



International Federation of Liberal Youth
Federación Internacional de Juventudes Liberales
Fédération Internationale des Jeunesses Libérales

IFLRY 27th General Assembly

November 25th-26th, 2005
in Skopje, Macedonia

MINUTES

1. Opening

IFLRY President Emil Kirjas opens the general assembly at 10:13.
(Please view attachment for the speeches)

2. Roll Call and voting rights

Jacob Rasmussen does the roll call and distributes the voting cards to the organisations present.

Full members:

CF Belarus, CPPY Croatia, CUF Sweden, CYA Serbia, JD Netherlands, JFS Switzerland, JJLL Spain, JLRA Paraguay, JNC Catalonia, Jong-VLD Belgium, JOVD Netherlands, JuLis Germany, Kalipi Philippines, LDRS Albania, LDYS UK, LHG Germany, LiDeM Macedonia, LJCJ Lithuania, LLJ Lithuania, LUF Sweden, LYA Bulgaria, MC Poland, MLD Slovenia, Finnish Center Youth Finland, NUV Norway, RU 94 Denmark, SHINUI Israel, SU Finland, TNL Romania, UCJD Colombia, UJTL Senegal, VU Denmark, YAACP Estonia, YLC Canada, YLS Serbia.

Candidate members:

FEL Belgium, JLA Andorra, YMRF Bulgaria

Observer members:

YDA USA, DPP-Youth Taiwan

Applicant members:

Youth Initiative Nepal, IPL Peru

Non-members:

LYMEC, ISEEL, YLDA

113 votes were handed out. When candidate members are accepted as full members they will be granted voting rights before the election of the bureau and the total number of votes will be 127.



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3. Election of congress chairs and congress secretaries

Martin Sjogren lists the nominees for congress chairs and asks them to stand up: Clinton Bench (YDA United States), Gesine Roeder (JuLis Germany), Karol Jene (IFLRY Poland), Martin Sjogren (IFLRY Sweden) and Richard Diamond (YLC Canada).

All of them are elected unanimously.

Martin recommends Jennifer Bonardi (IFLRY) and Nicolas Marschall (LHG Germany) as congress secretaries. Both are elected unanimously.

4. Election of returning officers

Martin recommends Nick Colosimo (YLC, Canada), Rolf Liljegren (VU Denmark) and Yoav Lerman (Shinui, Israel) as returning officers. All of them are elected unanimously.

5. Adoption of the agenda

There are no proposals for new agenda points. The agenda is adopted unanimously.

6. Adoption of minutes of the 26th Extraordinary General Assembly

There are no comments about the minutes of the last GA. The minutes are adopted unanimously.

7. Bureau Report of Activities

Emil explains that Vice President Richard Diamond from Canada will arrive later than expected as his flight was delayed due to a blizzard. So his report cannot be presented at this time.

Allan Witherick (LDYS UK) asks all outgoing Bureau members for the one thing which they are most proud of having achieved and the one thing that they would have liked to do.

Karol Jene replies that there was contact established with many new organisations but that a study trip to Caucasus had to be postponed. He criticizes that there still is a lack of communication with the member organisations sometimes also due to translation problems.

Martin Sjogren explains that he is proud of the website and the increased level of communication with the member organisations. He criticizes that IFLRY was, due to funding problems, not able to do a big event in Africa.

Emil Kirjas admits that there has not been a discussion on the future of IFLRY yet. There were not as many events this year compared to last year. Still it is sometimes difficult to explain the member organisations the importance of international work.

Jeroen Adema (JD Netherlands) asks Martin for the measures he has taken to strengthen the liberal idea in Africa and to get more participants from Africa to the seminars.

Martin explains that there was communication by email and phone with organisations from there. There has been contact to the Friedrich Naumann Foundation concerning the organisation of a seminar which could not yet take place. He visited Senegal, Ghana, and the Ivory Coast which includes all MOs except Tunisia and South Africa. He also assisted in translating information to French language for the MOs. Martin continues by describing the problems Africans are facing, like visa problems and travel expenses. Martin issued statements on African topics like the situation in Ivory Coast.

The returning officers announce that the deadline for the nominations for the auditors is 17:00 PM.

Dewi Van der Vyver (JongVLD, Belgium) expresses concern that the bureau reports have been too short. Emil replies that he agrees and regrets that the reports don't give a thorough description of the work. There is the idea of putting more information on a special section on the website with constantly updated information on the work of the Bureau member. This would also enable to put more pressure on the Bureau members.

Martin explains that the webpage project was his idea and that this might lead to members being informed better. But he admits that the report was not detailed enough.

Dewi adds that the criticism is not about the bureau doing not enough but about it not being described detailed enough in the reports.

Karol adds that in the E-News there is actually more information on the Bureau and that he has written seminar reports which are a total of 200 pages.

Jacob Rasmussen comments that this situation indicates a lack of communication between bureau and member organisations.

Michelle van der Burg (JOVD Netherlands) asks for the plans for projects with LYMEC and past cooperation during the last year. She asks about the relation with the European Youth Forum.

Jacob answers that the cooperation with LYMEC was as last year, but that there was no joint summer camp this year. Our communication with LYMEC is quite good. Concerning the European Youth Forum there is close cooperation, especially with the president who is a liberal. There was cooperation on the issue of ASEF-funding problems for a seminar on democracy.

The delegates from UJTL (Senegal) comment on the visa problems with African participants. They explain that IFLRY without participation at events and without a representation in the Bureau from Africa is not a true international organisation. They propose that the next GA should be in Africa.

Emil replies that IFLRY does everything possible to ensure the cooperation with Africa. He describes the problems in detail. Indeed, IFLRY does not show up in every region of the world although it is international. One solution is to organise more statutory events outside Europe like those in Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Buenos Aires. However there is not enough communication with the member organisations from outside Europe. Concerning visa, many organisations do not respect the deadlines for visas. One solution is a strengthening of the regional organisations. The whole issue must be included in the debate on the structure of IFLRY.



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Martin comments that IFLRY tries to internationalize as fast as possible but that this is linked to the democratization of countries in the world. He describes the history of IFLRY going to more and more continents, especially after the Cold War. In his opinion, IFLRY advanced quite quickly. He welcomes proposals from Africa for IFLRY events there.

Soren Melgaard (VU Denmark) positively notes the Bureau report of Paola. Michelle Van der Burg (JOVD Netherlands) agrees and asks what the potential MOs mentioned in Paola's report actually are. Paola names two organisations and explains that she had meetings with them.

Jan-Argy Tolentino (KALUPI Philippines) regrets that one Vice President did not present his report and thanks IFLRY for visiting Asia. He asks if it is the official position of IFLRY that those organisations that cannot join IFLRY because of the restricted membership criteria and if they should join regional organisations instead.

Emil replies that the development of IFLRY in Asia was good, but that indeed many organisations there don't fulfil the membership criteria for IFLRY membership as they are not independent from their mother party. In his opinion those organisations should follow the example of KALUPI and reform themselves. Then they would be stronger and be able to stand against their mother parties if necessary. Joining the regional organisations would be a starting point for a later membership application for IFLRY. The regional organisations can serve to communicate the interests of the national organisations to IFLRY. Another problem still is the financial burden.

Avni Dervishi (LUF Sweden) asks Paola about gender equality in the IFLRY bureau and about her role as being liberal and female. Paola explains that the gender is not so important and that she is also in South America promoting the participation of women in politics.

Frouke Hoekstra (JD Netherlands) asks about the website of IFLRY being offline for some time during the last weeks. Jacob explains that there was a hacker attack which crashed the website. However everything has been done to solve the problem as fast as possible.

Karol notes that there are no further questions and announces a break at 11:50 AM.

The GA continues at 12:34.

8. Annual Financial Report

Jacob Rasmussen presents the financial report for 2004 and refers to the hand-outs and the overhead screen.

Due to increased activities more money was earned and spent. There was unexpected revenue from the European Union from an event in 1994 which was forgotten. There was also a loss because the ASEF withdrew the finances for the seminar in Kuala Lumpur as IFLRY did not stop working with the Singapore Democratic Party as ASEF requested.

Allan Witherick (LDYS UK) asks how it could happen that in 1994 there were 4,000 EUR from the EU not claimed by IFLRY. Jacob does not know an answer as nobody from the Bureau remembers that time.

9. Auditors Report

The auditor Noar Shumrai (Shinui Israel) excuses the other auditor (Jonas Renz, JuLis Germany) who is not present during the meeting.

He explains that the finances were administered correctly and according to the rules of IFLRY. The costs for the Bureau meeting were adequate. The member organisations were more concerned with paying their fees and many paid back debts from previous years. He continued by describing the grants which IFLRY received. He expressed the importance of handing in seminar reports that comply with the rules of the donor, which was done. He mentions the budget problem with the seminar in Kuala Lumpur which led to a small deficit in 2004. A small surplus is expected in 2005. The interns at the secretariat provided important help. The willingness of the bureau to cooperate with the bookkeeping improved significantly, as almost all claim forms and receipts were available on time.

The auditors recommend buying a third computer so that more work can be done at the same time in the office with Executive Director and interns. They criticize that there was no summer camp in cooperation with a regional organisation this time. They regret that Brigitte had to resign as Vice President due to health reasons. The auditors welcome the new focus on the Caucasus region, but encourage also focusing more on Africa. The website should be updated more often, not only by the secretariat. The auditors remind the Bureau that not all regions and organisations can be reached by email properly and that postal mailing should therefore not be stopped completely. The next Bureau should have an even closer look on the further development of LIBEL. The forum on the IFLRY website is a suitable way of including the MOs in the policy discussions. The auditors appreciate the work of the Bureau and the secretariat.

A delegate asks for a comment on the programme of action. The auditors explain that the report was for the previous year, but that they did actually comment on the missing summer camp which was promised in the programme of action.

10. Adoption of Financial Report

The auditors recommend the adoption of the financial report of the Bureau. The report is adopted unanimously.

Karol announces lunch break at 13:08.

11. Adoption of Budget 2006

Jacob Rasmussen describes the draft for the Budget 2006. He explains that there is an attempt to have better interest rates. In total there is a revenue of 150,000 EUR expected. Jacob then describes the expenses which includes that there is a plan for a new website which requires an increase in the expenses for Internet. There is to be a net result of 0.

Dewi Van der Vyver (JongVLD, Belgium) asks about which grants IFLRY want to apply for and why a grant from Belgium is not mentioned anymore. Jacob answered that there was a cutback in the budget of the Belgian state. Dewi adds that she actually sees the possibility to still get this money.



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Frouke Hekstra (JD Netherlands) asks why IFLRY actually expects to have more grants this year. Jacob answers that this is because there are more activities expected and that IFLRY can therefore expect also to have more grants.

The budget is adopted unanimously.

12. Proposed Resolutions

Clinton explains that there will be working groups on Saturday on amendments to the resolutions:

- Curtailing the Use of Child Soldiers (YLC Canada)
- Development Aid (YLC Canada)
- Making Haiti a prosperous democracy (YLC Canada)
- Resolution on the Conflict in Western Sahara (JNC Catalonia)
- Resolution on the universal abolishment of torture (JD The Netherlands)
- Re-launching the Barcelona Process (JNC Catalonia)
- Condemning Iran's president's policy (SHINUI Israel)
- Motion of YLDA- IFLRY campaign for political rights (YLDA)
- Resolution submitted by LDYS (United Kingdom)

13. Membership issues: affiliations and disaffiliations

Karol explains that as a representative from an applicant membership organisation from Portugal is not here yet he will be able to present tomorrow.

JLA (Andorra)

Alex Armengol (JLA Andorra) presents his organisation in order to be granted full membership in IFLRY. He presents their country geographically and politically. Andorra has been a peaceful country for centuries as the power has been divided between two "kings". He describes the situation of the governing Liberal Party and continues with information about the youth organisation itself and its goals. Alex describes the view of his organisation on liberalism. As Andorra is a small country it allows different ways for individuals to participate in politics, like directly talking to the minister responsible for a policy. Alex describes the past international activities of his organisation, including participation in six IFLRY events and the organisation of the IFLRY summer camp in Barcelona.

Yoav Lerman (SHINUI Israel) asks if the country is actually fully independent concerning foreign policy and the rights of the people who live in the country but do not have voting rights. Alex explains that the modern constitution of Andorra grants much power to the Parliament so that the local bishop and the President of France actually don't have many rights. He further explains that the people without Andorran passports have all kind of social rights, only not the right to vote. He explains the problems with migration when there are open borders.

Maryann Tremblay (YLC Canada) asks for the position of JLA on social policy. Alex answers that Andorra had been a country dominated by farming and that social policy was rather simple. But since there is more and more industry Andorra and the Liberal Party have also focused quite much on social issues.

Tobias Hornfeldt Rohr (LUF Sweden) asks about the problem with missing voting rights and about their opinion on gay marriage. Alex explains that people after many years of living there are granted citizenship and have other rights already. About gay marriage, the problem is that the bishop, who is one of the two heads of state, did not allow the Parliament to decide on these kinds of topics and that therefore a compromise had to be found in order to keep traditions. Another member of JLA adds that registration for gay couples is actually possible, but not marriage.

Karol asks JLA to leave the room. Jacob Rasmussen gives a positive recommendation on the membership as past events had shown that all criteria have been fulfilled.

Jacob explains that there are now 116 votes distributed as an organisation from Bulgaria has arrived.

Israel Rotter (SHINUI Israel) explains that he did not actually understand the details about the political system of Andorra. Jordi Ricart (JNC Catalonia) and Cezar Martinez explain the political system again with one of the two kings being a bishop and the other one being the president of France. He adds that JNC recommends accepting the membership.

Thomas Kibasi (LDYS United Kingdom) explains that there is actually no difference concerning the rights of the people compared to other democratic countries. He also recommends to accepting JLA in Andorra.

Dejan Radunic (MLD Slovenia) also very positively recommends the acceptance of JLA as member of IFLRY based upon past experience. He stresses out that not the political system but the organisation is actually the important criteria for membership.

Karol notes that there are no further comments. The organisation is accepted as full member of IFLRY unanimously by the delegates.

FEL (Belgium)

Frederic Maghe presents FEL Belgium who wants to become full member of IFLRY. The organisation has 2,000 members. He explains why the organisation has not become member earlier although it already existed for quite a long time. The organisation is non-profit and has 8 local sections at every university in the French-speaking part of Belgium. He describes the activities and goals of his organisation which is mainly directed towards students. FEL would like to have more international contacts in order to learn from new international partners. They want to participate actively in IFLRY activities.

Michele Van der Burg (JOVD Netherlands) asks about the possibility of cooperating with neighbouring countries. Frederic is in favour of it, but adds that you can also cooperate with more than only neighbouring countries. He could also imagine cooperation with other student organisations.

Jeroen Adema (JD Netherlands) asks about the plans of FEL for establishing a kind of "civil citizenship" for students. Frederic responds that they are already doing this for years by meetings, discussions, and providing a service for the students.

Dewi Van der Vyver (JongVLD, Belgium) criticizes that FEL never actually contacted JongVLD and did not respond to contact attempts. She claims that FEL is unknown to her on a national level in Belgium. Frederic explains that he is relatively new in his organisation and therefore does not know



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about these past events. The new board of administration of FEL actually sees this differently and wants to cooperate more.

Martin Sjogren (IFLRY Sweden) gives a positive recommendation on the application for membership.

Dewi Van der Vyver (JongVLD, Belgium) asks on how the Bureau actually determines if an organisation is active at all and asks to reconsider the way of determining if an organisation is active. She explains her disappointment that she was never contacted by them and has doubts concerning their activities.

Monika Jankauskaite repeats that she knows about the organisation and notes that they have already been candidate member for some time. Jan-Argy Tolentino (KALUPI Philippines) asks how long FEL has been candidate member. Monika explains that it has been two years.

The GA accepts FEL as full member with 15 abstentions.

YMRF (Bulgaria)

Nora Emova Kartelova (YMRF Bulgaria) presents the organisational structure of YMRF as well as its history. She continues with an overview of the political positions and activities of her organisation. She says that best indicators of their success are their three observing members of the European Parliament. They had a conference in 2003 and established a foundation to support youth. They also organised a seminar with LYMEC in 2005 on minorities. YMRF wants to continue to cooperate with other member organisations.

Yoav Lerman (Shinui Israel) asks how many members are in their Parliament; Nora answers 214. Seventeen are from her organisation.

After Nora leaves the room, Karol notes YMRF's avid participation and their local branches. He gives them a "very positive recommendation."

Csibi Magor Imre (TNL Romania) notes that his member organisation's officer supports YMRF's membership and says that their mother party is good at organising. His organisation is strongly for accepting them.

LUF Sweden would like to strongly recommend them, saying that their youth movement and mother party are good models for cooperative organisations.

YMRF is accepted as a full member unanimously by the delegates.

Karol asks that we move on to the candidate members.

IPL (Peru)

Yesenia Temoche from IPL Peru presents their non-profit civil association which is based in Lima but has 17 bureaus. Their organisation supports liberty and a free market, among other values. She goes on to describe the background, work, and structure (i.e. councils) of the organisation.

Jan-Argy Tolentino (KALUPI Philippines) asks if the organisation is a youth group; Yesenia answers yes, that the ages range from 17 to 30.



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When Yesenia leaves the room, Paola gives a positive recommendation from the Bureau, saying that they have been working since 1990 to promote the Liberal Party in Peru. They are working together with other liberal organisations inside Peru.

IPL Peru is accepted as a candidate member unanimously by the delegates.

LG (Belarus)

Not present. Their application has been postponed to the next EC.

MLY (Moldova)

Karol notes that LG Belarus' and MLY Moldova's applications were received but no representatives are here to present. Their application has been postponed to the next EC.

Youth Initiative (Nepal)

Rajendra Mulmi from Youth Initiative Nepal presents his organisation's history, definition of youth, vision, and mission. He notes the many groups that support his organisation, as well as the programs that promote liberal ideas and promote awareness; these include Civic Concerns, Youth Seminars, Strengthening Youth Politics, Liberal Talkies, and College Based Programs. They would like to increase their work in research and publications. Youth Initiative Nepal is also a member of a committee to draft a national youth policy. They are a founding member organisation of Young Liberals and Democrats of Asia, Liberal Youth South Asia, and the Association of Youth Organisation Nepal. They seek to create a free press and liberal media.

Yoav Lerman (Shinui Israel) asks how they can operate when the King is ruling right now in an ineffective political system. Rajendra answers that there was the Maoist guerrilla conflict that brought violence. Parliament dissolved two years ago and a government was appointed with much turmoil in the last six months. Since February, the King has completely taken over and limited many freedoms. There has been a strong movement to bring democracy back to the country and international organisations have been helpful. Some leaders have had to go underground. Still, he says that we cannot do nothing and we should be even more active.

Avni Dervishi from Sweden (LUF) asks about the Maoist guerrillas and whether the organisation can take a stand against them without being threatened. Rajendra responds that liberalism is still developing outside of the mainstream in all of South Asia and it is a struggle. His organisation is not supporting the Maoist movement and they strive for democracy. Since they are still in a preliminary stage, they need a model organisation for support.

Judith Pallares from Andorra (JLA) asks about their position on gender policies. Rajendra says that within their organisation, the male/female ratio is pretty equal. At one point, there were even more women. He says that when they are not married, they are very active.

Rajendra leaves and Jacob Rasmussen says that Emil would be a better person to speak on Youth Initiative but that he knows that they fulfil the criteria to be a part of IFLRY.

Ellen Kuo from Taiwan (YLDA) speaks in favour of Youth Initiative because in the five days she spent with them, she saw their passion for democracy and human rights.

Jan-Argy Tolentino (KALUPI Philippines) recommends future meetings in the Himalayas.



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Youth Initiative Nepal is accepted as a candidate member with no votes against and no abstentions.

Circulo Liberal (Uruguay)

Karol asks Paola to explain the situation with Circulo Liberal in Uruguay. She says that we received their application but knew that they would not be able to participate in this conference. She also notes that the Bureau decided to support their application.

Michelle van der Burg (JOVD Netherlands) met them and recommends to vote in their favour. Frederik Ferie (JuLis Germany) supports their acceptance as well.

Dewi Van der Vyver (JongVLD, Belgium)) asks what their liberal values are. Paolo says that they are part of the national party.

Circulo Liberal in Uruguay is accepted as a candidate member with no votes against and three organisations abstaining.

At 17:30, we break for coffee.

14. Elections of the IFLRY Bureau

At 18:03, we return from the coffee break.

Karol announces that 17:00 was the deadline for nominations of the auditors. There are two nominations:

- Israel Rotter (Shinui Israel) nominates Noar Shumrai (Shinui Israel)
- Gesine Roeder (JuLis Germany) nominates Jonas Renz (JuLis Germany)

With all participants, we now have a total of 127 votes. Martin calls up the organisations and distributes the ballots. The candidates begin to present.

Jacob Rasmussen is running for President.

When he started in international youth politics six years ago, he was fascinated by what went on outside of Denmark and outside of Europe. There are too many problems to solve alone; we must stand united. He found this fellowship of interest with many IFLRY members and ran for Vice President in 2001. IFLRY members are the young political leaders of the whole world. We speak with one voice, we have impact on our goals, we have contacts with major leaders, and we can make a difference.

Jacob is running because there are still things that can be improved. He thinks we need to look outside Europe and become a global organisation. The role of IFLRY should be to continue the work we've been doing and focus on different regions across the world.

Inside the organisation, we need to work on better interaction with the member organisations, perhaps using more modern technologies like a weblog. We also need the MOs to help more. IFLRY's aim should be so clear that everyone knows what we're doing.

We need a new webpage and we need to make it a real forum for the MOs. We also need to be more professional and structured, particularly regarding campaigns and the media. Within the first three months of his tenure, MOs will receive a detailed program of action with concrete objectives. To make IFLRY better-known, we should make better materials,



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possibly including a video. We need to visit others more even if it costs more money. Politically, we need to focus on the World Bank and the United Nations.

IFLRY as a whole has the potential to be strong; let's use it, prioritize our resources, and get a successful defence. "Liberal" is not an outfit, it's a value system.

Yoav Lerman (Shinui Israel) supports Jacob and wants one of his goals to be strengthening ties with the Middle East. Jacob agrees; he has had trouble finding Middle Eastern liberals to join but prefers to lead the way with liberal events to serve as a model for and encourage the membership of Middle Easterners.

Dewi Van der Vyer (JongVLD, Belgium) asks what his definition of liberalism is. Jacob answers that it depends on the country in question and the political context. He supports democracy and giving people a chance to realize their dreams and reach their goals.

Avni Dervishi (LUF Sweden) asks that there be much more activity around the Middle East and wants to know if he supports using the lobbying organisations of stronger countries to increase democracy in that region. Jacob would like to use Middle Eastern organisations that have goals that are similar to ours, regardless of whether they are specifically "liberal." He says that we need to find strategic partners around the world to promote our ideas.

Michelle Van der Burg (JOVD Netherlands) asks what his priorities are. He responds: HIV/AIDS, empowerment of youth, and poverty. He would like to focus on them for the next two years. We need all of the 2-3 million members to help us with these.

Jan-Argy Tolentino (KALIPi Philippines) asks why we should *not* vote for him. Jacob says he has no clue! He then says that the structure that worked in the past will not work for the future. He is interested in transforming the organisation, so don't vote for him if you like the status quo.

Martin welcomes the speeches for Secretary General in alphabetical order.

Paola Silva is running for Secretary General.

She has been in IFLRY for three years, first as an International Officer and then as a Vice President. Her experience has taught her that in order for IFLRY to continue, we must emphasize values across the world. During her tenure, IFLRY's presence in Latin America has increased dramatically; the organisation is on its way to becoming a recognizable force in the world. Paola also works on democratic issues outside of IFLRY in Columbia. She would like to work on IFLRY's communications, taking into account that many organisations have limited Internet access. She also wants to communicate in English, French, and Spanish to engage young liberals in their native tongue.

Paola wants to support national campaigns through this position. She wants IFLRY to especially support weaker and transitional democracies. She promises her commitment to a great worldwide organisation. [Paola repeated her presentation in Spanish.]

Bart Woord is running for Secretary General.

Twelve years ago, he and his parents went camping but it rained. Bart continued to enjoy himself and earned the name "Mr. Positivo." The only thing that gets him down is a loss of potential. Bart wants to improve attendance, the website, etc. in order to help IFLRY reach its potential. Right now, it's not even close. The new Bureau will have to get IFLRY where it belongs. With member organisations all around the world, he refuses to believe that this is not possible.

Bart has vision: he wants a global perspective, complete with human rights and economic opportunities. IFLRY needs to think beyond a few seminars a year. He suggests supporting opposition movements, lobbying, and campaigns. Africa, Latin America, and Asia will be his focus.

Bart has ambition: he wants to hear innovative ideas, like a worldwide youth foundation or regional IFLRY offices to strengthen administrative/political capabilities. He wants to reach worldwide media, like the kind he got driving his caravan.

Bart has professionalism: he wants to strengthen IFLRY's administration and finances, including improvements in regular reporting, transparency, increased communication, and a better website.

Martin opens the floor for questions for both candidates. Jan-Argy Tolentino (KALIPi Philippines) asked Bart's greatest strength from Paola, and vice versa. Paola thinks that Bart's best quality is his happiness but his weakness is his lack of involvement in the past two years. Bart compliments Paola's great work thus far but says that being a good VP doesn't necessarily translate into being a good Secretary-General.

Soeren Melgaard Pedersen (VU Denmark) notes that Bart only says negative things about IFLRY. Bart responds that IFLRY has much more potential and refers to what Jacob says about changing things for the better. Bart illustrates the IFLRY's good magazine as something which is going fine now., but those things should be taken for granted.

Avni Dervishi (LUF Sweden) asks the candidates how they will improve communication with organisations that are less advanced and need conflict management. Paola says that each country has its own history and its own method of conflict resolution. She says that she can provide support and tools for change from IFLRY, as well as respect for the specific conditions in each region. Bart responds that despite his peaceful upbringing, he is not naïve. He is now going to Columbia and has been setting up a foundation in Eastern Europe.

Csibi Magor Imre (TNL Romania) wants IFLRY to make its governing body more accessible to countries outside of Europe and would like to know how the candidates might do that. Bart says that there is strong democracy in certain countries outside of the West; he hopes that they will serve as an example. He also notes that such countries could benefit from the funding of a foundation like the one he is setting up. Paola thinks that we must get involved in the topics that are interesting to these countries. We need to make them understand, through work with regional organisations, what it means to be a part of an international organisation.

Peter Bancroft (LDYS UK) asks what they would do that would be 1.) the most possible and 2.) the most rewarding/entertaining. Bart says that the first would be the website and the second would be to sponsor democracy-building projects in a places like Columbia or Haiti. Paola says that the first would be getting more funds outside of Europe and the second would be a reason to fight, like in Cuba.

Marc Gendron (Young Liberals Canada) asked them to highlight experience in budgeting and also asked if they would have sufficient time for the job. Paola said that she is committed and can travel as much as needed, but it is not needed all the time as long as we use technology. As for budgeting, she is a consultant. Bart answered that he has been involved in organisation issues for six years as a

campaign manager, president, and project manager for various projects. Regarding time, he writes emails until the middle of the night. He is a student but can do much more within IFLRY.

Frouke Hoekstra (JD Netherlands) asks Paola why she is running for two positions and what she thinks the difference between them is. Paola says she is running for both positions because she really wants to be in the Bureau and knows she is a good candidate.

Martin asks everyone to vote for President and for Secretary General. Once votes are cast, organisations are given ballots for the Vice Presidential election.

Speeches for VP:

- Peter Bancroft (LDYS-UK)
Peter is wearing an orange tie to commemorate the changes in Europe since the fall of communism. We act together on liberal issues and propose solutions to problems. Our actions are part of a process that we all take responsibility for. We have rising expectations of member organisations, so this new Bureau must have commitment to you, as well as vision and commitment to carrying it out. This will require work, perseverance, and creativity.
- Frederik Ferie (JuLis-Germany)
Frederik will make his speech small and effective. He hopes that all have seen the ideas that he has drafted and he has enjoyed all of the discussions he has had on these ideas. He will focus on quality and on the Middle East. Frederik has been a member for five years and has been working internationally since 2001. He is studying business in Germany and will finish in two years; this gives him time to commit to IFLRY. Frederik seeks our trust and support.
- Marc-Andre Gendron (Young Liberals of Canada)
A year ago, he was in a meeting in Poznan and realized that we are all young and dynamic leaders and all united in our cause. He became Chief Editor of Libel and attended events. Working with the Bureau, he learned more about IFLRY's strengths and weaknesses. Marc wants to involve more individuals, produce more results, make the organisation more global, and focus on communications. Communications will be his greatest contribution as well as the biggest challenge; it is our most important weapon but we don't yet use it to its fullest extent. His experience gives him the skills to do the job and deliver results. Marc wants to build a database of media to which we can deliver our message. He also wants to overhaul the website.
- Cristian Gonzalez (JLRA – Paraguay)
Cristian was the President of Liberal Youth of Paraguay from September 2002 to September 2005. JLRA elected him to come to the GA. He wants to work for liberal ideas and collaborate with liberals all over the world. Cristian considers himself an experienced and knowledgeable person who can work hard for IFLRY.
- Frosina Kostovska (LiDeM – Macedonia)
Frosina decided two months ago to run for the Bureau. The key to a successful organisation is communication; IFLRY needs to find a way to reach out to the grassroots. We should represent individuals, not just collectives; we also need to support local organisations and projects. We should support regional corporations in order to benefit IFLRY. Frosina cannot give long political speeches (in English!), but she now has experience and a deep sense of politics. She has organised three seminars for IFLRY and wants to use f.e. the Council of Europe to organise exchanges to cooperate with other youth organisations. Frosina accepts the votes of people who support her just because she's a woman, but that's not why she's running. She would like support for her knowledge and experience and will make you proud if you vote for her.



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- Leonardo Lorbek (CPP-LDY)
Leonardo is from Croatia and is Deputy President of CPP-LDY, dealing with international affairs and finances. He succeeded in building a youth organisation in a Croatian party for two years. Leonardo will fight for: visibility, strengthening, political education, and twinning projects. The person elected should be capable; the easiest way to deduce capability is to look at past results. Leonardo has vision and experience and has created results.
- Tobias Hornfeldt Rohr (LUF – Sweden)
Tobias believes that IFLRY has had a great impact on all of the member organisations and is a powerful group. IFLRY must be ready to meet the needs of tomorrow; these needs will not only be in Europe. We should shift our focus to a more international approach. To do so, Europe will have to give up some power. IFLRY should work more for the regions of Asia. IFLRY can change the market toward a more liberal direction. Tobias is a technician and has no political aspirations, so his candidacy is purely ideal. He will spend all of his free time in this post.
- Paola Silva (UCJD – Columbia)
Paola will ask for your support as VP if she does not get enough votes to be Secretary General. [We have already heard her speech.]
- Tafsir Thioye (UTJL – Senegal)
Tafsir has his Masters, is tri-lingual, and is a professional. IFLRY is taking an important step here today and he thinks that IFLRY should be more productive, dynamic, and pragmatic. We need to take concrete action to tackle terrorism, energy, and more. In addition, IFLRY needs to improve its communication. I would like the opportunity to show people that IFLRY is not reserved only for white people and does not discriminate – IFLRY is global. Tafsir would like to be VP in charge of Africa and open a bureau in Senegal for Africa. We have more than 30 years of fighting for democracy.

Martin announced the results of the first elections:

There were 127 votes cast for the Presidency with 4 votes not valid. For Jacob Rasmussen, there were 97 yes votes, 11 no votes, and 15 abstentions. Jacob believes that everyone voted in order to make IFLRY better. He thanks all who voted and is looking forward to the next two years.

There were 127 votes cast for Secretary General with all votes valid and no abstentions. Paola Silva received 63 votes; Bart Woord received 64 votes as the victor. Bart thanked the crowd and looked forward to the future.

Martin called all of the VP candidates to the front to answer questions. He asked that questions and answers be kept short.

Judith Pallares from Andorra (JLA) asked a question to Cristian Gonzalez in Spanish; he answered in Spanish. Judith translated that he has made many contacts in Latin America.

Allan Witherick (LDYS UK) asked everyone what they would change first in IFLRY.

- Tobias Rohr: when you sign up for email, it would work.
- Tafsir Thioye: the VP should work with regional organisations
- Leonardo Lorbek: change public relations
- Cristian Gonzalez: IFLRY would be more of an organisation
- Peter Bancroft: target communications
- Frederik Ferie: Bureau should form an efficient team



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- Marc Gendron: website
- Frosina Kostovska : communication and cooperation
- Paola Silva : communication

A member of UJTL (Senegal) noted (in French) that the ideal Bureau would have one black person, two males, and two females.

Michelle Van der Burg (JOVD Netherlands) asked for a strong point and a weakness from each; the candidates answered.

Avni Dervishi (LUF Sweden) asked if the seven males knew that a female candidate was better than they, would they step back? (Also, vice versa for females.) The second question was whether Europe was the best to promote democracy. The candidates answered.

Jan-Argy Tolentino (KALUPI Philippines) wants to know if the candidates are hungry. No one answers...but since it's 20:40, the answer is clear!

Jacob Rasmussen explains the voting points-system and the members vote.

At 21:21, the votes for Vice President were in:

1. **Marc Gendron: 287 votes**
2. **Paola Silva: 285 votes**
3. **Frosina Kostovska: 284 votes**
4. **Frederik Ferie: 267 votes**
5. **Tafsir Thioye: 219 votes**
6. Leonardo Lorbek 166 votes
7. Peter Bancroft: 115 votes
8. Cristian Gonzalez: 78 votes
9. Tobias Hoernfeldt Roehr: 73 votes

The top five were elected and the meeting adjourned at 21:25.

Saturday, 26th November 2005

15. Election of internal auditors

Congress Chair Gesine Roeder (JuLis Germany) reopens the GA at 10:17. She explains that there have been two nominations for internal auditors, Jonas Renz (JuLis Germany) and Naor Shumrai (Shinui Israel). Both are elected unanimously.

Gesine welcomes ELDR President Annemie Neyts, former LYMEC president Daniel Tanahatoc and former IFLRY Secretary General Jutta Rotacher.
(Please view attachment for the speeches and Q&A session)

Congress chair Richard Diamond asks Jacob to introduce the working groups. They will work until lunch which is at 13:00 and the congress will continue at 14:30.

16. Membership issues: affiliations and disaffiliations

Gesine Roeder re-opened the GA at 15:02. The speaker's forum is postponed because the speakers cannot get into the airport.

17. Amendments to the Statutes and Rules of Procedure

There are no amendments to the Statutes and Rules of Procedures.

18. Amendments to the Manifesto

There are no amendments to the Manifesto.

(Extra agenda point added: **Working Groups**)

- YLDA campaign for political rights

WG "YLDA Campaign for political rights" spokesperson Rajendra Mulmi from Youth Initiative Nepal gives a short history of focusing the "Check Your Rights" campaign for human rights on political rights. Goals, actions, inputs/output, etc. are provided on the YLDA resolution hand-out.

Further suggestions from the working group include adoption from the IFLRY GA (YLDA already adopted it), formation of a six-member working committee to identify countries which would need this campaign as well as those who could work on it, and development of funding proposals. In addition, each future IFLRY event in the next year or two should have a working group on this issue. This could be a long-term activity in YLDA and IFLRY integrated in its overall work. It could also work as a watchdog and action project.

Dewi Van der Vyver from JongVLD asked if she could have the documents on the overhead screen regarding the YLDA campaign; Karol said that he would send them in the MO mailing.

19. Adoption of the "Programme of Action 2006-2007"

WG "Programme of Action 2006-2007" spokesperson Bart Woord (JD Netherlands) asks the Congress Chairs about taking all of the amendments as one vote; they seem amenable to the idea.

Dewi Van der Vyver from JONG VLD asks about the semantics regarding a sentence on planets and global communities. Thomas Kibasi (LDYS-UK) is an English-speaking member and responds that it is "mindless bullshit" but technically correct. Allan Witherick (LDYS-UK) offers to work on the language of the document before members will vote on it. (New) President Jacob Rasmussen who edited the document says that 1.) people who wanted to change the document should have been in the working group, and 2.) one should vote on it now so we have a programme of action as soon as possible and English-speakers can revise the wording later if necessary. Thomas Kibasi (LDYS-UK) concurs and urges a vote, as does Congress Chair Richard Diamond.

The programme is adopted with one organisation opposing and one organisation abstaining.

(Former agenda point revisited: **Working Groups**)

- Communication Working Group

WG "Communication" spokesperson Marc Gendron (Young Liberals of Canada) says that his working group discussed Libel and E-News. The group wants to integrate them both under one team. There will be assigned regional communication coordinators. The group also wants E-News to be monthly. One idea was to print a special annual edition of Libel to distribute at the GA at a greater volume

than usual at lower costs. Also, a standard document on IFLRY in many languages should be printed for distribution at events. In addition, there will be more articles in Libel in Spanish and French. They will also integrate the Libel website with the IFLRY website. As for the E-News, they want to facilitate subscriptions, improve the design, and set specific procedures and deadlines.

20. Adoption of resolutions and documents

- Western Sahara resolution

The resolution is written in Spanish so the group could not read or discuss it. Jordi Ricart (JNC Catalonia) gives a background on the issue.

Avni Dervishi (LUF Sweden) hopes that there will be more European host families to help in this area. He asks Jordi if the resolution states that Spain alone cannot solve the problem. Jordi answers by reading the fourth "consideration" point but also concedes that nothing is mentioned about the European Union's role because the problem started well before the advent of the EU. Avni would like an amendment calling on the EU governments to help with the solution; Jan from JOVD Netherlands objects to adding amendments at this juncture and the Congress Chairs concur.

The resolution is adopted with no votes against or abstentions.

- YLC Development Aid resolution

Maryann Tremblay (Young Liberals of Canada) presents the resolution of IFLRY urging developed countries to honour and possibly increase their commitments of assistance to underdeveloped countries. Adrian Ineichen from JFS Switzerland would prefer to cut their tariffs imposed on these developing countries so that they can help themselves instead of relying on larger countries. Maryann responds that the increase of assistance is not mandatory; we just hope that they honour their commitments. Also, she says that these small countries need resources to become self-sufficient.

Jeroen Adema (JD Netherlands) says that liberalism is about *equal* trade and that these more powerful countries can afford to give more than they do.

Peter Bancroft (LDYS-UK) suggests that we talk more about tariffs in the future but thinks that this motion is good for the time being. He questions the validity of 0.7% as opposed to any other number. However, the number was chosen because it's what the countries agreed to. Allan Witherick (LDYS-UK) mentions that we cannot make new amendments to the resolution and should not waste time talking about that.

The resolution is voted on and adopted with two organisations opposed and two abstaining.

- Haiti Resolution

There were no amendments to this resolution. Maryann Tremblay (YLC Canada) notes Canada's support of other francophone countries. Haiti is one of the poorest countries in the world, it is currently suffering a civil war, and IFLRY has not focused on Haiti yet.

The resolution is voted on and adopted with no organisations opposed and three abstaining.

- Child Soldiers Resolution

Israel Rotter (Shinui Israel) says that the resolution is not strong enough and should note specific countries if necessary instead of being too general. Dewi Van der Vyver (JongVLD, Belgium) says that the proposal should be much more concrete.

The first amendment is voted on and adopted with no organisations opposed and three abstaining.

The second amendment is voted on and adopted with no organisations opposed and one abstaining.

The resolution is voted on and adopted with no organisations opposed and one abstaining.

- Iran Resolution

Avni Dervishi (LUF Sweden) prefers the original text of the first amendment. Frouke Hoekstra (JD Netherlands) responds that we cannot tell another country whether they can have nuclear power; moreover, the issue is about weapons. Tobias Rohr (LUF Sweden) asks if any country with nuclear power has not tried to create nuclear weapons. There is a continued discussion on the matter. Jeroen Adema (JD Netherlands) believes that everyone has the right to use nuclear energy because we need it.

The first amendment is voted on and adopted with one organisations opposed and two abstaining.

The second amendment is voted on and adopted with no organisations opposed and one abstaining.

The resolution is voted on and adopted with no organisations opposed and two abstaining.

- LDYS Resolution on Russia

Allan Witherick (LDYS-UK) objects to the first amendment because he thinks that the original language is something that any NGO can use; we want to focus on humanitarian action not "democracy."

The first amendment is voted on and adopted with several organisations opposed and several abstaining.

The second amendment is voted on and adopted with no organisations opposed and none abstaining.

The resolution is voted on and adopted with no organisations opposed and none abstaining.

- Barcelona Resolution

The amendments to this resolution are noted on the document. Israel Rotter (Shinui Israel) explains the resolution. Jordi Ricart (JNC Catalonia) would like to vote against the amendment of point #5. Frouke Hoekstra (JD Netherlands) disagrees.

The "#5" amendment is voted on and adopted with several organisations opposed and no abstaining.

The other amendments are voted on and adopted with one organisation opposed and none abstaining.

The resolution is voted on and adopted with no organisations opposed and one abstaining.

- Torture Resolution

The amendments to this resolution are noted on the document. Israel Rotter (Shinui Israel) presents the resolution. Frouke Hoekstra (JD Netherlands) notes that it is an urgent resolution due to the development of suspected CIA prison facilities in Asia and Europe. This prompted a reopening of the debate of torture, but the aim is to abolish torture universally. The addition of the word “even” is not just a grammatical point.

Avni Dervishi (LUF Sweden) will vote against it because it identifies torture with the United States and he thinks it applies to more places. Frouke asks that the members should read the resolution carefully because the US. is not being highlighted as the only country that practices torture. Uros from Serbia believes that when the U.S. does something wrong or right, we should be equally vocal about it. He also is confused about what is meant by the word “even”, and wishes that the language clearly identified the hypocrisy of the U.S.

Avni Dervishi (LUF Sweden) says that the CIA allegation is only from the media and not proven. He also objects to the fact that the action of the resolution has nothing to do with the US. Peter Bancroft (LDYS-UK) says that when liberal democracies do not stand up for our rights, we have an obligation to highlight it.

The amendment involving the omission of one clause is voted on and adopted with no organisations opposed and none abstaining.

The resolution is voted on and adopted with two organisations opposed and two abstaining.

- YLDA Resolution

The resolution is voted on and adopted with no organisations opposed and none abstaining.

(Former agenda point revisited: **Membership Issues: Affiliations and Disaffiliations**)

MLS (Portugal)

Delegate Maurits van der Hoofd (who was delayed due to a flight) arrives to request observer membership for MLS, which would like to be Portugal’s first liberal party. Despite their political isolation, Portugal should have its liberals join the liberal world community. MLS intends to host an IFLRY event next summer on political organisations in the Mediterranean.

Michelle Van der Burg (JOVD Netherlands) wanted to know how MLS started; the Portuguese applicant says he is nowadays the only “foreigner” of the movement and that the group has 14 or 15 members.

Jan-Argy Tolentino (KALIPi Philippines) asks why he says he’s not “purely” a youth organisation; he answers that the mission doesn’t say it is a youth group. They would like to be a party but they do not meet the standards yet. MLS wants to concentrate all of its resources in one place. Frouke of the Netherlands asks what the potential is for liberalism in a country like Portugal. He responds that their history is rife with dictatorships but that that should not stop the progress or efforts of MLS. Most Portuguese do not really know what “liberal” means; in fact, there used to be a liberal right-wing movement in the past. Israel Rotter (Shinui Israel) asks when their group started; the member from Portugal answers 2002.



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The Portuguese applicant leaves and Jacob Rasmussen says that he asked them to apply to be observers because they are not a youth organisation. However, their average age is quite young and they fulfil all of the criteria. Supporting this group would fulfil IFLRY's goal of promoting liberalism in places that are difficult for this goal. The Bureau supports the adoption of MLS as observer members. Allan Witherick (LDYS -UK) says that MLS Portugal was helpful and participatory in years past.

MLS is adopted as an observer member with no votes against and three organisations abstaining.

21. Any other business

Gesine welcomes country reports.

A Slovenian member notes that their President does not value the opinion of the Council of Europe on a particular referendum that their organisation supported. They also supported gay-couple registration, which was passed. One of the coalition members attacked an MP to check her gender. The President of the Parliament said that he could not do anything because that constituted free speech. He hopes that IFLRY will help support Slovenia's democracy in future years.

Rajendra Mulmi from Youth Initiative Nepal puts on a video about Young Liberals and Democrats of Asia.

The meeting adjourned for a coffee break at 17:05.

The meeting recommenced at 17:45 when our guest speaker, Juli Minoves, arrived (Please view attachment for the speech and Q&A session). Mr. Minoves is the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the LI VP of Andorra. Minoves thanks us for the invitation and he considers his presence here an electoral promise.

IFLRY President Jacob Rasmussen thanks him for coming, for his work, and for living up to his campaign promises.

22. Date and place of next meeting

IFLRY President Jacob Rasmussen says that no one has applied to host the next meeting, so the Bureau will find a place and present it at the next EC.

23. Closing of General Assembly

IFLRY President Jacob Rasmussen is happy with the involvement and looks forward to the newly elected Bureau fulfilling their duties. He thanks Emil for his work and asks him to close the GA. Emil Kirjas thanks us for everything, including opportunities to learn and transform.

Attachment 1

Addresses by the Key Speakers

25th November, Friday

Address by Pance Angelov, LiDeM President

LiDeM President Pance Angelov welcomes the delegates and describes the developments in Macedonia during the last years, explaining that huge advances have been made. He continues describing the potentials of Macedonia and the LiDeM party and its youth organisations. He describes a project for building a whole new town for student accommodation for the University of Skopje. Although there is limited money he explains that his party is committed to the realization of this project. He closes his speech by encouraging the delegates to continue with their task of spreading liberalism throughout the world.

Address by Emil Kirjas, IFLRY President

IFLRY President Emil Kirjas describes his first experiences with IFLRY from many years ago, as well as today, IFLRY faced many challenges as there was no email and not even a fax in the very beginning. Today, much more information can be sent out, which leads to higher expectations by the member organisations concerning the work of the bureau. Emil continues by describing the relations between IFLRY and the regional organisations like LYMEC and the Young Liberals of Asia which IFLRY helped to develop. According to Emil, IFLRY has managed to become an important worldwide organisation recognized by the United Nations and the World Bank. The future will bring challenges for the world, like terrorism and poverty. IFLRY should speak on behalf of young people in need of help. We should make sure that those messages are communicated to the member organisations. About the upcoming Bureau elections Emil advises those candidates not elected not to give up their work. He concludes his speech by explaining that he did his best during his time in the IFLRY Bureau and thanked all people active in IFLRY for their friendliness, help, and cooperation during the last eight years.

Address by Roger Albiniana I Saigi, LYMEC President

Roger positively notes the advances which have been made in Macedonia towards a membership in the European Union. He explains that he is proud of the good work LYMEC has done. He outlines the importance of liberalism with the violence in France as an example. Roger criticizes the developments in the European Union towards more bureaucracy and the lack of responsibility and democracy in the European institutions. The liberal vision of a united Europe must not be forgotten. He concludes by stressing the importance of IFLRY for international liberalism, LYMEC, and Liberal International. He talks about the change of generations which took place in IFLRY and LYMEC and thanks Emil for the long cooperation between both organisations.

Address by Renaldas Vaisbrodas, YFJ President

Renaldas Vaisbrodas, YFJ President. He attended our meeting in Poznan one year ago and addressed us then. Since then, he says that the war in Iraq continued, Auschwitz had a 30th anniversary, the Ukraine had an Orange Revolution, India held elections, and the first woman was elected President of an African country, among other things. In October, the UN had a General Assembly and discussed



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the Millennium Development Goals. To implement these goals by 2015, we must give much more effort and commitment. Many people in the world live on \$1/day and many people are dying of curable diseases. The General Assembly offered solutions but fell short on delivering reliable answers.

This Assembly created a Youth Resolution that addresses youth concerns and focuses on actions. Youth organisations, including IFLRY, came together then to present their visions. We need an even stronger engagement from IFLRY to bring forth the agenda of globalizing freedom and standing up for democracy.

A number of trends have occurred recently in Europe, such as the newly adopted bill by the Russian Parliament to suppress freedom of association. Groups will be shut down or will have to resume activities in a completely new way. The severity of this violates activism and freedom of association.

You have also heard about the actions around Paris that highlight the lack of opportunities for minorities and the lack of equality within society. Freedom requires a growing commitment, and he would like to congratulate and further encourage IFLRY's work. Macedonia's entry into the EU will give us even more opportunities.

26th of November, Saturday

Address by Annemie Neyts, ELDR President

Annemie Neyts (ELDR President) greets IFLRY and explains that she had been active in WFLRY, the predecessor organisation of IFLRY. She remembers the time when she had been participating in young liberal summer schools. She congratulates Emil as outgoing president as well as the new Bureau.

Annemie asks for the support of IFLRY on the further development of the European Union. She starts by outlining the history of the EU and describes it as unique and extremely valuable, but explains that the EU is also very fragile. She explains that there is still the danger of the failure of this project and that the enlargement is not complete yet, particularly with the Balkan states. Although there are 25 members the EU is not yet a leader on a global stage. In the field of security, defence, and foreign policy, the EU developed quite late but finally succeeded. At the moment this is going quite fast; however, it might even be too fast. Many people in Europe have not yet realised what is going on in this area.

The European Union was intended to ensure peace in Europe but its new military dimension could risk this. Strangely there are neither public debates nor referenda on this issue. She describes for which purposes this military corps is meant. There is a presence in many areas on the world, but the EU is not yet an actor on a global stage. Foreign policy is still dominated by the national governments who issue statements without previously consulting each other on a European level. One example is the Iraq crisis where the EU's member states had different opinions.

The EU is actually very active in development policy and the greatest donor in this field. However, nobody really knows, as national governments prefer using their own label and not the name of the EU. Nevertheless, much has been achieved. The EU should continue being an actor contributing to peace and development. One important region for EU intervention and mediation might be the Middle East. She addresses the conflict with Islam, globalisation, and the issue of poverty in the world.



There is, however, no reason for the Europeans to feel superior. The Second World War has shown that until just 50 years ago the so called "European values" have been ignored in a disgusting way. Some of the founding member states of the EU have problems in figuring out how the EU should further develop. Too many promises are being made, like that the EU would become the most prosperous area in the world. She calls such issues "rhetoric overkill". We need the enthusiasm for a further participation in the EU because it will only develop if we all contribute.

Q&A Session

Avni Dervishi (LUF Sweden) refers to the conflicts on the Balkans and asks Annemie if it is possible to be only a partner and not an active leader in such situations. Annemie answers that at the moment the EU is only an actor and not a leader. The leaders are still the heads of the member states who speak out before they find a common position. In the case of the Balkan conflict, it was the United States who took the role of a leader while the EU states only followed.

The Americans have an ambivalent attitude towards the EU: they welcome it as an interesting political construction, but whenever the EU has new initiatives there are also worries in Washington. It took quite long to find a common ground for co-existence between EU and NATO. Through the NATO, the US is somehow able to veto military developments in the EU. Because of all this, the EU is not yet a leader, but at least an important actor.

Yoav Lerman (Shinui Israel) asks about the riots in France and if the EU will cope with this. He also asks about the EU membership of Turkey. Annemie explains that the riots were caused by disappointed youngsters. They complain about the isolation they are living in. It has very little to do with Islam. It is not the role of the EU but of the national governments and the municipalities to prevent this, especially at a grassroots level. The EU could only give some money for projects but without projects no money can be given. She questions if it is really normal that 150 cars are burned in France each day. She questions why it is regarded not as bad to be anti-Muslim than being anti-Semitic. Annemie explains that she would like Turkey to be member of the EU and that she sees no incompatibility between the EU and Muslim religion.

Avni Dervishi (LUF Sweden) explains that riots like in France can also happen in other European countries. He agrees that this is not about Islam but about the social situation of those people. He mentions that in many countries people become more and more sceptical towards the EU. Avni asks if the situation with a European Army can be compared to the issue with the constitution issue. He asks how to solve those problems.

Annemie says that EU affairs must be treated as part of day-to-day politics; otherwise, people will continue to look at the Union as something alien. In the constitution, it was foreseen that a member state could leave the EU. This was supposed to be a signal to show that it is not all obligatory. She respects that the constitution was rejected, but does not see why the refusal should be final. People should be allowed to change their minds some day.

Israel Rotter (Shinui Israel) explains that the EU has not been successful in mediating in the Middle East conflict and that this might be seen as a failure.

Annemie claims that the Americans have not been successful either. Also, the EU is new and still learning. One should be very careful when sending troops, as you have to define clearly what they are going to do. Afghanistan is a good example for this; however at the moment it works quite well. Conflicts cannot be solved by third parties. It must be the conflict parties who have to stop and negotiate. The EU can only put pressure, not only in Israel but also in Zimbabwe.

Address by ISEEL

A member of ISEEL (Initiative of Southeast European Liberals) presents to the group and welcomes us to the Balkans. ISEEL is a young network organisation established in 2001. ISEEL wants to spread liberal ideas throughout the Balkans in order to solve future conflicts here. He believes through our



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mutual knowledge and our experience, we will grow and improve. He invites questions and also visits to his new website: www.iseelnetwork.com. He gives gratitude to IFLRY and LYMEC and appreciates their cooperation and support.

Address by Jutta Rotacher, former IFLRY Secretary General

Jutta Rotacher, former Secretary General of IFLRY, addresses the group. She sees that we have the same problems – finances, distance, time, the short periods of activity of young people, etc. She says that we are tasked with always asking what liberalism is about, what globalization could be, and how to resolve conflict, all within our everyday life. She notes that she was very privileged and that we should use our privilege to broaden our scope of thinking and pass it on to others. She produces a folder from an IFLRY seminar on racism and xenophobia, Soviet Jews, apartheid, and U.S. minorities from 20 years ago. She notes that conflict groups can only tackle their issues themselves. She urges us to be honest with ourselves and our fellow citizens, take life as an adventure, and try to find solutions. She closes by lauding our increasing diversity.

Address by Juli Minoves, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Andorra, LI Vice President

(Former) IFLRY President Emil Kirjas introduced Minoves who has, at just over 30 years old, already served as an Ambassador. He is the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the LI VP of Andorra.

Mr. Minoves thanks us for the invitation and he considers his presence here an electoral promise.

He thinks he is still young enough to qualify for IFLRY. He was working for the UN at 24 and an ambassador at 26. In 2001, they proposed to him to be the foreign minister; four years later, he won his election to the position. He says:

When I think about why I am a liberal, I believe that being a liberal means living a good life and letting others live a good life. Two of the freedoms we want to uphold and defend are freedom of speech and freedom of thought. We have different ideas of what being a liberal means and there are global challenges to being one. The press shapes ideas and is extremely important to freedom of speech and thought. Within globalization, the Gulf War was a striking moment for the media, particularly CNN. Another global challenge is the formation of press groups that, unfortunately, become the sole source of information. We can overcome challenges to freedom of speech and thought with education, which is essential. We must be very careful with how we educate our young.

Another challenge to these freedoms is the issue of cultural diversity. I try to encourage diversity even in my small country. We must be careful because many times, cultural diversity is now used to justify dictatorship and abuses, i.e. "Our country does these bad things because it's our culture." Cultural diversity does not mean that you can violate human rights.

This leads me to talk about democracy. Alexis de Tocqueville was an aristocrat and nostalgic about the French Revolution. In the 1830s, he visited the U.S. prison system and returned to France to write "Democracy in America" in which he discussed the tyranny of the majority. A democracy does not ensure that *everything* that the majority wants is permitted.

Another challenge is nationalism. In certain places, we tend to use nationalism as an excuse to say that everything is fair if it benefits the nation. We can be patriotic without violating liberal principles.



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Freedom of religion allows us to worship as we like and there is space for everybody within the liberal tent. We respect everyone and let them worship how they want. However, that does not mean that we must be passive in front of certain intolerances. Religion can be used as an excuse for dividing or stigmatizing people.

Freedom to trade – maybe I should have started with that because others might call liberals “ultra-liberals” who want a free market and nothing else. We believe that markets regulate themselves. Nations who trade lead to peace and markets lead to growth. We are progressive but we don’t think that the government can regulate everything. Growth is led by human initiative with a belief in markets. At the same time, there is a place for government. It’s not like the socialists say, wanting to be into every aspect of society, but governments do ensure stability, legal security for economic deals, and a certain degree of solidarity among people regarding externalities, including health and education. Education leads to opportunity – we don’t want societies where people are equally poor, we want a society with opportunities for all.

I’ve talked now about what we believe in terms of properly functioning markets, and now I go to global. Even though Andorra is not a part of the WTO, I have been an observer there. I was in the Seattle meeting of the WTO in 1999. Now, all of the meetings have anti-globalists protesting outside. I think they have good intentions but I think they’re wrong. What do they want – to return to a small village and practice collectivism? Do we really think that people nowadays from any part of the world want to live primitively? I don’t think so.

The WTO should not make smaller countries open their borders while the bigger countries keep theirs closed. If we want to open up for trade, we must do it effectively. Agriculture, for example, is important and we want to keep it but not at the expense of development of smaller nations.

I believe that the role of international institutions and policies must be strengthened and, sometimes, corrected. I would like to advocate for UN reform, which is a never-ending process. We should support the creation of a human rights council, the reform of the Economic Social Council, and consideration of the UN Security Council.

I have come to the end of my talk and I’ve had lots of water. I have talked about freedom of trade and international institutions but I would like to talk a little about development. We have had a number of Summits like the 1994 Summit in Copenhagen regarding the Millennium Goals. As liberals, we are for increasing aid and development. I have here a statement on the facts of international development.

The next meeting of LI will be in the Philippines and the next Liberal Congress will be in Morocco. I’m sure you’ll be prepared to participate with all of your ideas. Please feel free to discuss your ideas and ideals with me.

Q&A Session

When Minoves finishes, Jeroen Adema (JD Netherlands) asks about the possible issue of there being too much freedom of choice. Minoves says you can have as much freedom of choice as you want ‘until it encroaches upon others’. Uros from Serbia asks about the definition of “progressive liberals.” Minoves answers that being a liberal is being a liberal; we need no adjectives. Liberals are progressive. He thinks when people call themselves progressive liberals, they want to distinguish themselves from conservatives. In the U.S. and Canada it has a different meaning, but in Europe liberalism has sometimes been pushed to the right.



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Dewi Van der Vyver (JongVLD, Belgium) what he thinks about the Parisian riots and how to face challenges. He responds that we must be real liberals by permitting growth and holding elections. Europe is a space of prosperity and freedom but we sometimes go too far. Our history has been that of oppression; we are now free but people are used to being taken care of. We must push people and make them realize that it's not that easy. He doesn't mean that we don't need to have social programs, but from there we need to have strength of the individual. The Nordic countries are good examples of liberal policies along with a social state. We don't want to enter into low productivity and unemployment.

The returning officer from Shinui Israel is concerned about WTO pitting rich and poor countries against each other. Minoves says that liberals believes in the assistance of the West should be linked to democracy and human rights.

Michelle Van der Burg (JOVD Netherlands) wanted to know how he saw the role of liberal Europe in the world – what role should/could we play? Minoves says that if you're talking about foreign policy, liberal Europe doesn't have a role. The new European constitution is trying to change that. We are trying to engage other nations and encourage development. We could do a lot but we could do much more if united. There is no single voice of Europe yet and we need to do some soul-searching about that.

Jutta Rotacher, does not think that the answer of "we have to be liberal" is enough. The world is getting more complex and at age 18, you might have to make decisions that are uninformed. She asks what we would be doing in real living conditions. Minoves answers that every country has its own economic strengths and structures. We have very protectionist policies that prevent many economic evils. We want to open up the company laws and foster development with foreign capital. He refuses to make big generalizations with economic policies because what works for one will not work for another. There is no policy that will work for all.