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Salamitsizder ma, Kurmetti Dostar, Damy I gospoda,

Buongiorno, cari amici e colleghi,

It is my absolute privilege to speak up today at the inauguration ceremony of initiating a consulate of my country in Venice. Apart from being a founder of League of Lombardy, this city has truly been representing by itself a first global capital, a centre of the world for centuries. Its influence on both Universes of Orient and West has been enormous, and its contribution – crucial.

Not mentioning the legendary Marco Polo, who was the first westerner to explore mysteries and treasures of the East, one can talk a bit about a geopolitical and historical role, Venice had been playing in creating our modern world.

As we know, today's geopolitics consists of two simple determinants, which are Land and Sea. Venice participated in creating both of these sides. For millennia, world leading positions were provided to those who controlled a vast space of Eurasia. And that was the Land. And in both directions, eastwards and westwards, history witnessed invasions of Alexander The Great, Attila, the Kumans and others, aspiring for Great Power. Venice was a fragmentary continuation of Pax Romana which was the first Western Project of global scale. However, the first who could really succeed in this in the East were the Mongols. Creation of Pax Mongolica with control over Silk Road and a latter's turning into a successful not only trade one but also informational route determined a huge pressure, European powers sensed. The pressure made them feel insecure and made them forget of achieving an European Dream of United Empire of Charles the Great. And Venetian merchants were the very blood in the veins of Silk Road, carrying out cells of goods, and making the European muscles move.

Although and as mentioned, Venice was an inseparable part of European civilisation, she played well on both sides, developing a successful system of check and balances, sometimes secretly supporting opposite sides. The driving engine of this brilliant diplomacy altogether with development of espionage, was famous Venetian pragmatism, the very one which wisely pushed early venetians to establish the city in swamps and waters of the lagoon. The very pragmatism which made Enrico Dandolo, a great 42nd doge of Venice, diverted a crashing force of the 4th Crusade on a rivalling Byzantine rather than on Egypt, which led to a further prosperity of Silk road, and, logically, Venice. Thus, the fate and power of Venice was inseparably linked to those of Silk Road.

However, the very pressure was leading European Powers to the great naval discoveries and creation of New World. In turn, this led to the decline of Silk Route, dissolution of Mongol Empire and a slow sunset of the Venetian star.

Today, after looking around more carefully, one should notice a remarkable role of Venice in shaping so important things of our lives such as diplomacy, accounting, art, literature and architecture, politics with espionage and conspiracies, and of course, democracy.

In geopolitics, Venice took part in forming not only the Land determinant but also, undoubtedly, The Sea. Being a maritime creation by its origin and essence, Venice contributed in launching a concept of a "Safe Island", which was embodied consequently in British Empire and United States. Pax Americana is based on maritime power over ways of straits, the concept which is so understandable to every Venetian. Moreover, Oxford and finally - Cambridge (where your humble speaker works) have been founded also from Venetians monks, and in the most ancient chapel of Jesus College of Cambridge, it's possible to see the beautiful Venetian Arches, a memory of Lost Paradise.

The historical links of my country, Kazakhstan, with Venice are profound. In Torcello, even today there is a stone, which was an Attila's throne. The Kumans, or the Kipchaks, (Polovtsy) were trying to invade Venice since 9th Century, but abandoned unsuccessful attempts (Thanks to the Lagoon!) and preferred developing trading links. Today, there is the only surviving example of early Turkic literature, Codex Cumanica, and it is saved here, at Biblioteca della Chiesa di Redentore. The Italian language used to be one of the official languages of the Golden Hords, when Crimean Khans issued the decrees ("Yarlyks") in Italian for a large community of merchants to understand. Although they were mainly for representatives of Genoa, one can confidently say, that Venetians were there as well to counterbalance their archi-rival. Another example of this very known historical competition was in Kazakhstan of the 17th Century, when a Khan Zhangir's decree provided trade preferences to Venetians (They truly loved all those preferences during the course of history of Venice!) and banned Genovese from doing business in the lands of the Kazakh khanate.

Today it is my honour to greet a continuous revival of the friendship between our countries in the beautiful Venice, the honour is more pleasant that it is emphasised by being presented by a close personal friend of mine, a "Vecio", as Venetians put it, Console Pierluigi Alusio. I wish him and his colleagues of Venicecom a great success in their diplomatic and business activity!

Kop rakhmet, grazie mille per il vostro attenzione!