



College of Europe
Collège d'Europe



Natolin

Paul Demaret

Rector of the College of Europe

Warsaw, 13 April 2011

**INAUGURATION BRONISLAW GEREMEK
EUROPEAN CIVILISATION CHAIR**

Excellencies,

Dear Ms Stazewska, Vice-President of the Geremek Foundation

Dear Vice-Rector,

Dear Professor Espada,

Dear Mrs Espada,

Dear Colleagues,

Distinguished Guests,

Dear Students,

For the College of Europe it is a privilege to welcome you this afternoon to the Natolin campus for the inauguration of the European Parliament – Professor Bronislaw Geremek European Civilisation Chair and for the inaugural lecture which Professor Carlos Espada, the first chairholder, will deliver in a moment.

The College of Europe felt much honoured when it learned of the decision of the European Parliament to provide funds for the setting up of a chair bearing the name of the late Professor Bronislaw Geremek at its Natolin campus. Indeed, Professor Geremek, a great Polish and European figure, was a renowned historian, a great intellectual, one of the leaders of Solidarność, a Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, a most distinguished member of the European Parliament and, last but not least, for many years, a professor at the College of Europe.

Allow me thus to express the deep gratitude of the College to the European Parliament for having considered that the Natolin campus was the right place for the establishment of the Geremek Chair. This is a sign of trust which the College appreciates very highly.

My colleague the Vice-Rector, Mrs Osniecka, will recall in more details the figure of Professor Geremek, before introducing the chairholder, Professor Carlos Espada.

She will also read the letter which the President of the European Parliament, Mr Buzek, sent to the College on this special occasion.

May I add that Professor Erwan Lannon, the Director of the Natolin academic programme, should have shared this podium. However, unfortunately, he could not join us because he is recovering from recent surgery and cannot yet travel. On behalf of all of us present here, let me wish him the best.

Le Professeur Geremek aimait la langue française et enseignait son cours ici à Natolin en français. Permettez-moi donc de poursuivre un moment dans cette langue, une des deux langues de travail du Collège, pour décrire le contenu de la chaire portant son nom, tel qu'il a été présenté par le Collège à la Commission européenne, responsable de l'exécution de la décision du Parlement, et tel qu'il a été approuvé par celle-ci.

Tout d'abord, la Chaire de Civilisation européenne porte un sous-titre plus précis. Elle doit couvrir en particulier l'histoire européenne récente et retracer comment les facteurs d'unité ont triomphé des facteurs de division qui, durant une grande partie du XX^{ème} siècle, ont déchiré l'Europe

Ceci fera l'objet d'un cours au sein du programme d'études de Natolin à partir de l'année académique prochaine. Dans le cadre de ce cours, des mémoires de fin d'études portant sur l'histoire européenne récente seront rédigés sous la supervision du titulaire de la chaire. Celui-ci mènera également une activité de recherche aidé en cela par un assistant de recherche.

Le titulaire de la chaire sera également responsable de l'organisation de conférences spéciales portant sur des sujets liés aux intérêts du Professeur Geremek, qui seront ouvertes au public extérieur.

Fait important et sans doute original, la Chaire Geremek comprend également dix bourses d'études destinées à de jeunes diplômés en histoire intéressés à suivre le programme d'études européennes interdisciplinaires organisé ici à Natolin et à rédiger un mémoire sur un sujet entrant dans le domaine couvert par la chaire.

Autre aspect à noter, la Chaire Geremek établie au Collège coopèrera avec la Fondation Geremek afin de produire des publications et d'organiser chaque année une conférence internationale. En outre, la Chaire Geremek et la Fondation Geremek seront conjointement

responsables de l'octroi d'un prix annuel portant le nom du Professeur Bronislaw Geremek, destiné à récompenser un auteur soit pour un ouvrage marquant, soit pour toute son œuvre dans le domaine de l'histoire européenne récente en particulier ou de la civilisation européenne plus généralement.

For the College of Europe, the creation of the Geremek Chair contributes to the strengthening of its academic resources and of its master's programme in European interdisciplinary studies. It parallels the recent creation of two chairs based in Bruges, one dealing with the relations between the European Union and China and benefitting from the support of the InBev-Baillet Latour Fund, the other dealing with EU Foreign Policy and benefitting from the support of Total. It should be stressed that the activities of these two chairs are not limited to the Bruges campus but also extend to the Natolin campus.

I am glad to announce that in the months to come, thanks again to the support of the European Parliament, another chair will be established at the College of Europe in Natolin. It will focus on European Neighbourhood Policy. In the future, we hope that the activities of the Geremek Chair and of the Chair on Neighbourhood Policy can also in part extend to the Bruges campus, thereby reflecting the academic unity of the College of Europe.

What precedes shows that the College of Europe does not stand still. With the help of its many friends, the College constantly tries to expand its academic activities, to adjust its programmes to a changing Europe and to widen the recruitment of students. Certainly Professor Geremek would have been pleased to see that, thanks to European support, the College is now able to recruit an increasing number of young graduates from neighbouring countries, who study and interact with graduates from EU Member States.

I have said that the decision of the European Parliament to locate the Geremek Chair at the College of Europe in Natolin was a sign of trust. At the same time, it imposes particular responsibilities on the College, which needs to demonstrate through the activities that the chair will carry out in the months and years to come that the Parliament's trust was indeed well-placed. I have no doubt that this will prove correct, for we have selected as first chairholder a most distinguished and experienced colleague, Professor Carlos Espada, whom my colleague Mrs Osniecka will now introduce.

Pour conclure, je résumerais cette cérémonie en trois formules : honneur au Professeur Geremek et longue vie à sa mémoire, merci au Parlement européen, bienvenue au Professeur Espada.
