

**Prof. Danuta Hübner**  
**Chair of the European Parliament Committee on Regional Development**

**Laudatio for Dr. Javier Solana, winner of “The Knight of Freedom” Prize**

**ACADEMY OF YOUNG DIPLOMATS**  
**6TH EDITION’S GRADUATION AND 7TH EDITION’S COMMENCEMENT**  
**CEREMONY**

**November 20, 2010**

**Warsaw, Poland**

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Guests,  
Young Diplomats,  
Dear Javier,

I am more than pleased that I have got this chance to say a few words to, and about, a man, whom I have always deeply respected. Javier Solana is an unusual man, who has left his indelible, good mark in world politics, making an invaluable contribution to creating a united and free Europe.

I am also very glad that I can be here today with you, this year’s alumni of the Academy of Young Diplomats, and that together we can honor our Esteemed Guest. It is all the more fitting that his contribution is appreciated by you, our young diplomats, who aspire to take on the baton in the ‘European relay’. Your choice of Javier Solana shows that you realise that it is important to continue what today’s Laureate has started.

With the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and the appointment of a joint diplomatic corps for the whole of the European Union, you will have many more opportunities to influence and shape global politics in accordance with the most

important political ethical values which have guided the Founding Fathers of the European Union: freedom, cooperation, tolerance and the ability to change an individual interest into a common interest. I am sure that some of you will make a contribution to the emergent EU foreign service – and it will be your privilege to be able to refer in your work to role models such as Javier Solana, whose public activity embodies the political ethics instilled in our continent by the generation of Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman and Alcide de Gasperi, Altiero Spinelli.

I feel proud and honored to speak about Javier Solana, whom you are today awarding the much-deserved title of Knight of Freedom and whom I have always considered a friend of Poland.

In Homer's *Iliad*, which can be seen as the first epic knight poem in European culture, one of the most important indicators of chivalry was genealogy. In this work each knight is presented through the enumeration of his honourable ancestors. This is intended to show us that a real knight does not come from nowhere. He comes from a great history, which guides him in carrying out his ethical duties and means that he uses his skills and the gifts that fate has bestowed upon him to serve the community. Francisco Javier Solana de Madariaga, born on 14 July 1942 in Madrid, whom we are honoring today, is an outstanding example of individuality born out of a family background of unusually fertile intellect.

The Polish Nobel Prize winner Czesław Miłosz wrote a beautiful book entitled 'Native Europe', in which he tried to describe his Polish-Lithuanian experience through his depiction of an expanded Europe, although, when he wrote it, the idea of reuniting the divided continent seemed Utopian. We can assume that Javier's determination to regain Europe for Spain and Spain for Europe was similar to the determination of the generation-older Miłosz, who was facing the same dilemma on the other side of the continent. Also now we need more Spain in Europe and we count on you, Javier, to make it happen.

While studying at the Complutense University of Madrid, Javier Solana belonged to the active opposition against the regime. In 1964 he joined the underground Socialist Party. In 1965 he went to the USA, where he continued his studies in physics, at the

same time taking part in protests against the war in Vietnam. After he returned to Spain after the fall of the Franco regime, he started to work in the re-legalised Socialist Party and quickly became one of its leaders, responsible for its transformation during the post-Franco period. In 1977 he stood in the parliamentary elections for the Madrid region which he represented until 1982. In 1982 he became Minister of Culture in Felipe González's government and in 1988 he was appointed Minister of Education. In 1992 he took over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As Foreign Minister, he was known as a composed and discreet diplomat. He replaced NATO Secretary General, Willy Claes in December 1995.

The new Secretary General gave the NATO impetus for reform, which led to the reorganisation of its political and military structure and changes to its strategy which had been pursued up until that point. Javier Solana achieved recognition for his negotiation and constructive skills both within NATO and with difficult and demanding partners. His personal success was such that a year after taking up his new role, his own country, Spain, as a member of NATO, just its integrated military command structure. And in 1997, after five months of talks with the Russian Foreign Minister, Primakov, the NATO-Russia Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security was signed.

In 1999 Javier Solana was appointed the first ever Europe's High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy. This appointment facilitated new European growing cooperation between NATO and Union and contributed to the ever more evident desire of the Union to enter the wider global political stage. Javier Solana was one of the main architects of the more active role of the European Union in the Middle East as part of the Quartet (the EU, UN, USA and Russia). In 2004 he supported Great Britain, France and Germany in negotiations with Iran concerning the blocking of part of its controversial nuclear programme. He also represented the EU as a mediator with Ukraine. One of Solana's greatest achievements during his time as High Representative was the work he did in the Balkans where he managed to avoid a domino effect in the region.

Solana's impact on the development of the European Security and Defence Policy deserves a special attention We remember his role in the innovative programmes

against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, combating terrorism, organised crime and the process of rebuilding the 'fallen' states and resolving regional conflicts. Solana can be seen as one of the forerunners of the application of the new 3D (*Diplomacy, Defence, Development*) paradigm in ESDP programmes. It is not enough to settle conflicts temporarily – we need to create an environment in which people affected by the trauma of conflict, often on account of civil war, can regain a sense of stability and predictability through security and the rule of law. Standard examples of this approach include the EULEX programme in Kosovo, the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia and the EU NAVFOR Operation Atalanta, which aims to ward off, prevent and eliminate acts of piracy off the coast of Somalia. We should also remember that a major achievement during his term in office was the decision on the European Defense Agency, which helps Member States develop their defence capabilities in the field of crisis management, and also the incorporation of human rights issues and equal opportunities into the ESDP.

I am convinced that these types of innovative programmes and operations strongly influence image of the European Union in third countries, and reflect its ability to exert its strength worldwide, in both the 'soft' and 'hard' version. To a very great extent this is thanks to Javier Solana and his unusual ability to build consensus. I believe we saw this difference between soft and hard as obsolete and pioneered the need to move toward integrated strategic culture.

I do not know, Javier, whether you would confirm it, but people say that your motto is *'Make no enemies and never ask a question to which you do not know or like the answer.'* To be effective with such approach it requires a huge amount of work, as well as prudence and the quiet and systematic acquisition of knowledge.

François de Callières, the French author of a diplomacy textbook, writes that an ambassador should be able to read other people's minds and should have good manners and be approachable. Javier has these qualities. Maybe this makes his work a lot easier. He also has a remarkable ability to sense the mood of other people which makes him a first-rate diplomat. The French author I mentioned writes that *'in order to succeed in diplomat's work, one must rather listen than speak; and the*

*phlegmatic temper, self-restraint, a faultless discretion and a patience which no trial can break down – these are the servants of success.'*

Indeed Javier Solana has this patience. He proved that in the Balkans, in Ukraine and in the Middle East.

Maria Ossowska, an outstanding Polish scholar, in her work 'The Knighthood Ethos and Its Varieties' (*Ethos rycerski i jego odmiany*), refers to the aristotle-esque concept of 'the person who is rightly proud'. A person who is rightly is generous and friendly but at the same time unyielding if necessary. Only someone who is not prone to give in to provocations of the negotiating partners and who is not given to quick and unequivocal judgments can successfully dance the diplomatic *sarabande* while giving the observer aesthetic pleasure. Javier Solana is that person.

Thank you very much for allowing me to share my reflections with you. And, Javier, thank you for being with us here in Warsaw – and in our „native Europe”.

Y para terminar, querido Javier, por favor, que no se te ocurra, ni en bromas, pensar en jubilarte. Europa te necesita.