

It is a great honour to have been invited here. Because Ukraine is a country that I've been closely associated with for a very long time. I remember coming here with Elmar Brok and freezing to death on Maidan version 1.0. And I've been here many times after.

But I'd like to split the eight minutes that I have between two points. One is to talk about Ukraine. The other one is to talk about us - what we need to do right now.

Basically, there are two problems. One problem is war and the security environment in Europe today. Ukraine is the focus of these security problems today, but it may have been someone else. We did not really not pick up the phone or notice the alarm of security problems since 2008. We kept hitting the snooze button until this year. The other problem is what Ukraine needs to do.

25 years ago was the annus mirabilis of Poland becoming a free democratic country, followed by the then-called DDR, and Hungary, and then-Czechoslovakia. A year after the annus mirabilis in 1990, the Deutsche Bank did a study on the potential of the various republics of the Soviet Union to sustain themselves as independent countries. There were twelve criteria all together. The maximum points that you could come up with was 120. The country with the most points by Deutsche Bank rating that is the best, the most successful country to come out of the Soviet Union would have been in their opinion at 83 points – Ukraine. Then came – well even then, as now, no-one sees us as individual countries, liebe Kollegen - the Baltische staten came in at 77, followed by Russia at 72, Georgia – 61, Belarus at 55, and so on. So in other words, the country with the best rating and the best potential was considered Ukraine. Now in 2013 the IMF in its Purchasing Power Parity ratings of GDP per capita, Estonia was 23,000 USD, Poland was 21,000 USD, and Ukraine at 7,400 USD.

So something went wrong. We know a lot of what went wrong. But we fortunately also know these days what you can do right. Clearly there are huge reforms ahead of Ukraine to be made. And Estonia pledges it will do anything and everything that Ukraine needs. Support can be accounted on especially by those countries that succeeded doing in what Adam Michnik once said – that "we all know how to make fish soup out of aquarium, but we don't really know how to make the aquarium from the fish soup." But we do know now what it is you need to do. And

the experience precisely of those countries, who have gone through that process successfully, are the ones that should be most involved in the reforms that Ukraine needs to make.

I see Anders Aslund here, who is the greatest expert on the post-Soviet transformations – he's the man who I assume is also heavily involved with any genuine transformation. There are clear things we know now empirically, looking back at how countries failed, what they did wrong, what they did right, and what the prescriptions are. That is clearly the responsibility of Europe – so-called old and so-called new- to do that. Though, I wish we could get rid of that distinction.

One of the things is that on Transparency International list of corruption studies, Estonia is on position 28. It is interesting that we are in the upper good half of the European Union. And many of the countries in the less good half of the European Union were the so-called old members. I think that's good to keep in mind that transformation is even within the European Union. I heard a little lecture as a Foreign Minister 18 years ago about "oh, you, corrupt little East Europeans,"- and today some of those saying that then to us, are way behind.

I mention that not because of gloating – although there's a little bit of that, too – but mainly to say that you can get to the top. And you can do that being a former Soviet Republic. That will require a good amount of understanding by those who are fortunate enough these days to have GDPs per capita far higher than even the best of the the so called new members. So that is one point – the reform process.

But you cannot have a reform process when you are having a war. You can try. And President Poroshenko is trying to do that and it is a Herculean task. To try to reform your country domestically while you are fighting a war on your own territory. I don't know of anyone in history who's really managed to do that, but, with President Poroshenko you can make a start.

This is where all the rest of us come in. Basically, we have to admit to ourselves – be in in the case of NATO-Russia Founding Act or anything else – that the old rules unfortunately no longer apply and the fundamental architecture of security in Europe is gone. The first thing that was destroyed that we saw was what we thought received a definitive answer on 8 May 1945 – the annexation of territory on the basis of co-ethnics abroad. Otherwise known as Anschluss, which we saw with the Sudetenland. And know, having thought that this was gone forever, we have seen this happen in Ukraine.

1945, another basic premise of the post-WWII architecture was the prohibition of aggression, the UN Charter – it no longer holds. Then, the fundamental basis of the security in Europe – the Helsinki Final Act of 1975, which forbids aggression, changing borders by use of force, threat of force – that no longer applies.

We have just seen in this annus horribilis of 2014 the fundamental, basic, core tenets of the security in Europe just thrown out the window. And then of course, there is the 1990 Paris Charter, where they did not let us Estonians in, but at least the Poles and the Czechs and the Hungarians did – that said that every country has the right to make its own decisions on its security arrangements.

What we have seen in the 2013-2014 is that not even the mention of joining NATO can be seen as a reason to dismember and invade a country. The desire to have an Association Agreement with the European Union – that's not even the EU membership. I was the permanent rapporteur on the Association Agreement for Albania when I was in the European Parliament. It got a lot better to be an associate member, but it's not full membership. Already moving towards Europe is enough to create what we've seen. Forget the Paris Charter of 1990.

So that's why I'm sometimes amazed to see people saying, "well, we cannot change the NATO-Russia Founding Act." Which no-one seems to have read, because it says in 1997, "in the current and foreseeable security environment," we will not do this, this, and this. Unfortunately, none of that was foreseen in 1997, when Boris Yelstin was still the President.

So it is up to Europe to make all of this stop. Ukraine's job will be in the next decades to reform itself. Europe's job is to restore and re-establish some sense of security. Some sense of agreements that we can trust in Europe to hold to that were in all of the steps that I mentioned: no annexation of territory, because of co-ethnics, no aggression, no changing of borders through military means or threat of force, and the right of the Paris Charter of every country to make its own choices of their own security arrangements.

I'm increasingly upset by the arguments made in democratic liberal Europe that "of course, this is part of Russia's sphere of influence" or as we saw in the current issue of Foreign Affairs by John Mersheimer ("The Tragedy of the Great Powers") talking that it was Europe's fault that Ukraine is where it is today. No, Ukraine has as an independent sovereign nation made its European choice, and it is suffering a war because of that.

Dear Ukrainians, when it comes to domestic reforms, we are with you. I look at President Kwasniewski - he is nodding in agreement, as he often does, because we see things similarly. We will be there for you for the reforms. But all of us in the European Union must be here. Our paramount task is to restore peace and security on our continent.

Thank you very much.