

30 October 2019

Press release of the Bridge Forum Dialogue a.s.b.l. conference ‘*The Charlemagne Prize and I – testimony of a contemporary witness from the beginnings to the present day*’

The Bridge Forum Dialogue organized on 29 October 2019 a conference under the title: ‘***The Charlemagne Prize and I – testimony of a contemporary witness from the beginnings to the present day***’. The speaker was **Mr Georg HELG, Member of the Board of the Charlemagne Prize Society**. The event was hosted at the premises of the European Parliament, in Kirchberg. A distinguished audience gathered for this event, including representatives from the European institutions and bodies, members of the “corps diplomatique”, numerous public authorities and actors of the academic, economic and social sphere, as well as students.

Mr Hugo Woestmann, Member of the Executive Committee of the Bridge Forum Dialogue, introduced the speaker and the subject of the conference.

Mr Georg HELG explained the origin of the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen, which was founded by a group of Aachen citizens inspired by the idea of promoting West European unity in political, economic and spiritual relations. This message was clearly spelled out by the founder, Dr. Kurt Pfeiffer, on 19 December 1949, when he called for the establishment of an annually awarded prize for the most valuable contribution in the services of Western European understanding and community work, and in the services of humanity and world peace.

Over the course of its successful history, the International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen was awarded to recognize the exceptional work of outstanding personalities in the service of European unity. The list of laureates includes, among others, Jean Monnet (1953), Sir Winston S. Churchill (1955), William Jefferson Bill Clinton (2000), Pope John Paul II (2004), Angela Merkel (2008) and Emmanuel Macron (2018). The speaker remembered the words pronounced by Jean Monnet in his award ceremony: “*by creating Europe, Europeans are building the real foundation for peace*”.

Furthermore, Mr Georg HELG underlined the strong connection between the International Charlemagne Prize and Luxembourg. Notably, the prestigious award was bestowed upon Luxembourg three times: to the Prime Minister Joseph Bech (1960); to the people of Luxembourg – it was received by the Head of State, His Royal Highness the Grand Duke Jean, on behalf of his people (1986); and to the Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker (2006).

Mr Georg HELG concluded that Europeans shall continue fighting for the future and unity of Europe in order to defend the fundamental values of freedom, humanity and peace.



The presentation was followed by a stimulating questions and answers session.

More information is available on the website (www.forum-dialogue.lu) and LinkedIn page of the Bridge Forum Dialogue a.s.b.l.

Photo: from left to right:

Mr Werner HOYER, *President of the European Investment Bank, Vice-President of the Bridge Forum Dialogue asbl*; **Mr Georg HELG**, *Member of the Board of the Charlemagne Prize Society*, **Mr Hugo Woestmann**, *Member of the Executive Committee of the Bridge Forum Dialogue asbl*

