

## Russia-Europe Dialogue: Peace and Security in Multicultural Societies at a Time of Global Crisis

Peter Haider  
April 7, 2012



*Moscow, April 6-7, 2012*

In his message to the Conference **Dr. Walter Schwimmer** (Secretary General of the Council of Europe 1999-2004) wrote: “There is no Russia without Europe, no Europe without Russia [...] After so many bloody conflicts and atrocities that culminated in the historic tragedy of the World War II, Europe remembered not only its cultural identity but found also its political identity in the spiritual and moral values which are also the common heritage of the peoples of Europe, pluralist democracy, rule of law, individual freedom, political liberty, the respect for human rights. To respect this diversity is the key to stability, security and peace in Europe, not only at international level. [...] To achieve unity in diversity, Europe needs Russia, Russia needs Europe. Russia is an indispensable part of Europe.

### Session I

#### Peace and Security in Multicultural Societies at a time of Global Crisis

**Dr. Willem Van Eekelen**, former minister of Defence of the Netherlands, spoke about conditions for security in democratic societies: good governance, accountability and transparency, respect for human rights, “zero tolerance for discrimination”. He said “Put governments before their responsibility towards their own people, before we talk of military intervention. In the end naming and shaming might be more effective in promoting mutual understanding and common values. And I encourage UPF to lead us in that direction.”

**Dr. Stanislav Nikolaenko**, former minister of Education and Science of Ukraine, introduced a vision of the “noosphere society”, where mankind’s current state of division and conflicts will be transcended by raising the human mind, through a process of intercultural communication and education. “Through the purification of humanity and a path of complete education, the noosphere society will allow us to enter into contact with other cosmic worlds”, he said.

**Dr. Thomas Walsh**, President of UPF, analyzed the concepts of peace, security and multiculturalism and noted their expanded meaning today: greater focus on human security; more inclusive meaning of peace-building, etc. He pointed to the challenge which multiculturalism can present to peace and the need for shared national values. “A family system, he concluded, that engenders respect for the role of the state and rule of law, on the one hand, and respect for the legitimate rights of other sub-cultures that inhabit the same state, is an essential component of peace and security in multi-cultural societies.”

**Mr Sergei Kuchinsky**, Chairman of the Assembly of the Peoples of Russia, spoke about Russia’s 182

ethnic communities and 240 languages and dialects. Founded in 1998 to implement Russia's state policy for nationalities, the organization has carried out projects for development and dialogue among nationalities: the Congress of Russian Peoples, the House of Nationalities, etc. He explained about their priorities of working with federal and local authorities, improving the status of nationalities, and creating an "All Russian identity" to preserve spiritual and cultural unity in the post-Soviet world.

## **Session II**

### **Peace and Security in Multicultural Societies: Russian and European Approaches**

**Dr. Michael Platzer**, Director of the Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS) in Vienna, introduced the integration policy of the Austrian government. He described a 20 point program for integration, from strengthening the participation in the education system, learning the German language, promoting employment for migrant women, to intercultural dialogue, sports activities, teaching integration skills, etc. He also described various NGO initiatives dealing with the cultural diversity in Austria.

**Dr. Marcel de Haas**, a war analyst and senior research associate at the Clingendael Institute of International Relations in the Netherlands, reviewed in fluent Russian the opportunities of military cooperation between the EU and Russia, and between NATO and Russia. He recommended that both sides should "consider the sensitivities of the other side and take each other seriously" and "cooperate from bottom to top", encouraging exchange of students and military to promote trust.

**Ambassador Nicolae Tau**, former minister of Foreign Affairs of Moldova, discussed the pluralistic nature of societies in Europe and the former communist world. He analyzed multiculturalism from the perspective of culture, religion, and democracy; emphasized the need for objective scholarly approach to majority and minority views. "In western democracies, he said, it is easier to define the "other" on a religious or cultural rather than ideological basis; in post-communist societies the dominant other is still related to the previous experience of communist rule".

**Ambassador Robert Vandemeulebroucke**, Honorary Ambassador at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, concluded the day with a reflection on the current challenges of inter-ethnic relations in Western Europe. He noted that last year's terrorist act in Norway took place in one of the most progressive and integrated multicultural societies in Europe. He warned that terrorism was often caused by individuals under the influence of hate ideologies, and that governments should not discriminate against minorities under public pressure.

**Mrs. Olga Meshkova**, Secretary of the NGOs Council of Kondopoga municipal region (Russia), shared her experience in inter-ethnic integration as a local government official. Her city experienced, in 2006, a week of ethnic riots that shook the nation, shedding light on the deficient status of migrants from the Caucasus in Russia. Working under the chairperson of the Legislative Assembly of the Karelian Republic, Mrs. Meshkova has played a key role in building conditions for inter-ethnic harmony in her city in recent years.



# UPF Eurasia Leadership Conference

## Russia-Europe Dialogue

### Peace and Security in Multicultural Societies at a Time of Global Crisis

Moscow, April 6-7, 2012



On April 6-7, 2012 a UPF conference took place in Moscow to commemorate the UPF Founders Dr. and Mrs. Moon's visit to Russia in 1990, when they met with President Gorbachev.

A joint program of UPF-Eurasia and UPF-Europe, the conference was entitled: "Russia – Europe Dialogue - Peace and Security in Multicultural Societies at a time of Global Crisis". The theme of multiculturalism caused an intense debate throughout Europe and Russia; this was an opportunity for UPF to initiate a dialogue between Russia and European nations. The conference was attended by public figures, academics, and UPF Peace Ambassadors and volunteers from 23 nations.

Senator Aslambek Aslakhonov, Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs at the Russian Council of Federation (Senate), sent greetings to the participants, wishing them fruitful discussions that could strengthen the friendship between Russia and European nations.

### Introductory Session

The conference began with a video introducing the activities of UPF-Eurasia in 2011. Then a song offering was performed by a young student contestant for the upcoming "Mr. and Miss University Beauty Pageant", held yearly in Moscow with the support of UPF. Moderated by Jacques Marion, UPF-Eurasia Secretary General, the introductory session began with greetings from representatives of UPF Eurasia and Europe chapters.



*Dr. Oleg Mironov*



*Dr. Y. C. Song*



*Dr. Van Eekelen*



*Rev. Eiji Tokuno*

**Dr. Oleg Mironov**, former Ombudsman of the Russian Federation and head of the UPF Peace Council in Russia, welcomed participants and shared about the multicultural experience of Russia and the Soviet Union. He emphasized that inter-ethnic harmony cannot be imposed from the top, but must rise from within people's minds, from adherence to common values.

**Dr. Yong Cheon Song**, Regional Chair of UPF-Europe, warmly greeted participants, conveyed his gratitude for the invitation to Russia and in turn invited participants to the Europe-Russia conference to be held in Vienna, Austria, later this year.

He was followed by **Dr. Willem Van Eekelen**, former minister of Defense of the Netherlands. As representative guest speaker from Europe, he offered greetings and brief remarks on the challenge of multiculturalism, speaking from his long experience of leadership in his country and the European Union.

Finally **Rev. Eiji Tokuno**, Regional Chair of UPF-Eurasia, concluded with a keynote address. He pointed at three crucial signs of global crisis: the breakdown of family affecting the stability of society; the high rate of suicide revealing a lack of values and meaning in life; and the inability of the UN to prevent conflicts in the world. In conclusion, he said it was UPF's mission to address these challenges and bring fundamental solutions to the global crisis.



## Session I

### Peace and Security in Multicultural Societies at a time of Global Crisis

The first panel speakers represented the Netherlands, Russia, Ukraine, and included the President of UPF International, Dr. Thomas Walsh from the United States.



**Dr. Willem Van Eekelen**, former minister of Defense of the Netherlands, spoke about conditions for security in democratic societies: good governance, accountability and transparency, respect for human rights, “zero tolerance for discrimination”. He said “Put governments before their responsibility towards their own people, before we talk of military intervention. In the end naming and shaming might be more effective in promoting mutual understanding and common values. And I encourage UPF to lead us in that direction.”



**Dr. Stanislav Nikolaenko**, former minister of Education and Science of Ukraine, introduced a vision of the “noosphere society”, where mankind’s current state of division and conflicts will be transcended by raising the human mind, through a process of intercultural communication and education. “Through the purification of humanity and a path of complete education, the noosphere society will allow us to enter into contact with other cosmic worlds”, he said.



**Dr. Thomas Walsh**, President of UPF, analyzed the concepts of peace, security and multiculturalism and noted their expanded meaning today: greater focus on human security; more inclusive meaning of peace-building, etc. He pointed to the challenge which multiculturalism can present to peace and the need for shared national values. “A family system, he concluded, that engenders respect for the role of the state and rule of law, on the one hand, and respect for the legitimate rights of other sub-cultures that inhabit the same state, is an essential component of peace and security in multi-cultural societies.”



**Mr Sergei Kuchinsky**, Chairman of the Assembly of the Peoples of Russia, spoke about Russia’s 182 ethnic communities and 240 languages and dialects. Founded in 1998 to implement Russia’s state policy for nationalities, the organization has carried out projects for development and dialogue among nationalities: the Congress of Russian Peoples, the House of Nationalities, etc. He explained about their priorities of working with federal and local authorities, improving the status of nationalities, and creating an “All Russian identity” to preserve spiritual and cultural unity in the post-Soviet world.

## Session II

### Peace and Security in Multicultural Societies: Russian and European Approaches

The two afternoon sessions, chaired by Dr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Doctor of political sciences and member of the Academy of military sciences, continued the discussion with a focus on national approaches to multiculturalism in Europe and Eurasia.



Mrs. Zoya Krot, Regional Chair of the Belarus Peace Fund, described the role of the Fund, one of the largest government-related grassroots organizations in Belarus, in promoting inter-ethnic harmony and social peace in that country rich with 140 different ethnic groups. The fund works with local NGOs, promotes patriotism, and keeps alive the memory of World War II's enormous sacrifices (a great percentage of the population of Belarus was killed) through various commemorations and educational programs.



Dr. Michael Platzer, Director of the Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS) in Vienna, introduced the integration policy of the Austrian government. He described a 20 point program for integration, from strengthening the participation in the education system, learning the German language, promoting employment for migrant women, to intercultural dialogue, sports activities, teaching integration skills, etc. He also described various NGO initiatives dealing with the cultural diversity in Austria.



Dr. Saifullo Safarov, Deputy Director of the Center for Strategic Research under the President of Tajikistan, spoke about the need for regional integration in Central Asia, the benefit Afghanistan would gain from it, as well as the whole region. But only through solving the problem of inter-ethnic relations could Afghanistan start solving other problems. A dialogue among ethnic groups should be initiated by qualified politicians in a neutral country with the support of the world community. "I think, he added, that the Universal Peace Federation could play here an essential role."



Mr. Vladimir Frolov, a former Russian Parliament member and a well known actor, spoke about the project "two languages – one prayer" in Tbilisi, Georgia, for the sake of developing dialogue between Russia and Georgia. Even though diplomatic relations between Russia and Georgia are now broken, he said, he was proud that the Russian government and the Russian president last year awarded representatives of Georgia with government medals. The time will come, he said, when we will find our way to love people of other nationalities. The world needs a strong Russia in order to feel secure.



**Dr. Marcel de Haas**, a war analyst and senior research associate at the Clingendael Institute of International Relations in the Netherlands, reviewed in fluent Russian the opportunities of military cooperation between the EU and Russia, and between NATO and Russia. He recommended that both sides should “consider the sensitivities of the other side and take each other seriously” and “cooperate from bottom to top”, encouraging exchange of students and military to promote trust.



**Mrs. Olga Meshkova**, Secretary of the NGOs Council of Kondopoga municipal region (Russia), shared her experience in inter-ethnic integration as a local government official. Her city experienced, in 2006, a week of ethnic riots that shook the nation, shedding light on the deficient status of migrants from the Caucasus in Russia. Working under the chairperson of the Legislative Assembly of the Karelian Republic, Mrs. Meshkova has played a key role in building conditions for inter-ethnic harmony in her city in recent years.



**Ambassador Nicolae Tau**, former minister of Foreign Affairs of Moldova, discussed the pluralistic nature of societies in Europe and the former communist world. He analyzed multiculturalism from the perspective of culture, religion, and democracy; emphasized the need for objective scholarly approach to majority and minority views. “In western democracies, he said, it is easier to define the “other” on a religious or cultural rather than ideological basis; in post-communist societies the dominant other is still related to the previous experience of communist rule”.



**Ambassador Robert Vandemeulebroucke**, Honorary Ambassador at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, concluded the day with a reflection on the current challenges of inter-ethnic relations in Western Europe. He noted that last year’s terrorist act in Norway took place in one of the most progressive and integrated multicultural societies in Europe. He warned that terrorism was often caused by individuals under the influence of hate ideologies, and that governments should not discriminate against minorities under public pressure.

### **Section III**

#### **Education as a Factor of Peace in Multicultural Societies**

On the second day of the conference, the first session dealt with the theme of “Education as a Factor of Peace in Multicultural Societies”. The moderator, UPF-Austria Secretary General Peter Haider, first read a letter from Dr. Walter Schwimmer, former Secretary General of the Council of Europe, addressed to Senator Aslakhonov and conference participants; the letter expressed his regret for not attending, and his support for the conference.



*Peter Haider reading Dr. Schwimmer's letter*

*Dr. Tagirov awarding UPF leaders*

**Dr. Walter Schwimmer** wrote: "There is no Russia without Europe, no Europe without Russia [...] After so many bloody conflicts and atrocities that culminated in the historic tragedy of the World War II, Europe remembered not only its cultural identity but found also its political identity in the spiritual and moral values which are also the common heritage of the peoples of Europe, pluralist democracy, rule of law, individual freedom, political liberty, the respect for human rights. To respect this diversity is the key to stability, security and peace in Europe, not only at international level. [...] To achieve unity in diversity, Europe needs Russia, Russia needs Europe. Russia is an indispensable part of Europe.



**Dr. Walter Baar**, a specialist on demographical developments, founder and director of the Institute for Trends Research in Austria, observed that low birth rates cause European population to decrease substantially, making migration inevitable. "Europe as a whole, he concluded, faces the questions of multiculturalism versus integration ... It will be in the focus of policy makers worldwide how to make it easier for young adults in their best biological years to found a family."



**Professor Nataliya Semenova**, associate professor at People's Friendship University of Russia, addressed the three aspects of the global crisis raised during the opening plenary. Challenging the criticism of the UN as an ineffective body, she emphasized the responsibility of national governments to deal with conflicts. Then she insisted on the role of spiritual and moral values in education, referring particularly to the Christian foundation of Russia. She underlined the importance of the family in bringing up children as peacemakers.





Professor Engel Tagirov, President of the UNESCO Institute for a Culture of Peace, based in the Tatarstan capital of Kazan (Russia), compared our time to the era of Great Migration of the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century – and spoke about our challenge to give migrant peoples “not just education but equality”. He suggested creating a “Council of Sages” that could function as a think tank, and focus on the UN’s 8 Millennium Goals. Then on behalf of the International Humanitarian Academy “Europe-Asia”, he offered awards to UPF leaders Dr. Walsh, Rev. Tokuno and Jacques Marion.



Dr. Anna Brzysca, Russian-born educator living in Poland, explained the multi-religious approach to character education adopted for the “My World and I” school curriculum for adolescents, which she contributed to write in the early 1990’s in Russia. Published by the International Educational Foundation, the course was widely used in schools in Russia and Eurasian countries, translated in several languages. It taught moral values from the viewpoint of the four main religions present in Eurasia: Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism. It was then adapted into various character education programs throughout the world.



Mr. Reigo Tonsberg, the main organizer of “Play Football Make Peace” and of the annual Parnu International Football Tournament in Estonia, shared about “peace through sports” activities organized throughout the world. He showed a video of the project initiated by the World Association of NGOs (WANGO), and described its scope and philosophy, which is to bring character education elements into the football game, and encourage international, inter-ethnic and interreligious harmony through sports.

#### **Session IV**

##### **Prospects for Russia – Europe Dialogue and Cooperation**

The conference ended with a session on the prospects of a Russia – Europe dialogue. Dr. Van Eekelen, Dr. Petrovsky and Dr. Walsh each offered final reflections. Dr Van Eekelen shared again his thinking on security, democracy, good governance, ending with a positive note that he did not believe we are in a real global crisis, that “we made much progress since the cold war”.

Dr. Petrovsky summed up the conference by reading a draft resolution which he asked participants to approve (see addendum).

Dr Walsh recommended that we “find the way to embrace diversity while also embracing the need for common ground and overlapping values”. He underlined three points of the United States’ experience with unity and diversity: the unifying concept of “one nation under God”, the tradition of marriage beyond race or ethnic group, and an emphasis on interfaith dialogue.

Then a young student contestant for the “Mr. and Miss University Beauty Pageant”, Barbara, offered a final song from the heart, in Russian, moving the audience - and the conference was declared closed.

In the afternoon, participants from abroad who had some time before their flight home, were invited by UPF to a tour of the Kremlin, its treasure house and the famous Armoury Chamber.



*Dr. Petrovsky submitting the Resolution for approval*



*Final song*



*Greeting Peace Ambassador*



*Break time discussion*



*Visit to the Kremlin*



# RUSSIA-EUROPE DIALOGUE

Peace and Security in Multicultural Societies  
at a time of Global Crisis

Мир и безопасность в многонациональном  
обществе в эпоху глобального кризиса

OSCE/ODW, RUSSIA

4-7 APRIL, 2017



# Resolution



## Russia-Europe Dialogue

### *Peace and Security in Multicultural Societies at a time of Global Crisis*

We, participants of the Russia – Europe Dialogue on Peace and Security in Multicultural Societies at a time of Global Crisis, declare the importance of peacemaking efforts in Europe and the Eurasian region aimed at supporting peace and international harmony, and constructive dialogue between cultures and civilizations.

Therefore we have to state that the recent declaration about the “failure of the multicultural project” in Europe is not only premature, but also wrong in essence. The multinational and multicultural factors are fundamental to the creation of European civilization, modern European values and European identity. It is especially timely now, in this period of crisis in the political and economical development of Europe.

Insufficient attention to the international and intercultural dimension of relations leads to political and economic instability, and consequently generates conflicts and crises. Recognizing the significance of religious views in shaping social solidarity, based on fundamental universal values and moral principles, we need to address the root cause of conflict that originates in the human mind. This leads to dialogue and reconciliation, and lays a base for peace building and for the consolidation of cooperation and harmony between religions and cultures.

We highly value the role of families and schools in consolidating moral values and people’s education in the modern multicultural society. We call upon the community to study the concrete experiences of multicultural education in both European and Russian schools.

We are concerned about critical conflict situations in Europe and Eurasia, including the zone of conflicts in the South Caucasus that remains unstable. We call for constructive dialogue between all opposite parties within the zones of the Georgia - Abkhazia conflict and the Nagorny Karabakh conflict.

We call upon the community to remember the significance of the historical experience of co-existence and co-development of the peoples in Russia and the Soviet Union, as an integral part of the European civilization experience. Russia as a rightful part of Europe, reckons on a deeper integration with Europe in the sphere of economics, politics and culture.

We affirm the importance of dialogue between Europe and Russia, which will finally help to overcome the mutual distrust originating in “cold war” times, and consolidate mutual understanding between nations and peoples based on common European values. In the name of this idea we call upon all who desire peace, mutual understanding and cooperation in Europe to join us, and we reckon on joint efforts of governments, parliaments, NGOs, and the business world.