talks or forum? Thank you.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you so much. So because we see so many hands, we need to collect a few more rounds. So please allow the panelists to answer this round first. So firstly, I would like to invite Miroslav to comment on the North Korean troop deployment to Russia. So do you think there would be restraint, on their part or will aggression continue to be the main tool?

Ambassador Miroslav Wlachovský
Well, when it comes to bringing North Korean troops to Russia and, and to the Russian Ukrainian conflict, I think this is the dangerous escalation, because what we've seen in the, from Russia and, in the reaction of the west towards Ukraine, is a very careful approach from the West. Do not escalate. I think when we provided quite a lot of support to Ukraine, but I think our problem is that it was too little too late, in many ways. “..actually, it was the West led by the US, which was restrained in not escalating, the war in Ukraine. I think bringing troops of other countries to the conflict, that's a major escalation with the consequences, not only for Europe, but for Asia. Because you have to ask the question, what will North Korea get out of this? What, what is the form of payment from, from Vladimir Putin? And what will be the consequences for the Korean Peninsula, but also the high region? Because if the payment is that they will receive some sensitive technologies, from Russia, to build rockets which can reach the United States, then that's a major major escalation. So I think it's very, very dangerous.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
How about your Prime Minister's visit to Russia next year? Yeah.

Ambassador Miroslav Wlachovský
Yeah. The Prime Minister Robert Fico, announced that he got an invitation to Moscow to celebrate the 80th anniversary of victory over Nazi Germany. I must say that I strongly disagree with my prime minister and his visit to Moscow because I think at this moment, it's a gratification of an aggressor. And, I could not imagine that someone is at the podium in front of the Kremlin watching the military parade of vehicles which took part in aggression in Ukraine. I think it's, from my point of view, disgusting. And when it comes to the moment, if they would allow some kind of negotiations, I think it's too early to say because we don't know what will happen in where we will be in the conflict, in May. Maybe, it will already have some rounds of negotiations by then. I hope so. But as I said, it is in the interest of my country that there will be a just peace in Ukraine, not just a peace, but just peace.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Right. So, So, I would like to have Victor next because I'm grouping the questions. So, Victor, what is your view about North Korea's deployment to Russia? So from my understanding is that North Korean soldiers were found in the Kursk region. So, it is the region within Russia's territory, and both North Korea and Russia signed a treaty of comprehensive strategic partnership of which they both agreed to military assistance if their territory is under attack. So in this case, Russia is under attack. So, how would China, how should China react to this and what is China's view about Russia right now?

Victor Gao Zhikai
Thank you very much. For your information, I was invited to visit Kyiv in July 2023, and I had extensive discussions with the counterparts in the military, in the government in Ukraine, and I also kept very close contacts with the Ukrainian embassy in China. Now allow me to say something about the DPRK troops in Russia. Now there are three possibilities. One is that the DPRK soldiers will engage in military activities only in the Kursk region. That's number one. Number two is that the DPRK soldiers may engage in military operations in those territories including Crimea as well as the four provinces in the eastern part of Ukraine, which Russia declared they have absorbed through referendum, etc. Now the third possibility is that the DPRK's troops may engage in military activities in the Ukrainian territory beyond Crimea and beyond the four provinces in the eastern part of Ukraine. Now I would say any engagement in these three different possibilities will trigger different international law implications. Now for the first point, if the DPRK troops only engage in military activities inside as President Putin declared, it is none of your business. It is purely DPRK soldiers working with Russia on Russian territory to defend Russian territory against foreign invasion in the form of Ukrainian troops intruding into Kursk.

Now if the United States or NATO consider that as a flagrant escalation of the war, it is their decision. But what can they do? It is inside Russia. No one denies that Kurtsk is very much part of Russian sovereign territory. But if the DPRK soldiers were found in Crimea or in other Ukrainian provinces that Russia had already absorbed and Ukraine strongly denied any transfer of sovereignty over these territories, that will be a very significant escalation or a greater escalation. So I think we need to really read as to what exactly the DPRK soldiers are doing or will be doing relating to this war between Russia and Ukraine.

Now what does the DPRK want to get? Now, I was told that each soldier will get one thousand US dollars per month, but that's not the most important thing. I think in terms of the miniaturization of the warhead as well as the improvement of the range and the accuracy of the launch vehicle, that probably will be the most desired technologies that the DPRK wants to have from Russia. And Russia has probably the best such technologies in the world, probably on the par, if not even higher, than that of the United States or that of China. So if the DPRK will be satisfied with the technologies they eventually may get from Russia, their nuclear capabilities may be significantly enhanced. And then Eastern Asia, East Asia, where I live, you know, China, Russia, DPRK, ROK, and Japan probably will be more dangerous going forward. Thank you.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Right. So to both Michael and Khairy, the short question would be will Trump stop wars in the Middle East and also manage conflict in the South China Sea for example? So even though with the erosion of the rules based order and international law as Michael has rightfully pointed out, what kind of order that we are talking about here and, how can regional countries actually strengthen their resilience against such fault lines? And of course, Khairy, you can answer questions for Palestine. So, Michael, maybe you can go first.

Michael Vatikiotis
Look. The Middle East conflict we've lived with all our lives. My family's from the Middle East. They were refugees from the Middle East because of that conflict, and we've lived with it for seventy years. My worry is that there is too much focus on de-escalation and not enough focus on resolution of the problem. People talk very loosely about a two state solution without actually exploring what that involves. What is the process? What will it take to actually bring Israel and Palestine to an agreement on sharing what is, after all, a very small part of the world? You know, it's very hard to imagine how small Palestine and Israel are as an area. It takes, you know, less than two hours to drive from Jordan to the sea. It would take three hours to drive north and south. It's a very small part of the world. So I think we have to think more about what the process will be in terms of bringing about a solution to this never ending conflict that has afflicted us for all of our lives. I do think that, you know, there's a lot of talk about Trump's dislike of war. The fact is that there are lots of countervailing influences in the United States. It's true that Trump himself thinks that war is a waste of money, and he thinks that people who die in wars are, you know, what's what's the term he used, you know, they're losers. The fact is that there is also a very large military industrial complex in the United States that produces a huge

amount of high capacity weaponry that would like to see war continue to use. And then the third force is the business community that to some extent benefits from peace, but also benefits from war. So I think because of these different influences in the United States, we cannot just simplistically talk about, well, Trump will end all wars. The United States has continually had an expansionist, intrusive interventionist policy at least in the last thirty years, and it's very hard to see that ending.

Victor Gao Zhikai
Please allow me to make a very important point. I think all countries in the world, all people in the world with decency of the mind and dignity should support the legitimate causes of the Palestinian people. It is completely beyond my comprehension how Israel and its defense forces would have already killed more than forty thousand innocent people, civilians in Palestine. 75% of them were women and children, including many pregnant women. These are atrocities that all of us need to condemn, and I hope Muslim countries and non Muslim countries should really unite together to condemn such atrocities. In today's world, no such atrocities should ever be allowed, and I'm sometimes also appalled to see that there is one single country in the United Nations Security Council that would veto the resolutions proposed by all the other countries and endorsed by all the other members of the Security Council.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you so much Victor.

Khairy Jamaluddin
Yeah. Can I just address the question about Trump ending wars that was asked by the lady in the middle? I agree with Michael. It's a very complex decision that will not just be Donald Trump's decision to make. There are many other factors, the military industrial complex, other competing centers of power within the United States, which will determine this. But let's assume that Trump being the consequential president that he is, has the opportunity to do this. And like Victor says, we want to nominate him for the Nobel Peace Prize for ending wars because as a businessman, he doesn't like wars. Now, let's assume that he sticks to his word. He ends the war, in Ukraine, and he ends the genocide in Gaza. The point here is, how does he end the war? It's not so much whether he ends the war, but how he ends the conflict. That's more important. If he ends the Gaza genocide by putting pressure on Israel saying that we're not gonna give you any more money, twenty billion US dollars in direct military assistance, that's it. No more after this. And we are going to have a road map towards a free and independent Palestinian state. Fine. But if it's to just end the genocide today, but to allow for Tel Aviv to continue to act with impunity, which means the genocide may be over, but the illegal occupation continues. The building of settlements continues in the West Bank. The expansion of the Israeli security outposts continues. Gaza continues to be the biggest open air prison in the world. Then what kind of end to the war is that? Yes you may have ended the genocide, but we need to know how you end the conflict. Similarly, with Ukraine, we want to know how you end the conflict. If you tell and force Ukraine, for instance, to accept the lines that you have today,

accept the losses that you have sustained in terms of your territory, but you don't have sufficient support for deterrence in Europe for Putin to not do something else later, then what kind of settlement is that? Then what kind of settlement is that?

Michael Vatikiotis
Can I just add, Khairy, that, you know, to remind the audience that President Trump, and many many of the members of his incoming cabinet have more or less supported the idea that Israel will annex the West Bank.

Khairy Jamaluddin
Absolutely. That's why I say, you're sending an incoming, ambassador designate who doesn't even recognize the two state solution. So ending the conflict is fine, and we all support that in principle, but we have to ask the details. How do you end that conflict? That's very important. And let's not just walk away from the conflict saying, okay. That's it. Russia, you can pocket this amount of territory from Ukraine, but there's no deterrence against this from happening again. Or we end the the the genocide in Gaza, but there's no road map to a independent Palestinian state. Just to answer your question, sir, about my Prime Minister. For this, I support him. I'm a critic of my prime minister, but I want to be fair to him. And I think that he has been one of the most outspoken proponent for Palestine during the genocide. He has been the first and perhaps the only international leader to actually speak, at the United Nations, move a suggestion for the suspension of Israel, as a member of the United Nations.

During a press conference with the German Chancellor, outgoing, perhaps Olaf Scholz. When confronted with Germany's hard line position of supporting Israel, he clearly dressed down the chancellor in Berlin in front of the German press about how this didn't start just last year, but this started in nineteen forty, even before that, before the Nakba. So I think his in terms of outspokenness, in terms of the policy of not allowing Israeli vessels to berth in any port in Malaysia, I think I have to salute my prime minister for that. There are certain things that I wish he could have done a bit more. So for instance, in that infamous interview with Richard Quest on CNN, when he was asked, does Israel have the right to exist? He should have said, no. I support the creation of an independent and free Palestinian state. Turn the narrative around. Don't talk about Israel. Talk about the Palestinian state. Does Israel have the right to self defense? You should have answered “No occupying power has the right to self defense against legitimate resistance”. Israel is an occupying power in the West Bank and in Gaza. You don't have the right of self defense against what? Against people who are resisting an occupying power, which is Israel. That's what he should have said. But I think it could have been the heat of the moment. It could have been just a throwaway sentence. Unfortunate. So there are things that I think I wish he could have done better, but overall, I'm satisfied with my Prime Minister.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Ambassador Miroslav.

Ambassador Miroslav Wlachovský
Yeah. A couple of comments on Donald Trump and the Middle East.

Ambassador Miroslav Wlachovský
On Israel, I think, there are many thoughts, of, and vices of Donald Trump, as it is presented in the media, but I also want to praise Donald Trump because he was actually the US president who helped to create the Abrahamic Accords. So, there was an initiative that Arab countries will recognize Israel and will start to cooperate. And, I was in Israel, before October. I was there in February 2023, with then, my Prime Minister. And I remember that conversation with Benjamin Netanyahu, and what he expected next was that we are moving to an agreement with Saudi Arabia. So there was this expectation of cooperation with other Arabic countries, and then the terrorist attack of October 7th happened, and it was a bloody murder. There wasn't anything good about it, and the reaction came afterwards. And you are right that in the case of Israel, we can go back and back and back, and you can pick a date, and you can pick a century, because it's such a contested area. But, I think, with Donald Trump, you won't have moving red lines. You have a fixed red line. And I think one of the biggest mistakes of American politics in recent years was Barack Obama when he said, to the Syrian president Al-Assad, there is a red line, and then then he moved that red line.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you so much. So the final round of questions and answers, and I want to be fair. And, let's begin with the lady here.

QnA 6:
Thank you, his excellency and the distinguished panel for your comments on the topic. I'm a research analyst with the Institute of South Asian Studies in Singapore. My question is not about the fault lines that we can see but the fault lines that we cannot see. Which is offensive cyber, AI, and quantum computing. I wanted to know your views that these issues can very much disrupt the sweet spot, the geopolitical sweet spot that the countries are sitting on. In that case, whether the countries would prioritize their own pragmatic agenda or whether they would look for cooperation regionally is I would like to know your comments on that.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you so much.

QnA 7:
Thank you. My question will be to Mr. Michael. We know that recently the ICC put out an arrest warrant to Benjamin Netanyahu. And as you say, meets the erosion of international law. I would like to know your opinion on how this will play out and resolve in the end because we know what happened in Gaza is a blatant violation of multiple humanitarian rules and principles. And yeah, I just want to know, like, how it ended up. And I think, one more question. If I can, it's really rhetorical and hypothetical because Mr. Michael and Khairy bringing it out. We're talking about

veto power right now. Like, whether in Russia-Ukraine and Palestinian in Gaza, there will always be some countries that say no, I don't think I want it, and put a halt on the betterment of the disorder in this world. How much longer do we have to linger in this concept to let, you know, someone stop the advancement of our world? Or do we think it will be another issue if we disregard this fatal power among, you know, a giant political power in the world? That will be my question. Thank you.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Any more from this side? Please. Lady over there.

QnA 8:
Good afternoon. I have one question for all of the panelists. So one contemporary issue that's still in contention is climate change. So while we've discussed weapons of mass destruction and its looming threat, there's no denying that there's imminent damage and consequences to the environment, as well as the very existence of mankind using this warfare. So in the panel's view, how would the issue of climate change, and environment factor into how the international community currently governs nuclear weaponry as well as other weapons of mass destruction. Thus far has climate change been an important deterrent in escalating its use? Thank you.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you so much.

QnA 9:
Hello to all panelists. I'm Pristi. I'm a market researcher. And my question will go to Khairy. So just like you, Khairy, I'm also a pessimist when it comes to cost, and even in Indonesia, we can see that the trend is becoming lower. People are talking less about Palestine. The crowds are getting less even though we are protesting in front of the US Embassy, and the crowd is becoming less and less and less nowadays. And, I want to know based on your outlook, what is the outlook for Palestinian freedom in, in this situation where Israel is getting incredible support from the US to preserve what they want to preserve in the land. And, they also want to have this greater Israel agenda that they want to put into realization. And second, it's the lowering dialectics among our grassroots who are talking less about Palestine, who are not boycotting anymore and not talking about them anymore. And also, where's the middle power's country to also aid the Palestinian freedom?

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you so much, last question.

QnA 10:
I have two and half questions for the panel. The first one is, if we are talking about the resolution of, Israeli and Palestinian conflict, we have seen much impunity given Israel's actions. Then, does that mean that there is no such thing as an international global order? No international

norms or law? Does that mean eventually everything has come down to power play? If so, then, how can we use power play to stop Israeli atrocities when they themselves are backed up by one of the most powerful states in the world? That is my first question.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Be fast and brief because we are running out of time. Okay.

QnA 11:
Okay. Perhaps that will be my only question. Thank you.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Thank you so much. So I know many more of you have so many questions. So we will leave the Israeli Palestinian question last bit. So I would like to invite all the panelists to respond, based on what you like to respond on. So firstly, the role of cyber and AI in the world, military development and how they are highly disruptive, and international law development and how it has not been able to catch up. So how do you see this will also relate to another question on whether deterrence is still meaningful in any way? So, last but not least, so following that power's role in, several, multiple fault lines and also your view on ICC's decision on Netanyahu, Netanyahu and then Israel Palestine power play and the role of, respective major powers and countries. Thank you so much.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Victor, you want to go first?

Victor Gao Zhikai
Thank you very much. Let me give it a first shot. First of all, in terms of climate change, let me tell you. In several Chinese cities on the coastline, there have been reports about flooding by the rising seawater. Now, while the Chinese government has not reached the decision as to what exactly caused the rising flooding, and the scientists are not yet reaching a consensus view. My personal reading is that this is an indication of the rising sea level as a result of climate change. Now for countries like Indonesia, which is an archipelagic country, lots of islands, I hope all of us will be very very careful about this rising sea level issue. And I think this should be a reason for mankind to really decide to cooperate rather than kick the can down the road and not take immediate actions.

Now the other thing is, as just now I referred to, that is the AI tsunami. And I call the term the AI divide. There will be AI divide between persons, between companies, between governments, between countries, between civilizations, and between continents. And just now in the preliminary session, we heard that Indonesia has not really come up with a focus on AI. It's not surprising. Right now, only China and the United States are really plowing huge amounts of money, huge amounts of scientific talents into really improving AI. But there is a danger. If either China or the United States or anyone else wants to weaponize AI, then it will really cause the

whole situation, probably getting into a very dangerous crisis. That is eventually AI gets better than mankind, and we all become subjugated. Therefore, again, I appeal to both China and the United States and all the other countries involved in cooperation and never weaponize AI in the real sense of the word because otherwise, we do not know what will happen to the world and what will happen to the eight billion people that we are talking about.

Now for the Israeli Palestinian issue, I'll be very brief. I just want to make one point for the record. The Palestinian people are as much human beings as the Israeli people. If anyone comes to you and says that the Israeli people are more of a human being than the Palestinian people, they are telling you lies. And if any country comes to you and says, Indonesia, you are the greatest, largest, Muslim population, I respect Israelis more than I respect the Palestinians. They are not true friends. They are not friends of the Muslim world or the Islamic world. I think we need to come to a consensus. That is all of us need to support the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people as well as the legitimate rights of the Israeli people. Israelis and the Palestinians are both as much of human beings as you or I am for example. Any discrimination against the Palestinians is a violation of our own decency and our own dignity. And I hope on this point, we will be completely on the same page. Thank you.

Ambassador Miroslav Wlachovský
Yeah. I would react to cyber and AI. I think this is, as you said, a rather invisible fault line, but it's a very dangerous one because it's not clear when you are right to trigger an action. Because in case of cyberattacks, first of all, you have a problem to detect them. And the second of all, which is even more important in some cases, is that it's hard to clearly affiliate that attack with a certain power. And, we had this discussion in NATO that if the cyber attack on one country constitutes the article five situation, when other countries should come to protect and defend the other ally, we agreed that it is like that. That cyber attack can create such a situation, because it can lead to war.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Khairy.

Khairy Jamaluddin
Yeah. Thanks. Thanks. Just, Just, briefly or before I get to the last part about what's happening in Palestine. I think Malaysia's chairmanship of ASEAN next year, 2025 is extremely important. I think we should put cyber crimes front and center as an agenda item, because I think this is something that needs concerted agreement between countries. Not enough is being done. Not nearly enough is being done on cyber crimes. If we were worried post 2000 and post 9/11 about online radicalization, It's moved from just online radicalization now to actually targeting people. Financial scams, identity theft, compromise on leaders, politicians. And this is an existential threat to all of us, not just what's happening in terms of cyber threats, but what Victor mentioned earlier, which is the the entire threat that comes from AI, in the future. So I think we need to work together on this. Of course, it's a fault line because different countries and different actors

use it as a tool, a weapon. And they weaponize social media, and they weaponize AI for their own purposes. But I think just like we did in the eighties and nineties with nuclear weapons, we should identify this as an existential threat to all of humanity and get together and come up with standards, and we can start at ASEAN.

Climate change, the only short intervention that I have is I'm concerned because you have an incoming president who tends to listen to climate change deniers. So, the United States leadership in climate change and green transition is going to be hugely jeopardized. So we have to turn to other countries. China has taken up that leading role. We have to continue to push back against the advisers that Trump will surround himself with who say that this is absolutely untrue in terms of science and in terms of the United States commitment. And you can be extremely certain that all the commitments that Biden has put in, towards the transition, are going to be canceled by Trump in January.

Let me end by one more before I talk about Palestine. This is the question about the international order. Look, the United Nations Security Council is an anachronism. It is a creature of post 1945. With all due respect, even if you look at the permanent members today, there are at least two permanent members that if you measure them today in any metric, whether it's diplomacy, whether it's defense, whether it's the economy, has no business being in the Security Council. You can guess who those two members are. They're only there because they happen to be on the winning side in 1945. Today, they are middle powers at best. So you need to think about how you want to reform the United Nations. Easier said than done. If you want to reform the five, you wanna reform the security council, who gets the seat? Is it rotation? If it goes to this region, who gets it? For instance, if South Asia gets a region, India gets it, Pakistan's not gonna like it. Likewise, if you talk about Africa, who's gonna choose? So is it gonna be a rotation basis? But whatever it is, there is a problem because it's an anachronism. It doesn't work, but we don't have a solution as to what can replace it.

Now, just to end very quickly on Palestine. the outlook for Palestine, I disagree a bit. I think the crowds may have whittled down in front of the embassies, but boy, the boycotts are still working. You go to Kuala Lumpur, nobody goes to Starbucks. Right or wrong, it's empty. And people are still very much charged, emotionally charged, invested in this, and clearly making behavioral changes towards this. So I do think that it ebbs and flows, of course, with the news, and that's to be expected. But I think in terms of commitment from Malaysians, and I think Indonesians, I think it's there. And I think it will continue to be there until we have a free and independent Palestine. But just one point on this issue of the Palestinian state. I think some Muslim countries are not doing enough. I don't wanna finger them, but I think it's clear who are not doing enough. I think those Muslim countries or Muslim majority countries who are far from Palestine, far from the gulf, far from the Middle East, like Malaysia, Indonesia, we're doing a lot, a lot more than people countries who are close to Palestine. Why? Because of divide and rule. Why? Because of big power politics. I don't like Iran. You're gonna save me from Iran. Therefore, I don't have to lean on the Palestinian issue as much as I would like to, because I need your umbrella, your

protection, because, you know, of the divisions within the Muslim side. So I think the Muslim world has to look into itself, introspection, to say that, you know, when the house is divided, this issue is not gonna be resolved.

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
Over to you, Michael.

Michael Vatikiotis
Just a small point on that last I mean, you know, as someone who knows the region well. The Palestinian cause has never been a popular cause in the Arab states. The Palestinians are regarded as a sort of orphaned people, and no one really cares about them. I mean, the fact is that you're right. Malaysia, Malaysia and Indonesia in particular have gone to great lengths to defend the Palestine the rights of the Palestinians, but that's not the case in the Middle East, rightly or wrongly.I just wanted on the ICC, I would actually like to ask Miroslav because, you know, if there's one example of people who've actually gone to jail as the result of ICC prosecutions, it's in the Balkans. It's, you know, Serbia and Bosnia. So I want to ask you whether because since you're close to that part of that world, do people feel that justice was served? And is that something that they would like to see more of? Because it seems to me that the ICC, you know, doesn't really get much publicity for what it's trying to do. In fact, there's more resistance than anything else. But in the case of Serbia, people actually went to jail.

Ambassador Miroslav Wlachovský
Yeah. But it was a specialized court just for the war of Yugoslavia.

Michael Vatikiotis
Why can't that apply elsewhere? I'm sorry? Why can't that apply elsewhere in the case of Israel?

Ambassador Miroslav Wlachovský
You see the war, where in which it ended in Israel? I didn't see that. I see the war which ended in Yugoslavia.

Michael Vatikiotis
So you end the war first.

Ambassador Miroslav Wlachovský
You can deal with, either perpetrators or victims, after this. This is logical.

Michael Vatikiotis
So maybe that's the answer. I think what will happen is that Bibi Netanyahu will become the maverick sort of chameleon that he's been for many, many years. He will turn himself into someone who supports peace. We've seen that he supported the ceasefire in Lebanon. No one could have predicted that. He wants to survive, and he will try to survive. And if it means feeding into the agenda that they want to end this war, I predict that he will do that, and he will ditch the right wing.

Khairy Jamaluddin
But I think that's also the problem. The problem is that you have this imagination that this genocide is gonna end, and only after that, you deal with the consequences. No. I mean, I think you have to stop it now. You can't wait until something ends because it's not gonna end. Even if the genocide ends, that now what is happening in Gaza now, it still continues on a very grey scale level of occupation, of the denial of rights. So, I think, you know, we shouldn't wait for anything to end. We should take action now.

Ambassador Miroslav Wlachovský
May I suggest one quick solution for that? Just return hostages from Gaza to Israel.

Khairy Jamaluddin
I think we'll be here for a long time if we start this debate

Dr. Hoo Chiew-Ping
So, I really thank the audience today for such active participation. And I hope the core committee of a FPCI will agree that this is the panel session that gathered the most number of questions, I hope. And, I really want to thank the young students, young voices, and also our distinguished panelists. Please give yourself and all of us here a big hand of applause. Thank you so much.