

Appeal for jointly applied reason in the international relations of our time

“The problems of international terrorism and fundamentalism, the dramatic wave of refugees, the financial crisis of this century, the globally unequal distribution of wealth and the damage caused to our natural resources not only remain unsolved but they are intensifying on a local, regional and global level.” That is the opening sentence of the memorandum *In the Crises of our Time* (www.CFvW.de and www.CFvW.at), which underlies our appeal for jointly applied reason.

Adverse climate changes such as lengthy droughts, aggravating distortions in the economy and demography of broader areas of Africa and in the whole of the southern hemisphere are destructing people’s livelihoods. In particular, proxy wars waged in the countries peripheral to Europe and unleashed for regional as well as religious and ethnic reasons have triggered the largest flows of refugees since the end of World War II – the flows definitely able to destabilize the northern hemisphere societies as well. And also – war has returned to Europe.

The dangers of the current situation arise primarily from the fact that Russia and the United States no longer see themselves as the stabilising and leading powers of the overarching, although opposing systems or ideologies, that are however safeguarding their reciprocally respected strategic interests; now they consider themselves mainly the representatives of national interests. The same increasingly applies to China and also to India in the lee of China - as well as to certain regional powers such as Turkey and Iran. None of the structural reasons which led to World War I have actually been vanquished.

It seems now that both the ability of reciprocally predicting the other side’s actions during the Cold War and the mutual trust after the end of the Cold War have been lost to a significant degree. There looms instead an era of growing political tension and military confrontations between the great powers, with the return of an armaments race – which China has joined in the meanwhile. Considering use of the newest technologies in the systems of conventional and nuclear weapons, the internal development pattern of this armaments race poses for us an ever-present threat of human error and technical fault and pushes us dangerously close to the ‘point of no return’ which no one can actually dare or want to cross.

Repeating the words of Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker, we, the signatories to this appeal, are convinced that “*A complex society undergoing rapid change like our own cannot survive, let alone find the best paths without insight. But we are not given insight without first making a supreme endeavour in the search for truth.*” And we are similarly convinced together with von Weizsäcker that “*with jointly applied reason all our current and future political, economic and environmental problems would basically be solvable.*”

The alternative to easing of tension and to the balance of differing interests based on reciprocal predictability and mutual trust is unreasonable and morally irresponsible – and especially so in the event it supersedes the shared responsibility: to prevent further proliferation of nuclear armaments systems, to contain and to finally bring peace to hot spots such as Afghanistan and in the South China Sea, in the Middle East and in Ukraine using political foresight for example and confidence-building military actions, and so, last but not the least, to ensure a reliable and real future with a human face to the manifold lifestyles of the peoples in their individual facets.

The time is running out! Sign to join our appeal to the great of this world in order to break the antagonism of provocation and counter-provocation, suspicions and accusations, threats and counter-threats, sanctions and counter-sanctions, erroneous judgments and exaggerated reactions and to return to jointly applied reason.

Sign to join our appeal to the great of this world in order to search new roads with jointly applied reason in the threatening environment, to find them and to go along them – new roads to an “order of peace and security from Vancouver to Vladivostok” as set out in the Charter of Paris for a New Europe.
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