



S151/07

**Speech by**

**Dr. JAVIER SOLANA MADARIAGA,**

**EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy**

**CHARLEMAGNE Award 2007**

**Aachen, 17 May 2007**

**FOR FURTHER DETAILS:**

**The Spokesperson of the Secretary General, High Representative for CFSP**

**+32 (0)2 281 6467 / 8239 / 5150 / 5151 +32 (0)2 281 5694**

**internet: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/solana>**

**e-mail: [presse.cabinet@consilium.europa.eu](mailto:presse.cabinet@consilium.europa.eu)**

Your Royal Highnesses,  
Mr Mayor, Jurgen Linden,  
Mr Walter Eversheim, Spokesman of the Charlemagne Prize Board of Directors,  
Mr Claude Juncker, Prime Minister of Luxembourg  
Mr Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Foreign Minister of Germany,  
Mr Hans-Gert Poettering, President of the European Parliament,  
Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner,  
Ladies and Gentlemen laureates of the Charlemagne Prize,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to be in Germany again. Germany ceased long ago to be a foreign country for me. Because I am with friends here, friends who are always there for me. And I am deeply moved that our long friendship is sealed again today with the Charlemagne Prize.

Let me begin by thanking the City of Aachen for this prize. My deepest gratitude goes to this ancient imperial border city. Like few others, this city epitomises the European project and has made a unique contribution to its origins.

Crossing borders is second nature to the people of this city and this region. As is building bridges, living with differences, respecting them and integrating them into a common purpose. This is the very essence of the European project. Thank you Aachen, for this moving tribute.

I also want to thank my good friend Jean-Claude Juncker for his kind words of introduction. I give double thanks because they come from what we could call the quintessential European. Jean-Claude comes from a country at the heart of Charlemagne's Europe. He has a special and unique relationship with this prize: he received it last year for his enormous contribution to European integration, and on another occasion along with all his compatriots. In addition, he is also the doyen d'age of the European Council. It is not surprising that we look to him when we need advice or inspiration. Thank you again, Jean-Claude.

I have always combined curiosity about knowledge and science with a passion for people and life. The path that has taken me from a Physics Department to this stage is a long one. Many people have helped me along the way. I wish to thank them all.

I was privileged to be born into a family with a long-standing commitment to Europe. Naturally it gives me great satisfaction to note that, along with Salvador de Madariaga, two members of this family have now received this eminent distinction.

As a Spanish European, allow me to say a few words of gratitude to those Spaniards present here who have been awarded the distinction that I now have the honour to receive.

First, to His Majesty the King of Spain. Sir, the jury had the vision to confer the same prize on Your Majesty before Spain joined the European Communities. For me, with that prize Spain was warmly welcomed into the Europe of values, before taking its place formally within the Europe of institutions.

Further recognition came, with my country already a member of the Communities, when the prize was awarded to my good friend, Prime Minister Felipe González.

Once more, the jury not only rewarded his sterling work in the service of Europe, but also showed an exceptional understanding of the historic development of Spain's return to the European fold.

Mr Mayor,

For me, this award is more than an acknowledgment: it is an urgent and compelling call to action. Similarly, the words of Dr Kurt Pfeiffer, who brought this prize into being, are an invitation to continue pursuing the lofty ideal of building: "a voluntary union of the European peoples without constraint, so that in their new found strength they may defend the highest earthly goods – freedom, humanity and peace".

Achieving an objective of such magnitude requires the dedication of generations and many individuals, some of whom have received this prize themselves.

In taking my place amongst them, amongst the founding fathers such as Schuman, Monnet, de Gasperi and Adenauer, I am reminded of the words of Isaac Newton: "If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants".

These people laid the foundations of our common home. I have always tried to play my part. And I have been fortunate and privileged to do so.

The work which occupies virtually all my time and to which I happily devote my energy is Europe – its essence, its purpose, its future. Today, I would like to say a few words about European values and the value of Europe itself.

The Continent we occupy together is full of contradictions. We Europeans have scaled the sublime heights of knowledge and understanding: Cervantes, Beethoven, the Enlightenment, human rights, a passion for equality, and the welfare state. However, we have also plumbed the lowest depths of man's inhumanity to man. The words of Amos Oz: "Europe, that wonderful, murderous continent", have not always been wide of the mark.

But it is also typically European that after the horrors of the two World Wars came a radical new idea: to build a united Europe.

For centuries, many had tried to do the same. But never before had a project emerged after the depths of tragedy with such groundbreaking aims as the pursuit of unity in freedom and peace through openness and integration.

The idea bore fruit. It created a community based on the rule of law. In my view this is our greatest achievement. For more than half a century now, Europe's everyday existence has been rooted in peace and stability. These are not the product of a balance of power, as they were in the past. Rather, they have emerged from stable laws and institutions, able to withstand the ravages of political conflict.

Yet this is only one aspect of what makes the European Union so special. The other is the values underpinning it.

At the heart of the Union lies the commitment to a set of shared values. Democracy, tolerance, human rights, solidarity and social justice. These are the values that sustain and shore up our laws and institutions. They make us a political union that is more than an economic club. It was an achievement of historic proportions to base the process of integration on a set of shared values.

This also explains why it was, and remains, right to make membership of the Union conditional upon the genuine application of those values and a commitment to uphold them.

Mr Mayor,

The genius of the founding fathers was to leave open the question of where this project would ultimately end. In political terms this was the only possible approach, since there could be no agreement as to the final stage. Nor did it make sense to try and predict the future.

On that note, let me move on from the Europe of values to the value of Europe – that is from its essence to its purpose.

It is not hard to put this into words: by pooling our resources and working together we can forge a better and more promising future than any of us could have hoped to do alone.

This is all the more important in a world in which forces and movements have been unleashed which no single government can control or contain. A world in which violence, oppression and extreme poverty are still with us. A world in which many do not share our commitment to multilateralism and the rule of law.

I am convinced that we should continue the European integration process. In the past we have relied on a three-pronged strategy of enlarging, deepening and reforming. Each of these elements has depended on the others for success, and even for meaning. With enlargement we have reunified Europe without imposing anything on anyone, simply through the enormous power of attraction that the Union has had on other European States. It has been a historic success.

But the Union is a work in progress. That is why I am convinced that we need changes in various spheres. Changes in what things we do and how; changes in how we communicate with our citizens and spend their money; changes in how we deal with the rest of the world.

Above all, we need to safeguard Europe's capacity to act. Our world is changing very rapidly. New players are moving into the centres of power and decision-making; major economic flows are also shifting; many schools of thought are moving away from our humanist model; and scientific and technological know-how is spreading to regions of the world where, just a few years ago, it would have been inconceivable to encounter this type of knowledge.

In the face of those far-reaching changes; in the face of those challenges of unpredictable scope, I regret to have to observe that our Union is reacting with paralysing narrow-mindedness.

Just when we should be at our most alert, just when the world's demand for Europe is at its highest, the Union has turned inwards, immersed in a sterile institutional crisis. We cannot go on like this. This must be resolved as soon as possible, in 2007.

For this reason, I unreservedly support Chancellor Merkel in her efforts to put an end to this hiatus and put Europe back on a solid footing to face the future.

And we should do so with determination because Europe means not only grand ideas but also concrete achievements. Of these there have been many and of great significance: the single market, the euro, enlargement, the development of capabilities to conduct military and civilian crisis-management operations, to name a few.

But our citizens want more than a market and a regional stabilisation project. They also want the Union to be a global player. And they want it, by acting globally, to be a factor for peace.

Nowadays, international politics can only be conducted from continental platforms. Europe has interests to preserve and threats to counter. It has problems which affect it and which it must solve.

To meet these objectives, we have to pursue a genuine external policy, including a defence and security policy.

In the last few years, we have come a long way. We have done so through conviction and hard work, with the good will of many people, and where necessary by improvising solutions as problems emerged. But today, we are very close to the limit of what can be achieved in this way.

No-one knows better than we Europeans that if we wish policies to endure they must be sustained by institutions. We can only develop a genuine foreign policy if we give ourselves the necessary structures.

There is a very special relationship between external policy and European integration. As I have stated, there is an obvious benefit in acting together in a world where Europe can only have influence if it acts collectively. But this is only one way in which external policy contributes to the European project.

The other appears when you consider the subtle link between identity and external policy. I am convinced that there is a direct connection between the way we define ourselves and our external behaviour.

What we do in the world is a true reflection of who and what we are. There is a European way of doing things in the world, of tackling international problems: through dialogue, cooperation and building bridges. By protecting the vulnerable and speaking in the name of those who are forced into silence.

However, the relationship between identity and external policy works both ways.

Through our actions we demonstrate who and what we are. But that "we", namely the European project, is also being shaped by acting together, by gaining experiences, which in turn influence who and what we want to be.

We have to act in a world which is becoming increasingly complex and in some ways more dangerous. A world where we are witnessing a resurgence of policies of exclusion, which are often defined merely in opposition to 'the others'.

However, let me stress, none of those policies is defined in opposition to Europe. We are seen as an active player but not as a threat. For this we have to thank the legacy of the ideas on which we originally founded our project: solid laws and institutions, the tireless pursuit of consensus and a spirit of compromise.

That legacy allows us to play a unique role in resolving many problems. Take the issue of nuclear weapons and disarmament.

The system introduced to prevent the proliferation of such weapons is now coming under serious strain. That system is based on a delicate balance between three pillars which need to move forward in parallel: non-proliferation, disarmament and the transfer of technology.

The problem is that, at the moment, a considerable number of countries, particularly among the non-aligned, see a growing imbalance between the three pillars.

Thus, there is a real risk of them eventually withdrawing from the multilateral framework, in response to a situation which they perceive as unfair and detrimental to the development of their energy sectors. Or take the situation of many African countries, rightly more concerned with the proliferation of small arms, which cause the death of thousands of people every year and which are a constant factor for instability.

I can assure you that the European Union is best placed to address this. Because we have the necessary political capital and enjoy the trust of all parties involved, to initiate a process of dialogue to resolve this serious situation.

Mr Mayor,

European integration began with the desire to consolidate peace between Germany and France. Forty years later, it has been the key to the peaceful reunification of the continent. In Europe, we have managed to break away from the old idea of basing our security on the weakness of others. We have transcended that approach, which remains prevalent in many parts of the world. Now we realise that our strength and prosperity depend on the strength and prosperity of our neighbours.

We have to go on to take the next step and become a factor for peace in the international community. The young people of Europe are big-hearted. In vast numbers, they act to alleviate the situation of those who suffer the greatest hardships.

I have toured three continents, visiting EU missions in which European police officers, soldiers, magistrates and young people of all origins are working for peace. What started out as a European peace project must in the 21st century become a factor for peace in the world. Our young people will, without a doubt, back such a project. Because it is above all they who dream of a world like that.

It is what our citizens are calling for out for and what is expected of us outside Europe. We have the means. There are 500 million of us; we generate a quarter of gross global product; we are the world's leading trading power; and we account for half of all development aid. With those instruments we must build a great deal, to a very high level.

Mr Mayor,

Europe is a global player speaking with one voice and playing a decisive role in world peace and stability. Europe is an inescapable factor in resolving any international conflict or crisis. Europe, a point of reference for a world based on solid, respected laws and institutions. That is my idea of Europe. And I believe with all my heart that this can and should be the next achievement in the grand European project. We have the capability. Let us mobilise the political will and make it happen.

Once again, thank you very much, to the city of Aachen and to my German friends.

---