

**Extract from the address by Dr. Henry A. Kissinger at the Appeal of Conscience Foundation's 57th Annual Awards Dinner, which honoured Prime Minister Mario Draghi with the 2022 World Statesman Award**

19 September 2022

[omissis]

I have known Mr Draghi, our honorary, since we shared a plane of a common friend, who did not serve food on his planes, but knowing that friend, I had brought some sandwiches, which I shared with Draghi. Our friendship goes back many decades to that point when we shared a common airplane.

I have had enormous respect for Mr Draghi over these years, over these decades.

He has had an extraordinary capacity for intellectual analysis, and for an intellectual analysis of issues that were focused on the common good and not just on an immediate point.

He became prime minister at a moment where the president of the country decided that he needed a leader who was above the parties but whom the parties nevertheless respected and where he could be sure that whatever proposals Prime Minister Draghi would make to him, would be based on an analysis of the common good and of the national purpose. So, he was symbolic for a challenge of a generation.

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In various elevated positions, as general director of the treasury, as head of the European economic structure and then as Prime Minister of Italy, Mario Draghi was called upon to do extraordinarily complicated tasks because it was believed, and turned out to be correct, that he would analyse the issues, that he would not approach them from a partisan basis and, therefore, over the decades, whenever Mario Draghi retired from one of these positions, it was an interval and never a permanent withdrawal.

In our period, executives have to decide how to take their country or the unit they govern from where they are to where they've never been. So, what is needed is high technical knowledge, but beyond that, courage and vision. Courage because leaders have to move on paths that are not yet familiar, but are necessary; and vision to deal with the relationship of what is developing with the necessities of the individual.

The world right now has achieved a technology inconceivable even a generation ago, but its definition of purpose has not kept pace with the capacities that have been developed. So as we look around the world, we see the United States and China, enormous [inaudible] verbal conflict, and the danger is that when this becomes built into the thinking of each side, some accident can happen, some incident that then is interpreted by the hostility that has been built up. So China and the United States have a need for a kind of dialogue, not just for the immediate issues of the moment but also the evolution of the future. We look at the Ukrainian crisis, and we welcome the effort of the Ukrainian people to maintain their independence and their freedom. But, we also need to consider what happens after victory, and what the relationship will be between Europe, a liberated Ukraine and Russia as a historic entity. In the Middle East, the issue of nuclear weapons and the spread of nuclear weapons overhangs so many of the tensions and it's the cause of so many of the tensions.

It is a great privilege for me to speak here for a man who I believe has a unique capacity to analyse situations and to contribute to their solution. He can make that contribution sometimes in

government and sometimes as an adviser, but his record makes clear that he has the analytical ability and the courage and the vision that he will be with us for a long time in this constructive role. I will watch him and he will go beyond the period [inaudible], and it is therefore my great privilege to participate in giving this award this evening. I want to thank the previous speakers for the generous remarks they have made and for their expression of faith in our honorary.

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I wish you all the best, Mario Draghi.