U.E.F. NEWSLETTER N° 40

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1. FOREWORD BY JOAN-MARC SIMON

Dear friends,

After my election in the last Federal committee in Prague, it is a pleasure for me to address you for the first time as Secretary General of UEF.

First of all I would like to thank my successor Mr. Frischenschlager for the help and support in this new position, I believe replacing him will be a challenging endeavor that I undertake full of energy and confidence that with your help we will manage to bring the organisation forward in the next years.

The last FC of the organisation thoroughly debated the current political situation in Europe. The Lisbon Reform Treaty was welcomed as a necessary step to take the EU out of the impasse after the failed ratification of the Constitution. However we must remain vigilant for the shortcomings of the treaty and warn that it is not going far enough with its reforms. There is a lot of unclarity in the text and implementation will be very important. However priority now should be given to getting the treaty ratified.

At the same time, UEF is starting to prepare the campaign for the European Parliament elections of 2009. The forthcoming UEF Congress should define the strategy. So far the UEF launched an appeal to the European Political Parties asking them to nominate a president for the European Commission before the European elections. The EC should be the responsible to implement the chosen electoral programme. The text demands also that the electoral programs should include a commitment to further constitutionalisation of the EU after the elections. This appeal was sent to the members of the European Parliament and the full text can be found in our website.

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But in parallel to the political goals UEF should continue to develop its strength as a movement of European citizens. For this reason, during next 2 years we will be working to bring ex-members of JEF into the organisation and expand it to countries where we don't have members so far, notably Spain and Eastern Europe.

Furthermore I believe it is important to increase the visibility of federalists in Brussels and for this reason we will continue to coordinate periodic conferences - next one scheduled for beginning of February, participate in civil society gatherings, organise the traditional MEPs breakfast, next at the end of January, and a new years reception for UEF members in Brussels on 30th of January.

As you will see in our activity program we will be celebrating an Enlarged Bureau meeting in Torino during the 26th of January and later on the Congress of the organisation.

I am looking forward to meeting you in any of these events and start working in our future campaigns.

I wish you a good Christmas break and a successful 2008 for all,

Federalist greetings!

Joan Marc Simon

2. PAST EVENTS

L'Agora Citoyenne
Bruxelles, 8-9 Novembre 2007

A l'occasion du 50e anniversaire des Traités de Rome, le Parlement européen (PE) a lancé aux citoyens un formidable pari: l'Agora citoyenne.

Les deux journées de travail organisées au PE, le 8 et 9 novembre, ont mis en synergie l'élan participatif de la société européenne – à travers les réseaux d'organisations associatives, professionnelles et syndicales – et la démocratie représentative, incarnée à l'échelle européenne par les députés européens. Le but de l'Agora a été d'associer la voix des citoyens européens à celle de leurs représentants élus, en donnant la possibilité d'éclairer les termes du débat européen et de proposer des mesures concrètes, fondées sur l'expérience quotidienne, pour répondre aux défis que l'Union européenne (UE) rencontre de nos jours.

Ce forum est un outil fondamental car il fait des citoyens les principaux acteurs : leur participation a permis de voir sous un angle différent des questions qui, trop souvent, font l'objet uniquement de discussions entre lobbyistes et experts. Cette manifestation a été l'occasion d'approfondir des thématiques traditionnelles (affaires sociales, environnement, développement, éducation), tout en faisant émerger des points de vue divers et en dégageant un large éventail de solutions possibles. Ces échanges de vue complètent ainsi les résultats des auditions des commissions parlementaires, qui, tout en étant un outil d'information et d'expertise essentiel pour les députés, demeurent des manifestations ponctuelles, généralement non étendues aux plus larges réseaux de la société civile européenne. C'est d'ailleurs pour ces raisons que la société civile a souvent l'impression de rester à l'écart du processus décisionnel.

Au contraire, l'Agora a ouvert les portes du PE à ceux et celles qui sont les vrais destinataires de la politique européenne : nous, les citoyens de différents pays européens, qui avons ainsi eu l'occasion de débattre, de façon très ouverte, avec nos élu-e-s sur l'avenir de l'UE. Ensuite, la synthèse des travaux des différents ateliers a

non seulement été intégrée par les députés dans leur propre réflexion, mais a également été portée à la connaissance des commissions parlementaires et des Institutions européennes concernées, ce qui a mis d'autant plus en valeur la contribution des citoyens.

En tant que militants actifs de l'UEF-Belgique, nous avons été honorés de pouvoir participer à l'Agora et de souligner combien l'UE nécessite d'un lien solide avec ses citoyens, un lien qui pourrait bien se concrétiser avec l'adhésion des peuples des Etats Membres à un texte constitutionnel doté d'une vraie âme européenne. Il ne suffit plus de dire que l'Europe est construite *pour* les citoyens : nous avons besoin d'outils nouveaux, tels que l'Agora, capables de montrer que l'Europe est construite *avec* les citoyens.

La réussite de l'Agora est indispensable si l'on veut renforcer la confiance de la société civile et si l'on veut faire converger les projets et les objectifs des Etats Membres avec les attentes de ses citoyens. Nous avons bon espoir que l'Agora devienne une habitude pour le processus de décision politique et un lieu de confrontation directe avec les Institutions. Dans le but de faire mieux évoluer *notre* Europe.

Antonio Anselmi et Giorgia Bartoli
Membres UEF.be

The UEF Federal Committee
Prague, 10-11 November 2007

The last meeting of the Federal Committee was held on 10-11 November 2007 in the capital of the Czech Republic, Prague, with more then 60 delegates and observers attending the meeting.

The FC itself was as usually preceded by a seminar, this time focusing on "Social Dimension and Quality of Life in the European Union". The meeting was also joined by our honorary guest, European Commissioner Vladimir Spidla (Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities), who welcomed all participants and also contributed on the above mentioned topic.

The first part of the FC meeting was dedicated to general discussion, evaluation of UEF activities and comments on draft resolutions.

On Sunday morning, new Secretary General Joan-Marc Simon was elected. Mr. Simon replaced Friedhelm Frischenchlager who had served as SG in the period of 2005-2007. On this occasion, President of the UEF, Mercedes Bresso, expressed gratitude to Mr. Frischenchlager for his extremely valuable contribution to the work of the organisation and also wished all the best to the new team of the Secretariat.

Sunday morning was also reserved for voting on resolutions. The FC in Prague adopted four resolutions (for full text, please click on the titles).

Resolution on a Government Programme for Europe

In this appeal, the UEF addresses the European political parties. First, the UEF asks them to present a candidate for the President of the European Commission position before the next European elections. Second, the UEF asks them to include in their election programme the aim "to put forward, after the 2009 elections, new proposals for a further constitutional settlement for the Union".

Resolution on the Lisbon Reform Treaty

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The UEF expresses its view of changes included in the Lisbon Reform Treaty. In general, the UEF welcomes the new treaty that ended "the institutional impasse in which the European Union has found itself for more than six years", on the other hand, the UEF regrets that the treaty gives up many of the positive achievements of the original Constitutional Treaty.

Resolution against Xenophobia and Racism

The UEF decided to respond to current events in the streets of Prague where an extremist supporters demonstration was held. With this resolution, the UEF supports freedom of religion and respect of fundamental rights and protests again any renaissance of neo-nationalism/neo-nazism in Europe.

Internal Resolution on the role of the UEF in the reform of the European Movement International

This resolution suggests that at European level the UEF should focus on being a citizens' organisation whilst EMI would be a network of organisations. With this resolution UEF wants clearer role competences that will strengthen the profile of both organisations.

For more info and pictures from the FC in Prague, please go to our website - http://www.federaleurope.org/index.php?id=6355.

Debate with Commissioner. *In the picture: President of UEF CZ and MEP Libor Roucek, Commissioner Vladimir Spidla, UEF Secretary General Friedhelm Frischenschlager, Secretary General of UEF CZ Ivo Kaplan.*

FC Prague. *In the picture: Sergio Pistone, Philipp Agathonos, Lawrence Fullick.*

Leaving and new Secretary General. *In the picture: Friedhelm Frischenschlager, Joan Marc Simon.*

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JEF : "We want our flag back!!!"

- *What? JEF Europe promotes the symbols of the EU while they have been left out of the Reform Treaty*
- *When? 13th December 2007, on the same day as the signing of the Reform Treaty*
- *Where? In over 30 cities across Europe*

On the 13th December youth reminded in a pan-European action flying to national leaders that Europe has symbols like a European flag. The action coincided with the official signing of the Reform Treaty which made no reference to the symbols of the European Union - such as the anthem and the flag - that were originally present in the Constitutional text.

"Europe has symbols and they must be acknowledged" stated Samuele Pii, President of JEF Europe. "Clearly, European leaders have yet again given in to eurosceptic fears and deliberately excluded the symbols from this text".

The action took place in over 30 cities across Europe in both EU and non EU member states.

"The Young European Federalists demand that heads of government don't take for granted those very symbols that unite the peoples and nations of our continent" commented Samuele Pii, President of JEF Europe. "They contribute to the shaping of a true political union and represent the EU's values in the world" Pii continued.

JEF actions across Europe took place in the form of demonstrations or information stalls in front of Parliament buildings and major public spaces. "The aim of the action was not only to promote European symbols among civil society but also to send a strong message to European leaders: Europe will not be united by legal treaties alone" Pii concluded.

For more information, please go to http://www.jef-europe.net/index.php?id=1374#c19528\.

3. FUTURE EVENTS

Enlarged Bureau Meeting
Turin - 26 January 2008

The UEF Enlarged Bureau will meet on the weekend of 26 January in Turin.

Main focus of the meeting will be future strategy of the UEF concerning the ratification process of the Lisbon Reform Treaty. Short after the European Summit signing the Reform Treaty, the participants will also discuss the next steps for the relaunch of a European Constitution.

Also on the agenda, the members will start the preparation for the European Parliament's elections of 2009.

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More detailed information about the meeting, the agenda, the location and the travel reimbursement conditions will be sent to the members shortly, and will also be available on the UEF website.

UEF New Year Reception
Brussels, 30 January 2008

On Wednesday 30 January 2008, the UEF European Secretariat will organize an informal New Year Reception. This celebration is a chance to gather "federalist forces" for the first time of the year, introducing the new team at the head of the Secretariat. The UEF also invites all of its Brussels-based members, partners, friends, and Members of the European Parliament to have a farewell drink with the leaving Secretary General Friedhelm Frischenschlager.

The reception will take place in the art gallery at the entrance of the UEF Secretariat.

4. COMMEMORATION OF ALTIERO SPINELLI (1907–1986)

"Altiero Spinelli is rightly considered, together with such statesmen as Schuman, De Gasperi, Adenauer, Spaak, and the inventor of the European Communities system Monnet, to be one of Europe's most important fathers. From 1940 on, he totally dedicated his life to the fight for European federation, and gave a key contribution to the development of the European unification process."

The UEF commemorated the 100th anniversary of Spinelli's birth during the Federal Committee in Prague on 10 – 11 November 2007. Sergio Pistone contributed with a speech highlighting the most important moments of Spinelli's life and ideas that in many ways constantly inspire the process of European integration and activities of federalists across Europe.

In this issue of the UEF Newsletter, we bring some interesting points from the speech. If you wish to read the whole contribution of Sergio Pistone (14 pages), please go to our website: http://www.federaleurope.org/fileadmin/files_uef/FC/FC_Prague_10-11_October_2007/Working_Documents/PISTONE_ON_SPINELLI_update.pdf.

Sergio Pistone holding his speech.

"Spinelli was the founder and for many years also the leader of one of the most important movements for European federation, the MFE. I believe it is evident that the very existence of citizens' movements for European unity is one of the main factors in the progress towards European integration. These movements not

only launched the idea of European unification but also have uninterruptedly kept alive the demands for a European federation and for popular participation in constructing it." (Sergio Pistone, Altiero Spinelli and European Unification, p. 10)

"Spinelli's objective was always to initiate a democratic constituent procedure. His last great initiative to that effect was his activity as a member of the directly-elected European Parliament. Convinced that the direct election of the European Parliament would create the premise for it to take up a constituent role, Spinelli became then the promoter of the great constitutional initiative that led to the Draft Treaty instituting the European Union, approved by the Strasbourg Assembly on February 14, 1984. That project, of a federal nature, followed the model of the Philadelphia Convention by including in particular a provision for ratification by majority vote, but this was not accepted by the national governments.

Nevertheless, his role as a forerunner in the process of reforming the Community's institutions is generally recognized. From the Single European Act and through the Treaties of Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice great progress in European integration has been made possible, and now finally the issue of the European Constitution has been brought on to the agenda. The vicissitudes of the European Convention and its draft European Constitution demonstrate the enormous difficulties and the resistance still to be overcome in order to arrive at the European federal constitution which was the ultimate goal of Spinelli's entire federalist activities." (Sergio Pistone, Altiero Spinelli and European Unification, p. 12)

5. REFLECTION AND GOODBYE NOTE FROM THE OUTGOING SECRETARY GENERAL

Friedhelm Frischenschlager during the FC in Prague.

Dear federal friends,

After two years of being responsible as Secretary General of our UEF I had to leave this position and the Prague Federal Committee appointed my successor Joan-Marc Simon.

My two-year term covered an extremely exciting period of EU politics - in particular the constitutional treaty discussions and the following political efforts to save at least the Reform Treaty. Ratification process is always a

difficult one, so we still we have contribute our best to get through with it.

Two extraordinary tasks we had to handle during those two years. One was our Referendum campaign, decided at our Vienna Congress in July 2006. Unfortunately after the idea of a Constitutional Treaty was given up the political momentum was more or less lost. However, the experience proved that we have to - and I tried at least - improve our organisational substance, to improve our campaigning capacity and to extend, hopefully, to all EU Member states in the future.

The other challenge was our participation in the EU Commission Plan D activities. Our Speak up Europe activities were in many countries assessed as a central part of the entire program - and we managed to succeed in spite of - frankly - poor financial conditions and sometimes terrible EU procedures. Anyway, this Plan D experience also proved the dramatic need of an active European Civil Society and the indispensable contribution of the European Federalists!

As Secretary General I always complained about the room for improvement left for more activities and contributions of our sections in various EU-Member states. One week after our Prague Federal Committee I took over the Presidency of Austria´s Federalist Movement. I can assure my successor that Austrian Federalists will contribute even stronger to our UEF-Europe wide activities. I can promise that I will be a reliable participant in our Bureau efforts and I look forward to cooperating with all of you in the future.

Finally, I would like to thank you all - our President Mercedes Bresso, also for her understanding in difficult situations, Vice-President Philipp Agathonos for his permanent stand by, all other members of the Bureau, Federal Committee, Hanneli Ebding, all the excellent stagiaires, in particular Ivana and Jörg for their work in the 3 months after Hanneli left, and the participants of our "Think Tank" for their advice and general support.

I wish my successor Joan Marc all the best - and we see us again very soon in Brussels.

Friedhelm Frischenschlager
President European Federalist Movement Austria

6. PRESS RELEASE

UEF WELCOMES THE REFORM TREATY OF LISBON,

Brussels, 13th December 2007

The Union of European Federalists welcomes the signature of the Reform Lisbon Treaty on the 13th of December in Brussels.

"The Reform Lisbon Treaty is as a step forward for the EU for it renders the Union more democratic, transparent and able to face the challenges of the XXI century. Staying with current functioning means hindering EU's potential to shape its future." said Mercedes Bresso, president of UEF.

"The treaty is not perfect, the UEF regrets the opt-outs for the Charter of Fundamental Rights or the fact that the symbols of the EU were not included. However the European integration is made of little steps like the Lisbon Treaty and therefore we should welcome it as the right move in the right direction"

"The UEF demands to member states to start a swift ratification of the treaty. Once again, there

is no plan B for the ratification of the treaty. The EU should be ready to move forward when a majority of countries have ratified the treaty. Unanimity should not block reforms the EU very much needs." concluded Mercedes Bresso.

UEF Belgium: Europe in school

How to encourage teachers to explain Europe to their students? Getting citizens more closely involved in the European construction: here is a programme that gives you "all (or almost) you wanted to know about Europe and did not date to ask. This Tuesday, the Belgian section of the Union of European Federalists invited the press at the European Parliament (EP) to get acquainted with a programme developed by a group of associations promoting European integration under the leadership of PROMEURO asbl. It is designed for teachers with students aged between 15 and 25 but accessible to all through the internet (www.aede.eu- « Traineurope »).

It is divided into 7 chapters : the euro – its history an its social, economic and financial implications – the European values and symbols, the European citizenship with its implications regarding representative and participative democracy, its cultural diversity and political integration of the European Union (EU).

The subjects are presented in the form of 343 questions and answers and are illustrated with photos, statistics, a glossary, quotations and an index guiding the reader to the particular subjects he is looking for. It is hosted on the site of the European Teachers' Associations (ETA) who is taking over PROMEURO's assets.

"The programme is an « appetizer »", explains M. Jean-Jacques Schul, President of PROMEURO who conceived the programme: "It introduces the subjects, handles briefly the major issues and gives then references to other websites where the subject is handled with greater detail. The authors did not seek to convince but to supply teachers and youngsters with the elements that allow them to understand the major issues concerning European integration and make up their own mind. It offers youngsters a common basis to help them understand the major issues confronting the EU and decide whether they want to become active European citizens or not."

The programme is accessible in 4 languages: English, French, German and Spanish. It is rather successful since after 4 months the number of visitors keeps growing and reached an average of 700 visitors a day since October, which puts the programme on the top of the hit-parade list of European teaching programmes.

The conference was presided by M. Michele Ciavarini Azzi, acting President of UEF Belgium who raised the important issue of training the future European citizens.

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M. Gérard ONESTA, Vice-President of the EP reminded the audience that today, "Europe is everywhere - in our plates, in our pockets - except….in education!". He added: "The present programme could become the Wikipedia of European teaching".

Philippe BUSQUIN, EP, stressed "the tendency to talk too much about the institutional Europe. This website designed for teachers is most welcome, because it could be linked with those of local communities who have an important role to play in informing their citizens".

The associations having participated in the elaboration of the programme are: UEF: the Union of European Federalists-Belgium (UEF.BE), the European League of Economic Cooperation (ELEC), the Forum of the Civil Society and the Centre of European Culture. The programme was co-financed by the European Commission, PROMEURO and ETA.

7. NEWS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

New UEF team. *In the picture: Mana Livardjani, Mercedes Bresso, Joan-Marc Simon.*

Joan-Marc Simon elected new Secretary General

Joan Marc Simon has been elected Secretary General of the Union of European Federalists.

Prior to this position Mr. Simon has worked as independent consultant and has also been Secretary General of the Young European Federalists in Brussels from 2004 till 2006.

Mana Livardjani appointed new Director

Ms Mana Livardjani has been appointed Director of the Union of European Federalists.

Before joining the UEF, Ms Livardjani served as Secretary General of a European Confederation and Project Officer of the Brussels office of cafebabel.com. Previously, she also worked as Publications Coordinator at the European Parliament Vice-Presidency. She has completed an M.A. in European Studies at the Catholic University of Leuven. Her experience includes policy development, communications and project management.

Joerg Janssen continues in the Secretariat as Project Manager

Our current Project Manager for the Speak up Europe campaign Joerg Janssen will stay with us until June 2008. Joerg will take care of the UEF Projects during 2008, e.g. "Why Europe?!"

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Ivana Jemelkova leaves UEF

Our EVS volunteer, Ivana Jemelkova, will leave the Secretariat at the end of December, after 6 months of her work for the UEF. "*I am very grateful to everyone who made my stay in Brussels a true life experience*", she says. Ivana is now going back to the Czech Republic to continue her university studies.

8. CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

December 13th, 2007
JEF - 30 European cities
"We want our flag back!!!"

January 26th, 2008
UEF – Turin
Enlarged Bureau Meeting

January 30th, 2008
UEF Secretariat - Brussels
New Year's Reception

May 23-24, 2008
European Movement – Congress of Europe
60th Anniversary

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The UEF, founded in 1946, is an independent and non-governmental European organisation, campaigning for a federal Europe. Since April 2005, it is presided over by Mrs. Mercedes BRESSO, President of the Italian Region of Piedmont, Member of the EU Committee of the Regions.

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