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Friends of Europe Les amis de l'Europe

United Nations Executive Office of the Secretary General
1 United Nations Plaza
10017 New York
United States of America

Brussels, 16 June 2009

(29-03759)

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Co-Founder & Director

Geert Cami

Dear Mr Secretary General,

I am writing to follow up on an invitation letter sent to you by our President Viscount Etienne Davignon dated March 24 and inviting you to participate in our annual *President's Dinner* and high-level roundtable *State of Europe* that usually precedes the dinner and takes place during the day.

This year's *President's Dinner* and the *State of Europe* roundtable debate will take place on Friday, October 9 at the Concert Noble Hall in the heart of Brussels.

Response sent

State of Europe – high-level roundtable debate on the current state of Europe and its future

The high-level roundtable will consist of three sessions and will take place between 09.00 and 16.00. I attach the preliminary programme for your information. We at *Friends of Europe* would be delighted if you could join this brainstorming roundtable as a discussant giving introductory remarks. Each of the sessions will be introduced by 2 introductory discussants and then the debate will be thrown open among some 60 senior discussants, including European ministers, senior policymakers, opinion-formers, business leaders and international press representatives. The debate will also be attended by some 200 observers.

President's Dinner - Brussels' landmark event

Our annual *President's Dinner*, co-hosted by our President Viscount Etienne Davignon and our Praesidium Member and the Swedish Presidency's Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt, will start with a welcome cocktail at 19.00 at the same venue. The dinner is Brussels' landmark event, and it is both intellectually stimulating as well as entertaining.

These two events bring together top business leaders, policymakers, and opinion-formers for a lively and frank exchange of ideas. This year, we at *Friends of Europe* celebrate 10 years of lively and innovative debate, and we aim, with a new European Parliament in place and a new European Commission about to arrive, to use this occasion to highlight some of Europe's cultural achievements and challenges, to champion causes that deserve greater attention and to focus on social and political issues that need much greater European consensus.

Other confirmed participants at the *President's Dinner* include EU Commissioner for Trade Catherin Ashton, EU Energy Commissioner Andris Piebalgs, EU Commissioner for Information Society and Media Viviane Reding and EU Commission Vice President Margot Wallström in charge of Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy.

We would be honoured if you would join us for these special events. Should your agenda not allow joining both the roundtable and the dinner, we would be delighted if you could join us for at least one of the two events.

I thank you in advance and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Geert Cami

Co-Founder & Director
Friends of Europe



THE STATE OF EUROPE

2009-2010
TURNING CRISIS INTO CREATIVITY
DRAFT PROGRAMME

The sixth annual VIP Policy Summit for *Friends of Europe's* Trustees,
business leaders, top policymakers and opinion-formers

The Concert Noble Hall , Brussels, Friday 9 October 2009

08.30 – 09.00

Welcome of Participants

Session I:

09.00 – 11.00

CAN EUROPE EMERGE STRONGER FROM THE CRISIS?

As the financial crisis hardens into economic slump, the EU cohesion is weakening; Europe's early failure to coordinate national recovery measures has deteriorated into economic nationalism and threats to the Single Market. Yet most past EU advances have been in response to crises, so how realistic is it to believe that this one too could yield a new dimension to Europe's political integration? Are there any signs of a strengthening of EU governments' commitments to closer union as the only real bulwark in these hostile and dangerous times? As the cry 'Where's Europe' in countering the crisis grows, how likely is it that a new European Parliament and Commission will be able to rally the EU and ensure it speaks with one voice to the US, Asia and the Middle East?

11.00 – 11.30

Coffee Break

Session II:

11.30 – 13.00

WHAT ROLE FOR EUROPE IN SHAPING THE POST-CRISIS WORLD?

The global crisis is the catalyst for a new international chemistry in which political and economic decision-making will no longer be the preserve of the OECD's rich countries, let alone of the G7 super-rich. But just as Europe and the U.S. will see some of their post-WWII privileges eroded, what are the chances that by acting as a bloc the EU countries can exert a substantial influence in shaping the financial, monetary and trade rulebooks governing the global economy? Will the shared pressures of the economic crisis force Europeans to overcome their cultural and historical differences and exert greater leadership in the debate over new global governance structures?

13.00 – 14.00

Networking Lunch

Session III:

14.00 – 16.00

AT LAST, A 'BIG IDEA' FROM THE EU'S INSTITUTIONS?

Cornerstones of the EU ranging from competition rules to the Single Market and the eurozone suddenly appear vulnerable, raising fears that the Union could begin to slip backwards. Although no 'big idea' for deepening European integration has emerged in the last decade, the EU has begun to set the agenda in specific areas like climate change, energy efficiency and security, healthcare and new transparent solutions in an urbanising world. Could the EU's next big idea be to fashion a new industrial strategy that combines concerted recovery measures with governments' greater financial support for ICT and other advanced technologies? And as it strives to protect the integrity of its internal market, what should be the EU's approach to member states' protection of national champions and lame ducks?



Friends of Europe
Les amis de l'Europe

FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER 2009

THE STATE OF EUROPE & THE PRESIDENT'S DINNER



Hans-Gert Pötering

Alain Hubert

Daniel Cohn-Bendit

Jacques Delors

George Soros

Prince El Hassan

Carl Bildt

▲ The State of Europe – Oct. 2008



José Manuel Barroso & Viscount Etienne Devignon

Like every year on the occasion of its Board of Trustees Meeting, on **Friday 9 October 2009** Friends of Europe will host **two key events** that together constitute the highlight of its calendar. They are:

THE STATE OF EUROPE

VIP ROUNDTABLE CONFERENCE

THE PRESIDENT'S DINNER

FOR SENIOR-LEVEL GUESTS FROM ALL OVER EUROPE AND THE WORLD



Margot Wallström

Javier Solana

Jean-Claude Juncker

Monica Frasson

Jim Clifton

Steve Ballmer

Karel De Gucht



▲ The President's Dinner – October 2007

OUR ANNUAL HIGH-LEVEL "THE STATE OF EUROPE" VIP ROUNDTABLE CONFERENCE

Initiated in 2005, "The State of Europe" high level VIP roundtable conferences have quickly become a staple in *Friends of Europe's* agenda. **Senior EU and national decision-makers, top-level business and NGOs leaders and editors-in-chief** gather around a table for a brainstorming on *The State of Europe* to assess the political, social and economic challenges facing Europe, and the possible means for meeting these challenges.

Rather than using the classical conference format with speakers and participants, our annual "The State of Europe" VIP roundtables have some **80 high level discussants** around the table. No speeches are allowed, and discussants can at most bring some bullet-pointed preparations to the table to allow for frank and fast-moving debates. Furthermore, an audience of some **100 observers** (diplomats, international press correspondents, representatives of EU and national institutions, *Friends of Europe* members, etc.) attend the debate.



Previous State of Europe roundtable moderators have included *Financial Times'* European Editor **John Thornhill**, **Pat Cox**, President of the European Movement International (EMI) and former President of the European Parliament, **Carl Bildt**, Swedish Foreign Minister, **Janez Potocnik**, EU Commissioner for Science and Research, and **Vaira Vike-Freiberga**, former President of Latvia.



Animated discussions during the 2008 State of Europe roundtable



Friends of Europe Secretary General Giles Merritt, and José Manuel Barroso, European Commission President



Interview with Dimitrij Rupel, Slovenian Foreign Minister

DEBATERS IN THE PAST HAVE INCLUDED:

ALI BABACAN, Turkish Economy Minister - **JOSÉ MANUEL BARROSO**, European Commission President - **CARL BILD**, Swedish Foreign Minister - **PRINCE EL HASSAN BIN TALAL OF JORDAN**, Arab Thought Forum Chairman - **PERVENCHE BERÈS**, European Parliament Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee Chairwoman - **JOACHIM BITTERLICH**, Veolia Environment Executive Vice President and former Foreign and Security Policy Adviser to Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl - **ELMAR BROK**, European Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman - **DUSAN CAPLOVIC**, Slovak Deputy Prime Minister for Knowledge-Based Society, European Affairs and Human Rights - **DANIEL COHN-BENDIT**, Co-President of the European Parliament GREENS/EFA Group - **ROBERT COOPER**, Council of the European Union Director General for External and Politico-Military Affairs - **DANIEL DAIANU**, European Parliament Member and former Finance Minister - **KAREL DE GUCHT**, Belgian Foreign Affairs Minister - **JACQUES DELORS**, former European Commission President - **LAMBERTO DINI**, President of the Italian Senate's Committee on Foreign Affairs and Migration - **FRANZ FISCHLER**, former European Commissioner for Agriculture - **MONICA FRASSONI**, European Parliament Co-President - **FRANCO FRATTINI**, European Commission Vice President and Justice, Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security - **ELIZABETH GUIGOU**, Assemblée Nationale Vice-President - **JAN KUBIS**, Slovak Foreign Affairs Minister - **PEDRO LICHTINGER**, Pfizer Europe President - **JACQUELINE MCGLADE**, European Environment Agency (EEA) Director - **GÉRARD MESTRALLET**, Suez Chief Executive Officer and Chairman - **MARIO MONTI**, Università Bocconi President and former European Commissioner - **JANEZ PODOBNIK**, Slovenian Environment and Spatial Planning Minister - **HANS-GERT PÖTTERING**, European Parliament President - **WOLFGANG PROISSL**, *Financial Times Deutschland* Editor-in-Chief - **DIMITRIJ RUPEL**, Slovenian Foreign Affairs Minister, **MARC SAVERYS**, CMB Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director - **OTTO SCHILY**, Member of the German Bundestag's Committee on Foreign Affairs and former German Minister of the Interior - **CLAUS HAUGAARD SORENSEN**, European Commission Director General for Communication - **GEORGE SOROS**, Open Society Institute Chairman - **PETER SUTHERLAND**, UN Secretary General Migration Special Representative and BP Chairman - **BRUNO TOBBACK**, Belgian Environment Minister - **KAREL VAN MIERT**, former European Commission Competition Vice President - **PIOTR GRZEGORZ WOZNAK**, Polish Economy Minister, **CHRISTOS ZOIS**, Greek Interior Deputy Minister, and many more. (*positions at the time of contribution*)

FRIENDS OF EUROPE'S ANNUAL PRESIDENT'S DINNER

Friends of Europe's annual President's Dinner is not a traditional dinner with a couple of keynote speeches. It is the occasion for a select audience of 200+ guests from all over Europe representing all facets of Politics, Business civil Society and the Media to meet and enjoy an evening where the political elements work as a *digestive* in between the *normal* courses

Our annual President's dinner, traditionally on the same day as the State of Europe VIP roundtable, offers a platform for:

- **top policymakers to deliver landmark statements with a personal touch** (e.g. José Manuel Barroso, Hans Gert Pöttering, Javier Solana, Jean-Claude Juncker, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, etc.);
- **live, interactive TV-style debate sessions with top-notch panelists;** and
- **major announcements/celebrations** (e.g. the launch *Europe World* as the first pan-European policy journal in 2005 and its French version in 2007; reflecting on the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the Treaties of Rome in an interactive way coinciding with the 75th birthday of *Friends of Europe's* President Etienne Davignon, etc.).



The dinner is covered on TV and in the international press.

ABOUT FRIENDS OF EUROPE

Friends of Europe is an independent, not-for-profit think-tank dedicated to fostering open discussion and stimulating new thinking on the issues facing Europe and its citizens.

Based in Brussels, *Friends of Europe* works with national think-tanks from across Europe. It strives to reach out beyond the Brussels elite, including fresh new influences in the dialogue by using innovative communication technologies and pan-European marketing campaign.



Friends of Europe makes a contribution to almost all EU-related issues. We concentrate in particular on six important areas:

- Europe and the World
- EU Competitiveness and the Internal Market
- The Future of Europe
- Energy and the Environment
- European Society
- International Development

Friends of Europe's Board of Trustees, chaired by **Etienne Davignon**, one of the masterminds of European integration, comprises men and women from different walks of life who hold positions of responsibility in European affairs. Trustees include **Michel Barnier**, France's Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, **Anna Diamantopoulou**, Greek Member of Parliament and former EU Commissioner, **Carl Bildt**, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, **Monica Frassonni**, Co-President of the GREENS/EFA Group in the European Parliament, as well as the following:



PASCAL LAMY
WTO Director General



JAVIER SOLANA
CFSP High Representative



GUY VERHOFFSTADT
Belgium's Former Prime Minister



MARIO MONTI
President,
Università Bocconi



J.E. SARYUSZ WOLSKI
Chairman of the
EP Committee
on Foreign Affairs

AN OPEN FORUM FOR DEBATE

Friends of Europe provides an open forum for debate between EU level and national policymakers, NGOs, business leaders, the media and civil society. Our activities offer opportunities for networking and discussion, and receive extensive media coverage. More than a traditional think-tank, *Friends of Europe* aims to stimulate debate far beyond Brussels by linking up with think-tanks and media from across Europe.

LIVELY AND INFORMAL

Our Café Crossfire evening and lunch debates, Policy Spotlight debates, European Policy Summit conferences and Policymakers' Dinner and Lunch Debates, held at the Bibliothèque Solvay in the heart of Brussels, are lively and informal and aim at the confrontation of different ideas. A year ago, *Friends of Europe* introduced a series of roundtable debates called the Development Policy Forum (DPF), which bring together senior stakeholders to chart the course of EU-level aid and development policies.

PUBLICATIONS

Friends of Europe's publications are widely disseminated and written by specialised journalists or Trustees to be highly readable, setting out issues for non-specialists too. *Friends of Europe* is proud to be a co-initiator of *Europe's World*. Published three times a year, it is the only pan-European publication that offers policymakers and opinion-formers across Europe a platform for presenting ideas and forging consensus on key issues.