



## **LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT - NR 13**

Lund, 14th December 2020.

Dear Colleagues,

Dear Friends,

When the bells were ringing out 2019 we could not anticipate what to expect. The first quarter of the year 2020 was only the initial phase of what was coming. We had to cancel meetings in Paris, Helsinki and Berlin where we normally would have had opportunities rejoicing being together. All that was replaced by internet meetings that worked surprisingly well, thanks to the good cooperation of the secretariat and you all. I had hoped to leave as president in Paris but the corona virus, covid-19, changed everything. Now, we must do the best of what we can until this pandemic is over.



While I am writing this the snow is falling in my garden. That will not last. Time has changed and nowadays the climate is warmer than it used to be. The five warmest years on record have all happened after 2015. The winters I remember from my childhood were quite different. There is a change in climate. I miss the clean white snow and the silence in the forest. You can see a photo from my garden at winter two years ago. That is nowadays a rare view.

The Christmas period started now the first of Advent but during my childhood we waited to bring the Christmas tree into the house until Christmas eve. My brother and I had decided before which tree to cut and when coming back from the forest we decorated it directly, so everything was ready before Father Christmas arrived with the presents. Something we children eagerly had been waiting for. Early next morning we went to church in a sledge which I mentioned in my first Christmas letter. Nobody uses a sledge today except at tourist places. One can really say that the times are changing.

When the new year 2021 starts one could expect things to change for the better and the pandemic controlled. But I am afraid that this will not happen for the foreseeable future. We must struggle along in our quarantines. Hopefully, the vaccines will be as effective as the medical companies promise and then we can meet in person again. Hopefully in Berlin where the colloquy is planned to take place. The rapporteur Roland A. Kohn has written a draft but because of what has happened he will submit a revised version of the draft sometime in January and after its translation into French it will be sent out to our members which can send in amendments until the first of March. In the middle of March 2021 there will be a distant Bureau meeting followed by a digital Assembly following the same procedure as we did with success this year. In May we need to have an internet Bureau meeting to decide if we can have a Bureau meeting and a Colloquy in Berlin in October 2021.



Without help from our secretariat and the support from all of you it would not have been possible to achieve what we have done during this pandemic year. The great work of Roland Roblain, Lisette Hermans and Krist Decanni re have made everything so much easier. They deserve great thanks from all of us. My great thanks also go to the Restricted Bureau with Jean-Pierre Fourr , Jan-Kees Wiebenga, Brigitte Langenhagen and Dario Rivolta. For the first time we have had a Skype meeting and it worked well. Something we will use more often in the future, I am sure.

In these dark days, we light a candle and are sitting around the table having a chat with the family over coffee and cake in a warm surrounding. A lot of families will miss somebody either by quarantine or having passed away during this dramatic year. As we will light the 3<sup>rd</sup> candle of the Advent, we are reminded that three distinguished members of our association passed away : Klaus Franke, June 28, Ali Bozer, September 30 and Vincent Brady, October 6.

We remember them warmly and we are grateful for their contributions to our association. We sent our condolences to their families and our special thoughts are with them over these days. Their obituaries are attached to this letter.

But a light glowing through the windows into the dark symbolises also the warmth of our house, our association, and hope for the future. It encourages us to think ahead and seeing us again hopefully very soon.



**Let me end by wishing you all a  
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year  
2021!**

**Rune Ryd n**

**President**

Photos:   Brigitte Langenhagen & Rune Ryd n & FP-AP Archive



**KLAUS FRANKE** Our esteemed colleague Klaus Franke passed away on 28 June 2020 at the age of 84. Since 2012 he was an active member of the Bureau as well as the General Assembly of the European Association. Honorary President Uwe Holtz said that although initially sceptical about FP-AP, Klaus quickly developed into a reliable supporter and partner of the FP-AP cause. He found friends and opportunities where he could lend his long-standing rich experience. He was a member of The German Bundestag for 23 years and 19 years of the North Atlantic Assembly, where he headed the German delegation for 8 years.

He helped shape many discussions, also in FP-AP colloquia. At his insistence and using the FP-AP network, the German Former Members Association also held joint meetings with the Polish Association. Klaus Franke was a true European. But his hometown always remained his birthplace, Hamburg, where he belonged to the Parliament of the state of Hamburg and where, after leaving active politics, he rendered outstanding services in many honorary functions, not only to Hamburg.



**ALI BOZER** In 2002, our esteemed colleague Ali Bozer, who died September 30 at the age of 95, followed Uwe Holtz as the fifth President of European Association of Former Members of Parliament of the Member States of the Council of Europe. During his Presidency and as Honorary President of our Association he shared his rich political experiences in Turkish and European affairs with our members. It should be remembered that it was he who officially applied for full EU membership of Turkey in 1987 and who served as judge to the European Court of Human Rights and as a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Ali Bozer was a cornerstone of our European

Association and a bridge builder. We will honour his memory and I lost a political friend in many political areas as Honorary President Uwe Holtz said.



**VINCENT BRADY** Vincent Brady passed away on 6 of October at the age of 84. He was a former Minister of Defence as well as Minister of State for Finances. A founder member of the Irish Association of Former Parliamentarians as well an esteemed member of the Executive Committee and for many years serving as Honorary Secretary, President and Honorary Treasurer of the Irish Association. For many years he was an active member of our European Association of Former Members of Parliament of the Member States of the Council of Europe. For many years he was a managing director of an international distribution company.