

Twenty years have passed since I took the momentous decision to break away from my professional career and devote my life to [solidarity actions in the Balkans and the Mediterranean](#). I had spent a very long day toiling with that difficult decision.

To be honest, I was faced with the unenviable task of selling off a large part of my personal assets and committing them to aid to help innocent victims and setting up the [Fondazione Mediterraneo](#).

I felt compelled to turn over a new leaf.

Though she initially remonstrated with me over my intention to abandon my profession as an [architect and engineer](#)

– after all I had carried out more than five hundred projects throughout the world – my wife Rita finally relented and simply uttered, “Why not?”

I can still remember that very moment. The June sun was setting over the bay of Naples, enticing the city in its warm embrace. This splendid yet mysterious metropolis lay cushioned between the hills of the Vomero and Posilippo, to one side, and Vesuvius, to the other. The beauty of this Maison conspired with the iridescent twilight, casting an enchanting spell over the bay of Naples irreverently tossing the gauntlet into the sea... Twenty years have passed.

Rita has also departed, but her love for our home continues to dwell within its walls. The Maison des Alliances has become an inseparable partner in building [dialogue and promoting peace](#) in the Mediterranean and the world.

Today, I continue on this fascinating and stimulating journey with that same steadfastness as I wrestle with the challenges that lie before me.

Michele Capasso

President of Fondazione Mediterraneo and Maison des Alliances