

What Kind of Europe do we envision for the Future?

The European Leadership Conference takes place in Berlin

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By Fritz Piepenburg



As part of the series of *European Leadership Conferences* (“ELC”s) organised by the *Universal Peace Federation* (“UPF”) and the *Women’s Federation for World Peace Europe* (“WFWP”), delegates and guests from all over Europe met in Berlin to ponder the question “**What kind of Europe do we envision for the future?**”. Some 80 participants listened to and discussed twenty presentations assessing and presenting possible solutions to the current crisis of Europe in general and the European Union in particular. Three particular areas of crisis were identified and dealt with in different panels: “*the economic and financial crisis*”, “*the political crisis*” and “*the crisis of values and identity*”. These three topics were further augmented by a youth panel and a women’s panel, giving room to the specific viewpoint of youth and women respectively.

DAY ONE – Friday, November 16th 2012

(“Europa Saal” of the ‘German Society’)

MORNING - Session 1 ‘The Crisis of Values and of Identity’

“One of the main tasks of ‘The German Society’ which is situated next to Potsdam Square in the heart of Berlin and whose President is Lothar de Maizière, the last Prime Minister of the former East Germany and current Minister for Special Tasks in the reunified Germany, is helping citizens understand and identify with Europe as a political and cultural entity beyond the national level,” explained the society’s spokeswoman, in introductory remarks.



Ambassador Ian Marius De Jong, Netherlands - Dr. Marije Zivkovic, Director of the Family Centre in Croatia -
Dr. Yong Cheon Song, Chair of the Universal Peace Federation Europe

The first panel dealt with “The Crisis of Values and the Future Role of Religion”. **Ambassador Ian Marius De Jong** former Netherlands Ambassador to The United Nations made his case for a Europe with high moral standards. “Yes we need high standards”, he emphasised in his speech. “We owe it to the citizens of potential new member states to support their objective of getting rid of sometimes ingrown practices of poor government, leading to corruption and political favours.”

Dr. Marije Zivkovic, Director of the *Family Centre* in Croatia, that nation’s most important pro family organisation, stressed the role and importance of the family in modern society. Quality family life has many positive side effects, such as promoting society-friendly behaviour, which ultimately leads to crime prevention and has many other benefits.

Dr. Yong Cheon Song, Chair of the *Universal Peace Federation Europe*, reminded the audience that only one year previously the founder of both UPF and WFWP, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, had visited Berlin and spoken to an audience of 3000 people in the ‘Tempodrom’. Rev. Moon always encouraged national and regional entities to go beyond their borders and contribute actively to peace and harmony at a higher level. Pres. Song raised the question, “what are the root causes of the European crisis we witness in different areas?”. “There seems”, he said, “to be a profound crisis in values and a widespread loss of a sense that human beings are fundamentally spiritual in nature and receive much more satisfaction through developing their heart and soul, than by seeking happiness in ever increasing material consumption.”

Session 2 ‘The Political Crisis’



*Dmitri Marchenkov, Secretary of the Current Affairs Committee of the Council of Europe
Dr. Willem van Eekelen, former Defence Minister of the Netherlands
Dr. Walter Lichem, former Ambassador of Austria to Canada and Chile*

The second session dealt with the political crisis. **Dmitri Marchenkov**, Secretary of the Current Affairs Committee in the *Council of Europe*, stressed the need for citizens to be more involved in the democratic processes of Europe. “Democracy needs more substantial forms of interaction between people and authorities in order to include direct democratic elements in the decision-making process.” He called for a better framework for citizen participation.

Dr. Willem van Eekelen, former Defence Minister of the Netherlands, reminded the audience of the origins of the European Union in the form of a Coal-and-Steel Union founded in 1951. Over the decades it has developed into a political entity and has become a global player along with other world powers.

Dr. Walter Lichem, former Ambassador of Austria to Canada and Chile, spoke on the topic “The social Context of the European Political Crisis.” The future of Europe, according to Lichem, is in the hands of society, and that means each and every citizen of the Union. In post-war Europe the goals and direction of the Union were clearly defined. But now, in the 21st century, European politics seem to be governed by national interests combined with a loss of direction, which posed the question “where do we go from here?”.

AFTERNOON - Session 3 'Youth Perspectives'



Juan Ignacio Fernández Torres, Director of Advocacy for Youth Alliance Europe - Nicole Kaim, former chair of the International Network for European Studies (INES) - Falk Röder, a peace activist - Dominic Zöhrer, member of the UPF Europe Youth Committee

The afternoon started with a lively youth panel consisting of young speakers representing quite different angles on the topic of European identity. **Juan Ignacio Fernández Torres**, Director of Advocacy for Youth Alliance Europe, which is part of the *World Youth Alliance*, saw the need for giving young people hope and a clear vision combined with certainty for their own future. The *World Youth Alliance* with some 500.000 members tries to provide that.

Nicole Kaim, former chair of the *International Network for European Studies (INES)* reminded the audience that there is hardly any sphere in daily life which is not affected by European legislation and regulation. "We live in a common house, called Europe. The question is: how we all can feel at home?" There is a need for a European identity and for a feeling of bonding and belonging to the same family. Thus integration is the main challenge for the Europe of the future.

Falk Röder, a peace activist and founding member of an organisation called '*Global Change Factory*' advocated going beyond a perceived European identity and becoming world citizens without the constraint of national or regional boundaries. Instead of searching for a European identity, young people are looking for a global vision and identity unrestrained by national or regional constraints.

Finally, **Dominic Zöhrer**, member of the *UPF Europe Youth Committee* and student of religious studies, defined Athens as being the philosophical root of Europe, while Jerusalem stands for the Judeo-Christian spiritual values shaping the continent. In his view, the value crisis has more implications for the future of Europe than the obvious economic or financial challenges. "I believe it is the fundamental values and vision that shape the character and behaviour of the population. In this light, it becomes clear that if we want to solve any crisis and create sustainability we must understand the nature of the current spiritual crisis."

Session 4 'Womens Panel'



*Moderator Althea Corlett -Seija Künzig, Vice-President of the Women's Federation for World Peace
Marion Böker from Consultancy for Human Rights and Gender Issues
Corinna Pummer spoke on Women's Rights and Empowerment*

Seija Künzig, Vice-President of the *Women's Federation for World Peace* in Germany, was the first to speak on the Women's Panel on "Living Dignity as a Cornerstone for the European Community". She stressed the need to inject more feminine qualities into leadership at all levels: "This valuable feminine potential, which includes creativity, the desire to stand up for others, the will to harmonize and achieve consensus has not been realized fully in our society until now." **Marion Böker** from *Consultancy for Human Rights and Gender Issues*, stressed the need to apply human rights in every aspect and teach children about it: "Even here in Europe, not all governments take the issue of human rights as seriously as it deserves," she said. In her work, she gives courses in human rights to school classes. Finally **Corinna Pummer** spoke on Women's Rights and Empowerment and described her own project in the Andes of Peru, where her NGO called 'Aufwind' aims especially at empowering rural women.

DAY TWO – Saturday, November 17th 2012

(Ballroom of the 'NH Hotel', Berlin)

MORNING - Session 5

'The Economic and Financial Crisis – What are the Causes and Solutions?'



On the second day, the conference took place in the ballroom of the NH Hotel, Berlin. **Dr. Antonino Galloni**, General Director of the *Ministry of Labour* and member of the board of *Italy's National Pension Fund*, questioned the functioning of the Euro. Is the Euro indeed made for the people of Europe, or is it mainly a tool for gambling and speculation by the big banks? Speculation is not creating anything of real value. The money used for it is missing at lower levels of the economy.



Dr. Tihomir Domazet, One of his nation's leading economists and President of the *Croatian Association of Chartered Accountants*, sees the world as being in transition from a Post-World War II era into a completely new era. For the new economy, besides capital and labour the exogenous factors are of increasing importance. The real challenge for European politics is creating the framework for the free implementation of people's innate creativity, which in turn will benefit public welfare.



Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Ockenfels, President of the *International Foundation 'Humanum'* based in Lugano, reminded the audience of the rules of a functioning Social Economy. Private property paired with a willingness to invest and take the risk of so doing lies at the heart of any Social Economy. The state's role is to provide the rules for the Social Economy to unfold and, at the same time, take care of the deprived and needy. He appealed to politicians to invest in the education and independence of their citizens, since a political system without responsive and responsible subjects will never work

Session 6 'A Vision for Europe and the World'



Karl-Christian Hausmann, President of *UPF-Germany*, began the sixth session by recalling that Europe started originally as a peace project after World War II. He then elaborated on both the Greek and the Christian heritage of Europe as two distinct yet complementary branches of historic development. "After overcoming nationalism and communism, where do we go from here?" he asked. While making great progress on the technical level, much needs to be done on a spiritual level. Overcoming the age old dichotomy between Catholicism & Protestantism in Europe would be a step in the right direction.



Dr. Dieter Schmidt, President of the *Unification Movement in Germany*, gave a thorough overview of the life of the founder Rev. Moon, who always had a cosmopolitan vision of a world united in harmony. Europe, in the eyes of Rev. Moon, has an important role to play in making the world a better place. It can have a positive impact on its neighbours, most notably the Middle East, Russia and even China, if united and willing to look beyond its own borders.

AFTERNOON - SESSION 7 'Projects, Activities & Values of UPF & WFWP'



Finally, **Caroline Handschin**, President of the *Women's Federation for World Peace, Europe*, who has been working with the UN in Geneva for the past 20 years, gave an overview of the *Women's Federation*. In her speech entitled "Towards an Era of Participation: Family Culture as a Paradigm and Tool for Prevention and Cure", she stressed the need for family policy to find a more prominent place in the UN. Instead of debating issues of patriarchy and matriarchy, a new term could replace both: familyarchy. Also, according to Mrs. Handschin, while many speakers did point out the need to implement

human rights on a global level, the question remains on how to cultivate the hearts of men and women to permanently sustain all of those achievements.



Mark Brann, Secretary General of *UPF-Europe*, finally led through the many accomplishments and developments of the UPF International. UPF Europe in particular is engaged in sending medical equipment, generously provided by a number of countries, among them Germany, for the sake of equipping a children's hospital in North Korea. So far three containers of medical supplies were sent to Pyongyang.

Ambassador of Peace Awards

At the end, three participants were presented with Ambassador of Peace Awards by Dr Song as Regional Chair for Europe.

