

# CONFERENCE REPORTS



**THE COURAGE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY**  
**20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL FORUM 2000 CONFERENCE**

**OCTOBER 16–19, 2016, PRAGUE AND OTHER CENTRAL EUROPEAN CITIES**

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## SUNDAY

### Where is Europe Heading?

*In cooperation with Friedrich Naumann Foundation*  
October 16, 2016, 16:00 - 17:30, Embassy of Germany

#### **Moderator:**

*Christopher Walker, Executive Director, International Forum for Democratic Studies, National Endowment for Democracy, USA*

#### **Panel discussion:**

*Jan Švejnar, Director, Center on Global Economic Governance, Columbia University, USA/Czech Republic*

*Iveta Radičová, Sociologist, Former Prime Minister, Slovakia*

*Wolfgang Gerhardt, Chairman, Board of Directors, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Germany*

*Jerzy Buzek, Former Prime Minister, Former President of the European Parliament, Poland*

**Welcoming remarks:** *Arndt Freiherr Freytag von Loringhoven, Ambassador to the Czech Republic, Germany*

At current, we find ourselves in a situation where the European project seems to be eroding, as the euro-crisis and, most recently, the refugee crisis threaten the European Union, as we know it. But one has to be aware of the situation, the deeper dimensions and underlying issues: the lack of trust in national leadership, and the European project itself. Besides the challenges from the South, including the current refugee influx and Islamic extremism, and the East, with Russia's ever-growing influence in and impact on countries in Central and South Eastern Europe, the European Union now finds itself in a transitional phase. That is, it is in between the past, yet to be overcome, and the future, yet to be determined. The relationship between nationhood and integration is far from solved and continues to contribute to the destabilization of the Union, raising the question of Europe's direction.

According to Former EP President **Jerzy Buzek**, "Europe is heading towards disintegration" – a statement that aims at evoking change. This change, as well as the European Union's success as a whole, comes back to the issue of national representatives in power, who have the responsibility to make decisions on the national level. All speakers agreed on the national leaders' responsibility and potential effectiveness in preventing a downward spiral and the potential disintegration of the European Union. Furthermore, **Wolfgang Gerhardt** highlighted the uniqueness of the European Project given that there is no comparable agreement anywhere else in the world, which, despite the ongoing issues (e.g. Brexit, youth unemployment), supports the Union's resistance. This stability is further built upon shared, common values, as well as moral principles of democracy including, but not limited to, solidarity, governance and trust, as mentioned by **Iveta Radičová**.

With problems, like terrorist attacks, the refugee crisis and the division of countries into Eurozone members and non-members, testing our solidarity now more than ever, a change in thinking seems to be the only way forward. Democracy as a liberal concept is threatened, leaving Europe at a crossroads, as **Jan Švejnar** describes, not between left and right, but between up and down in the sense of where it is heading economically. In this sense, Europe has to become more flexible and dynamic, aiming at turning negative into positive processes and downward into upward spirals, as suggested by Švejnar. In order to do so, a common perception and program for Europe's future has to be actualized.

The main issues that one has to be aware of when asking where Europe is heading are the change in politics, with a rising populist movement and, according to Radičová, a growing acceptance of lying as normal instrument to be used by politicians (e.g. during campaigns); globalization as, both, a challenge and opportunity for member states and their cooperation and coordination; and the need for charismatic and resistant political players at the national levels. Thus, as Švejnar concludes, it is a question of leaders in Europe agreeing on fundamental principles and communicating them effectively, whilst tackling issues decisively, which in turn will determine Europe's future path.

## MONDAY

### A Crisis of Democratic Leadership

October 17, 2016, 9:30 - 11:00, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

#### Moderator:

*Iveta Radičová*, Sociologist, Former Prime Minister, Slovakia

#### Panel discussion:

*Ralf Fücks*, President, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Germany

*Edward Lucas*, Journalist, The Economist, United Kingdom

*Oleksandra Drik*, Head of the Board, Civic Lustration Committee, Ukraine

*Carl Gershman*, President, National Endowment for Democracy, USA

The Crisis of Democratic Leadership panel examined the current state of democracy, why distress exists, and potential solutions to reduce the crisis. Distress exists worldwide, as many political leaders engage in corruption or take actions to minimize the trust of citizens. The moderator asked three primary questions, "Why is there distress," "where are the real leaders today," and "what are potential solutions?"

During the panel, the speakers shared their views, in accordance with their diverse backgrounds, and suggested potential solutions to combat the crisis of democracy. **Oleksandra Drik** examined the political scene in Ukraine, after the Orange Revolution and the Revolution of Dignity, in which Ukrainians expected change. Yet, corruption and war remains. Drik suggested combatting this issue by identifying corrupt officials, and punishing or removing them from office. Ukraine needs help from the European society and requires time, resources, and assistance to purify the government and infuse new leaders. **Edward Lucas** suggested that democracy is like public health, and we need to think about "what is good and what is bad for it." We need to build trust, and most importantly pay attention to what happens between elections. Furthermore, Lucas stated as long as fear exists among people, change, will not transpire. **Carl Gershman** believes that we need to create a new global association of intellectuals who advocate democratic values. If this association learns how to preach, defend, and understand democracy, they can reinterpret democratic values in contemporary society. Gershman believes that each of us must behave as if we have power to change the world. If we act like this, in a truthful way, we can revive democracy in our own respective countries. **Ralf Fücks** emphasized the responsibility of leaders and urges the importance of listening to people, and not communicating the popular truth or lies. This allows leaders to influence, or even change decisions made by the public in a positive way. In addition, Fücks emphasized how the performance of institutional reforms can help restore confidence and help democracy deal with the challenges of globalization.

In summation, the speakers shared beliefs that anti-corruption reforms, building trust, and diffusing democratic principles through institutions are at the crux of combatting the current crisis in democracy. Leaders discussed the power of civil society, and how fighting populism in Ukraine for example, is in society's control. Eliminating fear was a shared ideal, along with focusing on "between election" time periods.

## Havel and the Future of Europe

*In Cooperation with Václav Havel Library*

October 17, 2016, 11:15 - 12:45, Žofin Palace, Forum Hall

### **Moderator:**

*Michael Žantovský, Executive Director, Václav Havel Library, Czech Republic*

### **Panel discussion:**

*Šimon Pánek, Co-Founder and Director, People in Need, Czech Republic*

*Anar Mammadli, Founder, Election Monitoring, Democracy Studies Center, Azerbaijan*

*Adam Michnik, Editor-in-Chief, Gazeta Wyborcza, Poland*

The three main ideas expressed in this panel, all refer to the idea of need.

According to **Adam Michnik**, it is the need to continue defending our European values and to be confident in the future. Secondly, well explained by **Šimon Pánek**, is the idea and belief that we need to be united, rather than divided. And the last is the need to keep in mind that we as Europe are doing well despite the problems that we are facing. Thus, a more positive attitude is what **Anar Mammadli** aspires to achieve.

What would be Havel's reaction to the European Union and how would he attempt to resolve this situation? Michael Žantovský reminds us that Václav Havel was a staunch supporter of European integration and his reaction when the Treaty of Paris came into force in 1952: "Look, the new Europe has been born". Adam Michnik concludes by asking himself, "What would Havel say?" and thinks the answer can be summed up in a negative opinion concerning Putin's politics. He repeated the following: "What does a farmer do when a storm destroys his crop? He sows his crop again". In a period where nationalistic movements are rising, we need to defend the democratic values like Havel did, even during difficult situations.

Šimon Pánek agrees that we are missing faith for the future and lack optimism. He also focuses on how some people have different dreams that may not necessarily be democracy, as they are seeking quick and easy solutions. Examples of this solution can be seen in Brexit that shows what Pánek calls "a mixture of populism and simplification". Currently, we witness "dreams-sellers" that are being successful because we lack patience, which in turn is dividing our society. Pánek concludes: "There is fear, but we need more patience". He believes Havel would say: "Let's continue. Let's stick to our values". Anar Mammadli recalls the new problems that Europe is facing, such as the growing of nationalism and migration. There are problems and challenges in terms of integration. Another problem is that some main states in Europe are hesitant and maintain that the EU should have a more clear and uncompromised policy. In conclusion, he underlines how post Soviet countries need to be supported in terms of public democracy, because they are suffering an unprotected freedom of speech and rule of law.

## **The West: Still Able and Willing to Lead the World Towards Democracy?**

October 17, 2016, 11:15 - 12:45, Žofin Palace, Knights' Hall

### **Moderators:**

*Irwin Cotler*, Chairman, Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, Canada

### **Panel discussion:**

*Thomas Pogge*, Founding Director, Global Justice Program, Germany/USA

*Alexandr Vondra*, Director, Prague Centre for Transatlantic Relations (PCTR), Czech Republic

*Andrew H. Schapiro*, Ambassador to the Czech Republic, USA

*Jerzy Pomianowski*, Executive Director, European Endowment for Democracy, Belgium/Poland

The West is no longer a leader, about last 25 last years, when there were the last great leaders, such as Havel or Mandela. We are faced with weakness of political leaders in Europe now. On the other hand, in long trends we believe that Europe has optimistic perspectives because now there are twice as many countries, which now have democratic systems. We should take into account the global rise of authoritarianism, in particular, and prevent offshore financing activities, which support authoritarian regimes in other countries.

The West needs to be redefined because at the moment we cannot properly define it. We have no problems with democratic institutions or procedures: they are spread out more than ever, but our values are in decline and not aligned with our institutions. It is important to revitalize the West's values and continue to promote democracy. In order to support such ideas, political leaders should above all take into account not their personal interests, but these values and the goals of the state. In conclusion, in order to support the long-term process of revitalization, we need to be honest with ourselves about real problems that we are facing and the current weakness of European democracies should be addressed; we should be able to talk openly about it with each other.

## Gallery I

*In cooperation with Friedrich Naumann Foundation*

October 17, 2016, 11:15 - 12:15, Mánes Gallery, Exhibition Hall

### Introduction:

*Tomáš Vrba*, Chairman, Board of Directors, Forum 2000 Foundation, Czech Republic

### Participants:

*Manal al Sharif*, Writer, Blogger, Women's Rights Activist, Saudi Arabia

*Zoltán Kész*, Member of Parliament, Honorary President, Free Market Foundation, Hungary

*Vladimir Kara-Murza*, National Coordinator, Open Russia, Russia

**Manal al Sharif** is a Saudi Arabian women's rights activist, even though she rejects the term "activist" as it alienates those speaking out. All her life she has been treated as a minor, in need of a legal, usually male, guardian, even in her mid-30s and after having become a mother. Women in Saudi Arabia are seen as a resource of seduction to men, which is why they are taught to cover up and not to talk to men. They are essentially invisible: faceless, voiceless and nameless. In 1999, the strict belief in what Manal al-Sharif has been taught all her life underwent a sudden struggle when Saudi Arabia allowed free access to the Internet. This allowed her to read and learn about other beliefs and led to her question her own. At the time, however, women still didn't have a podium in the absolute monarchy, which often presents itself as role model for other Muslim countries. This changed in 2011 with the Arab Spring uprisings and the simultaneous use of social media as political means. With a 400% increase in tweets and Saudi Arabia topping the list in terms of YouTube consumption and more than 90 million views a day, it was clear that social media provided the podium and voice that was long sought and hoped for. Al-Sharif, who believes that a lack of women's rights by design is a lack of human rights, used the impetus of the Arab Spring to initiate a Facebook campaign, namely "Women2Drive", asking for women's freedom of movement and right to drive in Saudi Arabia, thus ultimately aiming at ending guardianship. This was supported by several YouTube videos explaining the campaign's cause and purpose, showing al-Sharif in a new light – a courageous woman with a name, face and voice. To her, courage is neither the absence of fear, as there will always be fear, nor insanity, for which it is often mistaken by people questioning the courageous person's beliefs and actions. It is the balance between fear and one's will to act. She concluded by stating that "democracy is not a privilege; it is an obligation to stand against a system when it becomes corrupt", thus encouraging women to find the courage to, continue to fight for their rights.

According to **Zoltán Kész**, if everything in Hungary would have gone the right way, he would be happily teaching English to high school children. Instead he decided to give up his 14-year long career as a teacher to run for election in February 2015. It all started in 2014, when Kész started to feel fed up with the government's two-third majority, which allowed them to change the constitution, nationalize private pension funds and centralize education. The latter change triggered Kész and led to his candidacy as independent member of the Hungarian parliament, ultimately ending Orban's nationalist-conservative party's supermajority. In the beginning of his campaign, many saw Kész as traitor, speaking up against the government. Throughout his campaign, however, he was able convince those doubting him of his beliefs and opinions, hoping and pushing for a change in his home country. The reason why he felt like he had to do something relates to a quote by Martin Luther King, who once said that, "nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance". Kész's pre-election strategy was to tell and urge people to participate, as he saw and still sees election as the last form of democracy in current-day Hungary. He soon realized that the key was to address those who are usually passive, through his door-to-door campaign policy, by personally talking to and engaging them – a strategy that eventually led him to win by 10% over the government party's candidate. Today, he says, huge challenges remain, especially now that, "we know that opposition parties are just as corrupt". The role of civil society is more important than ever and more and more people are brave enough to stand against the government's attempt at building a "Putin-type of dictatorship". Despite all recent events in Hungary, Kész remains positive, reminding himself of his time as an exchange student in the 1990s in Georgia, US. At that time he had to write a speech resembling Martin Luther King's "I have a Dream". He

remembers writing about his hopes that by the time his children are 16, they will be able to live in a peaceful, tolerant and free society, just like the US. Now that his son is 15, he feels he is on a good track to achieving his dream.

To **Vladimir Kara-Murza**, a Russian politician and journalist, the city of Prague has a symbolic meaning. On 21 August 1968, as Russia was eager to crush the Prague Spring, men were sent to invade Prague. A few days later, eight Russian protesters went to the Red Square in Moscow to protest this invasion, using the now famous slogans "Hands off Czechoslovakia" and "For your freedom and ours". When Kara-Murza asked Natalya Gorbanevskaya, one of the protesters, about her opinion on this five-minute long demonstration, she stated that to her the demonstration was a selfish act, as she wanted a clear conscience. This courageous act was brought up again in September 2014, when hundreds of thousands marched through central Moscow to demonstrate against Russia's involvement and military intervention in Ukraine. These demonstrations were led by Boris Nemtsov, the most prominent opponent of Putin's authoritarianism and corruption of that time, who "loved this country too much to watch it being destroyed by authoritarianism", eventually paying the price of freedom and dignity in today's Russia, passing away after being assassinated in February 2015. Taking into account the previously mentioned events, as well as Sofia Kovalevskaya's quote, "Do what you must, come what may", Kara-Murza hopes to be able to keep alive the principles of freedom, rule of law and human rights in Russia. The politicians' aim should not be to win elections, but to show that an alternative and different vision for a free, peaceful and democratic Russia exists. He assures that he will continue to support young activists and build a sustainable movement, especially given the fact that "what we know from Russian history, small streams eventually turn into rivers" and concludes by stating that Western democracies should finally stop supporting Putin and avoid equating Russia with the current regime. Doing so undermines Russians opposing the current authoritarian government and hoping for a brighter future for their home country.



## **“Leading by Example”: Can Indian Democracy Trump Chinese Authoritarianism?**

*In cooperation with Robert Bosch Stiftung and Gateway House*  
October 17, 2016, 11:15 - 12:45, Mánes Gallery, River Hall

### **Moderator:**

*Jan Hornát*, Assistant Professor, Department of North American Studies, Charles University, Czech Republic

### **Panel discussion:**

*Neelam Deo*, Director, Gateway House, India

*Jagannath Panda*, Head, East Asia Centre, Institute for Studies and Analyses, India

*Juan Pablo Cardenal*, Journalist, Writer, Lecturer, Switzerland/Spain

The topic of the discussion, “Can Indian Democracy Trump Chinese Authoritarianism” prompted two questions stated at the beginning of the panel: could the growth of the Chinese and Indian economies within the last couple of decades produce changes in the political systems? Furthermore, does China have the ability to “provoke democracy?” The debate concluded with a critique of the west’s role in Asia. To **Jan Hornát**, the moderator of the discussion, the west can promote democracy through addressing its relationship with Asian countries.

Discussion participants made a specific point to highlight the success of the Chinese economy, but also the Chinese political problems that rarely are talked about. **Juan Pablo Cardenal** spoke to this issue, mentioning the strong growth of the Chinese economy and their presence on the global scene. Yet Cardenal then emphasized the prevalence of Chinese corruption, lack of freedoms, and human rights infringements. Regarding India, **Jagannath Panda** mentioned that while corruption is an issue in India, the government, contrary to the single-party Chinese government, is addressing the problem. **Neelam Deo** first raised the issue of the West’s role in south Asia, criticizing the West’s lack of financial support for issues regarding climate change, and using western interest to block imports of Indian oil from Iran. The discussion ended with Cardenal claiming that the west should ask “fundamental questions” when dealing with India and China, and should be supporting democracy in India, and criticizing the lack of democratic freedoms and human rights abuses in China.

## The Fragile State of Democratic Institutions

*In cooperation with European Commission Representation in the Czech Republic and the Center on Global Economic Governance, Columbia University*

October 17, 2016, 11:15 - 12:45, Goethe-Institut

### **Moderator:**

*Jan Švejnar*, Director, Center on Global Economic Governance, Columbia University, USA/Czech Republic

### **Panel discussion:**

*Georg Milbradt*, Professor, Dresden Technical University, Faculty of Economics, Germany

*Jerzy Buzek*, Former Prime Minister, Former President of the European Parliament, Poland

*Arun Maira*, Chancellor, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, India

The panel itself covered the topic of democratic institutions from a wide angle, being mainly due to the background of the speakers themselves. However, the panel could be summarized into three important ideas: **1.** There is the issue of the three types of democratic institutions: civil society, government, and supra-governments. The issues within these institutions lay in the principle of dialogue among each other and responsibility; **2.** The panel was concerned about the historical evolution of democracy and its institutions, but also how they are reflected in our present times compared to the past (more specifically, our recent past; post World War II); **3.** We, as society, must not underestimate the power of democratic disintegration and the potential outcome of such a process.

**Georg Milbradt** opened the panel discussion with a direct answer to the core question of the panel. Democratic institutions are not weaker in our current society, as a proof of that is the very victory of the West over the East at the end of the Cold War. However, that does not mean that everything currently is in perfect working order. There are new issues which have to be tackled in order to progress. **Jerzy Buzek** continues the discussion on this topic and highlights one of the issues, in Europe, as being inefficiency at a European level. The lack of engagement of citizens, weak civil society and furthermore the issue of some certain member states that do not abide to European Agreements (see the Greek crisis due to not abiding to growth and stability agreements).

Following this discussion on inefficiency and institutional issues, **Arun Maira** brought into discussion the very style of institutional types. Europe, and respectively the EU is focused around a vertical system of institutions with free elections and free governments. Yet, those things alone cannot guarantee a perfect system. For them to function properly, a system of horizontal institutions must be in place. The horizontal system requires dialogue, discussions and consensus all across the system. He has brought into discussion the idea of policy planning and continuation of agendas. Such a system is in place in India and focuses on the long term development of the state, therefore creating a vision of the future of the country. But, because our very educational system focuses on creating the best students, on creating speakers, society has lost track of the notion of listening and discussing issues.

Continuing the focus on vision, China is a positive example of a country with a vision and continuous political agenda. On the other hand, China is an example of a state with pseudo-democracy and pseudo-entrepreneurship. States that seek true democracy must have solid bases for those concepts in order to function properly.

Lastly, the question of where rights, freedoms or even democracy should be limited for the sake of security and development came up. The rise of populism is a direct observation of this phenomena. Milbradt underlines the idea that one cannot issue promises without the ability of delivering them. Not being able to deliver on those promises leads the people to lose trust in those bodies, hence leading them to look for solutions elsewhere.

## **A New Era of Authoritarianism**

October 17, 2016, 14:00 - 15:30, Žofin Palace, Forum Hall

### **Moderator:**

*Edward Lucas*, Journalist, the Economist, United Kingdom

### **Panel discussion:**

*Garry Kasparov*, Chairman, Human Rights Foundation, Former World Chess Champion, USA/Russia

*Suat Kiniklioglu*, Executive Director, Center of Strategic Communication, STRATIM, Turkey

*Annette Lu*, Former Vice President, Taiwan

*Ralf Fücks*, President, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Germany

*Irwin Cotler*, Founder, Chair of the Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, Canada

The session entitled "A new era of Authoritarianism" brought together several intellectuals and politicians to discuss the question whether or not the world is facing a new era of authoritarianism and if yes, what actions could be taken to invert or at least stop these recent developments.

Even though not all of the speakers were ready to admit the existence of a new era of authoritarianism, all of them agreed on the need to analyze recent developments like the failure of Arabic spring, the ongoing war in Syria, the external and internal politics of countries like Turkey and Russia as well as the anti-liberal turn of many European countries. The main questions identified as crucial for the understanding of today's situation can be divided into three main categories:

- 1) What makes authoritarian regimes so attractive? What are their strengths, what are their weaknesses?
- 2) What can democratic countries do in order to prevent the spreading of authoritarian regimes as well as the violations of human rights connected to them? What are the main reasons that the democratic countries failed doing so in the past years?
- 3) And based on these analyses what can be done (better) in the future?

As main reasons for the recent rise of authoritarian regimes three arguments were given: First, authoritarian regimes are able to give simple answers where slow and complex democratic institutions sometimes fail to provide them (sovereignty, stability, etc.). Secondly, western interests are deeply connected to these states and sometimes prevent action in favor of human rights (systemic enrichment of elites and corruption). And third, democratic countries are often perceived as too inactive and sometimes actually are ("culture of impunity").

A unified western society, determined to defend human dignity and auto-determination is key for the future of democracy. They must cooperate with the social societies in the countries suffering from authoritarian regimes if democracy is to survive.

## Leaderless Europe: Heading for Disaster?

October 17, 2016, 14:00 - 15:30, Žofin Palace, Knights' Hall,

### Moderator:

*Jan Šnidauf*, Head of the Political and Economic Section, EU Delegation to Bosnia and Hercegovina, Czech Republic

### Panel discussion:

*Werner Weidenfeld*, Founder, Center for Applied Policy Research, Germany;

*Per Nyholm*, Writer, Commentator, Columnist, Jyllands-Posten, Denmark/Austria

*Jan Techau*, Director, Richard C. Holbrooke Forum, American Academy in Berlin, Germany

*Jiří Schneider*, Executive Director, Aspen Institute Prague, Czech Republic

There is a pervasive feeling that Europe is in a state of decline if not immediate crisis. As an organizational body, the EU is perceived to have failed to adequately provide proper and effective guidance to a litany of modern tribulations. In a fascinating discussion, different solutions regarding leadership direction, organizational action at both a national and multinational level, and communication with the general public were hotly debated. At the conclusion, despite some dissention, a general consensus emerged that in terms of leadership direction, the best way to move forward is to present measures that often have widespread consensus amongst intellectuals and policy makers in a clear and purposeful manner to the public. Thus, in terms of the leaders themselves, there must be a degree of bravery to transcend party lines in an effort to enact sweeping reform to address the large degree of stagnation. Within these interpretations it was agreed that the origin of these solutions and reforms must originate from nation-states themselves, and within that effort renew faith and reaffirm the collective mission of the European Union.

In this panel, the members all agreed that the current rise of populism and anger towards the EU was misguided. As acclaimed academic and panel member **Werner Weidenfeld** put it "We are living in an era of complexity... and at the same time we are living in an era of confusion." This provided groundwork for the resulting discussion. Prolific reporter **Per Nyholm** and former Czech diplomat **Jiří Schneider** expanded upon this statement by reiterating a message that leadership confusion and lack of clear direction only worsened the political situation, and questioned key European structures. Within this framework **Jan Techau** echoed a pervasive feeling that solutions and guidance must be addressed through education amongst other measures in an effort to combat "sophisticated state failure." Such state failures ultimately were argued at the root of stagnation and not failures of the EU, a body not intended to handle crisis but preserve a state of stability.

*The 'what' question:* Europe is as free, prosperous and safe as never before. Still, there are challenges – and perceived challenges – that it continues to face, such as migration, terrorism and various economic issues. At the same time, there is no lack of recommendations regarding solutions to these challenges, since Europe has all the needed expert and analytical capacities. Those with knowledge and expertise should actively help communicate to the European publics what are viable options and what are not. By doing that they can help set the parameters for political leadership.

*The 'who' question:* There are no obvious candidates for strong European leaders who could present pre-meditated 'grand visions', since formulating such visions has become difficult in the increasingly complex world. But leadership is not an obsolete notion. Leaders should be measured by their judgment in picking viable options that are in line with their and the shared European values, their ability to frame partial solutions into a strategic perspective, and by their courage and willingness to put such a perspective to their constituencies in an understandable and credible way. Addressing openly citizens' concerns is an imperative, and should not be seen as populism; doing that while hiding or twisting facts should. Not addressing strong popular feelings (e.g. on issues such as migration) so as to presumably avoid populism will lead to political demise of even established traditional political forces.

*The 'where' question:* As member states of the EU remain the most legitimate locus of democratic political power, leadership efforts that hope to be successful must originate in their capitals, and lead to responses and reforms at state level. Inevitably, however, states do and will further on face the need to coordinate and organise at the EU level (subsidiarity remains the key principle, meaning the EU should act where lower levels could not do so as effectively). Therefore, despite the existing Euro-sceptic popular feelings, states should end practices of 'scapegoating Brussels' and – in a deliberate way and in their own interest – re-explain to citizens the necessity of and benefits from effective action at the Union level. Not doing so proactively would, in the current atmosphere shaped e.g. by Brexit, risk disintegrating Europe.

## The Responsibility of Intellectuals and Crisis of Global Leadership

October 17, 2016, 14:00 - 15:30, Goethe-Institut

### Moderator:

*Ramin Jahanbegloo*, Political Philosopher, Canada/Iran

### Panel discussion:

*Andrey Zubov*, Historian, Russia

*Helena Illnerová*, Professor Emeritus, Institute of Physiology, The Czech Academy of Sciences, Czech Republic

*Carl Gershman*, President, National Endowment for Democracy, USA

With the upcoming election of the 45<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America, one seems to notice an absence of intellectuals, thus questioning their responsibility and role today. **Carl Gershman** believes this to be untrue, underlining the important role that intellectuals play today, especially in the "intellectually dominated US". The challenge for intellectuals, he says, is to affirm who we are and what we are, whilst recognizing that we aren't perfect but flawed and still have a long way to go.

According to **Helena Illnerová**, intellectuals today have to provide objective, reliable data and stand up against their data's misuse, which often leads to a loss in objectivity and potential rise in hate and xenophobia. Most uproar in the intellectual field, she explains, comes from students, because they are the most eager to act when noticing or feeling injustice, as for example during the Nazi occupation and Velvet Revolution, to name Czech examples. Whilst science itself has nothing to do with compassion, but instead aims at finding out how the universe functions, proper data provided by scientists, as well as other intellectuals, may in fact help to find values to be shared and agreed upon.

**Andrey Zubov** adds that in each epoch we only see a handful of politically minded, morally inclined persons and sees the role of intellectuals in highlighting history to prevent repeating previously made mistakes. The intellectuals' moral authority, he explains, is to express absolute values and truths, which leads them to a choice between truth and their own comfortability, where truth has to prevail. Without intellectuals opposing the regime, the sense of human dignity declines or simply disappears. An intellectual's obligation is not to express himself, but to express charisma. Zubov further underlines that with equality generally being a form of progress and development, its only static form is freedom: all people ought to be free and the state ought to help people realize said freedom.

Despite the different approaches and views, there is general agreement on today's role of the intellectual in helping society think through compromises – for example by dealing with populism discontent based on injustices – and problems, and to affirm shared core values.

## Cuba: What are the Results of the US and EU Policies?

October 17, 2016, 14:00 - 15:30, European House

### Moderator:

*Javier El-Hage*, Chief Legal Officer, Human Rights Foundation, Bolivia/USA

### Panel discussion:

*Manuel Cuesta Morúa*, Activist, Founder, Progressive Arch, Cuba,

*Barbara Haig*, Deputy to the President for Policy and Strategy, National Endowment for Democracy, USA,

*Pedro Fuentes*, Attorney, Coordinator of International Affairs of Encuentro Nacional Cubano, Cuba, *Rosa María Payá Acevedo*, President, Latin American Youth Network for Democracy, Coordinator, Cuba Decide Campaign, Cuba

*Pavel Telička*, Member of the European Parliament, 2nd Vice-President of the ALDE, Czech Republic

"Cuba: What are the Results of the US and EU Policies" examined how current US and EU policy changes have shaped Cuba from a societal and political perspective. The panel also looked at the process of democratization and the furthering of human rights in Cuba. And finally, the discussion emphasized the possibilities of Cuba's future from a political and governmental perspective.

The panel contained perspectives from western and Cuban participants. Fuentes, Payá Acevedo, and Cuesta Morúa all expressed the current political climate from an independent Cuban perspective.

**Manuel Cuesta Morúa** admitted the positive aspects of the current changes, stating that the "controversy of (Cuban) policies make politics possible," but still highlighted the problematic aspects that arose from the EU agreement. **Pavel Telička** criticized the EU agreement and the "horse-racing" of relations in Cuba by the US and the EU. **Pedro Fuentes**, a former Cuban political prisoner and Cuban activist severely criticized the EU for turning a blind eye to human rights violations and the investment of "slave labor" in Cuba. Fuentes further claims that there is no way the current authoritarian government in Cuba could respect human rights. He emphasized the current political prisoner situation, including a man who has spent forty years in Cuban political prison. **Rosa María Payá Acevedo** stated that because of the US and EU agreements, much of the western world believes that the political and human rights situation in Cuba is improving. However, Payá Acevedo continues that the Cuban government is undergoing a policy change, not an actual change of human rights. The panel ended with the participant's urging of revolutionary political change in Cuba, the EU and US support of this change, and a necessary and enormous improvement on the current human rights situation.

## Women as Agents of Social Change

October 17, 2016, 15:45 - 17:15, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

### Moderator:

*Sai Felicia Krishna Hensel*, Director, Global Cooperation Initiative, USA

### Panel discussion:

*Manal al-Sharif*, Writer, Blogger, Women's Rights Activist, Saudi Arabia

*Iveta Radičová*, Sociologist, Former Prime Minister, Slovakia

*Tan-Sun Chen*, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Taiwan

*Tomáš Sedláček*, Chief Macroeconomic Strategist at ČSOB Bank, Lecturer at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic

*Annette Lu*, Former Vice President, Taiwan

Traditional social roles of women change rapidly and we should be ready to respond to it. There is a question: how exactly do these changes influence on the whole society and relations between people? The freedom, perspectives and rights of women are connected with the level of development of democratic institutions and human rights issues of a country. The more developed democracy in a country – the higher level of women activity and perspectives. This is our responsibility to provide women a chance and social conditions to take decisions about their life by themselves, not by other people. But women should also be fully responsible for these choices and decisions.

Also, it is important to enumerate social trends which cause and support changes of women's roles: increasing role of individuality in a modern society, equal access to education, open different professions and social activities. Production became more intellectual than physical, so the physical force is not a privilege any more. In conclusion it was noticed that equality in human rights and social conditions do not mean the total equality. Men and women are different and we should understand, rethink and keep this difference because a completely equal society does not work.



## Ukraine: Is The New Generation Willing to Assume Responsibility?

*In cooperation with Friedrich Naumann Foundation*

October 17, 2016, 15:45 - 17:15, Žofin Palace, Knights' Hall

### **Moderator:**

*Miriam Kosmehl, Project Director, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Germany*

### **Panel discussion:**

*Konstantin von Eggert, Journalist, Political Commentator, Russia*

*Štefan Füle, Former European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighborhood Policy, Czech Republic*

*Yevhen Hlibovytsky, Founder, pro.mova, Ukraine*

*Oleksandra Drik, Head of the Board, Civic Lustration Committee, Ukraine*

Given the sensitive nature of the topic and the personal involvement of the speakers themselves, the topic came to be a heartily debated one. However, the main points of the discussion can be reduced to the following two: **1)** The most important and the genuine movement towards a strong change is a coalition that is composed of civic society; **2)** The role of civic society is challenging. Yet, they are penetrating the system and are pushing for reform and change.

The panel opened with a set of remarks from **Oleksandra Drik**. Her main concern is the fact that Ukraine is currently in a movement of counter-revolution. Failure to identify the corrupt officials in the system and acting upon current issues in order to solve them may cause further issues for Ukraine. "Ukraine will not survive another revolution, what Ukraine needs are revolutionary reforms". And that is exactly what they are trying to achieve through reforms.

**Yevhen Hlibovytsky** expanded the discussion on revolution and pointed towards the idea Ukraine is only now engaging in a real revolution to 'unshackle' itself from its Soviet past. His argument was that what Ukraine experienced until recently were the same Soviet institutions, but with a modernized façade.

**Štefan Füle** pointed towards two main battles that are currently taking place: first, the battle for the territorial integrity of the country, and secondly the fight against corruption. Being in Ukraine during the crisis he described with great pleasantness that he met two types of people in Ukraine. The tired bureaucrats and the enthusiastic, ready to fight young people. He further emphasized the role of young people during the "Orange Revolution" and highlighted how he is against the idea of outsourcing foreigners and EU officials in order to help Ukraine rebuild. He expressed his belief that the EU should help Ukraine and foreign states build their own political elite.

**Konstantin von Eggert** took a different approach and analyzed the issue in respect to the values that the two nations have developed. He expanded on the idea that even though Russians view Ukrainians as people of Russian origin speaking a *weirder Russian*, they are in truth very different and pursue different values.

On the question of whether or not civil society will provide change, the speakers generally disagreed. The essence of the disagreement was a battle between wanting a fast reform and those seeking slower, and more sustainable reform.

## The Increased Use Of Referendums: Avoiding Political Responsibility?

October 17, 2016, 15:45 - 17:15, Mánes Gallery, Exhibition Hall

### Moderator:

*Kateřina Šafařková*, Journalist, Czech Republic

### Panel discussion:

*Alfred Dubs*, Member, House of Lords, a Winton's Child, United Kingdom

*Werner Weidenfeld*, Founder, Center for Applied Policy Research, Germany

*Jacques Rupnik*, Political Scientist, France

*Zoltán Kész*, Member of Parliament, Honorary President, Free Market Foundation, Hungary

This panel focused on the limits of referendums, along with discussions on how referendums should be implemented. Referendums are a tool for achieving solutions in democracies and a tool that represents the people and the government. The speakers, all from diverse backgrounds, provided varied views with specific examples.

**Werner Weidenfeld** broke down democracy as two basic principles, representation and direct decisions. He stressed how distrust, and the pressure on the self is growing, particularly in Germany. Weidenfeld's strongest issue is the way questions are formulated in referendums. The complex and confusing language leaves the public confused, and thus influences voting. Yet, Weidenfeld believes that a vital democracy requires referendums to reach out to the public. With the use of direct questions, distrust and confusion can be limited.

**Zoltán Kész** used the recent Hungarian referendum to emphasize his view. Although 98% of people voted in favor; the referendum was invalid, as most people did not vote. Parties encouraged people to stay at home! Although the referendum was invalid, the Prime Minister changed the constitution, emphasizing the power of the Hungarian government and the political reinterpretation of the results. Kész states that if you live in a country where the only democratic institution for the people include elections or referendums, then he is in favor of referendums on both the local and national level. He also explains how government control of the media influences voting. He humorously stated, "no one wants to immigrate to Hungary," although the government made it seem otherwise.

**Jacques Rupnik** shed light on two problems. One, the virtual direct democracy, such as social networks and new modes of communication, which thrive on the declining undermined authority of established media. Two, the issue of referendums acting as the political counterpart of the former. Rupnik believes that for important issues, such as statehood, referendums should exist. **Alfred Dubs**, on the other hand, delved into Brexit, stating how a threshold should have been implemented, and how people voted on different topics. He believes that referendums should be used sparingly, and issues should be clear, so the public votes on the correct issue, rather than against a political system.

In conclusion, the speakers shared the belief that referendums are vital to democracy, but should be used sparingly. For complicated issues, they should not be phrased as one, difficult to understand question. Referendums provide politicians with a means to improve their rating, which serves as another argument why referendums should be used carefully.

## Václav Havel and Mahatma Gandhi

*In cooperation with Václav Havel Library*

October 17, 2016, 15:45 - 17:15, Mánes Gallery, River Hall

### **Moderator:**

*Surendra Munshi, Sociologist, India*

### **Panel discussion:**

*Arun Maira, Chancellor, Central University of Himachel Pradesh, India*

*Ramin Jahanbegloo, Political Philosopher, Member, Program Council, Forum 2000 Foundation, Canada/Iran,*

*Pieter De Buysser, Writer, Playwright, Belgium*

The main questions addressed in this talk revolved around Gandhi and Havel's unique approach to political dissidence, non-violent activist techniques, and their continued relevance in today's world. Though the two men were from different eras and never physically met, all three speakers repeatedly emphasized their shared approach to politics and discussed the substantial influence Gandhi had in shaping Havel's beliefs. There was also a general consensus among the speakers and audience that the lives of Gandhi and Havel are extremely relevant in the modern day with the increase of violence and lack of character in our current political leaders. The speakers also had different and innovative ways of applying practices used by Gandhi and Havel to today's political systems to make them more compassionate and effective for the people of the world.

The talk began with each speaker explaining their personal experiences in working with or researching about Mahatma Gandhi and Vaclav Havel. They also explained in detail why they believed both men should continue to be studied and learned about by today's youth. **Arun Maira** stated that he finds Gandhi's economic theories to be especially applicable in today's world of globalized, capitalist economies. Particularly, he brought up Gandhi's idea that businessmen are trustees of society's wealth and should not be greedy and unethical when attempting to seek profits. **Ramin Jahanbegloo** emphasized how Gandhi's philosophy could be seen as an ethical platform that seeks to include all of humanity. **Pieter De Buysser**, a playwright writing about Václav Havel, brought up his concerns that modern conservative politicians were distorting the image of Havel to make him seem like a strong proponent of capitalism and neoliberalism.

Building off these ideas, the next question posed to the speakers was how we could use the teachings and actions of Havel and Gandhi to "rehumanize" politics. The speakers agreed that Gandhi was an excellent politician who was able to enact tremendous change without ever holding elected office. Maira attributed this success to Gandhi's mission to use politics as a way to serve a larger purpose and not simply himself. Jahanbegloo used the examples of Donald Trump to show how modern politics had shifted from serving others to using power as a tool to further a personal agenda. When asked how Gandhi and Havel could still be relevant in a world permeated by so much violence, all speakers responded that emulating the pacifist tactics of both men could be effective in bringing about positive change.

The talk concluded with a discussion about some of the more notable faults of the two men, specifically their failure to see women as an integral part of their new political systems. However, the general consensus of the panel and the audience was that continuing to learn and study Vaclav Havel and Mahatma Gandhi is important for the advancement of our society.

## Populism, Caudillism, and Other Challenges to Democracy in Latin America

October 17, 2016, 15:45 - 17:30, Goethe-Institut

### Moderator:

*Diego Arria*, President, Rescatando Venezuela Foundation, Venezuela

### Panel discussion:

*Oscar Arias Sánchez*, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Former President, Costa Rica

*Fidel Moreira Flores*, Executive Director, Study Center for Governance and Democracy, Nicaragua

*René Gómez Manzano*, President, Association of Cuban Independent Lawyers Corriente Agramontista, Cuba

"The idea must be changed, not the leaders", is the belief behind the panel. The matter of institutions' instability in Latin America is discussed and finds a positive point of view towards its end: the future generation sees freedom as a serious matter and despite a long history of populism, there is hope.

With a comparison between different states, such as Bolivia, Nicaragua, Argentina and Venezuela, we can observe a strict relationship between State and business. This relationship is fighting against democracy and this makes it impossible to proceed with the reforms needed to consolidate law and order: we are constantly in front of populism and that is a threat to institutions because Latin America is actually unable to guarantee their independence from power and to respect what are defined by the speakers as the "rules of the game". The problem underlined during the discussion, is how history keeps repeating itself letting us witness over and over the constant confirmation of the status quo. Even something as democratic as elections is used and misused and politicians do everything they can to maintain their power, instead of showing their support to the future political leaders. They always talk about the re-foundation of the nation that begins with a tabula rasa; an example can be seen in Bolivia and its dozens of Constitutions. The problem stays the same and it is a President that does whatever it takes to stay in power.

**Oscar Arias Sánchez** reminds us the importance of respecting law and order: there are rules that must be taken in consideration. Law prevails over power and power has to be distributed. The common perspective is that the system is not working and the only way to change this failure is to change the power.

The discussion ends on a positive accent: there is hope for Latin America and this hope can be found in the new generation. The final appeal from the speakers to all of us is to stay in contact, follow what is happening, and to do anything we can against this regime, because democracy needs to survive.

## Gallery II

October 17, 2016, 17:30 - 18:30 Mánes Gallery, Exhibition Hall

### Introduction:

*Pavel Fischer*, Director, STEM, Czech Republic

### Participants:

*Garry Kasparov*, Chairman, Human Rights Foundation New York, Former World Chess Champion, USA/Russia

*Philip Zimbardo*, Psychologists Professor Emeritus, Stanford University, USA

*Rosa María Payá Acevedo*, President, Latin American Youth Network for Democracy, Coordinator, Cuba Decide Campaign, Cuba

**Rosa María Payá Acevedo** enters the topic of this year's Forum 2000 by pointing out that "taking responsibility is the way we have in totalitarian regimes to be free". Further she acknowledges that this feeling might also be present in democratic regimes, but is often little animated. In totalitarian regimes "escape or change" are the only options. Anything else would be an "aberration of a human being." She continues describing the current Cuban situation with all the impacts a totalitarian regime has on a society in order to introduce the idea of "totalitarian regimes toxicity". Totalitarian regimes do not only concern the countries where they are implemented, but manage to reach people way beyond their borders. One of the examples given by Payá Acevedo is the inversion of symbolic meaning connected to people like Castro and Guevara. Her analysis of the Cuban situation further leads her to some remarks on democracy. In her experience, democracy is fragile because it doesn't dispose of the same mechanics as totalitarian regimes. She suggests implementing tools in social society in order to make democracy less vulnerable. In totalitarian regimes the international voice is often the only weapon that the people have at their disposal, the only chance that their regime might be prevented from criminal actions. But she remains positive. "People have the same hope. It lives in each citizen when they become aware that history and the possibility to change it depends on them." Concerning Cuba, where an article of the constitution proscribes any modification of the regime, she is sure that those who believe in democracy know that the people's volition will always be above the constitution.

**Garry Kasparov** started by highlighting the connection between his original occupation as a chess player and his position as a chairman of the Human Rights Foundation in New York. Chess under the Soviet Union was a means of showing intellectual superiority to the West. When he won his chess title, he knew that his actions could inspire others, he knew about his responsibility.

When the soviet regime finally collapsed in 1989 this obviously didn't just happen because of a miracle but thanks to people having the courage to take responsibility. And as he argues, these people could do so because they were sure of doing right thing. This was especially made possible by the moral support that the "free world" would constantly provide those fighting for human values. Kasparov underlines that this is what is missing today. To his mind people have lost the capacity to distinguish between evil and good. One of the reasons that rendered this development possible is that "totalitarian regimes pretend to have the monopoly of moral issues." Another one can be found in the "attempt to slow things done". Negotiating with the "evil" is in Kasparov's eyes not the answer. We need to recognize that we are in a war against the "dark forces" and we can no longer ignore that we will not be able make peace unilaterally. "Every attempt for compromise is an invitation for aggression."

Information goes both ways now. The only option for the authoritarian countries remains to attack the democratic ones. ("Totalitarian regimes never ask "why", they only ask "why not?"). That's why Kasparov argues that recognizing that conflict is inevitable is therefore so important.

**Philip Zimbardo** introduces his presentation by asking, "How is a human being constructed and how does it react?"

Democracy is in his eyes under greater threat than it has ever been since the 1930s and 40s, when Mussolini and Hitler came to power. But people are not aware of it. Hannah Arendt has shown the banality of evil in her book about Eichmann and his process in Jerusalem and Stanley Milgram has shown the propensity of "normal" people to act viciously under certain circumstances. In this

experience one out of three Americans was ready to give the maximal charge of 450V (mortal charge) in order to penalize wrong answers. For Zimbardo the evil starts with the charge of 15V (lowest charge) because it accustoms and renders the evil usual. He goes on comparing this experience situation with the treatment of Jews in Nazi Germany, saying that the carrying of the yellow badge corresponded to 15V and the final solution to 450V. Germans were gradually acclimated to crimes against Jews. A similar thing can be observed in connection to authoritarian regimes today. It starts with the control of the media and ends with a complete overthrow of the democratic order.

Authoritarian measures are further on often based on the idea that giving up liberty is necessary to obtain security. Zimbardo points out how wrong this equation is in showing that security is always just an illusion whereas liberty really exists. That is also a reason why totalitarian and authoritarian regimes always create an enemy that people are afraid of.

For sustaining a real democracy, it needs pro-democratic individuals; people whose moral judgment and moral courage guides their actions. These effective social change agents as Zimbardo calls them can only be the product of an education that is ready to take risks and to accept failure.

## TUESDAY

### V4 and Germany: Public Trust in Democratic Institutions

*In the framework of the Czech-German Discussion Forum*  
October 18, 2016, 7:45 - 9:30, Goethe-Institut

#### **Moderator:**

*Libor Rouček*, Former Vice-President, European Parliament, Co-Chairman, Czech-German Discussion Forum, Czech Republic

#### **Participants:**

*Martin Bútora*, Sociologist, Institute for Public Affairs, Slovakia

*Werner Weidenfeld*, Founder, Center for Applied Policy Research, Germany

*Wojciech Przybylski*, Editor-in-Chief, Eurozine, Poland

In this panel, there was a deep and insightful conversation about the V4, the next steps that are necessary, and how Germany has and will play a role for the future benefit of the organization. With the V4 countries, the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary, progress was possible on the Principle of Solidarity, following that of the EU and NATO. The Visegrad Four are tackling a major issue in the democracy of their nations is democracy under distress? According **Werner Weidenfeld**, we are in the "Era of Confusion," where countries are proposing "Flexible Solidarity" in which countries can do what they can in terms of immigration and supporting neighboring EU countries. Germany has been influential to the development of V4 according to **Wojciech Przybylski**, stating that Angela Merkel can be seen as a leader of the organization due to her promotion of solidarity in Central Europe. A major point **Libor Rouček** and the rest of the panel made clear was the difference between the relationship existent now and twenty-five years ago. The panelists mentioned that the countries in V4 are currently looking for their own bottom line; their own benefit instead of what the coalition was founded on, solidarity.

Instead of creating a two -type integration into the EU and other European organizations, the panel advocated for "Differentiated Integration" in which these organizations welcome countries at their own rate without classifying them in a certain category. This is a subjective process and difficult situation to be in. Even though distrust is on the rise, democracy can prevail with the help of countries coming together to answer the people and truly represent all of Europe.

## Global Environment: Who Will Take the Lead in Facing the Mounting Problems?

*In cooperation with Embassy of France*

October 18, 2016, 8:00 - 9:30, French Embassy

### **Moderator:**

*Bedřich Moldan*, Founder and Former Director, Environment Center, Charles University, Czech Republic

### **Participants:**

*Thomas Pogge*, Founding Director, Global Justice Program, Germany/USA

*Olivier Fontan*, Assistant Deputy Director for Environment and Climate & the COP21 Negotiating Team, France

This panel covered the topic of the Paris Agreements of 2015. This panel can be summed up into the following points: 1. The important elements that go beyond the agreements (moral/ legal obligations); 2. The panel informed us on the processes after the agreements; 3. We got informed on the actions and preparations of Czech Republic in regards to the agreement.

**Thomas Pogge** started the panel with some general remarks on the issues that are caused by climate change and preceded to making an analogy describing the difficulty in negotiations within the international arena. He mentioned that Switzerland, for example, would be more willing to accept some contents of the agreement than, for example, Bangladesh. He further explains that this is due to the fact that Switzerland is simply richer and its people can afford to go somewhere else if something bad happens, whereas this is not the case with Bangladesh.

**Olivier Fontan** talks about the prospects of the agreement and that the agreement has been extremely successful in mobilizing civil society, on a global scale, to be more aware and engage more in environmental issues. Furthermore, he brings up the objectives that the agreement has set out for each state. Each state must try and reduce its carbon footprint by 5% yearly in order to avoid a 2° C increase by the end of the century. However, out of the whole amount of fossil fuel left within the planet about 65-85% must remain there to achieve that objective.

Both speakers proceeded describing that environmental issues are not something that can be solved by single individuals, but only by collective actions. "Climate change is like democracy. A personal vote will not change the election, but a collective action will trigger a difference".

Lastly, the speakers brought into discussion the topic of transparency. Hence, they have explained that in 2018 a package with more transparent decisions will arrive; they expanded on the subject of people wanting to understand exactly what are states doing with their budgets and what exactly that money is being spent.



## The Danger of Extremism and Populism in Central Europe

*In cooperation with the Embassy of Austria*

October 18, 2016, 08:00 - 09:30, Austrian Residence

### **Moderator:**

*Tomas Vrba*, Chairman, Board of Directors, Forum 2000 Foundation, Czech Republic

### **Participant:**

Franz Karl Prüller, Senior Advisor, Board of ERSTE Foundation, Austria

### **Host:**

H.E. Alexander Grubmayr, Ambassador to the Czech Republic, Austria

In order to present this extensive topic from a practical perspective, Franz Karl Prüller points to seven short theses referring to particular dangers, with one, more or all of them pertaining even to the most stabilized democracies.

**(1) Danger of underestimating populist parties:** In 1999, when Austria's Freedom Party came in second and formed a right-wing coalition with ÖVP, the Austrian People's Party, coming in third, it enabled the right-wing party to become accepted and present its views. While this coalition soon split, it is not expected to happen again, as today's Freedom Party is inherently different from its previous versions. Thus one should not underestimate populist parties and their resisting power. **(2) Danger of being naïve towards populists:** It is to be expected that right-wing parties will continue to take advantage of every mistake made. The danger presented itself here is that "the best in society lack conviction, the worst have passion". **(3) Danger of believing that populists don't have a real cause:** It would be a mistake to disregard populists' appeal to "real problems", including job insecurities, precarious situations, diminishing living standards and the general lack of a social economic perspective – insecurities that may lead to people turning to radicalism. **(4) Danger of believing to be able to counter their rhetoric with rational arguments:** Populists and extremists do not work with facts. They work with emotions, and are pleased not to be intellectual, but instead appeal to the "general public". Hence, in this case, it would be wrong to follow a strategy aiming at using rational arguments. **(5) Danger of letting populists take over:** We are at a point where mainstream politicians and media have largely taken over the populist rhetoric, setting the agenda of what is being talked about according to the populists' interests and ideas. **(6) Danger of our responses being only "more of the same":** With populists shifting from economic to cultural causes of problems, understanding "foreigners as strangers to our healthy culture", leads to an emotionally charged atmosphere demanding new responses from alternative and government parties, instead of "sticking to the old script". **(7) Danger of society being split even further and deeper:** Finally, the inherent deepening split in our society is to be halted and prevented. Especially in times where a defeat in an election is explained as conspiracy, not only endangering the basic principles of democracy, but also our society's stability.

There has to be clarity about the basic rules we have to live by, created by providing guidelines and rules of social interaction. Dealing with populists nowadays needs to encompass being aware of the dangers, but also accepting their probable power and resistance. Vrba concludes by stating that "you can remain optimistic, as long as you're an informed optimist".

## Personal Story as an Argument?

*In cooperation with Shoah Memorial Bubny and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic*  
October 18, 2016, 8:00 - 9:30, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

### **Moderator:**

*Petr Brod, Journalist, Czech Republic*

### **Participants:**

*Alfred Dubs, Member, House of Lords, a Winton's Child, United Kingdom*

*Petr Pithart, Former Prime Minister, Czech Republic*

*Jan Sokol, Politician and Philosopher, Czech Republic*

### **Host:**

*Václav Kolaja, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic*

During Tuesday's morning session former and current politicians came together in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Prague's Czernin Palace. The working breakfast's topic "Personal story as an argument" provided the framework for a rich discussion, linking personal experiences to political careers and commitments.

Three topics approached by the moderator:

How did personal experiences influence subsequent political commitments and activities of these three politicians? What kind of political careers did they choose? And what are their positions on some of today's major political issues, such as Brexit, the European Union or the question of immigration and refugees?

The first part of the panel concerning the panelist's experiences of the past, lead them to their political engagement, which highlighted the diversity of possible reactions in similar situations. All three panelists shared the experiences of their fathers being persecuted by the Nazi regime, but did not draw the same conclusions. While World War II inspired **Alfred Dubs** to the idea that politics should combat the evil, **Jan Sokol** want politics to be more than just a defensive activity. Besides showing different reactions to similar situations, their personal stories also showed how the context, in which further political commitment took place changed the direction, in which this engagement was conducted. Political activity in a democratic country like Britain (Dubs) and political engagement under the Soviet regime (Pithart, Sokol) had to lead to different results.

A similar diagnostic can be made concerning the panelists positions on current political issues. It seems like life stories do in fact influence subsequent political commitments, but this should not make us forget that they are also modified, rearranged, and reinterpreted.

## The Paradox of Religion

October 18, 2016, 9:30 - 11:00, Mánes Gallery, Exhibition Hall

### Moderator:

*Shlomo Avineri*, Professor of Political Science, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

### Panel discussion:

*Daniel Herman*, Minister of Culture, Czech Republic

*Tarek Osman*, Author, Broadcaster, and the EBRD's Senior Political Counsellor for the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean, Egypt

*His Holiness the Dalai Lama*, Spiritual Leader, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, India/Tibet

As the title of the discussion itself alludes, religion seems to be a paradox. While the tenets of most religions emphasize a message of understanding, peace, and tolerance, in today's world and throughout history, this message has often been either abused or muddled. In a panel featuring distinguished guests such as **His Holiness the Dalai Lama**, author and media persona **Tarek Osman**, Czech Minister of Culture **Daniel Herman**, and moderator, political scientist **Shlomo Avineri**, fundamental contradictions and the ultimate message and purpose of religion were discussed. As Mr. Avineri noted, it is hard to boil down the biggest takeaways from such a powerful discussion; however, all members stressed the importance of dialogue and tolerance. They believe that there must be a common effort to fight the suppression of ideas and freedom. It is in these situations that religious doctrine can be completely abused and misunderstood as its power structure and wide influence is used as a tool of persecution, defying religions' pacifying and open tenets.

From a personal level, Herman noted that religion can offer a bearing for a "fruitful life," especially powerful under a situation of oppression such as the communist dictatorship that marked Herman's upbringing. All agreed that for an individual, religion could be a potent guide and moral grounding. Osman, however, approached the topic from a multinational scale, discussing religion's institutional importance. Religion at many times has brought order and direction to entire groups of people, nations, and regions but, as Osman notes, there is a "fine line between order and control." A suppression of freedom of expression and thought is thus a highly potent possibility and in many cases reality. His Holiness the Dalai Lama helped bring perspective to this issue by stating that despite the power of fear and anger, their expression represents a betrayal of religious doctrines and even human nature. In an incredibly optimistic tone, he then stressed that humanity is marked by "love and compassion" and that people of all denominations and even those secular can cooperate working towards a happiness that echoes the true creeds of belief.

## Truth and Love at 80

*In cooperation with Václav Havel Library*

October 18, 2016, 10:00 - 11:30, Žofín Palace, Knight's Hall

### **Moderator:**

Alexandr Vondra, Director, Prague Centre for Transatlantic Relations (PCTR), Czech Republic

### **Panel discussion:**

*Michael Žantovský, Executive Director, Václav Havel Library, Czech Republic*

*Rosa María Payá Acevedo, President, Latin American Youth Network for Democracy, Coordinator, Cuba Decide Campaign, Cuba*

*Martin Bútora, Adviser to the President of the Slovak Republic, Slovakia*

*Irwin Cotler, Founder, Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, Canada*

"Truth and Love at 80" was not only a commemoration of Vaclav Havel's 80th birthday, but a discussion of Havel's legacy contextualized in modern society. Moderator **Alexandr Vondra** was quick to point out that the "entire generation of 1989 of freedom fighters and human rights activists is almost gone." He noted that there was a rise of populism despite previous intellectual democratic movements. Throughout the panel, the theme of young people taking action arose, and how the youngest generation can in the words of Vondra, "put the freedom agenda back in the center of our attention."

Other than truth and love, **Martin Bútora** pointed out the importance of hope regarding Havel's legacy. To Havel, hope was not only an idea, rather an "expression of commitment." **Irwin Cotler** recalled his own humanitarian inspirations from Havel. He again reinforced the idea of commitment, especially when it comes to human rights abuses today. Cotler also made clear eight important principles to combat and analyze oppressive regimes around the world. **Rosa María Payá Acevedo**, a Cuban democratic activist explained the problematic aspects of cynicism, particularly as to how it related to Cuban society to make Democratic change. While also explaining to the audience that, "America changed its policy, not Cuba," Payá Acevedo stated that in Cuba, "eventually, the truth will come out." **Michael Žantovský** emphasized the importance of truth. To him, truth will always exist, and young people will continue to seek it. The discussion encompassed questions from the audience, even one that questioned Havel's "iron hand" instead of his "velvet glove." However, the panel concluded with stating the importance of Havel's influences, and as Payá Acevedo stated, a hope for citizens "to share that responsibility."

## **Dynasties, Democracy, and Power**

October 18, 2016, 10:00 - 11:30, Mánes Gallery, River Hall

### **Moderator:**

*Hrishabh Sandilya*, Political Analyst, India/Czech Republic

### **Participants:**

*Paul Flather*, Secretary General, Europaeum, United Kingdom

*Neelam Deo*, Director, Gateway House, India

*Diego Arria*, President, Rescatando Venezuela Foundation, Venezuela

*Erkin Gadirli*, Co-Founder, Member of the Board, Republican Alternative (ReAI), Azerbaijan

There are political dynasties around the world, even today. The list of countries is overwhelming and surprising to most. One main idea looked at during this roundtable was democratization during dynasties. The speakers actually gave a wide array of answers. **Paul Flather** argues that there is positives to dynasties and through democracy dynasties can form. **Neelam Deo** came to a similar conclusion through a different perspective, focusing on costs of elections and forcing only the wealthy to be able to afford such campaigns, such as a \$1 billion Senate race in California. This is why it is necessary to incorporate Affirmative Action type policies in government, like how India has allocated seats for representatives of lower castes in parliament. She continued to discuss the issue of women brought up on the panel, how it has taken 70 years for women to go from 5% to only 11% of seats in parliament. In a dynasty, more women are actually in politics, says Flather. The idea is that with a dynasty, you generally find the family is dedicated to public service, qualified in terms of merit, have political experience and familiarity, which makes easier for women to be that fitting person for the job. Due to sympathy vote, name recognition, campaigning skills, and the benefits of incumbency, relatives are able to take advantage of the situation and take a seat of government as a result which has happened countless times even today. The other two speakers, **Erkin Gadirli** talked about the mindset of the people of Azerbaijan, having political nationalism. On the other hand, **Diego Arria** discusses how Venezuela is experiencing a "Brain Drain" of people leaving the country because of a poor military dynasty. The panelists describe how there are positives and benefits to both regimes, but the main idea is to incorporate women in politics, give the people the voice they deserve and create a large pool of great candidates to lead your country by promoting education at an early age to invest in the country's future. After a dynasty has ruled a country for so long, merit tends to go down as Karl Marx and Thomas Paine both point out. As long as merit is top priority, dynasties and democracy can only be good competition to lead a country to a better place.

## The Future of North Korea: Democracy and Respect for Human Rights in Sight?

*In cooperation with Embassy of the Republic of Korea*  
October 18, 2016, 10:00 - 11:30, Goethe-Institut

**Moderator:** *Pavel Fischer*, Director STEM, Czech Republic

### Panel discussion:

*So-yeon Lee*, President, New Korea Women's Union, North Korea

*Geun-wook Lee*, Professor, Department of Political Science, Sogang University, Korea

*Jin-sung Jang*, Poet, Spy, Escapee, North Korea

*Michael Staack*, Co-Director, Institute of International Politics, Helmut Schmidt University, Germany

*Scott Snyder*, Director of the Program for the U.S.-Korea Policy, Council on Foreign Relations, USA

Issues from human rights, genocide, international engagement or refugees were some of the most important points discussed. To sum up in a few points, the discussion concerned: 1) How to bridge the mistrust space created in the relations between USA and China in the context of North Korea; 2) How to engage, carrot and sticks policy a solution?; 3) A dissemination of the 2014 UN Human Rights Report; 4) The condition of the North Korean refugees.

The panel started with a speech from the Ambassador of Human Rights from South Korea, Lee Jung-hoon, making some general remarks on the atrocities that are being committed in North Korea and continued with his presentation on the political situation in North Korea. He has described in great detail the variations of each of the regimes of the Kim dynasty. Furthermore, in comparison to his grandfather and father, Kim Jong-un is a failed leader.

After this presentation, the discussion was taken over by **So-yeon Lee**, who as well described in great detail the pain and the crimes that the regime commits. Even though her presentation was focused generally around women of North Korea, many of the things she described do apply to men as well. An issue that she identifies across most women from North Korea is that they are brought up in a manner to idolatize the Kim dynasty.

**Geun-wook Lee** tackled the very issue that is within the very title of this panel and he said that there are many issues with North Korea and that if the regime will fall it is unknown what will happen. The lack of a middle class, the lack of properly educated people, the lack of democratic culture will prove to be enormous hurdles for their society to overcome.

**Scott Snyder** and **Michael Staack** expanded the discussion on the issue and brought into the discussion other international actors. Snyder points to the fact that interest in North Korea in American circles is a thing that started only in the 90s, after The Great Famine. Staack refers to some similarities between a potential reunification of the Korean peninsula and the German reunification. However, he dismisses most of the similarities due to the fact that two cases are essentially very different. Moreover, the international community must try more and engage into dialogue with North Korea. They insist, that even though they are viewed as the "villains" in this case, they must be invited to dialogue. Especially because by having them isolated, the other international actors are playing according to the North Koreans' wishes, to stay isolated.

## The Influence of Václav Havel in Latin America

*In cooperation with Václav Havel Library*

October 18, 2016, 10:00 - 11:30, European House

### **Moderator:**

*Gabriel Salvia*, Director, Center for the Opening and Development of Latin America, Argentina

### **Panel discussion:**

*Martin Palouš*, President, Václav Havel Library Foundation, USA/Czech Republic

*Jorge Olivera Castillo*, Author, Journalist, Former Political Prisoner, Cuba

*Rafael Rincón*, Director of Strategy and Innovation, Fundación para el Progreso, Chile

The main ideas on the legacy of Václav Havel in Latin America, highlighted by the moderator and later, developed by the speakers were related to the character and life work of Havel. Firstly, Havel was a man of solidarity. He was a man who fought against all kinds of totalitarianism and who pursued an active policy in human rights that is equally admired and missed in Latin America. Finally, he was a man who pursued dialogue without any kind of discrimination.

Firstly, **Martin Palouš** and **Jorge Olivera** both remarked the similarities between the Cuban transition with the experience of Czech Republic. Palouš highlighted that the Czech experience inspired and helped those searching to help Cuba's transition to democracy. He stated that the Czech Republic has a compromise with Cuba, because of a shared historical experience. Interestingly, the main purpose is not to aggressively and negatively point at a country and highlight their lack of respect for human rights, but it is based on a basic premise of solidarity, manifested along the encouragement of dialogue and international cooperation. There is no development and no welfare or prosperity without democracy, the rule of law and fight for human rights for all, he remarked. The internationalization of human rights is a *sine qua non* condition in order to achieve a culture of peace. Consequently, he highlighted two main characteristics of Havel's legacy: international solidarity and efficient politics.

On the other side Olivera, an independent journalist from Cuba who was also a political prisoner remarked the outstanding capacity of Havel to remain in the imagination of the dissident community in Cuba, to keep the flame of democracy alive and creating a legacy not only for his own country, but for the whole world. He remarked that Havel was a referent who crossed the borders of his own country and united Cuban people in their fight against totalitarianism and in their struggle to obtain fundamental freedoms. Moreover, he emphasized Havel's mastery and artistic language when revealing against injustice and when challenging the rigid norms of Communism. Havel, contrary to his adversaries, created a speech of love and comprehension instead of hate and repression.

The third panelist, **Rafael Rincón** not only accentuated Havel's words, ideas, and thoughts but mainly his attitude, his conduct, his actions. In doing so, he resumed Havel's life into three main attitudes: living in the truth, sense of responsibility, and giving power to the powerless. Rincón remarked various aspects that he deemed are part of Havel's legacy as well as examples to be followed by the leaders of Latin America: Firstly he remarked the above-mentioned sense of responsibility. Havel dismantled and continuously challenged the lies upon which the Communist regime was built and maintained, he told the truth and fought hard for something not to bring success to himself, but because he believed it was the right thing to do. Furthermore, this liberal attitude was marked by a ceaseless tendency in dialogue and a high appreciation of dialogue. On top of this, he never pursued a "Messiah" attitude, presenting himself as a common man instead of as a savior who was chosen to be so, like it happens very often in Latin America and its populist leaders. On the contrary he was a very modest man with common sense.

Finally, throughout the round of questions from the floor, the main discussed ideas about Havel's legacy in Latin America were his unequivocal propensity to dialogue and maintaining an open debate; his capacity to pursue a democratic transition in a peaceful manner, based on dialogue and his unlimited capacity of solidarity.

## 20 Years of Forum 2000: The World and its Current Challenges

October 18, 2016, 12:00 - 13:30, Žofín Palace, Forum Hall

### Moderator:

*Surendra Munshi*, Sociologist, Member, Program Council, Forum 2000 Foundation, India

### Speakers:

*His Holiness the Dalai Lama*, Spiritual Leader, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, India/Tibet

*Tomáš Halík*, Philosopher, President, Czech Christian Academy, Czech Republic

*Manal al Sharif*, Writer, Blogger, Women's Rights Activist, Saudi Arabia

In the 20 years since Forum 2000's creation, one could see and feel changes in various aspects, which have led up to today's 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum 2000 Conference in Prague. Despite the many problems and constant anger, fear and hatred in today's world, **His Holiness the Dalai Lama** points to a positive change in terms of people being more compassionate. By paying more attention to one's inner peace, one's physical condition is improving, hence leading to more happiness in one's life. In general, people feel the responsibility to take care of one another, with education taking on the important role of spreading humanity's compassion. However, we are now witnessing dangerous reactions to globalization: the revival of nationalism, conflicts and wars, as well as the shocking success of populist players in a post-communist world. These recent developments, amongst others, seriously contributed to undermining democracy as a concept, creating even more challenges. Dealing with these challenges demands a common understanding and sense of community. **Manal al Sharif** agrees that what makes us human is the compassion for other human beings and stresses that it takes courage to start questioning and to take action, but that it will be worthwhile, agreeing with His Holiness who believes that "if you do good, you'll benefit, if you do wrong, you have to face negative consequences". The leitmotif "The Courage to Take Responsibility" has run through this year's session like a golden thread, having been taken on in different kinds of fora and discussed by people from all aspects of life. Finally, it all comes down to individuals showing compassion, forgiveness, and tolerance in order to be able to question and understand our own as well as other ways of life. Hopefully we find the courage to take responsibility one way or another.



## Media: Still Setting the Agenda?

*In cooperation with Czech Television*

October 18, 2016, 14:30 - 16:00, Mánes Gallery, Exhibition Hall

### Moderator:

*Eva Hanáková*, Co-Founder, Tablet Media, Czech Republic

### Speakers:

*Per Nyholm*, Writer, Commentator, Columnist, Jyllands-Posten, Denmark/Austria

*Petr Dvořák*, Director General, Czech Television, Czech Republic

*Thomas Kent*, President, Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), USA

Their analysis focused equally on two questions: Do traditional media remain influential? And, what are the risks if they don't? Concerning the first and main question of this panel, all three speakers seemed to agree that agenda is set by various different actors today. However their diagnostics and predictions on the future of traditional media differ in some major points.

**Thomas Kent** admits severe external changes (appearance of the Internet leading to more concurrence, more difficulties in obtaining advertisements and enhanced social media use) as well as some internal insufficiencies (slow adaptation to new technologies) that put traditional media in a complicated position. The main thing that changed for him is however, the number of actors involved in the process of making news ("democratization"). If traditional media will stay influential or not will therefore depend on whether they will manage to produce better quality than their competitors.

In a similar way **Petr Dvořák** analyses the problem. Admitting a problem for traditional media to attain the young generation, he also underlines the importance of quality for traditional media. Designating "trust" as the major factor in favor of traditional media, he stands up for a "quality-before-speed" philosophy, highlighting the importance of fact checking for the traditional media.

**Per Nyholm** is also claiming what he calls "slow news", sharing the other panelists concern for the existence of serious media. The picture that he is painting of the situation of traditional media is nevertheless way darker than those of his co-speakers on the panel. Identifying new social media (he calls them asocial media) as the greatest threat to traditional forms of media. He draws our attention to the dangers implied in a possible disappearance of these media ("The barbarians are banging on the door"). Only the future will tell us if Nyholm's predicted loss of culture and civilization will become true or if on the contrary, Dvořák's and Kent's prudent optimism will be proven correct.

## **Putin's Russia: Dealing with the Politics of Disruption**

October 18, 2016, 14:30 - 16:00, Goethe-Institut

### **Moderator:**

*Julius von Freytag-Loringhoven*, Head of Moscow Office, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Germany/Russia

### **Speakers:**

*Andrey Zubov*, Historian, Russia,

*Konstantin von Eggert*, Journalist, Political Commentator, Russia,

*Rostislav Valvoda*, Director, Prague Civil Society Centre, Czech Republic

Today, we face a revived authoritarian regime in Russia and the important question we should answer: why? According to the panel, Russia did not have a "decommunization" period. People lost their state very quickly and had no time to reorganize their life and had no ability to deal with new rules and the new state. The second important question regards how Europe should respond to this new Russia. One answer would be to combine all efforts together and follow democratic principles even if it will be unprofitable. Also, we should consider and understand some internal problems in Russia, such as desecularization of the state and discrimination of religious minorities and atheists, internal propaganda of Putin's regime, falsification of results of the votes, and penetration of the state propaganda to the Institute of Education. These trends lead to the aggravation of the situation around Russia. Finally, this may be useful to deal with Russians who disagree with state regime: dissidents, oppositionists, and some social organizations who also consider the situation in Russia as a problem.