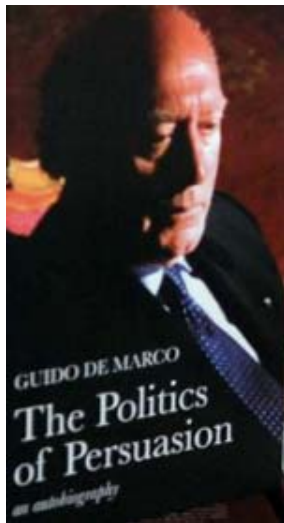


THE POLITICS OF PERSUASION – AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY
by Guido de Marco
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International Statesman Par Excellence

The Politics of Persuasion, an autobiography by Professor Guido de Marco, President Emeritus of Malta, is a treasure of a book in that it provides a direct account of contemporary international relations by an international statesman who has had a front row seat throughout this fascinating journey.



A review of the international dimension of this book highlights the fascinating role that Guido de Marco played as a navigator of cold war and post-cold war international dynamics. This included setting up and directing a foreign affairs ministerial structure that allowed Malta to punch above its weight and succeed.

Two main lasting results of this legacy are the fact that as Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malta Professor de Marco secured Malta's right to EU membership and also become a more relevant actor in Euro-Mediterranean affairs as a major contributor to peace and prosperity in the region.

This autobiography is unique in that it provides insight into real time experiences that highlight the important role that Guido de Marco played as both an eye-witness of history in the making and an influential decision-maker with a sense of wisdom throughout.

During the Cold War period Professor de Marco played an important role in the Council of Europe as an advocate of common European values, a prerequisite to the eventual elimination of the east-west divide. Of particular interest is the insight that Professor de Marco provides about the Bush/Gorbachev summit in Malta in December 1989 that brought to an official end the Cold War and the superpower show downs that dominated international relations in the aftermath of the Second World War.

At the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE and later at the OSCE) Professor de Marco advocated the necessity for a strong European Mediterranean policy reiterating the indivisibility of security in Europe and security in the Mediterranean.

As President of the 45th Session of the United Nations General Assembly Guido de Marco was instrumental in ensuring that the Middle East conflict between Israel and Palestine receive the attention it deserves. His reference to implementing a "Presidency with a Purpose" is clearly articulated through the actions taken in seeking to influence positively crisis situations during his watch that included the conflicts between Iraq and Kuwait, and Israel and the

Palestinians. It is also evident in his promotion of a second generation United Nations that commenced a process of renewal of this unique body of multilateral diplomacy.

A guiding light in all of Professor de Marco's international travails was his determination to "ensure the observance of the rule of law in international relations and the need to maintain peace". The dictum that best describes his style and actions on the international stage is "*Si vis pacem – para pacem*" (if you want peace, prepare for peace). The fulfilment of this role is further highlighted by the numerous confidence building initiatives that de Marco put forward as Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malta including the Stability Pact for the Mediterranean, (an alliance in partnership between Mediterranean states) and a Council for the Mediterranean.

Professor de Marco's indefatigable approach to international relations clearly distinguishes him as an international statesman par excellence. His entire international career can only be defined as a class act of Diplomacy in Action. The relentless pace of his shuttle diplomacy and sense of vision are evident throughout as highlighted in fascinating accounts of encounters during the governmental crisis in Albania, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the democratic uprising in China, the escalation of tension between North and South Korea, and the life moving episode of famine in Ethiopia.

The play-by-play account of Malta's EU membership saga is indicative of the de Marco legacy that will influence generations of Maltese and Gozitans to come. It was through his perseverance as a relentless and persistent promoter of Malta's interests and convincing proponent of the major contribution that Malta would make to the EU's Euro-Mediterranean agenda that the EU re-opened membership negotiations with Malta.

More recently as President of Malta state visits were politically engineered for Malta to get the maximum benefit from them. Guido de Marco continued to be a champion of Malta's interests in an ever changing international landscape, constantly reading the tea leaves of history and seeking to influence the direction of transitional international relations by promoting peace and stability in Europe and the Mediterranean regions.

What makes this publication an essential reader for all contemporary and future diplomats is the insight that Professor de Marco provides about key skills that need to be adopted in complex international relations situations. Reference to insistence, persistence and consistence as determinants of success are echoed throughout. In fact, these three attributes help to comprehend how and why Professor de Marco has had such a distinguished and successful international career.

Another key to success that this autobiography highlights as an essential characteristic of diplomacy is that of fostering personal contacts. While Professor de Marco himself admits that he always observed protocol even if he was never keen about it, it is ultimately the human factor that makes all the difference in international relations. Professor de Marco excels on this key

attribute – he is a people’s person – always engaging, always interacting, always acting with a sense of purpose.

This book is a must read to all who want to achieve a better understanding of the world we live in and the important role that Malta has played in shaping regional and international relations since independence.

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