

## Theme 4

### What is the Unfinished Business?

IRENA LASOTA

We are initiating the topic that is at the heart of this seminar. We have here four speakers—**Isa Gambar** from Azerbaijan, **Tunne Kelam** from Estonia, and **Vytautas Landsbergis** from Lithuania, who were not only very active during the events of 1988–91, but may be described as the very conscience of the independence movements in their countries. **Mustafa Dzhemilev** is the national leader of the Crimean Tatars and may also be described as the conscience of the Soviet human rights movement.

#### Panel Discussion

**Mustafa Dzhemilev, Tunne Kelam,  
Vytautas Landsbergis & Isa Gambar**

#### **Mustafa Dzhemilev**

To tell you the truth, I am not really ready to participate in this academic seminar. I asked Irena what I should speak about and she said the topic should really be “How to liberate Crimea.” Of course, if I knew how to liberate Crimea, I wouldn’t be participating in conferences, I would be liberating Crimea. So if we are not liberating Crimea yet, let me talk about the situation as it is.

Firstly, what are the consequences of the Russian occupation for the Crimean Tatars, the indigenous nation of the Crimean peninsula? They are dramatic.

As you know very well, the Crimean Tatars survived the mass deportation from Crimea in 1944 and the partial genocide perpetrated by Stalin. We survived over decades and worked in a democratic and peaceful way to return to our historic homeland, the Crimean Tatars’ motherland. From the moment of the declaration of independence of Ukraine, the Crimean Tatars were a well-organized group within Crimea that could counteract the Russian separatist movement supported by Moscow. In Ukraine, there was a saying that the most Ukrainian group in Ukraine was the Crimean Tatars. And if you followed the propaganda coming out of Russia starting in 1991, the Crimean Tatars were portrayed as a disgusting group and a de-

stabilizing threat likely to create the next Chechnya or Kosovo. It was said that Ukraine was carrying out the wrong policy by attempting to forcibly change the demographics of the population in Crimea and discriminating against the Russian majority. The Russian population was the majority in Crimea, constituting 58 percent of the peninsula, and the Ukrainian population, which was fairly Russified, speaking and writing in Russian, was about 23 percent. Yet, the Crimean Tatars, constituting less than 20 percent of the population, posed a threat.

Now, since March 2014, there is annexation and occupation. From the outset, we heard about the possibility of a second deportation of Crimean Tatars. The idea appeared on official web sites. There has not been a second deportation yet, but there have been all the preparations for it.

At first the occupation forces tried to negotiate with us. Before the actual annexation, the Verkhovna Rada, or parliament, of the autonomous republic adopted a resolution stating that special rights will be offered to Crimean Tatars, including that they would have representation in the government. The Crimean Tatar language would be officially recognized and even the historic names of Crimean Tatar sites and streets that had been Russified following the original deportation would be re-adopted. It seemed that there would be a state of eternal happiness. A few days later, on March 12, I held a conversation with Vladimir Putin and he made the same promises. I insisted, however, that Crimea should remain part of Ukraine. Of course, I do not refuse Russian support. When the Crimean Tatars were deported, Crimea was a part of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and if Russia wants to make reparations, it can negotiate with Crimean Tatar leaders. But the territorial issue cannot be negotiated by us.

Putin stated that he had to wait for the referendum to be held to make a decision. I made clear that the Crimean Tatars would not participate in the referendum because to conduct a referendum on de facto occupied territory contradicts both international and Ukrainian law and the results would be illegitimate. The referendum was held on March 16 nevertheless. The official results stated that 85 percent of residents of the Crimean peninsula voted and 97 percent voted for annexation. In previous elections, turnout had never been that high, and we can say definitely that only about 900 out of 180,000 Crimean Tatars voted and, since there was the option to vote for remaining in Ukraine with special autonomous rights, we are not sure even if these 900 voted for annexation. The real results were revealed in the report of the Federal Security Service (FSB) in Crimea: according to this classified document, only 34 percent of eligible voters took part in the referendum.

Immediately, new regulations were adopted. As of April 18, 2014, those who did not declare their intention to retain Ukrainian citizenship would automatically be considered Russian citizens. To retain Ukrainian citizenship, however, one had to submit a special application that stated formally one's acceptance of Crimea as part of the Russian Federation even when declaring one's intent to remain a Ukrainian citizen. Any person claiming Ukrainian citizenship on the territory of Crimea is considered a foreign alien. What happens if one does not accept Russian citizenship? The person has no right to work in state institutions, to buy land, to be elected or to vote in elections, to use medical services, to receive an exit visa, or even to hold a funeral. People who worked in state institutions were ordered to submit their resignations and to re-apply for their positions as Russian citizens. Our people asked us what they should do in this situation. We said that adoption of a Russian passport did not negate claims of Ukrainian citizenship. Moreover, the Ukrainian government made clear that those who accepted Russian citizenship would still hold Ukrainian citizenship and be treated as Ukrainian citizens on Ukrainian territory.

In general, in Crimea, we deal with a Soviet-type regime and in some respects one that is even worse. Democratic freedoms like the right to free speech, association, assembly, and others are denied. If three persons are found congregating, they are treated as holding an unauthorized meeting and fined from 10,000 to 40,000 roubles [between 200 and 800 USD]. It is a ruinous fine for people. People are afraid of facing such a fine. On May 3 of this year, three thousand people came to greet me at the border of Crimea. I have been banned from the territory and was not allowed to enter. All people who came were photographed, reported, and followed, and all of them have been fined. If the fine is not paid within a month, it is automatically doubled. If it is not paid after that, a person's property can be seized.

Mass searches are taking place. Over the last two weeks, forty searches took place. They are looking for "banned literature," just as they did in the Soviet Union. Now, there is a list 200 pages long containing many thousands of titles and it is being enlarged constantly. They search libraries, book stores, and homes and even seize titles that aren't on the list. If there are books with portraits of people banned by the authorities, like myself, they are seized. The searches are carried out illegally by masked men threatening violence against women and children in the homes. They seize computers and whatever else they find. If they find hryvna, the Ukrainian currency, they interrogate the residents.

The authorities also started to conscript Crimean Tatars into the Russian army—even those who do not hold Russian passports or citizenship.

Once conscripted in the army, they are taken to different regions of Russia. They expect that the Crimean Tatars will desert and not return to Crimea. They do everything possible to make sure that Crimean Tatars leave the territory.

There have been abductions: more than fifteen people have disappeared. Only one person has been found. He was brutally tortured and did not survive. He had protested the occupation by wearing a Ukrainian flag on his shoulders. Videotape showed that men in police uniforms had taken him away but no one has been charged with the crime.

In Crimea, there is also a huge concentration of Russian troops—about 40,000 soldiers with heavy armaments. There are different interpretations of this sizeable force. Some consider it likely that these forces will be used to occupy territory with electrical and water supplies and to create a land corridor to Russia. This would mean new losses in human life.

What also worries us? With the military actions in Ukraine, there will be the justification for destroying the “fifth column” in Crimea, namely those who do not support or accept the annexation of Crimea, and firstly the Crimean Tatar people. We know they have lists of people who would be targeted for liquidation and we cannot exclude mass actions against Crimean Tatars. A week ago, Sergei Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, said there were no plans for a second deportation. But how can one treat such words? Before the annexation, Putin declared he had no intention of annexing Crimea.

The situation is dire. We are concerned that the topic of Crimea has disappeared from view and people will stop talking about the annexation. No Western nation now recognizes the annexation, but we fear that nothing will be done, and our fate will be similar to the situation of Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia. We also fear that, as in 1938, some Western nations might be willing to negotiate over the issue. Not many openly talk about it but some EU MPs and even the Czech Prime Minister speaks of it.

What then can be done? What are we asking for? First, we want the issue of the annexation of Crimea not to disappear from the headlines, from the world media. We must speak about what is happening in Crimea and we must speak about how Crimea should be liberated and returned to the sovereign control of Ukraine. It is difficult to say when this could happen, but most analysts relate it to the length of time the current Russian leader is in power. So it depends on Putin.

The annexation of Crimea is also against the interests of the Russian Federation. It offers no advantages to Russia. To the contrary, it will be a

burden to the Russian economy. The annexation has isolated Russia from the community of civilized nations. Paradoxically, a large majority of Russians are pleased with this situation. If you steal someone else's territory, this is a matter of pride. It is difficult to know how long these attitudes will persist. Right now, there is no possibility for a new referendum. People have been congratulated that they are part of Russia and warned that there is no going back. Article 229 of the Penal Code states that advocating a new referendum is tantamount to treason. The liberation of Crimea will not depend on the moods of the Crimean people, even if those running around with Russian flags have put them away and are disappointed at the results.

As regards the economic situation, the Russian government raised the salaries for state workers but prices have doubled. And the tourism industry, on which 60 percent of the population depends, has been destroyed; it does not exist anymore. Ukraine still supplies Crimea with water and electricity and even foodstuffs. There are kilometers-long queues of trucks supplying food. There appear to be business circles in Ukraine involved in this activity, since it offers opportunities for price gouging. Gas prices are manipulated. Of course, if water and energy supplies are in doubt, Russian forces can act.

There is no independent media. All Ukrainian channels are blocked. You can only watch Russian TV, which presents totally biased news. People become zombie-like watching it. Maybe we can do something in this area by setting up a satellite television channel, but then people need satellite receivers.

It is extremely important to document the human rights violations of Russians, Ukrainians, and Crimean Tatars in Crimea. We established a unit within the Ukrainian government to monitor human rights violations and also document the officials who carry out those violations. All of this information will be filed in cases submitted to the European Court of Human Rights. The fines being levied for border crossing, for example, are illegitimate. There is no recognized foreign border of Crimea and so it cannot be a violation of law to illegally cross the border. Trillions of hryvna have been confiscated and a decision of an internationally recognized court could seize Russian property in response.

Also, Ukraine's capability of defense must be strengthened. In the first days of the occupation, the Verkhovna Rada held a closed meeting and the minister of defense reported on Ukraine's military capability. Can you imagine that at the time of the aggression, Ukraine had only 40,000 soldiers of which only 6,000 had arms? It was a situation ripe for military aggression. The situation improved, but still it remains difficult.

## Tunne Kelam

I feel here at home. It reminds me of how, twenty-five years ago, in central Estonia, we convened the second conference of the oppressed nations of the Soviet Union with twelve nations represented. A third conference was held in January 1991 in Tallinn.

Under the title of “what has to be done,” however, we must ask ourselves if anything has changed? What could we have done to prevent this? When we listen to Mustafa now, I must admit that I did not imagine twenty-five years ago that we would still be talking about lawless societies, rampant corruption, KGB-based governments, oligarchic power, aggression, dismemberment of countries, torture and killings of civilians, the muzzling of free media. Seen from the vantage point of 1989–91, this all should have been unimaginable. And yet, the free countries of Europe and the US are not able to face the reality that the world has changed again. Or has it changed after all?

Yesterday, I said that freedom and democratic rights are not guaranteed if citizens are not prepared to defend what they have achieved: liberty and rule of law. In 1941, Erich Fromm, the father of modern social psychology, wrote his famous book “Escape From Freedom,” where he explained why such unexpected dictatorships like Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union had emerged in enlightened Europe. His conclusion was that having achieved freedom, people had also to take responsibility for themselves. This did not happen.

In 1989, we faced the same situation in Central and Eastern Europe. Freedom by itself does not provide for progress, democratic rights, compensation of the past injustice, or economic advances. Today, the dogma of progress dominates the Western world, an understanding that progress is a steady mechanical process. But there is no guarantee that progress from human bondage to freedom and abundance will mechanically continue.

For me, the continuity of developments—historic, moral, cultural, political—forms a backbone that holds progress together. Continuity was very important for us in the Baltic nations. Having been deprived of all other options, Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians clung to the understanding that under international law their countries were continuously recognized independent states despite military occupation and annexation. This understanding was confirmed by the remarkable fact that the pre-occupation diplomatic missions continued to be recognized in Washington. There emerged another perception of continuity, however, that of accommodation. This process had two aspects. To a considerable extent, the West had accommodated to the existence of the Soviet Union and its behavior. For its part, the communist leadership accommodated its

subjects to the reality it imposed upon them. Especially after the death of Stalin, when indiscriminate terror subsided, including in the Baltic States, there followed a significant shift in thinking. The Soviet subjects were faced with a softer alternative: they would be allowed to live provided that they accepted the system. One could survive and even have some benefits. This engendered a pragmatic, even cynical approach to the existing dictatorship. A massive barter took place trading people's principles for some economic and social benefits.

I would say that in Estonia, there is still a certain idealizing of the Soviet past. If you look at who are considered the "legendary" figures in our history, they are all those who made their careers in Soviet Estonia, who were part of the nomenklatura. The history of opposition and resistance is not taught in schools. The biggest damage done by communism wasn't the social and economic destruction. It was, as Pope Benedict noticed, the moral destruction and the hardening of souls.

So there are manifold tasks to be addressed. One very important task is assessing recent history. After being elected to the European Parliament ten years ago, one of my biggest disappointments was witnessing the absolute disinterest to our history and to our past. "Yes," they would say, "you have become members now. But don't think too much of the past. Let us look to the future." To our colleagues our past seemed too problematic and troublesome.

After a while, I realized there is no possibility of building a common future without settling accounts with the past. It can't be artificially pushed aside. There are tens of millions of victims who suffered under communist totalitarianism. If we prefer to ignore this enormous legacy of suffering it will find other, sometimes destructive and extremist, ways to emerge. The political and moral assessment of Nazism and Communism on equal terms is not just an historic or emotional problem. It is a problem of our common future, of mutual trust and genuine equality.

Some progress has been achieved. Together with Vytautas Landsbergis and some other friends, we initiated in the EU parliament a "Resolution on Totalitarianism and European Conscience."<sup>1</sup> It was very hard to get a majority behind it. The price was a certain watering down of its substance. But, in April 2009, the EU parliament adopted this historic resolution. It had two concrete initiatives: first, to mark August 23 [the anniversary of the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact] as an all-European day of

<sup>1</sup> The text of the Resolution on Totalitarianism and European Conscience may be found on the web site of the European Parliament (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P6-TA-2009-0213+0+DOC+X-ML+V0//EN>). — Editor's Note.

remembrance of all victims of totalitarian systems and, secondly, to create a European Platform of Memory and Conscience, which would gather memories and investigate the past. Both have got half-way. Only half a dozen countries have agreed to mark August 23. The Platform on Memory and Conscience operated in Prague, without money and having a limited staff. Finally, in 2014, the Hungarian government allotted a substantial sum for one year to establish an office in Brussels.

What is important for all of us is to address the past and to create a balanced version of modern European history. The present history is built on the paradigm of the winners of World War II that includes the Soviet Union, despite it being co-responsible for its start. In 2009, the European People's Party supported my idea to publish a book on the history of the communist regimes of the ten new member states, with the title *Reunification of Europe*. It is the first time that the sufferings and resistance of ten communist-subjugated countries have been presented in one volume.<sup>2</sup>

### Vytautas Landsbergis

I see that we fell into a pattern of talking about transition in some countries and not others, of an ordering or competition of countries. But I think this is a problem of definition. The division should be between democracy and non-democracy or democracies and non-democracies. The European Union and NATO are democracies in contrast to non-democracies. And among the non-democracies there are anti-democracies that see democracy as a threat to be destroyed. So, if one country adopts democracy, such a neighbor thinks it must be destroyed.

When thinking about the topic, I also prefer not to divide this whole period starting only with the year 1989, but rather to focus on the years 1989 to 1991. This was a period of time when systems changed, when choices were made for the future. It did not just happen in the year 1989. The first sentence of the seminar's description begins: "The revolutions of 1989 and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union. . . ." This implies that the revolutions occurred and as a consequence something else happened. But the process of collapsing was going on throughout the region and throughout this time. The revolutions came about as a part of this process. It is about our destiny in Eastern Europe in this period and the weaknesses of most of the republics of the former Soviet Union.

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<sup>2</sup> *Reunification of Europe: Anti-Totalitarian Courage and Political Renewal*, published by the Group of European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats in the European Parliament (EPP Group, Brussels: 2009). See <http://stream.eppgroup.eu/Activities/docs/year2009/reunification-en.pdf>. — Editor's Note.



And here, again, we should be clear: these states were never republics and the Soviet Union was never a “union.” It was a union only of subjugated nations. Thus, I notice also the use of the phrase “former Soviet Union.” I propose to stop using that phrase. We do not think about ourselves in those terms. Don’t refer to the Soviet Union anymore. Let the Moscow leaders think about it. For us, the Soviet occupation was an unfortunate period during which there was an imposition of a system we didn’t want. We don’t want to be included in this construct.

Here, also, we must talk about choices. After the Belavezha Accords, all Central Asian and other so-called republics had a chance to grasp the opportunity to become nation states. The dissolution of the Soviet Union was not simply a formal procedure. For a time, there was a chance to build new states and to choose to become democracies. These were years when people were not spectators but had a chance to build their own countries.

What came later was that the KGB party came back. In Russia, what came to replace Soviet dictatorship was a Russian dictatorship, not democracy. In other republics, or colonies, unfortunately the same happened. Arkady Dubnov spoke about the republics as the children of the Soviet Union; they also adopted dictatorships. The Soviet Union was not just a geographical area, but an ideological, moral and mental sphere, where Russia was the dominant force.

I remember [former Soviet dissident and Russian human rights activist] Sergei Kovalyov writing in 1999 that democracy was over and the KGB was the ruling party in Russia. It was not a party, of course. He meant it as a system of ruling, of government, as in the Soviet Union. Russia was going backward—a restoration of anti-democracy, of the Soviet *ancien régime* coming back in a new form.

What can I say about this unfinished business? If we speak only about 1989, the liberation of nations would have stopped at the borders of the USSR. At that point, the leaders of the Soviet Union accepted the fall of the Warsaw Pact countries but said “don’t touch our formal annexations” in order to retain the borders of the Soviet Union. The same was said when the question of NATO enlargement was discussed. The idea was, “If we cannot keep Central Europe, the rest is ours.” It was the same as the mentality of communist dictators. We are not out of business. All of the Soviet captive nations have to stay. So, the peaceful dissolution of the Soviet Union was a remarkable historic development, but even now the Russian leaders are silent about it because for them it meant the dissolution of their empire.

We remember that Democratic Russia was on our side, backing the Lithuanian independence movement's demands.<sup>3</sup> There would have been enormous difference if Russia had been able to become democratic. And now everything has changed, especially with the 2008 and 2014 wars—Russia is shaped as an anti-democracy.

## **Isa Gambar**

It is a great honor to be on the same panel sitting next to Mr. Landsbergis and Mr. Kelam. In the late 1980s, we looked at these colleagues of ours in the Baltic States already as legendary persons helping to spark the movements in the countries in the former Soviet Union. We closely followed their work, their movements, the statutes they adopted, their statements and speeches, and their style of behavior in the face of critical events, such as the attack on the Lithuanian parliament in January 1991 and the attempted coup in August 1991 in Moscow. They helped us a lot. In January 1990, when Moscow introduced troops to Baku and hundreds of peaceful demonstrators were killed and the situation was dire, a number of our colleagues from the Baltic States proposed a meeting in Riga between the Azerbaijan Popular Front, the Armenian National Movement, and the leaders of the Baltic independence movements. We met with democratic leaders from Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. These talks were not successful in solving the conflict but in those days it was very helpful in calming the situation.

We tried to be good students. We saw what happened in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. We saw the cooperation between the movements and we proposed to colleagues in Georgia and Armenia to follow their example. Our Georgian friends were responsive but unfortunately our Armenian colleagues focused on territorial demands and did not value concerted efforts with colleagues in other states.

Twenty-five years have passed and we may say that the transition period in these post-Soviet states is over. Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia made key and necessary reforms. They achieved political and economic freedom and they are members of NATO and the EU. They have their problems but they have completed the transition as democracies. The transition period is also over in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and other CIS (Commonwealth of Independent

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<sup>3</sup> The Democratic Russia Movement was a coalition of parties and organizations associated mainly with Russian dissident and human rights activists. It supported the Democratic Russia bloc within the first Congress of People's Deputies elected in 1989; the caucus was led by Andrei Sakharov until his death in 1990. A Democratic Russia Party was also created but it supported the maintenance of the Soviet Union. — Editor's Note.

States) countries. Unfortunately, the transition period in these countries resulted in authoritarian, corrupt regimes that are part of the Kremlin's policy. Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova, and maybe Kyrgyzstan are a third category; they are still in a period of transition.

But when we sum up twenty-five years of events, we must try to look forward and answer questions for the future. One question is whether a common strategy is possible for the whole post-Soviet bloc. We discussed this yesterday. In my view, it depends on what we mean by "common strategy." If this is a detailed guideline, the answer is no, there is no such possibility, but if we speak of a common strategy as a set of fundamental values and methods for solving problems in our societies, the answer is yes. These democratic values and methods are common for all of us. We cannot create a single guideline or framework for change, but we can build a "think tank" to share recommendations and strategies on general issues and to analyze how they apply to our particular countries. A common "think tank" would include representatives of liberal democratic views who want to help the transition to real democracy in our countries. Very often, there are situations when our friends from Eastern Europe have more experience and larger possibilities for helping us and supporting us without too much effort.

Yesterday, I was called a romanticist and optimist. But I am an idealist who is pragmatic. I believe we must follow our ideals but also act according to real politics and interests. Politicians who act without keeping the basic interests of people in mind lose their way. Of course, those who follow only short-term goals and fulfill only their interests are not going to be successful either. I am an optimist because I believe we can change the situation. We heard today that it will take decades to make changes in Russia. I disagree. I believe Russia does have the potential to achieve liberal democracy. We see this possibility in demonstrations of tens of thousands of people in Moscow. Do you think it is easy to organize a demonstration in Moscow in support of Ukraine or against the annexation of Crimea? Thousands of people did find the courage to take to the streets. I am convinced that if the government and television were in the hands of normal people, it would take a few months but the situation would change drastically. Millions of people in Russia who now have these imperialist ideas are influenced by current state television propaganda. It is natural for ordinary people to be influenced by such propaganda. But it is also possible to change their ideas.

The problem is that Russia remained an empire after the collapse of the Soviet Union and an empire is incompatible with democracy. When an empire starts to democratize, this is the beginning of collapse of the empire. Putin is trying to prevent this altogether and it will result in more stupid

and harmful decisions. So, we cannot simply hope that reforms will start in Russia and then they will spread to our countries. This was the wrong assumption of Western politicians and think-tanks twenty and twenty-five years ago. We must work in our post-Soviet bloc countries independently of what is happening in Russia. We must support nations struggling toward democracy to change without counting on the politics in Moscow. A lot can be done if the right policies are followed. Positive changes can be achieved and democratic reforms can be made in the post-communist countries. The events in Ukraine proved once again that the people living in the post-Soviet region want these changes and seize the opportunity when it is possible to take a democratic path. I am convinced that as far as Azerbaijan is concerned, the people are ready for democracy. And when pressure from Moscow weakens, the transformation will happen more easily. For this, we expect the support of the US and Europe and especially the countries of Eastern Europe.

## **Discussion**

### **IRENA LASOTA**

I will address the first question to Mr. Kelam and Mr. Landsbergis. How well are you prepared for possible Russian intervention? I don't mean like Crimea, a direct occupation, but some other form of Russian intervention. A year ago, everyone would be thought crazy if they said Crimea was going to be annexed by Russia. So, a provocation in Narva, for example, or in Lithuania, is today a possibility. And for Mr. Dzhemilev, what is the danger that there will be violent provocations in Crimea blamed on so-called "Islamic terrorists." If something happens, who should we think about first?

### **VYTAUTAS LANDSBERGIS**

There are no guarantees that nothing will happen. Anything can happen, especially with such a neighbor having such a strange mentality that believes peace and co-operative relations are less important than seizing a piece of land and building an empire. This mentality is not about the people. During the communist times, there were so many nice words about "the people." It all meant nothing. The people could be annihilated and destroyed. So, we may send tens of thousands to die, but if we take a piece of land, it is all worth it. It is the philosophy of the Russian empire. This is important. It is a fascist mentality. According to the leaders, gaining a larger piece of land is the main goal for the nation and state. We could see even after the Soviet Union collapsed how important this mentality was in relation to gaining or losing a piece of land. In the state propaganda, the Baltic States were said to be "lost." It is bad to lose territory. It is better to retain and "regain" territory.

What can we do with this mentality? We hope that in time this imperial mentality may weaken, but it may take a very long time or it may require a catastrophe. I want neither a catastrophe or to wait a hundred years for this mentality to change.

What we strived for and what we achieved was membership in NATO. The Russian leaders were most angry about our countries' membership in NATO. This was unacceptable because it made their neighbor safer and for them a neighbor being safer is a bad thing. Our job thus is to be safer.

### **TUNNE KELAM**

We are not well prepared either mentally or politically. The Western message to Russia up until now is roughly that despite all its condemnation and protests, aggression pays off. Ignoring really what has happened in Crimea and Ukraine, most people in the West concentrate first and foremost on restoring the peace, which by necessity leaves justice at the sideline. While negotiating the peace terms, the aggressor sees retaining its conquests as part of the compromise. Mr. Putin is confident that NATO will not insist on restoring the status quo ante to Crimea. But one should also note a positive change. In Estonia, people feel a real anxiety. Many people have decided to join the league of self-defense. There is also a sense of solidarity. We don't feel separate from Ukraine.

The best security guarantee for all of us will be when Europe will realize that Ukraine is a European problem in the same way that the Baltic States see Ukraine as their problem. The same applies to Georgia or Azerbaijan. The direction of changes taking place in the Black Sea basin or in the Trans-Caucasus region is our common problem. If we start to think and act politically this way, the EU and NATO will gain credibility.

Never, however, discount even the smallest group. We do not know what is the critical mass of people needed to prevent a catastrophe or to propel progress. People here in this room make up a valuable group who have already changed history and who can change history further.

### **MUSTAFA DZHEMILEV**

Regarding the possibility of violent attacks, it all depends on Russia. If Russia decides that it needs Islamic terrorism as an excuse, then there will be such attacks. I think that Russia is not yet decided on how to deal with the Crimean Tatars. The first steps were to try to make a deal. Putin told me all the good things Russia could offer Crimean Tatars. He proposed greater cooperation with Tatarstan, and so on. But there seems to be no unanimity regarding how to deal with Crimean Tatars. Some people still think it is possible to negotiate. Others try to infiltrate and recruit informers.

Putin did say something about how Crimean Tatars should not provoke bloodshed. Putin is not concerned about bloodshed when he says this. Of course, we are not going to fight with Russia. We adhere to non-violence. But we cannot exclude the possibility of provocation. On our land, there are a lot of Russian troops. They can behave in a provocative way. Russia is also afraid of our negative influence on other ethnic nations in Russia, especially about the Volga Tatars and Tatarstan. They fear that our example of non-violent and peaceful resistance may inspire them. So we cannot exclude that they may want to present the Crimean Tatars as violent terrorists.

It is very difficult to prevent violent reactions to provocations. We cannot control all the people or the territory. There might be provocations and some people may not restrain themselves. Then it would be shown on television that bad Crimean Tatars are attacking good Russians. One should be prepared for such news. And remember that many elected leaders of the Crimean Tatars are not allowed to live in Crimea, which makes our voices weaker and our possibilities of tampering the possible violence less effective.

#### **VYTAUTAS LANDSBERGIS**

A point was raised earlier about German peacekeepers being sent to Ukraine. We should not be under any illusion that they are peacekeepers. One can look at the peacekeepers in Georgia, where Russian troops were not moved from the border, in spite of agreement that the Russians would retreat. German troops may be seen as safe keepers of the situation in which Russian employees and agents will stay in areas of occupied territory and Germans will separate them from the Ukrainian army. So Germans will be used to give one more piece of land to Russia. German troops here would be seen not as peacekeepers but as conquest-keepers.

#### **ISA GAMBAR**

This question is just as relevant, even more relevant for Azerbaijan. Estonia and Lithuania are members of NATO, which is obliged to protect it from attack—but one cannot be sure this will happen since the US and UK have now allowed the Memorandum of Budapest to be violated by one of its signatories, Russia. NATO may not be able to counter-act against a nuclear power.

#### **VYTAUTAS LANDSBERGIS**

If NATO did not react, it would be the end of the international world order.

**ISA GAMBAR**

Russian embassies give Russian passports to citizens of Baku and residents of northern parts of Azerbaijan. It is a basis, under Putin's precedent, potentially to attack Azerbaijan. The higher value placed on human life, the more difficulty there is in taking decisions of war. But when a country does not care about the life of their citizens, it is easier to decide to wage war. Developed countries avoid warfare.