

Sharpening Our Vision

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It is an honour for me to round up this, the 7th ECSA World Conference.

The views and positions that have filled this room in the past two days struck me for their intellectual honesty, boldness and brilliance. This is exactly what we need now that Europe and the world are stepping into a new phase in history.

So, first of all, I would like to thank you for your contribution. The success of this Conference confirms once again the outstanding quality of the work carried out through the Jean Monnet Action and the ECSA network.

I can assure you that your activities will receive my full support during the coming years. I also hope there will be plenty of good applications in the future from the ECSA network.

1. New International Governance

Your discussion in the past two days has clearly identified the challenges ahead of us: growing inequality, human development, the crisis of multilateralism, and above all the need for peace.

We need to adapt to these challenges and take fresh initiatives. We need to develop a true international governance. We need to imagine new, fairer rules for global co-existence.

I would like to reprise the words of Secretary Boutros Ghali. After the end of the Cold War – he said – the world has *drifted* into new orders. There has not been any definite attempt to *manage* the change, at least no attempt comparable to historical precedents after the Second World War.

I agree completely. At the same time, it is fair to say that the EU is one such historical precedent. Future historians will probably describe the EU as the most successful attempt to manage the transition out of the Second World War. And, since 1989, we

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have managed the transition of Europe out of the Cold War. Admittedly, the European Union is a regional – not global – integration project, but it is the only original political and institutional development of our age.

Trans-Atlantic Relations

For all these years, the ties that have linked Europe and the US have helped maintain peace and have ensured the respect of our common values throughout the world.

As President Barroso stated yesterday: «The global challenges cannot be tackled efficiently if the EU and the US disagree».

I would like to add that the trans-Atlantic relationship is crucial not only for security, but also for global prosperity and a stable international environment.

EU Stands for Peace

It is particularly appropriate that this debate on world orders takes place in the framework of the Jean Monnet Action.

As first conceived by Jean Monnet, the process of European integration is essentially a peace project, and a supremely successful one.

It has brought reconciliation, peace, and development in Europe over the last half century, helping to consolidate democracy and to ensure prosperity.

Exporting the EU Model to the World

Beyond the European continent, the EU model can serve as an example for other regions, encouraging countries to settle their crises through political means, to increase economic interdependence, and to create mutual trust.

It is no coincidence that the Union gives high priority to regional integration in its external policies, particularly to regional organisations with a clear mandate for conflict-prevention.

This is one of the ways in which the EU is seeking to build and defend stability on the international scene.

Multilateralism

In addition to its role as promoter of peaceful regional integration, the Union's external relations also feature a strong commitment to multilateralism. The search of an effective multilateral system has become part of Europe's genetic pool.

For us, many global challenges can be tackled only through international co-operation; so we have a clear interest in supporting the continuous evolution of the tools of good governance.

Active commitment to multilateralism means taking global rules seriously; it means helping other countries to implement and abide by these rules; it means engaging actively in multilateral fora, and promoting a forward-looking agenda beyond a narrow defence of short-term interests.

I would argue that the Union has been a frontrunner here. We have shown time and again that we can take the lead in supporting global goals across a wide range of issues.

Examples include:

- our successful efforts to create the *International Criminal Court*;
- the EU diplomacy behind the *Kyoto Protocol*;
- the adoption of the «*Everything but Arms initiative*», lifting all EU tariffs and quotas on imports from least developed countries; and
- the «*Regulation on tiered pricing of medicines*» to promote the sale of pharmaceutical products to developing countries at substantially reduced prices.

The changing international environment after the end of the Cold War has not made the world a safer place, but it has also given us new opportunities to promote peaceful change towards human development.

To achieve this, the Union is engaging in dialogue and co-operation with its international partners. But this dialogue needs thorough reflection and new ideas. This is where the Jean Monnet Action and ECSAs come in.

2. The Jean Monnet Action and the ECSA Network

Let me say a few words on the Jean Monnet Action and the European Community Studies Associations, the ECSAs.

First of all, I want to praise your role as ambassadors of the EU around the world.

Several indicators show that the peoples of Europe are looking at our process of integration with growing indifference. For instance, turnout at last year's Parliamentary elections has been

disappointing in many countries.

We believe the main reason is a lack of information, not a lack of support. This is why communication is a top priority of this Commission for the next five years.

You are a crucial part of our communication strategy especially in countries outside the Union:

- nearly 750 universities offer Jean Monnet courses as part of their curricula;

- via the Jean Monnet Action, a network of 1,800 professors reach an audience of 250,000 students every year;

These are impressive figures. However, you are unlike ambassadors in crucial respects: you are independent and critical voices;

- over 600 Jean Monnet chair holders maintain an exceptional level of excellence in teaching and research;

- your research has expanded and enriched our own understanding of our project and of its implications.

ECAs have opened the world of scholarship to decision-makers and to civil society.

3. Follow Up

Before concluding, let me tell you how I intend to follow up on the many insights you have debated over the past two days. I would like to mention three main points: education, multilingualism, and intercultural dialogue.

Education

Some of you highlighted the role of education in promoting our core values: tolerance, democracy, respect for human rights, and peace.

I cannot agree more. I am convinced civic education should figure more prominently in our schools. I will see to it that our existing and future education programmes are geared towards this goal as well.

Multilingualism

As Secretary Boutros Ghali nicely put it yesterday, respect for diversity starts with learning foreign languages. Learning languages opens minds and broadens horizons; effectively, it

helps us become better citizens of this world.

Member states have committed themselves to ensuring that every citizen learns other languages in addition to their mother tongues. I will strongly encourage this policy through political co-operation, reflection, and innovative action.

Intercultural Dialogue

Finally, intercultural dialogue has been a recurring topic in this Conference. This shows, once again, that intercultural dialogue is the linchpin of fair, sustainable and peaceful world orders.

I believe we should throw our political weight behind this insight. This is why I will propose 2008 to be the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. I count on ECSAs across the world to contribute ideas and help us make a success of this initiative.

4. Conclusions

This Conference has shown a growing interest in European integration among scholars throughout the world. It has also shown the relevance of European integration studies for global governance.

Your field of studies brings together the intelligence and talents of specialists from several disciplines: law, economics, political sciences, social studies, etc.

This is perhaps the most important outcome of your 7th World Conference. It reflects the real power of your organisation: it is the power of a network that creates knowledge, insight, and wisdom to an extent larger than the sum of its parts.

I belong to that group of people for whom defending and developing a united Europe is a full-time job. Inevitably, our day-to-day work exposes us to the risk of becoming short-sighted.

This is why people like us should listen very carefully to what you have to say about our project. You make us better understand our achievements and our shortcomings as well.

Above all – to use Mr. Mayor's image – you help us climb atop the watchtower and anticipate the future.

I am grateful to you for letting us share in your knowledge, your vision, and your passion.