



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT - NR 10

Lund, 14th December 2019.

Dear Colleagues,

Dear Friends,

The second year has passed by and soon my presidency is over. As the tradition is, I will reflect on my experiences. Naturally it has been a challenging but also a rewarding period. Working together with wonderful friends from different parts of Europe has been very inspiring. Meeting and exchanging views are important for understanding Europe and makes it possible to live in peace with each other. **“No more war”** said Walter Schwimmer in Strasbourg. Let us hope he will be right.

Our association celebrated its twenty fifth anniversary at the meeting in Paris. 1994 is our official birth year. Dramatic changes had happened in Europe only a few years before. Before divided we were suddenly looking at a more united and open Europe. So, at that time the creation of our association was natural and as Honorary President Uwe Holtz summarized:

“Our resounding activities during the years could not have been realized without the help of the member associations in cooperation with the FP-AP secretariat; not without the manifold efforts as well as political and thematic inputs by members of the Bureau and the General Assembly; by the thirteen presidents in the past 25 years and the many more vice-presidents of our Association and the different rapporteurs of the colloquies; not without the assistance of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, our official cooperation partner since 2009.” Mme Carole Bureau-Bonnard, Vice-President of the French Assemblée nationale welcomed us at the official residence “Hotel de Lassay” (picture).



By meeting and sharing views and experiences we can make our little contribution in building a peaceful and more open Europe. That can be done in many ways through seminars, colloquies and teaching at universities and schools. As far I know that has been done with great success in Finland but also in Austria or Germany.



After the annual meeting and our twenty fifth anniversary in Paris the next venue was in Lund in southern Sweden. There we also had a seminar about **"Climate change- what can we do about it"**. Four experts from the city and the university gave us an idea of what can be done. It is possible to mitigate the changes of the climate they said. Naturally it takes big social and economic adjustments and it needs the acceptance of the people.

The seminar in Lund was a follow up of a seminar in Stockholm three years earlier with the title "Arctic – a hot topic" describing the drastic climate changes happening in the Arctic during the last decades. Arctic is the harbinger of things to come to the rest of the world. During the last twenty years I have had the opportunity to see how fast the climate has changed up there with drastic effect for the environment and the livelihood of the local peoples. And we felt all the heat : with 33°C a 150 year old record was broken in Lund during the meeting.

The meeting in Lund ended with a study trip to the two new scientific institutions Max Lab IV (picture above) and ESS- European spallation source. The first one studies the composition of hard matter down to molecule structure through synchrotron light and the other will make it possible with neutron beams to study biological matter down to the size of an atom. That study visit was highly appreciated of the participants.

The last meeting for the year 2019 was in Cagliari, Sardinia. To come from a cold rainy Lund to a warm, nice Mediterranean weather and atmosphere was a great treat. Our Italian friend Dario Rivolta had done an excellent job in arranging our visit. The Friday dinner at Casa Azeri was more than a wonderful event with music and dancing from a Sardinian group. The guided visit to a Nuraghi archeological site (pictures here under) on Saturday showed how early high cultures existed in Sardinia.





Time flies.... here comes 2020.

(also for astronomical clock in the Lund cathedral)

In Cagliari we decided on the schedule and the venues for 2020.

We will meet in Paris for the Bureau and the General Assembly, Friday 20th of March. The day before there will be a seminar organized together with the French association about **“Convergences of Health Care”**.

Next June we shall have a seminar in Helsinki. I am grateful that we now have Finland and Norway as full and active members. I had hoped that more members from the north of Europe could join but I have not succeeded in spite of efforts and I really regret that. Basically, it is a matter of money. The Baltic States have no associations or very small ones which cannot afford the cost of membership and travels to our meetings. That is unfortunately also true for Denmark. There is no good solution to this problem unless we can achieve external funding for them. So far no luck!

And of course we will have in the Fall our colloquy in Berlin, a city that reunited since 30 years. In Lund was decided upon the title : **“Europe facing global powers at a horizon of ten years”**. At the same time Roland A. Kohn was chosen to be the rapporteur.

It has been wonderful to be President during these two years. But, without help from our secretariat and the positive support from all of you it would not have been possible. The great work of the secretariat with Roland Roblain, Lisette Hermans and Krist Decannière made everything so much easier. They deserve great thanks from all of us. Thank you very, very much! You are indispensable.

I also would like to extend my thanks to the Restricted Bureau with Jean-Pierre Fourré, Jan-Kees Wiebenga, Brigitte Langenhagen and Dario Rivolta for the very good collaboration we have had during these two years. You will forever be my great friends!

Dear Friends,

Now with Christmas and New Year before us let us hope the peace will prevail and the people will feel secure in spite of what is happening in our changing world. Let the light shine in the darkness and that the darkness will not prevail – let it be light.



Let me end by wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2020!

Rune Rydén

President

Photos: © Krist Decanniere & Rune Rydén