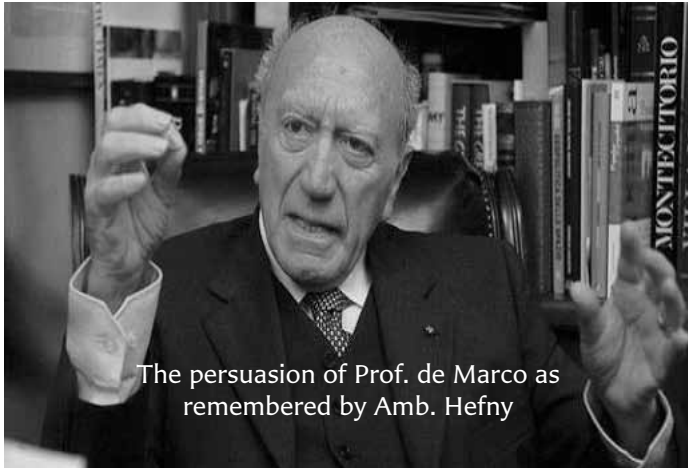


Tribute to Professor Guido de Marco

My Country “EGYPT” and the Arab Region Enjoyed de Marco’s True Friendship

by **Ambassador Dr. Magdy A. Hefny**
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Mrs. De Marco, and Family
Excellencies, Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen

At the outset, I would like to express my deep thanks and gratitude to H.E. Dr. Joe Borg, Chairman of MEDAC, and to Prof. Stephen Calleya, Director of MEDAC, as well as the organizers for inviting me to be part of the feature panel paying

tribute to Prof. Guido de Marco. The theme of my submission is “My Country “EGYPT” and the Arab Region Enjoyed De Marco’s True Friendship”

This great moment is a powerful occasion to commemorate, recollect, and most important to recognize Professor Guido de Marco’s legacy in Malta’s political life, in the world of diplomacy and politics, and in, regional Euro-Mediterranean dialogue and cooperation. He believed that such cooperation is a basic element in creating structures to consolidate regional security and cooperation.

Indeed, at this moment, Malta and the world of politics and diplomacy lost one of its greatest minds and a dynamic driving force with one of the strongest voices in regional and international politics.

On the home front Prof. de Marco was an eminent criminal lawyer, Minister and Deputy Prime Minister and also as President of the United Nations’ General Assembly. And in his role as a university professor and a chairman of MEDAC, he left his unique mark.

His achievements in high public office, both in Malta and internationally will remain recorded in our modern political history books. And he is the one that presented Malta’s request to join the European Union back in 1990.

I think it is more the individual day-to-day experiences so many people have of Prof. de Marco that have spurred this “outburst of respect and love”, as his family put it in their statement of thanks.

Paying tribute to Professor de Marco, he was a man of ideas and promoting fresh thinking and in bringing about new concepts. He believed that:

- “Relevance does not depend on size but on ideas. “This is what Malta has succeeded in achieving” (Lawrence Gonzi, Prime Minister of Malta, told Parliament in his Speech).
- “Through the politics of persuasion and the rules of engagement, which dictated that two parties need to find the points that link an argument rather than focus on what divides an issue (Guido de Marco, Autobiography).
- He was also instrumental in consolidating Malta’s active contribution to the work of international organizations, including the United Nations, the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the Commonwealth.
- The well known dictum ‘*si vis pacem, para bellum*’ (if you want peace, prepare for war) should be modified in this day and age to read: ‘*si vis pacem, para pacem*’ (if you want peace prepare for peace).
- He was reiterating his belief that ‘A step forward in disarmament is a step forward in the survival of mankind.
- He put across several questions in his keynote address to the Montana Forum (Switzerland) “Revisiting Multilateralism: Which Order For the World?”. “What is this new order? Are we going to exercise prevention of wars on a unilateral basis or does the future lie again in the United Nations Charter, the only way to enforce peace and peacekeeping?
- During his Presidency of the UNGA in 1990 (45th Session), Prof. de Marco initiated a dialogue, that later led to a presidential motion unanimously approved, to revitalize the General Assembly and

other aspects of reform necessary during a time of transition in international relations.

- Representing the General Assembly, as its President, Prof. de Marco undertook a number of diplomatic initiatives leading to his visit to the refugee camps in the Occupied Territories and Jordan, to Ethiopia and Albania.
- He proposed a new role for the Trusteeship Council, an initiative which was pursued by Malta within the United Nations, an initiative which Malta is known with.
- He insisted that the role of the president of the General Assembly was not limited to presiding over meetings but rather to represent it and to generate wider and greater awareness of some of the most vital issues the General Assembly discussed and deliberated upon. This he did successfully on many occasions and, particularly, in his handling of the Kuwait crisis for which the Kuwaitis have remained ever so grateful.

Iraq invasion of Kuwait.

His role as President of the UN General Assembly had come at a time, when Iraq invaded Kuwait. In this role he had the courage to take a clear stand and declare that Kuwait should be given all necessary support in that time of dire need. And no wonder that the Emir of Kuwait and his delegation had not only attended his funeral but bestowed such an honor on him.

The Palestinian Question.

With the strongest voice he stood firm for Palestinian rights and the refugees' plight in the occupied territories, while he was caught in gunfire between the Palestinian youth and the Israeli forces, during his visit to Palestine.

Mrs. Suha Arafat, the widow of former Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, described Guido de Marco as a courageous man and a great leader. “When my husband was under siege in Ramallah and everybody was afraid to talk to him, Guido de Marco had the courage to call him every day. He was a loyal man when there was no loyalty at all,” Mrs. Arafat said. She cited an Arabic proverb that says: “*A person who has children to follow his path will not die.*” She added that “There are people who make history and Guido de Marco was one of them. And Malta should be proud of great men like Prof. de Marco.”

Guido de Marco’s legacy will influence the establishment of peace and cooperation among all nations of the Mediterranean, (according to the chairman of the UN’s Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of Palestinian People). “Prof. de Marco is well known to the members of the committee as an ardent supporter of a comprehensive, just and lasting solution of the Question of Palestine on the basis of international legitimacy and the United Nations resolutions,” Ambassador Bajdi said.

He added that “Prof. de Marco contributed personally to identifying practicable approaches towards moving the Israeli-Palestinian peace process forward, he said, adding that the former President highly valued the role of the United Nations, including the committee, in resolving the conflict”.

As President of the General Assembly in 1990, he addressed the special meeting of the committee to commemorate the International Solidarity Day with the Palestinian People. When, in 1992, the Government of Malta invited the committee to hold its European meeting in Malta, Prof. de Marco addressed its opening session in his capacity as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malta.

“He remained a true friend of the committee, always prepared to support its work with advice and counsel. Participants in the United Nations International Meeting in Support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace held in 2008 in Malta gained from his vast experience and insight on the situation in the Middle East as part of the Mediterranean when he addressed the gathering as an invited Honorable Expert,” Ambassador Bajdi said.

The Ambassador and Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, Riyad Mansour, also shared his condolences for the passing away of “a true friend of Palestine”.

For me, since I started my journey with MEDAC in 2004, I enjoyed every moment in meetings with Professor Guido de Marco. His loss is great not only for his family and the Maltese, but also for me. I express deeply that he was a real friend to me, my country “EGYPT” and to my Arab Region. His style and attitude made an impression on me from the outset: brightness, joy of life, a sense of humor, a vivacious intelligence coupled with an approach which many times, would ultimately convince.

In this great moment, I remember all our meetings and discussions about the future of our regional Euro-Med dialogue and cooperation. *His vision* gave me a lot of hope for democracy, peace, and stability to reign over EGYPT and the entire Mediterranean region.

I found in him a man of vision and conviction, together with an extraordinary personal charisma, and a man of principles, possesses the power of reason, and reconciliation. I enjoyed being in audience with Professor de Marco, and I was always happy meeting him and seizing his wisdom and looking forward to our next meeting together. I wish the new political generation would manage to live up to the standards set by great statesmen of his kind.

For MEDAC, the diplomatic and international community will deeply miss this great leader, academic and diplomat. Professor de Marco contributed his knowledge and great experience by writing his famous Autobiography on “the Politics of Persuasion”, which is a must for every student following the MEDAC Diplomatic Studies programme at the University of Malta.

De Marco, I will always remember you as a man of noble traits, a brilliant mind that contributed a lot to the people of Malta and led them into the European Union. I will always remember you as a knowledge generator for the benefit of people of the Mediterranean and beyond, as you have disseminated your knowledge and experience beyond Malta, serving the cause of peace in the world.

At the dawn of the widespread of Arab springs of political change and democratization, may I propose that “Euro-Med Seminars establish on its agenda “A Guido de Marco Observatory for Euro-Med Best Practices of Sustainable Peaceful Transition to Democracy and Good Governance.” The mission of the Guido de Marco Observatory would be to develop criteria and standards on “How Best Political Process for Democratization and Good Governance could be Successful.”

In conclusion, I would like to express anew to Mrs de Marco, and to Mario and all the de Marco family, my heartfelt condolences.

