

PRESS RELEASE

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Astana

Changes in the world order: building bridges or walls?

World experts and speakers of the panel session from among the influential leaders of the East and West opened the 14th Eurasian Media Forum in Astana dedicated to the addressing of global problems of the present titled: "New World Order: Building Bridges or Walls?"

During the lively discussions moderated by British TV presenter and journalist **Nick Gowing**, the speakers focused on the impact of populist trends in the world, on the quality of current world leaders and on the danger of unleashing war in various hot spots, particularly, in North Korea.

The speakers of the panel session included ex-President of the European Commission and former Prime Minister of Portugal Jose Manuel Barroso, former President of Turkey Abdullah Gul, former US Ambassador to the United Nations Bill Richardson and former Chief of Staff under the Prime Minister and chief negotiator from the Israeli Side Gilead Sher.

The most alarming message of the session, as **Jose Manuel Barroso** pointed out, is that if China and other countries cannot convince the North Korean leadership to abandon hostile nuclear arsenal, then "most likely, North Korea will be intervened by the United States."

Bill Richardson described North Korea as a country of bad alternatives. He said that the situation was currently complicated by the fact that there is a very serious outcry in the United States over the death of a young American, who was recently released from prison in North Korea. There is public pressure to take action.

However, a preemptive strike is a bad alternative in the face of the unpredictability of the North Korean leader and the risk factors associated with South Korea, Japan and US troops based in this region. Alternatives related to cyber-countermeasures will still be considered, but future measures depend on China's willingness to help. Russia will also probably be more cooperative", Richardson said.

As for Turkey, ex-President **Abdullah Gul** stated that the military solution is acceptable only in the most extreme case. First of all, it is necessary to investigate all the possibilities for political resolution, preferably behind closed doors. The position of China is crucial. It is in China's interest to see North Korea without weapons of mass destruction.

Representative of Israel, **Gilead Sher**, confined himself to the phrase: "Israel will do everything necessary to protect itself." During the press briefing on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the speaker noted that both sides are interested in resolving the conflict for the sustainable development of the region to the benefit of future generations.

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