

**MB100 Ask our Experts - Online Conversation**  
**13<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

**#3 “Quantum Leadership in Times of Pandemic”**  
**with**  
**H.E. President Armen Sarkissian**

**KEY INSIGHTS**

- Our **world has changed**, and we will have to learn to live by new rules. The Covid-19 pandemic is not only symptomatic of this new quantum world but has also thrown this evolution into perspective and will probably accelerate it. In the classical political world, what matters are organized forms of connectivity: changes tend to be slow, linear and relatively predictable. By contrast the quantum political world moves much faster and in seemingly random ways. This characterizes the new global stage on which the Covid-19 pandemic is playing out. In our highly complex, interconnected world, the classical behavior of global risks has become more ‘quantum’. Terrorism and the international financial markets were already behaving quantumly.
- **Democracy in a quantum political world.** We already live an important percentage of our lives virtually. This fact is changing how we exercise **politics** and entertainment, and the two are now merging. This affects both the electorate and the elected in terms of how they convey and receive messages. Governments are no longer handed 4-5-year mandates but are rather subject to a form of ‘**daily democracy**’ – vulnerable and open to manipulation.
- This poses the following question: How will governments, armed with **Quantum tools (AI and quantum computing)** already used effectively by the private/retail sector, make use of quantum management in the execution of their power? Each of us is a source of information that can and will be available, analysed and managed. What is the destiny of free will in this new world? An illustrative comparison of the effect of magnetic fields on electrons conjures an environment where we risk being ‘guided’ against our will by invisible external fields. The coronavirus has exposed many fault lines in our Western democracies and market driven economies - to conserve the best of what we call ‘Western’ values, we will be forced to rigorously re-evaluate them.
- **Co-operation and sharing of best practices**, not philosophising about the future, are currently the subjects of conversations between world leaders. Now is not the right moment to evaluate the effectiveness of current international organisations or even incumbent governments – but there will be a post Covid-19 reckoning probably sooner rather than later. However, why not take the opportunity to create some complementary structures: one idea which pre-dates the pandemic, but whose hour might now have come, is a global club of small successful (albeit that everyone has their own take on both those words) countries coming together to share and mutually benefit from collaboration and co-operation. A world where small is not only beautiful but also has its voice and the right to be listened to.
- **Listening to the younger generations** is an absolute pre-requisite before trying to offer them guidance. One of the positive outcomes of the pandemic has been its power to humble and force us to think, question and seek out greater understanding in the pursuit of truth.
- **Environment and a new ‘Mount Ararat’** – this tragic event is perhaps offering us all a chance to re-think our habits in terms of how we work, travel and consume. We forget its lessons at our peril and must invest in a cleaner and healthier world.