

Intervención Iñigo

Mr. President of the European Parliament,
M. le Rector,
deputies,
ambassadors,
authorities,
students and friends.

Ik kan mijn toespraak in het Europacollege niet beginnen zonder zijn stichter en voorzitter, Salvador de Madariaga, aan te halen met een citaat waar ik veel van hou en dat ik vaak herhaal : "Europa zal geen realiteit zijn zolang het niet in het bewustzijn van zijn burgers zit."

In 1960, celebrating the tenth anniversary of the first promotion of the College of Europe, which took the name of the French writer Antoine of Saint Exupery, the rector Henri Brugmans pronounced these words:

"Lorsque nous avons fondé le College, nous ne voulions pas seulement étudier les problèmes de l'Union Européenne et former les cadres de cette intégration, nous voulions tâcher de provoquer une prise de conscience morale, voire la naissance d'un nouveau type de citoyens- d'un type d'homme nouveau, dirais-je plutôt, celui que réclamait notre époque.

Pourquoi avions-nous eu cette ambition gigantesque? Parce que nous savions que le passage du régime nationalitaire au régime d'union continentale n'était pas seulement une opération douanière, ni seulement une concentration politico-militaire plus ou moins occasionnelle, mais la constitution définitive d'un espace communautaire nouveau; parce que nous savions qu'une telle mutation entraîne toujours, si elle veut être durable, un changement des institutions, donc, une adaptation radicale de nos hiérarchies de valeur."

Half a century later, you can imagine my excitement, as President of the Board of directors of the College of Europe, realizing that all those aims for which it was created in 1950 have been fulfilled today.

Please let me say a few words in honor of my predecessor, Prime Minister Jean Luc Dehaene, who has worked for this house for the last 10 years with talent, constancy and imagination.

Please let me express my deep gratitude to Mr. Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament, and stress his presence here in Brugges this morning to inaugurate the Academic year 2009-2010. His presence here is particularly symbolic as we are celebrating these days the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the most revolutionary change that Europe has suffered in the last decades. Jerzy Buzek is polish as Pope John Paul II who I like to recall too these days. He is a civil engineer, member of the Solidarity movement, Prime Minister of Poland between 1997-2001 and one of the promoters of the Natolin seat. He has just been elected President of the European Parliament and it's a great honour to have him here as the expression of the brotherly gathering of both Europes. Thanks to the European Union we can talk now of one Europe, the Europe of the liberties, democracy, peace and Human Rights.

And let me celebrate with you the come into force of the Treaty of Lisbon. It has been ten years of struggle to obtain the necessary political and law instruments for Europe to continue in the XXI century with the path established 50 years ago by the founding fathers. But we still have a great job ahead. A Shakespeare's character said:

"There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their lives
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

It is Europeans like Buzek, Saryusz-Wolski and Demaret who daily show us in their political work the path to follow. But it is you, my dear students, the ones who have to follow it to turn into reality the dream of Europe as freer, fairer and with more solidarity.

IMdeV
3 de noviembre de 2009