



**Under the High Patronage of  
HE Qubad Talabani, Deputy Prime Minister, KRG**

**Sunday & Monday,  
May 18 – 19, 2025**

**Under the Auspices**



**DRAFT AGENDA,  
May 19, 2025**



## Security & Growth

**Day 1 | Sunday, May 18, 2025**

**The Foundation Hall, Culture Factory, Sulaimani**

10.00 *Registration, Arrival of Guests – Light Lunch*

13.00 **Official Opening**

### **Welcome Remarks**

✓ **Symeon G. Tsomokos**, Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece

### **Opening Remarks**

✓ **H.E. Qubad Talabani**, Deputy Prime Minister, Kurdistan Regional Government

### **Keynote Statements**

✓ **H.E. Andres Pastrana**, President, Christian Democrat International; President, Republic of Colombia (1998-2002)

✓ **Georgios Alamanos**, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the Republic of Iraq

*Chair of the Opening Session:*

✓ **Symeon G. Tsomokos**, Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece



#### 14.15 **The Middle East in the Global Order**

##### **Strategic Alliances and Global Challenges**

*An exploration of the GCC's role in balancing regional and global partnerships and addressing emerging global challenges.*

- ✓ **Ahmet Davutoglu**, Prime Minister of Türkiye (2014-2016); Leader of the Future Party
- ✓ **Hoshyar Zebari**, Foreign Minister, Republic of Iraq (2003-2014); Member of the Political Bureau, KDP
- ✓ **Dimitris Avramopoulos**, MP; EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs & Citizenship (2014-2019), Greece
- ✓ **Massimo D'Alema**, Prime Minister of Italy (1998-2000)
- ✓ **General Sir Nick Carter**, UK Chief of the Defence Staff (2018-2021); Hoover Institute and Atlantic Council
  
- ✓ **Chair: Nik Gowing**, Founder and Director, Thinking the Unthinkable, UK

#### 15.15 **Strategic Pivot**

##### **Iraq, the Kurdistan Region, and the Geopolitical Landscape**

*An analysis of Iraq's and the Kurdistan Region's role in regional power dynamics, addressing political and economic partnerships.*

- ✓ **Radu Butum**, Head of EU Liaison Office in Erbil, Delegation of the European Union to Iraq
- ✓ **Marianna Charountaki**, Senior Lecturer in International Politics, University of Lincoln, UK
- ✓ **Volker Perthes**, Senior Distinguished Fellow, German Institute for International & Security Affairs (SWP)
  
- ✓ **Chair: Nikoletta Kritikou**, Chief Foreign Affairs Editor, Skai TV; freelancer KATHIMERINI newspaper, Greece



#### 16.10 Kurdistan's Economic Potential

##### Insights from International Partners

*A special session devoted to heads of foreign missions in the Kurdistan Region to share insights on their countries' contributions to Kurdistan Region's economic development. The panel will explore successful experiences, lessons learned, and opportunities for deeper international collaboration to help unlock Kurdistan's economic potential.*

- ✓ **Liu Jun**, Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Erbil
- ✓ **Albrecht von Wittke**, Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Erbil
- ✓ **Seungcheol Lim**, Consul General of the Republic of Korea in Erbil
- ✓ **Steve Bitner**, U.S. Consul General to the Kurdistan Region
- ✓ **Andrew Bizley**, Consul General of the United Kingdom in Erbil
- ✓ **Yann Braem**, Consul General of the Republic of France in the Kurdistan Region
  
- ✓ **Chair: Peshawa Muhammed**, Head of Diplomatic Relations, DPM Office

#### 17.20 Strengthening Cooperation Between the Region and the European Union

*Exploring ways to enhance business relations, trade partnerships, and cross-border cooperation between Middle Eastern and European businesses.*

- ✓ **Dara Rashid Mahmud**, Minister of Planning, Kurdistan Region Government
- ✓ **Anna Diamantopoulou**, President, DIKTIO; EU Commissioner for Jobs & Social Rights (1999-2004), Greece
- ✓ **Nikos Papandreou**, Member of the European Parliament, Greece
- ✓ **Omar Shaban**, Head, PalThink for Strategic Studies Policy Institute; Sen.Advisor, European Inst. for Peace, Palaistine
  
- ✓ **Chair: Manveen Rana**, Senior Editor, The Times, UK

#### 18.10 The Role of Iraq and the Gulf in Global Markets

*Analyzing how Iraq and the GCC are serving as gateways between East and West, with emphasis on investment, on trade and market integration.*

- ✓ **Sheikh Saad Hassan**, Executive Chairman, Onex, Republic of Iraq
- ✓ **Shishir Priyadarshi**, President, Global Relations, Adani Group, India
- ✓ **Anna Diamantopoulou**, President, DIKTIO; EU Commissioner for Jobs & Social Rights (1999-2004), Greece
- ✓ **Nikos Papandreou**, Member of the European Parliament, Greece
  
- ✓ **Chair: Nik Gowing**, Founder and Director, Thinking the Unthinkable, UK



19.20                      *Break*

21.00    **Welcome Networking Buffet Dinner**  
          **The Grand Millennium Hotel Sulaimani**  
          **Ballroom B**



## Security & Growth

**Day 2 | Monday, May 19, 2025**

**The Foundation Hall, Culture Factory, Sulaimani**

08.30 *Arrival of Guests*

09.30 **Opening Remarks**

✓ **Haval Abubakir**, Governor of Slemani

09.40 **Welcome Remarks**

✓ **Symeon G. Tsomokos**, Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece

09.45 **Keynote Statement**

✓ **H.E. Abdul Latif Rashid**, President of the Republic of Iraq

10.05 **Statement and Discussion**

✓ **Dimitris Skalkos**, Secretary General for International Economic Affairs, MFA, Hellenic Republic

✓ *Chair:* **Symeon G. Tsomokos**, Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece



#### 10.20 **Business Beyond Borders**

##### **Creating Strategic Alliances**

*A showcase of opportunities in key sectors like trade, energy, and infrastructure, followed by targeted matchmaking sessions.*

- ✓ **Kovan Jalal**, Director of Industrial Development, Kurdistan Region, Iraq
- ✓ **Layla Omer**, President, Municipal Council, Slemani
- ✓ **Markus Jerger**, President, Council for International Cooperation, Germany
- ✓ **Amanj Fayaq**, Director General of Investment, Slemani
- ✓ **Dhaval Desai**, Senior Fellow and Vice President, ORF, India
- ✓ **Villy Filippopoulou**, Chief Executive Officer, Commercial Mediation, Qatar
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **Fanis Papathanasiou**, Journalist, ERT, Greece

#### 11.05 **In Conversation**

##### **The Future of War and Peace**

- ✓ **General Sir Nick Carter**, UK Chief of the Defence Staff (2018-2021); Hoover Institute and Atlantic Council
- ✓ **Greg Mills**, Director, Brenthurst Foundation, South Africa
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **Basil Gavalas**, Managing Partner, Asinin Corporation, Cyprus

#### 11.35 **Innovation as a Catalyst for Regional Development**

*Discussing how technological advancements, entrepreneurship, and innovation can propel the region into a new era of sustainable growth.*

- ✓ **Nikos Theodoropoulos**, Co-Founder & Vice President, StiQ
- ✓ **Safeen Ghafour**, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister, Kurdistan Regional Government
- ✓ **Erol User**, CEO, Erol User Corporation, Türkiye
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **Konstantin Valkov**, Director of Special Projects, New Bulgarian University

#### 12.05 **Statement**

- ✓ **Ulrich Nussbaum**, State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs & Energy (2018-2021), Germany

*Introduced by* **Symeon G. Tsomokos**, Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece

- ✓ confirmed speaker



12.20 **Financing Regional Growth**

**Investment, Trade and Infrastructure**

*Exploring opportunities and challenges in securing investments for trade and critical infrastructure to enhance regional connectivity.*

- ✓ **Muhammed Shukri**, Chairman of the Board of Investment, Kurdistan Regional Government
- ✓ **Hawre Tofiq**, Head of International Relations and Organizations, Presidency of the Republic of Iraq
- ✓ *Chair:* **Sana Nawzad Osman**, University of Sulaimani, Kurdistan Region, Iraq

12.45                      *Networking Break - Light Lunch*

13.30 **Energy Sovereignty and International Cooperation**

*Discussing the roles of Iraq, the Kurdistan Region, and GCC in securing global energy markets while pursuing sustainability and investing in future: PPP, oil and gas.*

- ✓ **Ahmad Mufti**, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources, Kurdistan Regional Government
- ✓ **Admiral Evaggelos Apostolakis**, MP, Hellenic Parliament, Minister of Defense (2019), Greece
- ✓ **Ulrich Nussbaum**, State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs & Energy (2018-2021), Germany
- ✓ **Raad Al Kadiri**, Senior Director, BCG Center for Energy Impact, USA
- ✓ **Zisis Ioannidis**, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Energy, Hellenic Republic
- ✓ *Chair:* **Alexia Tasouli**, Diplomatic Correspondent, Greece

14.20 **Building Sustainable Growth**

**Diversifying Economies Through Environmentally Sound Agriculture and Agro-Innovation**

- ✓ **Hallo Askari**, Minister of Environment, Republic of Iraq
- ✓ **Begard Talabani**, Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources, Kurdistan Regional Government
- ✓ **Dimitris Skalkos**, Secretary General for International Economic Affairs, MFA, Hellenic Republic
- ✓ *Chair:* **Abdulsalam Madani**, Advisor to the President of the Kurdistan Region





## 15.00 In Conversation

- ✓ **Rebwar Taha**, Governor of Kirkuk
- ✓ *Chair:* **Manveen Rana**, Senior Editor, The Times, UK

## 15.15 Diplomatic and Economic Alliances The Path Forward

*High-level dialogue with political figures from Iraq, GCC, and the EU, discussing economic diplomacy and shared interests.*

- ✓ **Enver Hoxhaj**, Member of Parliament; Minister of Foreign Affairs (2011–2014 / 2016–2017), Kosovo
- ✓ **Emmanouil Karagiannis**, Reader in International Security (Defence Studies), King's College, UK
- ✓ **Luis Ravina**, Dir., Navarra Center for Int'l Development & Prof. of Int'l Economy, Univ. of Navarra, Spain
- ✓ **Umberto Tavalato**, Director, Med-Or Italian Foundation, Italy
- ✓ **Theo Benos**, Researcher, Athens University of Economics and Business & AE4RIA network, Greece
- ✓ *Chair:* **Alexia Tasouli**, Diplomatic Correspondent, Greece

## 16.05 Women Empowerment & Leadership Unlocking the Region's Potential

*Exploring the role of women in driving regional growth, leadership opportunities, and policy advancements towards gender equality.*

- ✓ **Sherri Kraham Talabany**, President of SEED
- ✓ **Konstantina Karabatsoli**, Member, Hellenic Parliament; Ambassador in Greece of the organization "World Political Leaders WPL"
- ✓ *Chair:* **Konstantin Valkov**, Director of Special Projects, New Bulgarian University



16.30 **A Common Future**  
**International Cooperation for Economic Growth and Stability**

- ✓ **Georgios Alamanos**, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the Republic of Iraq
- ✓ **Soumen Bagchi**, Ambassador of India to the Republic of Iraq
- ✓ **Alicia Rico Perez del Pulgar**, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain to the Republic of Iraq
- ✓ **Mohamed Al Hassan**, Special Rep. for Iraq & Head of United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **Momen Zellmi**, Center for Future Studies (CSF); Editor in Chief, The Future Media

17.10 **In Conversation**  
**Cultural Diplomacy and Business Synergies**

*Roundtable discussions between business leaders and policymakers, focused on trade and investment.*

- ✓ **Prof. Luis G. Franceschi**, Assistant Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, UK
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **Fanis Papathanasiou**, Journalist, ERT, Greece

17.30 **Closing Remarks**

- ✓ **Symeon G. Tsomokos**, Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece

20.30 **Arrival of Guests - Official Dinner (*by invitation only*)**  
**The Grand Millennium Hotel Sulaimani**  
**Ballroom B**



21.00 **Welcome Remarks**

✓ **Symeon G. Tsomokos**, Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece

Concluding remarks

✓ **H.E. Qubad Talabani**, Deputy Prime Minister, Kurdistan Regional Government