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A HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE**

EUROPE

100
AFTER / BEFORE

7 May 2018

Venue: Latvian National Library

Organizers: European Commission Representation in Latvia, Latvian Institute, and Latvian Political Science Association

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After World War I, some borders appeared in the European political landscape that had not existed before. For ten nations, a unique opportunity presented itself to establish new democracies. Within the physical and mental ruins of war, hopes were born, the processes of state creation and democratic re-birth began, as well as development through the difficulties of change.

For countries such as Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Poland, Ukraine, Hungary, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, the further historical path through the century turned out to be quite dramatic. There were short periods of good times, the turmoil and devastation of the World War II, and both reconstruction of independence and national divisions in many of these countries.

100 years after World War I, Europe is not just a geographical entity on the global map, but also a community of states and citizens that has managed to replace violence with the idea and practice of peaceful cooperation. But what do these countries and nations which presented themselves on the world stage 100 years ago, have to offer to Europe and the world today as a basis for stability in the next 100 years? Which are the national achievements, personal victories and ideas, as well as civil capabilities that could serve as an incentive for further development and Europe's role in the world?

9:30 - 10:00 | Registration, coffee

10:00 - 10:10 | Opening remarks by H.E. Māris Kučinskis, Prime Minister of the Republic of Latvia

10:10 - 10:20 | Opening remarks by Inna Šteinbuka, Head of the European Commission Representation in Latvia

10:20 - 10:35 | Keynote speech by H.E. Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, Former President of the Republic of Latvia

10:35 - 10:50 | Keynote speech by Edgars Rinkēvičs, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia

10:50 - 12:30 | Plenary session - POLITICS

All 10 countries were eager to set up democratic political systems. However, only a few managed to safeguard the fragile democracy as a wave of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes swept across Europe. One of the sources that allowed these undemocratic regimes to flourish was the populism endangering Europe even today. The rebirth of Europe after World War II and the end of the Cold War was possible thanks to the attractiveness and effectiveness of democratic values. Democracy served as a vehicle for attaining peace in the post-war period and also in building a united Europe in recent decades. What is the future for democracy?

Speakers:

Paweł Kowal, former deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, member of the European Parliament

Andres Kasekamp, Professor of History and Chair of Estonian Studies at the University of Toronto

Artis Pabriks, Member of the European Parliament

Jakub Janda, Deputy Director and head of the Kremlin Watch programme at the European Values Think-Tank

Moderator: Žaneta Ozoliņa, Professor at the University of Latvia

12:30 - 14:00 | Lunch break

14:00 - 15:30 | Plenary session - ECONOMY

The historic experience related to the economic crises encountered during 100 years will be discussed in the Economy panel. Their causes, successful and unsuccessful management as well as their economic, social, and political consequences will be treated. The participants will also present their vision for a sustainable economic development in the future.

Speakers:

Valdis Dombrovskis, Vice-President of the European Commission

Marek Belka, Former Prime Minister of Poland and former Minister of Finance of Poland

Juhana Virtainen, Member of the Finnish Parliament

Gatis Krūmiņš, Rector of the Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences

Mārtiņš Kazāks, Chief Economist of Swedbank

Moderator: Inna Šteinbuka, Head of the European Commission Representation in Latvia

15:30 - 15:45 | Coffee break

15:45 - 17:15 | Plenary session - CULTURE

How have the crises experienced during the 100 years in the values and systems during the duel of democracy and totalitarian regimes shaped the common European identity? Should it be transformed into Europe's future (and how)? References should be provided to the historic and contemporary developments and personalities of the particular countries which changed the course of the events or the way of thinking.

What is the bold vision of the civil and culture community of modern Europe for the next 100 successful European years? What can I do on a daily basis as a citizen of these countries to make it happen?

Speakers:

Rytis Zemkauskas, writer, journalist; Kaunas 2022 European Capital of Culture

Radoš Mušović, Montenegrin civil society activist and journalist

Šarūnas Liekis, Dean of the Faculty of Political Science and Diplomacy at Vytautas Magnus University

Mārcis Auziņš, Professor at the University of Latvia

Moderator: Aiva Rozenberga, Director of the Latvian Institute

17:15 - 17:30 | CONCLUSIONS

Ivars Ījabs (Latvia), Associate Professor at the University of Latvia



The Latvian Institute



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