



HRVATSKA PANEUROPСКА UNIJA FOEDUS PANEUROPÆUM CROATICUM

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Letter of Invitation

International Conference of the Croatian Pan-European Union

“Dissolution of Empires – Totalitarian Regimes – World War II – Creation of the European Union and the Schengen Area”,

Osijek, 20-22 October 2017

Dear Madam / Sir,
Dear Pan-European friends!

The Croatian Pan-European Union is organizing an international conference “Dissolution of Empires – Totalitarian Regimes – World war II – Creation of the European Union and the Schengen Area” in Osijek from 20-22 October 2017. We have asked the Prime Minister of Croatia, Mr. Andrej Plenković, to accept the high auspices over our Conference and to open it.

The President of the International Pan-European Union, Mr. Alain Terrenoire, announced his participation in the conference. Representatives in the European Parliament Anna Záborská, Dubravka Šuica, and Marijana Petir, representatives of national branches of the Pan-European Union from other countries, as well as the branches of the Croatian Pan-European Union, have all been invited to speak on the subject of the conference. A special part for speeches and discussions where the presidents and representatives of the Pan-European Youth from several countries, who are invited to the conference in a larger number, would take part will be organized as part of the conference.

Topic of the Conference

The International Conference of the Croatian Pan-European Union in October 2017 in Osijek will mark the 100th anniversary of historic events that started at the end of World War I with the revolution in imperial Russia and the creation of the Soviet Union and they continued with the dissolution of the German Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Kingdom. The Ottoman Empire fell in 1922 and the Chinese Empire fell before it, in 1911. While the German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire

and Kingdom and the Ottoman Empire dissolved into several parts, the Russian and Chinese empires changed their social and economic structure and became the Soviet Union and the Republic of China, but their territorial limits did not change much. Nations started to arise in the place of empires. Russia saw the introduction of the new Bolshevik system in 1918, the Fascist system was introduced in Italy in 1922, and the National Socialist system was introduced in Germany in 1933. This development brought about the beginning of World War II. The process of European integrations began only after the war, during the 1950s. An accelerated process of European integration ensued, as well as the introduction of a common currency, abolition of the visa and border control systems, the Schengen border zone system was instituted, as well as many other advantages.

However, today we are witnessing different perspectives, as well as dangers for European integrations. Under the influence of the global financial crisis, solidarity within the European Union is disturbed and the trust of European countries and citizens in the European institutions is brought into question. Instead of a European constitution, the Lisbon treaty was signed. It only partially enables an efficient mode of functioning for the European community. One of the central European economic and political forces, the United Kingdom, decided to leave the European Union by the will of its people declared on a referendum. The Schengen border regime, under the influence of unfortunate events related to the migrant crisis, is starting to be threatened instead of being expanded to Croatia, as it was announced. Some countries reinstated border controls. Migration waves of refugees and immigrants from Asian and African countries lead to a dissension among European countries with regards to the way of approaching the refugees, the immigrants, and the crisis as a whole. The migrant crisis and global changes are also forcing the European Union to face new challenges: the proposed accession of the Republic of Turkey to the European Union, the possible change in relations between the EU and the US, as well as with the changes in relations between the US and Russia. If acceptable solutions are not found, the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs announced that China is ready to take the role of world leader, even though it does not wish to do so. As a general result of the migration crisis in Europe, one can perceive a rise in xenophobia, nationalistic and chauvinistic movements, occlusion, division, suspicion, and conflict.

In opposition to that, in South-Eastern Europe, where the fall of totalitarian communist rule a quarter of a century ago brought about the greatest destruction, aggression, and ethnic cleansing seen in Europe after World War II, a strong turn and commitment to democratization, stability and European integrations is felt on one hand. On the other hand, there are also the recognizable tendencies towards regression into the regional tensions that are getting stronger under the influences of different interests of Russia, Turkey, and the European Union. This is felt the strongest in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also in Serbia and in Kosovo. Macedonia is in a special and sensitive position amongst its neighbours: the Greeks, Albanians, and Bulgarians. Countries which round out Europe from the south, southeast, east (Greece in 1981, Romania and Bulgaria in 2007) as well as from the northwest (Slovenia in 2004, Croatia in 2013)

became full-fledged members of the European Union. Other countries in South-East Europe, all of them placed between the previously mentioned, are in negotiations to become members or to receive the status of candidate for entering the European Union: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Albania, and Macedonia. The question of Turkey becoming a member-state is handled in a special way between those who support full membership and those who support special status. In any case, Turkey represents an important connection between the European Union and the Islamic countries, as well as a necessary partner in handling the current migrant crisis. This makes the tumultuous political situation in Turkey all the more sensitive.

This conference has the task to shed light on the contemporary motions and perspectives and to give a Pan-European answer to current challenges: how to continue the processes of integration within the European Union, how to ensure economic growth, social justice and protection of European nature, as well as how to increase stability, democratization, and expand integration onto the countries of South-Eastern Europe?

Please find enclosed the preliminary Conference programme. We would very much appreciate if you could confirm your participation in the conference, if you are able to do so.

With expressions of particular respect,

President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mislav Ježić". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light blue background.

Academic Mislav Ježić