TAKREEM GATHERS GLOBAL THOUGHT AND ACTION LEADERS FOR AN INSIGHTFUL DEBATE ON FORCED MIGRATION AND REFUGEE RIGHTS

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NNA - After two years of convening virtually, TAKREEM jury board was finally able to assemble in Geneva for the selection of this year’s laureates. To mark the occasion, a dinner reception attended by guests from different backgrounds was held at the “Beau Rivage Hotel”. The dinner also included a panel discussion about refugees and the regional and global response to forced migration. The panel was moderated by Mr. Khaled Janahi, Chairman of Vision 3 and Co-Founder and Trustee of the Maryam Forum Foundation. Among the speakers were three inspiring figures and activists in the domain of refugees and human rights: Mrs. Fadumo Dayib, a Somalian Politician, Refugee and Social Justice Advocate; Mrs. Arwa
Damon, CNN's Senior International Correspondent based in Istanbul, Turkey and founder of INARA, the International Network for Aid, Relief and Assistance; and Dr. Khalid Koser, the Executive Director of the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund.

Each of the panelists brought his and her unique insight and personal experience to the discussion. They referred to the current situation in Ukraine as an inevitable starting point and moved forward to place it in a global context where many burning questions can be asked. They reflected on the disparity of response expressed by host countries facing incoming waves of refugees on both social and political levels. They also highlighted that this disparity is not always forwarded by the west when Middle Eastern and North African refugees are in question, but can also be witnessed in eastern countries, who in theory are expected to be more hospitable, since sharing common backgrounds, religion, ethnicity, etc.

According the three speakers, the hospitality we are witnessing today in Europe, a continent historically known for its hostility towards refugees, in reaction to the war in Ukraine should not be surprising but should actually be the norm. In this context, Dr. Khalid Koser, Executive Director of the GCERF, insisted that the burden of refugees absolutely falls on the global south. He reminded that the “numbers and political attention in Ukraine should never allow us to forget that the crisis is a crisis of the global south and not Europe”. Dr. Koser said: “I fear that refugees around the world are facing an increasingly inhospitable atmosphere. Governments are closing their borders, people are showing lack of tolerance and lack of sympathy towards refugees around the world and not just in Europe, and this is why Ukraine stands as an unusual example in the world today”.

In a similar paradox, Mrs. Arwa Damon, CNN’s Senior International Correspondent based in Istanbul remembered the days she was covering the Syrian exodus and was both shocked and moved by the blatant discrepancy in the way Syrian and Ukrainian refugees were treated at the borders of hosting countries. She asked: “Why did we as Arabs not respond when our own were being displaced? Why did we not drive to the borders and offer Syrians or Iraqis or whoever it may be a ride to somewhere warm or homes or food?”
In the same rationale, Mrs. Fadumo Dayib, Somalian Politician, Refugee and Social Justice Advocate, said: “Opening our doors and responding to people in need should be an ethical obligation, something that each and every one of us should be able to do, particularly if we have the means. By doing so, we may learn something new and bring in change and innovation to our society”. Mrs. Dayib also emphasized on the importance of humanizing refugees like herself, to give them names and faces so everyone could remember they are ordinary people. She reminded that being a refugee is not, and should not, be a permanent status and it is every refugee’s dream to go back home and make an impactful change.

The panel was concluded with a special thought to the millions of Palestinian refugees around the world. Mr. Koser referred to them as the “forgotten refugees” and called on the importance of “raising awareness about the Palestinian crisis” while Mrs. Damon highlighted the power of individuals to make impactful change. Mrs. Dayib concluded by saying that the Arab countries do have the power to change the current status quo when it comes to the Palestinian crisis, and it is important to recognize that, if the crisis continues, this implicitly means that Arab governments have not resolved to make change happen.

In his closing statement, Mr. Khaled Janahi reminded that “dignity” and “empathy” should be the two keywords kept in mind when looking for solutions to current global refugee crisis.

Singer and Songwriter Yasmina Joumblatt, great granddaughter of the legendary Asmahan, dedicated the song “Li Beirut” to her compatriots during the dinner where funds were raised to help Lebanese students currently in Europe with their living expenses.

TAKREEM was established in 2009 by media figure Ricardo Karam with the aim of honoring Arab accomplishments and bringing Arab achievers to the forefront of the global stage.

Since its inception, the Foundation has honored and recognized laureates from most every Arab country. It built bridges between North Africa, the Middle East, the Gulf and Arab diaspora, creating a community of like-minded people and acting as a gateway for the region’s cultural, educational, scientific, environmental, humanitarian, social and economic excellence.
Beyond honoring excellence and forging links, TAKREEM aims to create the needed environment and dynamics to move forward, leave a mark, and provide future generations with a different kind of role models.

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Army helicopters, military units contribute to extinguishing Batramaz fire

Hamieh says meeting with UNODC’s Aigner confirms works ministry’s will to cooperate to uplift Lebanon’s reputation

Murad: For an urgent Parliament session to reach a unified official position on the violation of our maritime borders

Mneimneh: We hold the President of the Republic personally responsible for relinquishing Lebanon’s maritime rights

Army: Seizing of drug manufacturing plant in Al-Sharawneh

AGENDA

Friday, March 10, 2022

TAKREEM gathers Global Thought and Action Leaders for an Insightful Debate on Forced Migration and Re