**Statement by Dr. Kamal Kharrazi, President of SCFR**

**In the 4th Meeting of the Leaders for Peace Foundation**

**11 May 2021**

**Dear Colleagues,**

Being delighted to attend this annual meeting of the foundation, I would like to thank President Raffarin, and his colleagues. Also, I would like to thank Amb. Vimont for preparing the 2021 report focused on multilateralism.

**Mr. President,**

As the report points, anti-western sentiments are rapidly rising in the south, which is mainly due to some western governments looking down at the south with disdain as well as the disrespect of their cultures and traditions. Even some western powers use the label of terrorism to suppress freedom fighters, while a clear line of distinction should be drawn between freedom-seeking nations and terrorist groups.

**Dear Colleagues,**

The geopolitics and economic equations on the ground have been remarkably changed in today’s world. An emerging country like Iran has managed to establish itself as a rising self-reliant country in spite of eight years of war, decades of sanctions, including Mr. Trump’s maximum pressure, and help others to defeat terrorist organizations such as al-Qaeda and Daesh. The awakened nations in the Middle East are struggling for their freedom, while western powers gain out of selling destructive weapons to the regional aggressors. The poor country of Yemen is an example.

**Mr. President**

The global health perspective is discouraging and the south is seriously worried about its condition. The low-and middle-income countries, according to the report, had received, by the end of February 2021, only a total of 675 million doses of Covid-19 vaccine while the rich countries had received 4.2 billion doses, far from their real needs. More astonishing, a country like Iran, due to the US secondary sanctions, has been unable to use its blocked resources to buy enough doses of vaccines. The war of vaccines, smuggling, theft, and confiscation of medical devices, has caused catastrophes and shame for those who claim human rights.

**Dear Colleagues,**

Confrontation with the challenges of the present world requires a “new multilateral order” on the basis of new realities and reform of the United Nations and Security Council, as well as dis-interference of great powers in international organizations.

Regrettably, the Security Council is turned into a club for securing the interests of great powers by veto right, even though it may result in the killing of tens of thousands of innocent people. There are unfortunately many cases and examples of such catastrophes in the history of the Security Council. And today, we are witnessing that tragedy in the war in Yemen, the killing of Muslim Rohingya in Myanmar, the Syrian crisis, and elsewhere.

In the annual report, references have been made to the expansion of the Security Council. However, in my opinion, such a structure is flawed by itself, and the addition of some more permanent members, may help those countries, but it cannot promote international security. I truly believe that the solution lies in the democratic structure of the United Nations and the Security Council.

**Mr. President**

Another challenge of multilateralism mentioned in the annual report is democracy. In my opinion, the western powers’ problem with the emerging powers is not about democracy but is rooted in their humiliating look at them and the lack of respect for their cultures. Western powers measure the world with their own criteria and benchmarks and try to impose their own model of democracy on them without due regard for their cultures and values.

Of course, such a view would never be acceptable by the south. Furthermore, when these western powers appear to extend their full political and military support to the governments that are totally strange to democracy and human rights, it cannot be accepted that democracy and human rights are really a matter of concern for them.

Here, I would like to draw your attention to a new opinion poll commissioned by the Alliances of Democracies chaired by Mr. Rasmussen, the former NATO Secretary-General and prime minister of Denmark. According to this poll conducted in May 2021 among fifty thousand respondents in 53 countries, some sixty-four percent have considered “inequality” as the biggest threat to global democracy while 44 percent have seen the United States as the biggest threat to democracy.

I would hope such an exchange of views could play an effective role in reducing the current challenges of the world and help to establish a “new multilateralism”.