

**IPU General Assembly
October 17th, 2017, Saint Petersburg**

**Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and
Gentlemen!**

Thank you for the floor!

**It is fair to conclude from the theme of
our conference that we all see cultural
diversity as an asset.**

**Cultural diversity as such is
inseparable from human identity.**

Because human beings can interpret themselves in a community alone.

Because of their very nature, human beings strive to either create communities that will provide security and protection to them, or they strive to integrate themselves into such a community. Human communities integrate through a shared culture – part of which is the shared religion – and this shared culture becomes the foundation for and the primary factor

determining the personality and the identity of individual members of the community.

Thus, protecting cultural diversity means the protection of man's fundamental right, the right of upholding their identity, personal integrity and natural communities.

Our culture gives us our values, and awakens our consciousness of them. It is through these values that we are able to interpret the world around us

and are able to identify our own place and role in it. Without this consciousness of our own values, we would be unable to recognise, advocate or defend our interests.

In terms of the preservation of their culture, human beings and their communities are threatened from two different directions today.

One threat stems from the reflex of self-defence embedded in every culture. When encountering other

cultures, this may be coupled with a demand for exclusivity and expansion, and this has indeed resulted in a multitude of conflicts in the history of mankind.

The other threat is recent: it is the intention to rob humans of their culture, identity and communities – using technical tools and mechanisms of unprecedented efficacy to shape their consciousness – so that exposed and helpless as they are without the

protection of the above, they could be degraded and manipulated into mere economic units, i.e. useful consumers.

By the second decade of the 21st century, dear Ladies and Gentlemen, it is becoming increasingly obvious that the danger of disappearance or dissolution does not only threaten minority cultures subjected to or living side by side with dominant ones, i.e. ethnic or religious groups living the life of minorities in various state

frameworks. Today's self-certain majorities inclined to abuse their dominant position vis-a-vis minorities are also threatened.

Let us remember: those who increasingly blatantly question the legitimacy of nations, religions and the different cultures, those who wish to dissolve the sovereignty of nation states in an array of world governance structures – including the notion of the United States of Europe – have been

using the historically endless conflicts between cultures, religions and ethnic groups as their primary argument.

Therefore, if we feel that we do not have a good enough reason for a dialogue today, when we wish to advocate humaneness, tolerance, a joint stance in the face of global challenges, let us remember that we have one more reason to cooperate: the threat that we are all facing, i.e. the intentions and the power of the by now

global networks of secretive power centres.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

The phenomenon I am referring to is the most recent manifestation of the conflict between – on the one hand - state power of democratic legitimacy mandated by communities of the same culture, and private power centres lacking a community mandate but

relying on the power of money on the other.

We can all witness this process in our day, and what is new is not the conflict itself, but the disruption of the balance of power that had previously existed between the two parties.

By now, private power centres have arrived at a level of resource concentration and network-building when they enjoy a decisive supremacy against most states in the world. As

yet, however, there are still serious roadblocks barring private power centres from achieving victory over the legitimate state.

One of the most important of these impediments is the natural desire of man to exercise control over their own fate and the fate of their communities. This is the desire that in the past two centuries brought to life the various forms and degrees of democracy.

As long as a community exists, it finds it difficult to tolerate when decision-making over its own affairs is shifted to the far distance, into the hands of others.

This is why we are witnessing today how private power centres are trying to disintegrate not just the democratic structures created by communities, but also how these communities themselves are the targets of similar ill-intended challenges, along with all

their components, including the most fundamental, the traditional family.

We cannot blind our eyes to the fact that in the „brave new world” of the 21st century – in addition to cultural diversity – even the shared civilizational foundations for these diverse cultures are threatened.

Distinguished Colleagues,

The short timeframe prevents me from explaining my position that the wave of illegal migration afflicting Europe today

is also a part in the war waged by private powers against cultures. I only wish to say that the migrants – torn away from the natural fabric of their own cultures – are themselves the victims of a manipulation mechanism, just as the same is true for the members of host societies wishing to preserve the natural fabric of their own culture. Rootlessness is the shared fate in store for both these groups.

Dear Colleagues,

It is true that we, politicians are not the sole perpetrators causing the conflicts in the world today – skilfully portrayed as a fight between cultures and religions – but we must certainly bear the primary responsibility for their occurrence as well as for their solution.

All this is happening in an age and in a situation in which – in contrast to appearances – the real battle is no longer fought among different cultures, ethnic groups and religions with

different sets of values. The real battle is fought between those defending their traditions, faith, values, and the nihilists who deny that any of these things have a right to exist.

We must be prepared for a dialogue, but also for cooperation. We must be able to see the natural diversity in our countries and in the regions surrounding us as resources that support us, rather than as obstacles in

the way for the prosperity of our own community. We must strive to act in fairness, rather than strive to achieve exclusivity for our own community.

It is the future of our children and grandchildren that is at stake. We must summon up the wisdom required to rise to this challenge.