

Building a world community

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Canadian Edition

Published by the World Federalist Movement, a non-governmental organization that advocates more just and effective global governance through the application of the principles of democratic federalism to world affairs.

VOL.2, ISSUE 2
DECEMBER 2018

World Federalist Congress in The Hague reaffirms fight for global peace, justice and democracy

by Andreas Bummel

Convening July 9 to 13 in The Hague, the world's capital of international law, the World Federalist Movement (WFM) reaffirmed the organization's fight for global justice, peace and democracy. In a resolution adopted at the meeting, the movement underlined its "primary goal" of institution-building and emphasized its commitment to "the reform and improvement of existing international institutions" and "the creation of new democratic supranational institutions" to cope with "the urgent challenges of our interconnected world and move away from international anarchy and towards world federalism and democratic world governance."

World federalism and global democracy are now more urgent than ever

"While they may appear distant in terms of realization, the goals of world federalism and global democracy are now more urgent than ever," said the movement's newly elected Co-President, Fernando Iglesias, a Member of Parliament from Argentina and former Council Chair, who will serve in this capacity together with Lloyd Axworthy, a former Foreign Minister from Canada.

Programs discussed in The Hague included the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC), the Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect (ICRtoP), the Campaign for a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (CUNPA), the Coalition for a Latin-American Court on Transnational Organized Crime (COPLA), the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), and the Civil Society Initiative for a UN 2020 Reform Summit (UN2020), among others.

Priority areas identified at the Congress for WFM's work included continued support of the International Criminal Court, the Responsibility to Protect, promotion of regional integration processes and the democratization of regional organizations, support of the

Campaign for a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly and of the efforts for a Latin-American Court on Transnational Organized Crime.

In addition, the meeting decided to set up transnational working groups that will explore and promote federalist solutions to major global issues in collaboration with experts and relevant stakeholders.

“cosmopolitan counter-balance to populist nationalism”

Discussing the necessity of the movement’s stronger engagement with issues such as migration, global warming, the disruptive impact of automation, artificial intelligence and biotechnology or nuclear non-proliferation, participants emphasized that democratic world federalism represents “a cosmopolitan counter-balance” to the recent rise of populist nationalism.

The topic of world citizenship and the need of strengthening democracy was also taken up during a presentation of the new book *A World Parliament: Governance and Democracy in the 21st Century* authored by Jo Leinen and Andreas Bummel. Introduced and moderated by the newly elected chair of WFM’s Congress, Florencia Gor from Argentina, the book launch put a spotlight on how global democratization needs to be a response to the erosion of democracy worldwide.

Resolutions adopted by the Congress included a call introduced by WFM Japan and the Japanese Parliamentary Group for World Federation on parliamentarians across the world to create similar parliamentary groups to promote “democratic global governance and world federation.” According to another resolution, “global taxes could be one of the promising means to generate funds for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.”

The Congress unanimously adopted a resolution in support of a UN World Citizens’ Initiative based on the example of the European Citizens’ Initiative and the creation of an internet platform for “global debates, voting, and elections.” Another resolution expressed “in principle” support of “the concept of a World Community of Democratic Nations as one possible first step towards a democratic world federation.”

As part of a major internal reform, the WFM streamlined its own governance architecture and abolished one of the organization’s bodies, the Council, leaving an Executive Committee and a bi- annual Congress running the organization. It is anticipated that WFM’s next Congress will take place in Japan in 2020.

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