**NEF Economic Club, Association**

**International Peace Committee**

**The first document of the International Peace Committee**

The first consultative meeting of members of the International Peace Committee was held at Uherské Hradiště (the Czech Republic) on 7 and 8 May 2015. Members attended the meeting either in person or by telecommunication means. An invitation to take part in the consultations was also extended to members of the Committee of the Association ‘Informal Economic Forum, Economic Club’. Membership of the International Peace Committee was granted also to international recipients of the prestigious Golden Biatec Award. Participants remembered the tragically deceased member, Dr. Rongxiang Xu, world leader in the field of regeneration of damaged body organs and tissues. They also unanimously adopted the topic for discussion presented by Imrich Béreš, *“Peace is not for granted, it must be “fought for””*. The pair of spokespersons drew up a declaration resulting from the informal exchange of opinions that lasted several hours.

**Superpower and power positions are given precedence over the return to and embracing the path of mutually beneficial and peaceful cooperation**

It was exactly one year ago that a group of members of the association ‘Informal Economic Forum, Economic Club,’ founded in 1993, published an ‘Open Letter to the World Community, the Presidents of Russia and of the United States, and the Ukrainian Citizens Promoting a Peaceful and Civilised Resolution of the Ukrainian Crisis.’

It has been clearly proven that today’s political leaders are unable to reach an agreement which would provide that the striving for peaceful conditions of life not only in Europe but all over the world is their ultimate imperative. A year and a day later, it has become evident that superpowers and the states which consider themselves as having a say in the decisions concerning world developments pursue only their proper objectives. Although they occasionally share certain interests, more often they want to be principal factors behind the developments in the world, or even world history.

It is indisputable that only harmonised cooperation and diplomacy may prevent the outbreak of fatal global war associated with the end of civilisation. Given the fact that this idea lives in the minds of reasonable people, it should not be impossible to assert it also in international relations between the states and nations. Efforts at safeguarding peace can only be successful if the holders of power improve their communication with the rest of the world and its population. At present, they do not respect this premise in practical life, and it seems they do not even see the need for it.

The thinking of the leaders of superpowers, major powers, but also of a number of other states, does not reflect the spirit of age-old ideals of mankind, such as fraternity, equality and liberty. If, in the early 1980s, we believed that the OSCE and numerous disarmament negotiations were heralding the beginning of a new era, we were mistaken. Figuratively speaking, the curtain was raised, but before the common sense could enter on the scene, it was dropped again.

Since then we have been witness to spiritual feeble-mindedness and unbridled justifications by politicians for always finding or even inventing their arch-enemies. Not to mention the inroads into internal affairs, including by means of military aid, or even “quiet” as well as open and triggered interventions aimed at imposing, from their self-assigned imperial positions, their ideas of democracy and development on other regions and states. They announce such actions to the world as manifestations of their humanity and responsibility. And they never look back at them, even if their missions result in chaos, misery, victims or a total collapse and destitution. There is no example to the contrary.

In the world of today, thanks to their leaders and their media, populations of the countries like the United States, Russia and EU member states, perceive life in peace to be a permanent condition. People have even accepted that armament is good not only for business, but that it is also the best development incentive for their home states and for improving the quality of life. But the politicians can be occasionally heard as pointing to a threat to the peace that calls for concrete measures. The idea of gradually channelling the funds used for armament into economic and social development has turned to dust.

There are no saviours, and the public opinion is controlled by power centres. All is well, but there is a growing number of works about global conflicts that are in the offing. We are being prepared for war and for a horrible end, but with the production of “007-type” heroes. Such is the result of how the present-day leaders perceive their responsibility; it is not at all relevant whether any of them has slightly more truth to his credit than his counterparts, his real, imaginary or fictional rivals. For most political leaders of superpowers and major powers, it is almost unthinkable to relinquish their worldwide hegemony ideas.

We created the International Peace Committee because of our fear that today’s politicians, of the will of their manipulated voters, have no qualms about disregarding their obligation to maintain peace exclusively through peaceful means. This is also why, in the space of ​​the European Union and of the North Atlantic Alliance, the possibilities laid down in their founding and valid documents are not being made use of. There are also political leaders who do not even abide by constitutional principles of their states, which clearly provide that their primary duty is to ensure peace and welfare. They must be urged to fulfil this most sacred duty.

At this time of commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, we also remember the peace movement of the post-war period, when our grandparents, parents, but also our contemporaries were soldiers of the “Cold War”. We call upon the representatives of the European Union, the United States and the Prime Ministers of the Danubian countries to support the idea of reviving the “Peace Cruise on the Danube and the Black Sea”, which our predecessors brought to life between 18 August and 6 September 1958.

We expect to receive also the support of Russian President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Robert Fico.

We should, finally and with resolve, search for humanity, development paths, higher quality of life and the language of peace. We must strive for finding such world leaders who will give priority to peaceful and mutually beneficial cooperation between the states and their peoples.

**Spokespersons of the IPC from 7 May to 31 December 2015:**

**Peter Čatloš and Peter Kasalovský**

**Bratislava, 10 May 2015**