

The logo for the Bay of Bengal Conversation 2023 features a blue geometric shape on the left, composed of interconnected lines and dots, resembling a stylized globe or a network. To the right of this shape, the text "Bay of Bengal" is written in a black serif font. Below it, the word "Conversation" is written in a blue sans-serif font, and "2023" is in a black sans-serif font. At the bottom, the phrase "Rising Tides" is written in a brown, cursive script font.

Bay of Bengal
Conversation 2023
Rising Tides

Inaugural speech by Moussa Mara | Bay of Bengal Conversation 2023

Speaker: **Moussa Mara**, Former Prime Minister, Mali

Moussa mara, “good morning, everyone. Mr chairman dear Ahmed, dear friend Mr Rahman and my friend Boris Tadic, former prime former president of Serbia, distinguish guest all of you I would like to introduce my speech by presenting a real thanks to the Centre for Governance Studies for inviting me. I am a former prime minister of Mali. Mali is a country in west Africa very far from bangladesh but I am very honored to be here among you and try to talk about some topics linked to this important forum. I would like to introduce my presentation at the first chapter to present what on my opinion could be the global geopolitical map and at the second chapter I will share with you some important question linked to what is going on and what could be the next decade on the geopolitical strategical landscape and the last chapter I will try to talk about the indo pacific issues even though I am not a real expert of that but I will share with the crowd my view about this important area of our world. In the first chapter on my view five important characteristic must be known to explain the current picture of the global map the global geopolitical map the first one is sadly the decline of multilateralism and this situation is shown by the difficulties in solving international problems with international agreement. The example of climate issues security issues economic issues and how it is difficult internationally to find some global solution about financing the development the other example is the impossibility to reform the united nations system. In particular the permanent membership of the security council, we have some hope on this stage like in the health with who and the other sectorial international organization but it is obvious that the multilateralism is declining. The second characteristic of the global map is the rising of powerful nation dominant in their neighbor and trying to get a position elsewhere and the two most dominant countries around the world are obviously the US and China, they are unifying countries around them through organization or initiatives. We can show the example of NATO, G-20 and BRICS. And this confrontation is being global and my opinion it will go on underground,

on the seas, on the air, even in the space it will be political. It is also political it is economic cultural security scientific and it will last. The third characteristic of the global map is a new one and important one it is the ambition of the middle power countries which will try to take advantage of the confrontation between China and the US these countries like India, Brazil, Japan, turkey, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, south Africa in Africa, Nigeria and the example of this country trying to be visible is given by the both chief of some of them in G-20 and BRICS this characteristic will be the difference between the former match US and soviet union and the current match US and China. These nations will play some roles in the future and will note that in our analysis. The fourth characteristic is Europe constitute by several countries rich but unfortunately divided. The problem of Europe is the division the difficult difficulties to work together. And the evidence of this division is the declining of the Europe of defense the Europe of defense has been totally eaten by NATO. And the last characteristic is I don't know if you can say the declining of democracy but democracy is being challenged in different parts of the world. Now we are facing to the rising of fury and rage radicality everywhere and the trend of national policies inspired by the right vision of the societies close the borders nationalism focus on the own interest have finished damaging the democracy image. And now in several countries democracy is not considered as the right way for development. And if we look at the african situation will show some example of that some what we call kudeta the overthrown of regular regime in some countries in Africa. And the young thinking that they believe in autocracy compared to democracy this is a characteristic of the global map we have to take that into account in the second chapter. I would like to share with you some questions analysis about what is going on in the planet. The first is the war between Russia and Ukraine which is going on with a huge impact everywhere and on my opinion this war will last unfortunately. And I think this war is not winnable by any part. Russia has not enough resources

to win and Ukraine will not get enough weapons to win and this situation will weaken for sure Russia and it will damage the cooperation overseas around the world. The second thinking I would like to share with you is about values because the international relationship from the second world war to now has been established around values. But now what's look at the values around the world the first is the freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of to choose who may lead the collectivities these freedoms are being contesting by a lot of states regimes around the world. The second is the right for everyone to access services to be educated to get health to get job to get revenue income and if this value is important why we are struggling to get the sdgs by 2030. The third is equality, gender equality, no discrimination against minorities protection of human rights and then the right for international community to interfere to the internal affairs. If this value is important what about religious consideration or sovereignty the claiming for the country to have the right to do what they want on their own territory. The next value is the humanity the right to live if this value is important what about the un being unable to get more than 35% of its budget for humanitarian assistance. We are searching 50-56 billion and now only 20 are available for humanitarian action. Finally about the value it is difficult to gather humanity around values whereas it was that situation that drove the settlement of international institution and organization the third topic on this chapter is about war what kind of war during the nuclear era. Is it possible to burn definitively the use of nuclear weapons? Or is it needed to prepare ourselves especially in the indo pacific zone to face nuclear war and then what role for new technologies on the battlefield and what kind of battlefield when it is possible to destroy infrastructures or financial system at a distance. The next one is about climate change disagreement about the application of paris agreement low willingness of powerful countries to refund their duties. Let's hope about reaching the goal to maintain the global warming around one 1.5° compared to pre-industrial

period no action expected the future on this way will depend on the capability for nos notably in the north to force the government to act. And finally on this chapter I will talk about Africa my own continent which represent 16% of global population but only 3% of global gdp, 2% of global investment and 54 states Africa is not a country is a continent with 54 states. Africa the main characteristic of our continent is as I said for Europe is division. We are not able to gather ourself on the same vision the same ambition and try to go out from poverty and the leading country. In Africa the leading countries in Africa all of them are unfortunately focused on their own situation, that's why Africa is still so divided. And the south region in Africa where is my own country mali is across the west and the east of the continent impacted by climate effect, desert, poor and demographically dynamic migration area. And now the seat of battles rebellions terrorist armies division ethnic issues the south has no institution to manage it concerns and it is shared between west Africa and east Africa that does not ease to solve its problem. I talk about south because south Africa look like the indopacific on my opinion not totally a continent undefined map undetermined concept some countries together but a huge difference between them. And the difficulties to gather themselves around the same vision the same ambition. This to introduce the last chapter about indo pacific the indo pacific as said and shown is one of the richest zone in the world with 40 countries the area where are concentrated a huge part of businesses investment trade two third of humanity combining welfare and poverty very diverse situation. It is for sure a geo- strategical opportunity for the two powerful countries US and China but also for countries like Japan, indonesia or India. For sure it is also a zone with a huge challenge the south China seas climate change concern territorial issues between countries humanitarian problem inside some countries and some other issues. But the indo pacific is not a continent and as no institution or no organization in charge of tackling its political or other difficulties economic environmental and security. The question is

why and how to settle an organization in charge of indo pacific challenges and then how it will be complementary with the current dispositive on my opinion the first answer is it will be difficult to gather the region in a political way and in a political organization due to the complexity of the reality maybe like what is going on. In un system it is possible to focus the attention on some sectorial issues like climate health, trade freedom, freedom of movement of people, capital and other issues like what the European union started by steel and coal. And then try to enlarge the scope for the future the probable scenario will be the face to-face confrontation between China and US in the indo pacifi.C and some role played by the middle powers in this context countries in the region must be smart to take advantage of the regional and global balance created by this confrontation to reach their target in term of security, stability and prosperity. This will be tricky but not impossible dealing with powerful nation could be complex because they are able to be at the same time big as an elephant and small as an ant. Finally and I will conclude by that we must never forget that it is difficult near impossible to predict what will happen in the global map now, the only certainty for the future is the uncertainty that surround it anything plant can be swept away by an single event. And we will face to several events in the coming years and decades. What we need to integrate is the need for agility adaptability and resilience agility adaptability and resilience which are needed for a single country region continent and a zone like the indopacific. And for that building consensus are needed around ideals ambitions and visions in order to gather people and to maintain the truth between people and leaders in a country in a region and in a continent. This is what I advise to the indopacific countries, what I advise also to my own continent because I was saying we are so divided in our continent and this is the substance of my speech. And I would like to thank again very warmly the Centre for Governance Studies to inviting me to make this speech thank you thank you for your patience.”