



European Foundation Leaders Summit
*European Foundations taking leadership on
global issues*

Keynote address by Mr. JAVIER SOLANA

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High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy
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Dinner on 31 March 2003 at 7 pm, Musée Belle-Vue, Place des Palais, 1000 Brussels, Belgium

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am pleased to be here tonight amongst foundation leaders. I hope that this dinner and tomorrow's meeting will bring a fruitful discussion and new partnerships.

I am tonight representing the Madariaga European Foundation. The Madariaga European Foundation was created in 1998 by a group of alumni of the College of Europe in Bruges to promote the ideas of the founder of the College: the Spanish writer and philosopher Salvador de Madariaga (1886-1978). Salvador de Madariaga presided over the cultural commission of the Congress of The Hague in 1948, from which the idea of an authentic European educational institution emerged.

Salvador de Madariaga was a passionate defender of liberty and tolerance and wanted to construct a free and democratic Europe of continental scale to ensure an area of peace in a world of conflict. The Madariaga European Foundation uses the potential of the fifty year old College of Europe, with its now nearly 7000 alumni, at the service of a shared idea, that of European unification, but taking its rich diversity and complexity into consideration.

The Madariaga European Foundation develops a variety of projects on European issues such as European citizenship, multilingualism, the role of minorities in an enlarged EU, good governance, etc all in partnership with other foundations, governments and academia, as well as the European Institutions.

Being embedded as it is in the realities of a changing world, the Madariaga European Foundation is currently broadening its focus towards the role of Europe in the world.

This strategic decision to open up towards countries outside our continent, to unlock a global future is, I think, exactly in line with the agenda of this meeting: building a community of players will advance a stronger role for Europe on global issues. Your presence shows the motivation and willingness of foundations to discuss closer cooperation and taking leadership on the global level. Partnership will help us to put European philanthropy on the world stage and to give strength to a European voice, something which has not been fully achieved so far.

My role as European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy is confronting me daily with the need - of a single European voice and a common point of view. Meanwhile, the transatlantic relationship has suffered injuries that need to be healed as soon as possible. Otherwise they would have catastrophic results both for Europe and for the US.

I see this as a challenge, for Europe, to become a more important actor in the world, with a coloured multi-faceted view and a voice that should sound and resonate more loudly on the global scene.

Because of its history and its diversity, its variety in background, ideas, working methods, views and multilateralism, Europe also has a high potential to become a bridge between continents, between opponents, between religions. Its strength lies in its diversity, but this diversity has to resonate towards the outside world through a single voice.

This challenge is also one for European foundations which have to both respond to today's evolving society and, at the same time, be leaders of proactive change.

I would like to congratulate the foundations for their already existing engagement and investment in the future of Europe and the world. Continued efforts and investments are required in a rapidly changing society characterised by phenomena -problems but also opportunities- that are not restricted to a particular country or continent but have impacts in the global social, economic, political, and environmental spheres. Global issues such as ethical challenges, sustainable development, AIDS, religious tolerance, human rights, migration, affect both local communities and the world at large.

These efforts to speak and act together have to be inspired by mutual confidence and flexible structures. All possible administrative, cultural, psychological and legal obstacles have to be overcome. I am pleased to hear Mr. Charhon speak about the European foundations' efforts to create a more human operating environment. I would like to thank Mr. Charhon and the Network of European Foundations for Innovative Cooperation for organising this summit. I encourage NEF to develop further their platform for foundations so as to launch concrete projects on global issues. Through its Europeanness, the Madariaga European Foundation looks forward to providing valid contribution to this platform of cooperation.

Partnership and proactive cooperation require of course financial resources. This is where we have to draw from new sources and to create a whole community of players.

I thank Mr. Stephan Schmidheiny, the President of the Avina Foundation for setting up the European Mercator Fund within NEF. The Avina Foundation illustrates clearly how corporations, governments, international agencies and foundations can collaborate to create true networks of partnerships across countries and areas of activity.

The foundations have to be catalysts and visionaries for change and are fertile ground on which to build. Moreover, foundations' independence and continuity make them strong actors and enable them to bring added value in society. If they act as centres of knowledge, jointly with government, business and agencies, the final result for society will be bigger than the sum of all the independent projects: partnership adds value.

This is a juncture in time that brings an opportunity for Europe and the European foundations:

- First, to create its coloured voice and to make it heard;
- Second, to cooperate not only with each other, but with other sectors of society and also complementarily and in cooperation with regional partners all over the world and in particular with their American and also Russian counterparts.

Together, we are capable of ensuring the strength of civil society in the framework of Europe in the world.

With this encouraging and challenging message, I thank you for your presence and I wish you a fruitful discussion and reflection on these matters tomorrow. Personally I look forward to receiving the conclusions of the discussions so as to embark on concrete projects, and hope that my foundation will provide a fruitful contribution to the debates.

Bon appétit.

31 March 2003, 9 pm