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Ahtisaari Day High-Level Seminar

New dynamics in politics and business

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Introducing Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja

This is not the first time I have the honor of introducing FM Erkki Tuomioja. In September 2001 during the first state visit of President Vladimir Putin the guests moved for coffee in the Presidential Palace and I discovered President Putin standing alone for a moment. I took the FM to him and said in German -- we all knew he spoke German and so does Erkki Tuomioja: „*Herr Staatspräsident darf ich ihnen den finnischen Außenminister vorstellen, er hat 17 Bücher geschrieben.*” By now Erkki Tuomioja has, I imagine, already published over twenty books.

The war in Ukraine has tested many. But the Finnish FM has shown his mettle in a remarkable way by emerging as the voice and face of Finnish foreign policy. He has found the right words and made himself available to the media in spelling out the position of the Finnish Government. He has done that with great clarity and resolve. -- And for that we thank him and salute him.