



"Europe and Russia: Partners in a Globalised World"

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Address of Dr Yong Cheon Song, Chair, Universal Peace Federation, Europe

First of all, as Chair of Universal Peace Federation in Europe I would like to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to each and every one of you to this important conference on "*Europe and Russia: Partners in a Globalised World*". It is very good to see you all here today!

This conference can be seen as the direct expression of the deep concern that our beloved late Founder, Father Moon, expressed almost exactly one year ago in a surprise early morning telephone call he made to us during an event similar to this that we were holding at The U.N. in Geneva. In that phone call he expressed his heartfelt concern that Europe and Russia should work more closely together - for their mutual benefit but, even more importantly, for the peace and well being of neighbouring nations and of the entire world.

His desire was for UPF in Europe to take initiative and to do what we could to help make this happen. Having, discussed his call with my fellow UPF Chair in the Eurasia Region, Mr Eiji Tokuno, together we agreed to begin trying to fulfill these goals by holding 2 conferences. The first was held successfully in Moscow this April and I am delighted to see a number of you here today who were present then. Our conference here today is the sequel to that Moscow conference and I sincerely hope that many more such joint projects and activities will follow.

It seems entirely fitting that Austria should be the host for such an event in view of its key role in relations between Russia and Europe over the centuries and most recently during the "cold war" era. I am deeply grateful to The U.N. here in Vienna for hosting this event and to so many distinguished Austrians,

including Dr Erhard Busek, Madame Speaker Prammer, Dr Walther Schwimmer, Dr Walther Fasslabend and others for their support of this conference. I am also grateful for the very warm welcome we have received here and for the great work of our local staff guided by the tireless devotion of Mr Peter Haider,

our Austrian Secretary-General, who have together borne the main burden of organising this conference!

In my 8 years as UPF Chair in Europe, even though I am not European by birth or upbringing, I have had to reflect deeply about European unity and European identity because these are issues fundamental to UPF's sense of mission and its vision of the world we seek to help create. Father Moon was always passionate about world peace, as those of you who have read his best selling autobiography "*As a Peace Loving Global Citizen*" will know. His vision has always been that, after millennia of conflict and division, one unified world of lasting peace and prosperity for all is now within humanity's grasp - centred on the ideal of humanity as "one family under God".

However, he always stressed that it is not inevitable that this will happen even though the historical conditions are ripe for it to do so. It is a dream in the mind and heart of God that will only be realized if humanity can wake up to the potential of this age and, by exercising our God-given portion of responsibility, make it happen. Thus, we can say that connecting to our common humanity as children of the one God (or "Heavenly Parents") is a fundamental prerequisite for us to be able to transcend barriers such as race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, gender and culture that otherwise often appear insurmountable.

Father Moon also passionately advocated European unity combined with forging a strong sense of common European identity. He called on Europeans to recognize the extent of what they had in common (common values deeply rooted in their Judeo-Christian heritage, respect for human rights, belief in the rule of law and in the division of powers, accountable democratic government and much else) rather than focus on the relatively less important issues that divided them.

He felt that European unity was invaluable for its own sake and for the benefits that it would bring to all Europeans, but even more so for how a unified Europe, guided by its highest and most civilizing values and empowered by its material wealth and scientific and technological 'know how', could help to foster peace in other, less fortunate and less well endowed parts of the world.

His key point, Ladies and Gentlemen, was that we stand on the threshold of a new world order. That world order will be shaped not so much by individual nations as by blocks of nations acting for the good of humanity as a whole. Furthermore, it is one which will only take proper shape to the extent that we can put in place right and principled relationships – between individuals, between communities and between nations. In short, we need a new paradigm for international relations and "living for the sake of others" should be as much part of the ethics of international relations as of inter-personal ones. In future, all nations, blocks of nations and international organizations need to encompass a truly global vision that seeks to advance not only their own interests but also the well being of all humanity.

For the last 30 years of his life and more Father Moon strongly advocated his vision for an "International Highway Project" linking all continents, major capitals and centres of civilization by an 8 lane (in each direction) "super highway" bordered by demilitarized peace zones on either side and which would serve as a vibrant artery for trade and commerce, for migration and tourism, as well as for cultural exchange and which would greatly assist economic development around the world, drawing isolated and depressed areas into the economic mainstream.

To this end, he advocated building a tunnel across the Bering Straits between Russia and Alaska as well as an undersea tunnel between Japan and Korea and one across The Straits of Gibraltar linking Europe and Africa. These new facilities for bridging hitherto unbridgeable geographical divides between continents were conceived of as complementing already existing structures such as The Channel Tunnel between Britain and France and The Bosphorous Bridge linking Europe and The Middle East. They formed part of his grand vision for linking humanity together as "One family under God. He was greatly

encouraged by Russia's recent decision to go ahead with The Bering Strait Tunnel project and saw it as opening up the eventual possibility, for example, of driving by car from London to New York.

I believe that this project holds out almost limitless possibilities for human growth and development on many levels. However, more than anything else it stands as a powerful model of how in this new era of international relations, individuals, nations, international bodies and organizations need to think and act – namely by encompassing the whole world and all of humanity in their plans and acting with all of their best interests at heart.

Father Moon pointed out that all relationships between any 2 entities in God's creation (be they atoms or molecules, individual human beings, commercial organizations or nation states, needed to be centred on something higher than themselves in order to result in harmonious interaction and new development. Conversely, as he also pointed out, entities that focus only on their own wellbeing tend to self destruct - as happens when cells in a body feed off each other and cause cancer, often causing the body itself to perish. How often have we seen human institutions self destruct according to this very same principle and wars break out between nations!

It seems to me that despite current tensions over issues such as the supply of gas, Russia and Europe now have far more in common than divides them. The tensions of the "Cold War Era" during which the relationship between the two was based on military stand-off or so called "mutually assured destruction" and the huge ideological divide between Godless communism and God-fearing Christianity, have largely disappeared. With their disappearance has come a renewed sense of common heritage and mutually shared interests and a willingness to cooperate on many levels.

Russia is now involved in NATO, a member of the Council of Europe, soon to become a member of the World Trade Organisation and keen to negotiate with EU nations a treaty to remove the need for each other's citizens to have visas when visiting the other's territory. These are all auspicious signs of progress since the cold war that can and should be built upon. However, I believe it is both necessary and desirable for Russia and Europe to forge an altogether more high minded partnership. This should be a partnership for peace in which together they seek to further the interests of humanity as a whole.

We need to find new ways for Russia and Europe to become partners for peace by serving higher purposes that can benefit humanity as a whole. Cooperating to construct an international highway from Western Europe through Russia to The Far East and moving the rest of the world to take responsibility for other sections of this whole project, would be one such step. But there are no doubt a great many others.

I believe that non-state actors, including NGOs like our own, have a vital role to play in promoting the dream of lasting world peace and in elevating the consciousness of governments beyond more immediate issues, perspectives and concerns, to focus on such dreams. I believe that conferences like ours here today have a vital role to play in this process and my hope is that this conference and future ones will throw up many more ideas as to how to bring these 2 key areas of our world and their very diverse and varied populations into increasingly harmonious and fruitful partnership for the sake of all humanity.

Thank you very much.