

BERLIN

PROF. DR. JERZY BUZEK
Präsident des Europäischen
Parlaments

27. Juni 2011

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Grundsatzrede

ERSTES EUROPAFORUM DER KONRAD-ADENAUER-STIFTUNG

Es gilt das gesprochene Wort!

Sehr geehrter Herr Präsident Dr. Pöttering, sehr geehrter Herr Präsident Dr. Lammert, sehr geehrter Herr Vorsitzender Krichbaum, verehrte Kollegen, Exzellenzen, liebe Freunde,

Es ist eine große Freude, wieder in Berlin zu sein, als Gast der Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS). Ganz besonders danken möchte ich meinem Freund Hans-Gert Pöttering, Präsident des Europäischen Parlaments i. R. und nun Vorsitzender dieser Stiftung.

Konrad Adenauer würde sich heute besonders freuen: diesmal komme ich zu Euch nicht aus dem Osten, sondern aus dem Westen - direkt von Brüssel, am linken Ufer des Rheins. Ich erinnere mich sehr gut daran, wie ich Konrad Adenauer zum ersten Mal gesehen habe: als Karikatur in den gleichgeschalteten Zeitungen meines Landes. Er stand für all das, wogegen das Regime gekämpft hat: christliche Werte, Freiheit, Demokratie. Kurz gesagt: er stand für all das, wofür wir in Solidarność gekämpft haben.

Konrad Adenauer ist nicht nur zum Vater des neugeborenen Deutschlands geworden, sondern auch zum Vater des neugeborenen Europas. Als Christdemokrat hat er Europa aus der Asche erstehen lassen, begründet auf unseren Werten. Christdemokraten haben zum ersten Mal in der Geschichte das Gebot der Feindesliebe in die Politik übersetzt. Und aus Feinden wurden Freunde.

Dear Friends,

This week will be a crucial week for Europe. This week, the Greek parliament will vote

on a reform package. This Wednesday, the Commission will publish its proposals on the next Multiannual Financial Framework and the reform of the EU's own resources. This Friday, Poland will start its first council presidency.

Europe is standing at the crossroads again. We have to decide which path to choose. We have to ask very serious questions. What are our values in these times of change? What does our community mean to us? Where do we stand with our convictions in the world? Christian Democracy has made the EU a shining model in the world. It is time to make it shine again.

Europe must shine again

When I was in Egypt, in Tahrir square, in the beginning of this year, I was struck by one sentence: "Thank you, Europe." We must imagine what this means. There are people in the Arab world who are ready to risk everything to fight for freedom, democracy, the rule of law; in essence: to fight for our values.

Europe has become a role model. The universal appeal of our values can be seen in our Southern and Eastern neighbourhoods. Unlike in the past, these values are integrated not through conquest and domination, but through free and voluntary acceptance. This is not only a chance for peace, justice and a better life for these people - this is also our chance to make Europe shine in the world.

Our response to the Arab Spring has to be decisive and generous. KAS is doing tremendous work on the ground, strengthening civil society. You are giving Europe a

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human face - reaching out to those who count on us. You are the model for a European Endowment for Democracy. Beyond the support for civil society, we must also offer economic benefits. People have to see the fruits of democracy on their tables. We must not miss this chance. We need visa facilitation. We need investments and grant market access to goods from the region, step by step.

What we need today is to reinvent enlargement policy. In the '90s, in Central and Eastern Europe, membership of the EU was our goal. This allowed us to make painful reforms because our people saw the goal. We all know that we cannot offer the same goal to all our neighbours. The question we have to ask is how we can create a similar dynamic of attraction. This is perhaps a task for a foundation like KAS - how to transpose the principle of shared sovereignty we realised in Europe to our wider neighbourhood? How to create the same *solidarité de fait* our Union was built upon?

Out of the crisis

Dear Friends,

Take any newspaper and you will see very negative comments about the future of the EU. Views go from sceptical to apocalyptic. If we want to continue to shine as a model, we have to change and progress, but first we have to build trust again.

Trust has become an endangered species in our times. Despite all we have achieved, I think our citizens do not fully trust any more in our values. We do not trust in the community we built. Many people feel lost in a world where everything depends on everybody. This is understandable. But only together can we master the crisis. Only together, can we leave it behind, stronger as before.

We have to show responsibility and we have to show solidarity. There is no solidarity without responsibility. This week, it will be the responsibility of the Greek parliament to adopt ambitious but painful reforms. It shall then be our responsibility to show solidarity.

Some financial experts are openly calling for a Greek default. But I ask them: can they be sure that the default will be limited to Greece? When Lehman Brothers defaulted, the German economy shrunk by 5% - the greatest recession since the war.

Avoiding a default in Greece is not simply in the interest of Greece, it is in everyone's interest. Let us be honest with ourselves - nobody in the EU has a spotless balance sheet. Governments and investors have to take their responsibility. This is not a crisis of our common currency; this is a crisis of sovereign and private debt. We have lived beyond our means for too long. This is the responsibility of the Greek parliament, but this is also our shared responsibility in the EU.

We all need to draw lessons from what has happened in order to avoid a similar crisis in future. I ask you to trust the EU to overcome the crisis with the same determination you did in Germany. The EP is working very hard to address the true causes of the crisis. We have increased the regulation of the banking sector that has allowed for bad behaviour in the past. We are also about to strengthen fiscal discipline by reforming the Stability and Growth Pact.

Today, the European Parliament is defending what the Bundestag has asked for - more automatic sanctions. As a matter of fact, our position is more German than the German governments'. In negotiations with the Council, we have already obtained reversed qualified-majority voting in 6 out of 7 cases we asked for. We hope for a deal before the summer break.

In future, the new European Stability Mechanism will provide the necessary assistance for Member States in financial distress. We politicians should not interfere too much in its operations; we should rather lead the way ahead. We must work towards an economic union that will assure fiscal discipline and help foster growth.

The European Parliament believes that we have to complete our single market and close the remaining gaps and bottle-necks so

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that it becomes a motor for growth once again. Serious structural reforms along the lines discussed in the Euro Plus Pact are needed - especially in terms of retirement ages, other labour market reforms and privatisations. Our monetary union must be strengthened to become much more of an economic union.

What can be the contribution of KAS and of Christian Democracy in this context? Germany's economy is built on your own very strong values as it has always been the case. And you are the biggest and most powerful economy in the EU. You went through a big transformation and you have become true experts in re-unification. Germany's success is also built upon the Common Market, upon our community. The solution for the next steps is in your hands.

Europe at the crossroads

Dear Colleagues,

We must not take for granted what we have achieved. The European Union is a referendum of every day. And every day, we must fight for it. The one thing that made Europe a success is our community method. We need to redefine it today. We in the EP believe this method is the only one which works in a Union of twenty-seven.

This Wednesday, the European Commission will publish the first draft for the Multiannual Financial Framework of the EU and will propose reforming own resources. We know that this debate will not be easy. At a moment when citizens have to tighten their belt, we cannot allow ourselves to be lax with taxpayers' money. We cannot waste one single cent and we have to fight all abuses.

The EP proposes to increase the EU's budget by 5%. We are doing so to invest the taxpayers' money more efficiently, to create economies of scale. Growth is generated through investments. Europe's added value is that for every Euro invested at the EU level can generate up to four Euros of extra spending. We saw this last year with the

four billion invested in energy projects, which created 20 billion of spending.

We need to identify those areas where a common European approach creates an added value. I think it is obvious that it does not make sense to run 27 different consular services when it is all about access to the same Schengen area. We should not think that 27 research & development strategies generate better results in competition with China or the US. We should not believe that 27 separate energy grids would be able to cope with the challenges of energy security.

This is why we need European investments: to save money for our citizens. This is why I proposed, together with Jacques Delors, the establishment of a European Energy Community. The decision we have to make is not a decision of net contributors or net recipients. The decision we have to make is whether more Europe makes sense or not. We do not need a new Länderfinanzausgleich at European level, but we do need a strong budget to make Europe shine again.

Liebe Freunde,

Europa steht an einer Wegscheide. Welchen Weg werden wir einschlagen? Entscheiden wir, einander zu vertrauen und in unsere Solidarität zu glauben? Oder ziehen wir uns in die alten Gräben zurück?

Wenn ich heute hier als Pole stehe, bedeutet es sehr viel zu sagen: Wir haben keine Angst mehr. Ihr seid unsere Hoffnung. Ohne deutsch-französische Versöhnung, besiegelt durch Mitterrand und Kohl, gäbe es keine Europäische Union. Und ohne deutsch-polnische Versöhnung, besiegelt durch Mazowiecki und Kohl, hätten wir keinen wiedervereinten Kontinent.

Unser Vermächtnis für die nächsten Generationen sollte eine EU sein, in der wir alle leben wollen. Eine EU, die mit Vertrauen und Zuversicht in die Zukunft blickt, die die Krise genutzt hat, um gestärkt und geeint daraus hervorzugehen.

Vielen Dank.