

# Newsletter

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## The Death Penalty: European Union and International Perspectives

The EU has abolished the death penalty among its member states, and is collectively opposed to capital punishment. On occasion of the World Day against the Death Penalty (October 10), the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence (MF-JMCE) assembled five European consuls (of France, Germany, the UK, Spain, and the Netherlands) as well as two legal experts from FIU’s School of Law on October 8 to present their stances and discuss the subject.

Moderated by Professor of Law Noah Weisbord, the European consuls and law school professors demonstrated not only their collective opposition to this form of punishment, but each also provided a slightly different reasoning for its abolition, and connected their own national histories to the topic at hand. Many reasons were listed why the death penalty is unacceptable for EU member states: an increasing international consensus that it should be abolished, possible violations of international human rights conventions, a statistically proven ineffectiveness as deterrent with studies showing that having it actually goes hand in hand with increased murder rates, as well as racial justice considerations.

The second part of the evening was filled

with questions by the audience, and a discussion that revolved around different political-legal cultures worldwide, and religious justifications, as a possible reason why it still persists. It was highlighted that the U.S. finds itself in the company of non-liberal states such as China, Iran, Yemen, etc., and that more than 50% of executions stem from only 2% of states, raising a number of

problematic questions. But there were also reason brought for how the abolition of the death penalty in many US states could be advanced: from highlighting the racial injustice that condemns proportionately more African-American than Caucasians, to using a cost-



Panel Discussion on “The Death Penalty: European Union and International Perspectives

argument as capital punishment trials cost significantly more than a prison sentence. A lively debate ensued with the audience that saw arguments made for keeping it, as well as for its abolishment. Even if not everyone in the audience may have been convinced of the merits of abolishing capital punishment, the evening certainly was successful in gathering and diffusing arguments against it, and to show European unity on this issue.

*By Dr. Markus Thiel*

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# Celebration of Jean Monnet EU Center of Excellence



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



Dr. Markus Thiel, Prof. Ediberto Roman, Tomas Abreu, Hon. Candido Creis, HM David Prodger, Hon. Philippe Létriliart, Hon. Jürgen Borsch, Willemijn Kallenberg, Christine I. Caly-Shanchez, Prof. Michele Anglade, Prof. Noah Weisbord.



Tomas Abreu, Honorary Consul of Monaco, and Hon. Philippe Létriliart, Consul General of France



Tomas Abreu, Honorary Consul of Monaco; Hon. David Prodger, British Consul General; and Dr. Volker Anding



Markus Thiel and Christine I. Caly-Sanchez



Hon. David Prodger, British Consul General; Hon. Jürgen Borsch, Consul General of Germany; Prof. Noah Weisbord



Hon. Candido Creis  
Consul General of Spain in Miami



## Cuba and the European Union: Opportunities, Challenges, and Tensions



Pavel Telička, EU Parliament Member

Martin Palouš, Christine I. Caly-Sanchez,  
Pavel Telička

On Friday, October 16, the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence was excited to co-sponsor a presentation by EU Parliament Member, Pavel Telička, on Cuba and the European Union.

"You're lucky to have a member of the European parliament. Too often in the US, Europe seems irrelevant, I can assure you it's not," said John Stack, the Dean Designate of the Green School of International and Public Affairs before introducing Mr. Telička who spoke about how the case of Cuba is an excellent opportunity to raise the question of the importance of human rights. Martin Palouš, Director of the Vaclav Havel Initiative for Human Rights and Diplomacy, also had a few words to say in his opening remarks about the importance of building a bridge between the world of academia and the world of practical international politics.

Mr. Telička spoke in front of a filled auditorium, on the ongoing negotiations for a new bilateral treaty between the EU and Cuba, with a particular emphasis on the issue of human rights. His talk began with a question related

to US diplomatic changes toward Cuba: "Do you know what was the first reaction was in Europe? 'Americans are ahead of us,' and that shows you that we are living in an environment where politics are in crisis."

Telička supports that change that is occurring in policy toward Cuba, stating that the policy of the International Community toward Cuba has not been too successful, since human rights abuses are still there, and people are still living in bad conditions. He is adamant that the time is now to negotiate for the betterment of human rights in the island.

For him what is most important is to figure out what policies need to be implemented to benefit the people of Cuba, and to ensure that negotiations are conducted in such a way that human rights are respected. Telička sees that the challenges that these negotiations present are, to a large degree, opportunities themselves. He considers policy efficiency on the part of the EU, and cooperation with the United States, as major challenges, but also opportunities that should be taken.

After his opening remarks, the floor was open for questions, which included participation by Cuban activist Rosa Maria Payá and others, which encouraged a lively debate about the past, present, and future of Cuba and its foreign policy.

In his conclusion, Telička urged for the necessity of thinking jointly to form concrete conditions and ideas that can become part of the negotiation process in order to ensure progress on all sides, and once again stressed the importance of protecting human rights.

The lecture was presented by the Václav Havel Program for Human Rights and Diplomacy, in partnership with the Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs, the European and Eurasian Studies Program, the Kimberly Green Latin American and Caribbean Center, and the Cuban Research Institute. It was funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

*By Stephanie Sepulveda*

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## Alexandra Mosquera, Journalism Student at SJMC



Alexandra Mosquera  
Student of Journalism, FIU

*Alexandra Mosquera, a student of Journalism at FIU, who has ties to Spain and Germany. She tells us a little bit about herself in her own words, one that shows us the connections between Europe, Latin America, and the United States.*

"I was raised in Spain for over 10 years, but was born in El Salvador, and I'm half German, half Ecuadorian. I consider myself Spanish since it was the country that shaped me the most with its culture and values. My parents and I moved to Spain when I was 10.

When I was 16, a teacher told me that my writing wasn't too bad, it was a compliment coming from him. That was the first time I felt the calling of journalism, of being a reporter and maybe a foreign correspondent for The New York Times.

I spoke Spanish and German, but I have always been fascinated by the English language and started to learn it on my own when I was 12. I realized the best way to learn a language has always been to go to the country where it's spoken! The next thing I knew, I took a year off and came to the U.S. I was an AuPair and lived in Los Altos Hills in Northern California where I lived with a family and took care of 5-year-old twins. When I went back to Spain I

applied to a few schools and a few months I was on my way back to the U.S. I attended De Anza College, where I initially took some classes. I moved to Cupertino, CA, in the summer of 2010 and declared my major as journalism. DAC gave me the best foundation for a life in the U.S. that I could have asked for. I was the secretary and later on, the captain of the cheerleading team of the school, had my first experiences at a college newspaper, La Voz, where I learned more about writing and photography and I met people who would become the best friends I could have made.

After I had enough credits to transfer, I decided to get closer to New York City and attended Rutgers University in Northern Jersey in 2013. As great as the school was, with very dedicated professors and many opportunities to grow in different clubs and organizations, New Jersey didn't feel like a place I could call home. I went to the school library, opened up a U.S. map, closed my eyes and went with my index finger up and down the East Coast to then finally stop in the state of Florida. Two weeks later I had sent out four applications for different universities in the State.

FIU was the first to accept me and since Miami was a warm place, it was my first choice. I also chose Miami because of my Ecuadorian and Salvadorian roots. I thought I would feel more connected to them through the music, food and of course, the people. I feel lucky to have chosen FIU.

My advisor helped me so much throughout all the semesters and it made me feel safe and a little more relaxed to know that I could rely on her. I have a mentor in journalism, who exposed me and my classmates to practice and threw us into the cold water. He made it possible for me to not only learn most of what I know in journalism, but he taught me who I don't want to be and who I really want to become.

FIU has taught me to be persistent, it hasn't given me anything that I didn't have to work hard for, it hasn't opened any doors yet, but it has taught me how to open them myself. FIU has given me friendship and love, as well as experience while working at The Beacon.

For the future, I will be doing my Optional Practical Training (OPT) and hopefully find a job, if not in Miami, then at least in Florida. I plan on pursuing a masters in business in the next year. This city and the people in it have a place in my heart and memory that I'm not ready to leave behind just yet. I think there are great opportunities lying ahead of me and I'm confident that I will do what I love. I'm this confident thanks to the education I have received and the support from friends and family along the way and beyond my college career. I have had many opportunities to meet some of the brightest and most beautiful minds here at FIU, in SJMC and have to thank them too for being part of a spectacular journey.

For students that might think about coming to the U.S. and specifically FIU to study, I can only recommend this experience! There will be hard times and you might struggle, but it will all be worth it. In the middle of the biggest struggle you might meet the best people you'll ever meet that will not only shape your life for a minute or a day, but for the rest of your life they'll be a part of it. If you feel motivated and inspired to pursue an education at FIU, people will embrace you and help you grow. Growth won't happen over night and you might not even notice until someone interviews you for a student spotlight how much you've experienced, but it will happen and you will learn from good and bad, surrounded by an immense number of diversity in people, food and more, a different language (or languages) and the future beautiful minds.

*By Stephanie Sepulveda*



## Swedish Domestic and International Politics: Past and Present

### Interview with Swedish Ambassador, Christer Persson



Dr. Lukas Danner, Amb. Christer Persson,  
Christine I. Caly-Sanchez, and Dr. Markus Thiel

On October 21, 2015, former Swedish Ambassador to various Latin American countries including Uruguay and Nicaragua visited FIU to give a lecture on 'Swedish Domestic Politics: past & present'. Mr. Persson was able to integrate his experience of his many years as diplomat representing Sweden in Latin America, at the United Nations in Vienna, the EU in Brussels, and other posts. Given his illustrious background, the JMCE asked him a few questions on current topics in EU, European and Swedish politics. But first, we wanted to know a bit about his current position: based out of Wasilla, Alaska, he is an affiliate of the Department of Political Science of the University of Alaska, Anchorage. But he also lectures regularly for Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. In addition, in the past years after retiring from his diplomatic position, he taught at several universities international relations and law, as well as European and Latin American Politics in Nicaragua, Chile and at the UN-mandated University of Peace in Costa Rica.

When asked what the former Ambassador sees as the most pressing political issue in Swedish Politics, he cited the ongoing refugee/migrant crisis: not only because it is a huge challenge for a relatively small country such as Sweden to host and integrate thousands of arriving people, but also because a failure to do so would strengthen the emerging far-right Swedish Democrats, with unforeseen consequences for Swedish domestic and indeed, European/EU Poli-

tics. When asked about his view of the biggest political issue in the EU currently, Amb. Persson mentioned the Eurocrisis. Far from being over, the long-term sustainability of the Greek governmental budget and Greece's economic performance is still not guaranteed. And while Sweden, as a non-Euro member, did not have an obligation to provide funds, it did so out of solidarity. Our final question was directed at the issue of leadership in the EU, which is faced with a number of challenges at the moment.

Ambassador Persson expressed that the Franco-German leadership was essential in developing and furthering European integration. Thus, he does not agree to the ones who think that right now may be a good time to abolish the EU (as the EU often took a step forward and then back), nor does he view the current German dominance in EU affairs a problem, as long as Germany pursues responsible policies- which by judging at past statesmen and their leadership, was the case.

*By Dr. Markus Thiel*

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Amb. Christer Persson and Dr. Markus Thiel



Amb. Christer Persson speaking to students after his lecture



# Conversations on Europe: "Europe Jews: Past, Present, Future?"



The Miami-Florida Jean Monnet European Center of Excellence hosted its third Conversation on Europe Video Conference of the semester on Tuesday, October 20. The talk titled "Europe Jews: Past, Present, Future?" was moderated by Rod Linden, Director of the European Union Center of Excellence / European Studies Center at the University of Pittsburgh.

Four experts were called to discuss the issue of anti-Semitism and crimes toward Jews in Europe, including Andrew Srulovitch who is the Director of European Affairs and Assistant Director of International Affairs for the Anti-Defamation League; Ben Judah a foreign Affairs Correspondent; David Weinberg, Professor Emeritus from Wayne State University and author of *Recovering a Voice: West European Jewish Communities after the Holocaust*; and Gunter Jikeli of Indiana University, author of *Muslim Anti-Semitism in*

*Europe*.

The conversation focused on the increase of anti-Semitic incidences in Europe, including violent attacks that endanger the well-being and life of Jewish communities living in Europe. Of particular relevance during the talk was whether or not the anti-Semitic sentiment is comparable to that of Europe in the 1930s and 1940s, what are the possible explanations for this resurgence, and what are the community and political responses.

"There is another wave of anti-Semitism, but the forms have changed," said Gunter Jikeli when asked about the differences between the present situation and the past. Another difference according to David Weinberg, is that we are currently not in a place of government-sponsored anti-Semitism, which makes the current environment drastically different from the 1930s.



Videoconference with the University of Pittsburgh

Other important points discussed included the experiences in France, where anti-Semitic attacks are at an all-time high, and the differences between perceptions of Jewish communities in different European cultures, as well as the impact of Muslim culture on contemporary anti-Semitism.

The conversation was a lively one, and students and faculty at FIU were able to see the discussion and to gather new perspective on the issue.

You can watch the recording of this conversation on [www.ucis.pitt.edu](http://www.ucis.pitt.edu)

The next conversation, "Rescue & Prevent: responses to Europe's Migration Crisis," will be on Tuesday November 17 at 12pm.

By Stephanie Sepulveda



Christine I. Caly-Sanchez and FIU students

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# Italy Day at FIU



Hon. Gloria M. Bellelli, Consul General of Italy

“We have to thank our American friends because they are so close to our culture that we can share our organization with them.” Those were the opening remarks given by Gloria M. Bellelli, the Consul General of Italy during the kickoff of Italy Day at FIU.

Italy Day at FIU was celebrated on Thursday October 22 with a series of film screenings and discussions. The three-hour-long event was celebration of Italian art and culture with the special honor of including the Honorary Gloria M. Bellelli, the Consul General of Italy. In relation to the Italian government’s connection to FIU she said, “we hope that through this connection with FIU we can foster activities and we can put together events that give the young generation the opportunity to focus on subjects that could be useful for our common life like the environment and new technologies.”

The audience was diverse, and included faculty, staff, members of the FIU Italian Club, Italian students, high school students who are part of the dual enrollment program, and other guests. The large number of Italian-speaking guests made it possible for large segments of the conversation to be conducted in Italian, while the films were all presented in English with Italian Subtitles.

The opening remarks were followed by a screening of “Alice’s Adventures in Tuscany,” a film that was made by the Autorita Portuale di Livorno in 2000. Originally intended as a form of advertising, the filmmakers were contacted by the General Consulate of Italy in order to collaborate and screen the film. Part of the film actually takes place in Miami, and chronicles the adventures of a girl who explores Italian history and culture in Tuscany, the entire film was actually shot on the real locations in Italy.



Consul General of Italy, Hon. Gloria M. Bellelli, Massimo Spiga, Christine I. Caly-Sanchez, and the Port of Livorno Italian Delegation



Delegation from the Port of Livorno and Massimo Spiga



Dott. Massimo Provinciali, Ing. Giovanni Paolo Spadoni, Prof.ssa Cristina Grieco, and Dr. Magda Pearson



# Italy Day at FIU



The second film was “The Journey of a Dragonfly,” by Claudia La Bianca, who directed, produced, and edited the film. Set in Sicily, the film tells a tragic love story of a New York photographer who finds love in Sicily. La Bianca describes the film chronicling “a fantasy, and stories that live in between two worlds.”

The film was followed by discussion with La Bianca, who was happy to answer any questions regarding the film and her journey as an Italian-American.

The afternoon culminated with refreshments that were provided by the FIU Italian Club,

and allowed for the guests to ask one on one questions with the speakers.

The event was co-sponsored by the Consulate General of Italy in Miami, the European and Eurasian Studies Program, the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet European Center of Excellence, the European Student Association, the Department of Modern Languages, the FIU Italian Club, and CSO.

*By Stephanie Sepulveda*



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**Claudia La Bianca, Director and Producer of “The Journey of a Dragonfly”**



**Claudia La Bianca, Christine I. Caly-Sanchez, Massimo Spiga**



**Student Ambassadors ( Andrea, Stephanie, and Francisco) and Claudia La Bianca**



**Audience at Italy Day**

# Panel Discussion: "FIU Student Experiences In France: What They Learned"

## French Weeks 2015



Consul General of France, Philippe Létrilliart



Consul General of France, Philippe Létrilliart, Christine I. Caly-Sanchez, FIU Faculty and students

Starting on October 29, 2015 the Miami-Florida Jean Monet Center of Excellence inaugurated its 8th annual French Weeks, from October 29 to November 12, 2015. As part of the initiative to celebrate French culture and to foster a deeper connection with France, the Center sponsored a series of events that focused on France. The first of these events was a discussion panel with FIU students on what they learned through their experiences studying in France.

The panel, held in the Green Library on October 29, had as its guest of honor, the Honorary Philippe Létrilliart, Consul General of France in Miami. The Consul General began the discussion by providing his opening remarks, which focused on the politics, culture, and economy of France as well as the opportunities and benefits of educational exchanges between French and American students.

Members of the panel included three students who all participated in different study abroad programs in France as well as professors who direct the programs. The faculty present at the event included:

- John Bailly, Director of the Honors College France, Italy, and Spain Study Abroad Programs
- Maria Antonieta Garcia, Senior French Instructor
- Pascale Becel, chair of the Modern Languages Department
- Jose Rodriguez, Assistant Dean of the Honors College as well as director of the Cultural Communication Patterns of Europe study abroad program

Professors were given time to talk about their program and after each student talked about their program, their experience in France, and what they learned.



Dr. Pascale Becel



Professor John Bailly



Jose Rodriguez

# Panel Discussion: "FIU Student Experiences In France: What They Learned"



Ian Schreiber



Alta Grace Gustave



Stephanie Sepulveda

**Ian Schreiber** spoke of his year in La Sorbonne in Paris. A series of picture of his time in Paris guided his remarks, where he discussed his experience at a university in Paris, his successes learning the French language, and Paris's innate Instagram-friendly landscapes.

**Alta Grace Gustave** had the opportunity to discuss her experience with the TAPIF program, which allowed her to spend a year in Lourdes, as a teaching assistant. A program that allowed her to gain more confidence with her French, as well as to experience different cities in France.

**Stephanie Sepulveda** spoke about her experience in the Summer of 2014 with the Honors College Study Abroad Program, titled "Art, War, and Human Rights." She spoke of her month-long journey in France, which included memorable experiences in the meeting Holocaust Survivors and a French Resistance Fighter.

The event was sponsored by the Council for Student Organization, and co-sponsored by the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence, the Department of Modern Languages, the Honors College, the European Student Association, and the Consulate General of France in Miami.

Other events held during the FIU French Weeks include a film screening of "Midnight in Paris" on October 30<sup>th</sup> and a screening of two episodes from the documentary "Apocalypse: La 1ère Guerre Mondiale" ("Apocalypse: The First World War") on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

*By Stephanie Sepulveda*



Event Attendees



Stephanie Sepulveda, Christine Caly-Sanchez, Consul General of France Hon. Philippe Létrilliart, Alta Grace Gustave, Pascale Becel, Jose Rodriguez, Ian Schreiber



- ▶ To view video, [click here](#)
- ▶ To view pictures, [click here](#)

## Interview with Hon. Philippe Létrilliart Consul General of France in Miami

The Consul General of France in Miami, Hon. Philippe Létrilliart, was kind enough to answer a few questions for the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence. The following conversation was had ahead of the Panel on FIU student experiences in France.

**MEUCE:** Why do you think it is important to have events like this panel, where students share their experiences from France?

**Philippe Létrilliart:** This is the third time I meet with the students either coming from France or going to France and it is always a nice moment for me. Love to have fresh views on my own country, and to have a deep dialogue on how the difference, what was interesting for them, what was surpassing, what was the kind of relationships that they had with the French people and with the French language. And if they came back with some learning about this, which is very important.

**MEUCE:** Why do you think it's so important to establish connections between France and the US?

**Létrilliart:** Well, for instance, in the US we have connection for such a long time. We have always been friends and allies since the very beginning of the American nation. But this is history, and history is great and we have to cherish our common history, but we also have to work on the future. And this is why I like to meet with the students because we want, as the French government, the French Embassy, and the French Consulate in the US, we all want to have more American students going to France, and more French students coming to the United States.

**MEUCE:** What about relationships with FIU in particular?

**Létrilliart:** So for Florida I can say that it is very interesting, because here in Florida, we have many, at least in FIU, bilingual students—they already speak English and Spanish. And they can learn a third language, which is such a necessity in today's world. And also going to France, even for a short period, or for a long period, like one or two years in a French University, is a great opportunity for an American student. It is an opportunity to know the world and Europe. And it is not only about your studies, it is also about your personal life and your professional life. So, especially for Floridian students and students in FIU, people who already know North American and Latin America, it is very interesting to know and to connect with Europe, and the best way to do this is to spend a period of time in a French University.

**MEUCE:** Would you say that it is just as important for French students to come and spend time in the US?

**Létrilliart:** Absolutely! We are really close to the US and we have many French companies working in the US, particularly in Florida we have more than 450 French companies, including 40 of the biggest French companies. So if you have spent some time in an American university you will perform and will be able to get a job in the US or to work with the US from France, and this is a great asset.

**MEUCE:** What do you think about the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence at FIU and its initiatives?

**Létrilliart:** Great! I'm so happy to have the Center. And for me, and my European Colleagues, I can say that it is incredible. I was very surprised when I came here to learn that we had a European Union



Hon. Philippe Létrilliart,  
Consul General of France

Center of Excellence, now a Jean Monnet Center. It's amazing because we can meet the students, but we can also meet many scholars and invite many people from abroad. So this is really a great way to promote Europe and to know each other.

**MEUCE:** What are you most looking forward to in the future with FIU and with the Center?

**Létrilliart:** I would like to insist on environment and climate change, something which we are already doing. I would also like to insist on technology because we have good technology in Europe and in France, as well as transportation, medicine, and innovation. So I would like to work on those fields with the European Center in the future.

*By Stephanie Sepulveda*



For more information  
visit:

<http://www.consulfrance->



## Blanka Rosenstiel Lecture Series on Poland: "Kosciuszko A Man Before his Time"



Alex Storzynski

On Friday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence co-sponsored a screening of the film "Kosciuszko: A Man Before His Time" and a discussion with Alex Storzynski, Pulitzer Prize

winning journalist, award winning author, director, and President Emeritus and Vice Chairman of the Board of the Kosciuszko Foundation.

The lecture began with a brief history of Kosciuszko and his relationship with early American history. "He stood up for black slaves, he stood up for white serfs, he stood up for Jews, and he stood up for women," said Alex Storzynski about Kosciuszko when introducing the film.

Lady Blanka Rosenstiel, the founder of the program and namesake of the lecture series dedicated to bringing the best of Polish culture and arts and science to FIU, was specially welcomed by the Steven J. Green

School of International and Public Affairs.

The film shows Kosciuszko's quest for liberty with his American and French allies against the tyranny of King George, Catherine the Great and Napoleon Bonaparte and is based on the book, *The Peasant Prince: Thaddeus Kosciuszko and the Age of Revolution* by Storzynski

After the screening, there was time for a discussion and a question and answer session, which gave an opportunity for the audience to ask deeper questions related to the movie and the historical development of the events, also allowing for reflection on the part of Storzynski on Kosciuszko's influence, his involvement in American history, and connections to the present day.

This event was co-sponsored by the Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs, the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence, the American Institute of Polish Culture, and the Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Miami, the European Student Association, and CSO.

By Stephanie Sepulveda



Maria Krol, Michael Brillman, Lady Blanka Rosenstiel, Alex Storzynski, Christine I. Caly-Sanchez, Beata Paszyc



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## Lecture "25 Years of German Unity— 26th Anniversary of Germany's Reunification"



Hon. Jürgen Borsch, Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany

The Honorable Jürgen Borsch, Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany was on hand to give a lecture on the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Germany's Reunification at FIU on November 9<sup>th</sup>. He was introduced by Dr. Markus Thiel, Director of the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence at FIU.

Hon. Jürgen Borsch gave a review and a reflection of the momentous process of German reunification to the audience, which included students and faculty.

"Twenty-five years ago, on the 3<sup>rd</sup>

of October, 1990 we finally reached German unity after so many years of division of our country," the lecture began. The hour-long reflection on this momentous event was a historical recount focusing on the events that led to German separation and later reunification, starting with World War I and World War II. Following the wars, the subsequent division of Germany into four pieces of allied control resulted in a physical and ideological division between West Germany and East Germany.

"West Germany was becoming a

flourishing partner in the Western world, east Germany was being exploited by the Soviet Union. This signified the mержence of two German States," he stated.

The questions that the Honorable Consul Jürgen Borsch kept repeating throughout his lecture, was: how did this happen? What led to these events? Using history, not just events in Germany itself, but also in the eastern and western blocs to contextualize the events leading up to the reunification of Germany in 1990 meant that the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification was not only a product of domestic factors, but also of external occurrences in the West, the Soviet Union and other Central-Eastern European countries.

"The Berlin wall fell on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November 1989, so today exactly 26 years ago," he said on the meaning of this date, "The Berlin wall is a symbol that change is possible and it is possible without shedding a single drop of blood."

The lecture gave students at FIU an opportunity to learn more about this significant event, the people involved, the connection with the United States, and the forces that allowed Germany to, once again, be a united country.

This event was co-sponsored by the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence, the European and Eurasian Studies Program, the Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs, The Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany, the European Student Association, and CSO.

*By Stephanie Sepulveda*



From left to right: Dr. Lukas Danner, Christine I. Caly-Sanchez, Rocio Pellerano, Hon. Jürgen Borsch, Dr. Markus Thiel

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## Conversation on Europe—Video Conference with the University of Pittsburgh : "Rescue & Prevent: Responses to Europe's Migration Crisis"



Tuesday November 17 2015

The Miami-Florida Jean Monnet European Center of Excellence hosted its fourth Conversation on Europe Video Conference of the semester on Tuesday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, titled *Rescue & Prevent: Responses to Europe's Migration Crisis*. The videoconference began with a moment of silence of respect for the recent events in France. "Our goal is to address a topic which is emotional, challenging, and maybe intractable. Perhaps more so because of the events of last week," said Dr. Rod Linden, Director of the European Union Center of Excellence/ European Studies Center at the University of Pittsburgh.

Panelists for the discussion included: Joanna Kakissis, foreign correspondent for National Public Radio; Martin Xuereb, director of Migrant Offshore Aid Station, a humanitarian search and rescue operation assisting vessels in distress in the Mediterranean Sea; and Alessandro Bertani, vice president of Emergency, an organization that provides free, high-quality medical and surgical treatment to

the victims of war.

The aim of the panel discussion was to look more closely at the underlying scene of refugees in Europe. The talk began with a brief introduction that dealt with the numbers and patterns of immigrant flows in the last year. More than 600,000 people have come through Greece alone, others have crossed through the Mediterranean, taking routes that are dangerous and arduous.

The talk asked panelists to discuss both the national and international implication as the European Union attempts to address the issues while upholding its values and electorates express their dissatisfaction with governmental responses.

Questions addressed included why is this happening now? What are the reasons beyond the obvious violence and upheaval? And how do we assess the European response? Both in the government and intergovernmental level, but also at the human level.

"This is a huge existential test for the EU, because it goes to the

heart of what the EU is supposed to be," said Linden.

Alessandro Bertani talked about how the push factors have changed in the past two years. "We believe the most important push factors can be summed up in two words, war and poverty. Our work in war zone areas in the past two years has increased dramatically," he said.

Martin Xuereb said the escalation in the past year is seen in the Eastern Mediterranean route, because of the escalation of the situation in Syria. "Matters have escalated to a point that people see no other option but to leave either Syria or the refugee camps, he said, "The people we take on our boat say, had they had an option, they would've never left their homeland."

The discussion focused a lot on why these people are migrating in such massive numbers, and the gravity of the situation that they are experiencing in their home countries. Europe's response to the issues is the essential point for the panelists.

Although he knows that fear and insecurity is understandable at times like this, Xuereb, stated that the real issue is what is going to be done about the problem. "Our energy needs to be channeled into helping those in need and those are the people who are running away from terrorist acts in their own country."

"At the end of the day you have to ask yourself, is it too deadly to stay here? And those are very real questions. Every time I go on assignment I meet people like that," reflected Joanna Kakissis.

By Stephanie Sepulveda

► To view video, [click here](#)

## "Nobody Kills France—A Call for National Unity and Courage" by Dr. Maxime Larive



129 dead, 99 critical injured and over 350 injured, these are the numbers ensuing the terrorist attacks taking place on November 13 in the streets of Paris. These are the worst attacks on European soil since the Madrid and London bombings in 2004 and 2005. In a period of 10 months, France has seen two successful terrorist attacks with the January mass killing against French satire paper, *Charlie Hebdo*, and a Jewish supermarket (read [here](#) a previous analysis on the January terrorist attack) and yesterday night. And during the summer, three American tourists stood up and disarmed a man seeking to massacre people in a Thalys train from the Netherlands to France. These attacks on November 13 were highly sophisticated with three teams of terrorists attacking simultaneously (see below the location of the attacks).

Here are some reflections on these horrific attacks. The attacks on *Charlie Hebdo* and on November 13<sup>th</sup> demonstrate that the executioners are for the most part French and European citizens. Yes, *Charlie Hebdo* had received some international attention after the publication of the Danish cartoons of the Prophet, but aside from that it was a low print paper. Very few people around the world knew about *Charlie Hebdo*. The November attacks on cafés in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> arrondissements

and the music venue, the [Bataclan](#), confirm that these executioners are French. These locations are places where locals and Parisians go, they are not highly touristic locations. The attackers wanted to send a clear message to French people that they won't be safe any longer. These attacks seek to go after the basic components of French life by targeting the arts, music, social interactions, and freedom. Members of radical Islamic networks simply seek to restrict and oppress humans in the name of bigotry and racism. There are no religious justification of such heinous crime, only ignorance and stupidity.

### A Solid Leadership

The French leadership, as of today, has been exemplary. François Hollande, French President, has certainly not been a model on his socio-economic agenda and has had difficulties in bringing needed reforms to the country. However, the criticisms emerging from the French rights (from the mainstream right, Les Républicains, and extreme right, Front National) are abject and unfounded. In the last year, François Hollande has been an exemplary leader in combining toughness and calling and maintaining national unity. His leadership during and after the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks was subtle and strong. Yesterday night' speech prior the exceptional council of ministers at

midnight, François Hollande addressed the Nation with an impeccable short speech. Not only did he call for an immediate state of emergency and territorial lockdown of France – which has only been done three times prior under the Fifth Republic – but closed his address by calling for solidarity and national unity. It was a difficult exercise that he managed to pull off.

Ensuing the Council of Minister on November 14<sup>th</sup> at 9am, François Hollande declared:

*It is an act of war, which has been perpetuated by a terrorist army, ISIS, a jihadist army, against France, against the values that we are defending all around the world, against what we are: a country of freedom speaking to the totality of the world. It is an act of war, which has been prepared, organized, planned from the outside, and with domestic assistance that will be demonstrated by the current investigation. It is an act of absolute barbarity.*



Photo: AFP / Christelle Alix

The use of word and repetition of 'act of war' could underline the possibility of the use of ground military forces in Syria in the days or weeks to come. French army could be working on bringing another dimension to its war efforts over Iraq and Syria. However, launching a ground offensive in Syria is quite of a headache considering the current Russian involvement and the Assad forces. Can France conduct military operations in Syria against ISIS without the assistance of Syrian and Russian forces? What would be the endgame? How can France identify and quantify success with a ground offensive against ISIS? After a decade of military involvement

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in Afghanistan, the Talibans are back and Al-Qaeda, which has been severally armed, has been replaced by ISIS (read [here](#) an analysis by François Heisbourg).

### National Mood and the Respect of French Values

Domestically, French citizens ought to show the same determination than after the attacks on *Charlie*. It appears that the national mood is darker than in January and French citizens seem heartbroken, rightfully so, but they need to stand up and demonstrate to these radical movements the impenetrable French spirit. François Hollande [said](#)

*France is strong and even if she can be hurt, she will always stand up and nothing can break her, even the sorrow that touches us. France, she is solid, she is active, France is brave and will win against barbarity. Our history is a reminder.*

Now, France, as after *Charlie*, has to look at itself and reflect on its failed social policies implemented almost five decades ago (read [here](#) a solid analysis by Javier Solana, former EU High Representative). The degree of inequalities in France is continuously increasing and the sense of belonging to the French nation seems to be disappearing in a wide segment of the population. Blame can be attributed on both side, but it will be unproductive. French values of Liberté,

Egalité and Fraternité are the foundation of our Republic and should be rediscovered. This means opening our arms to the refugees leaving Syria and fleeing other authoritarian regimes. Welcoming these refugees and offering them chances to success and leave productive lives are the remedy to such hate and violence. France cannot close her borders and reject the others, as it would be a direct repudiation of its values. Understandingly, the initial reaction is anger and desire to make a distinction between us and them. But once our time of grievance is complete, French citizens ought to remember their history and values. The rhetoric coming for the French rights calling for closing the borders, leaving the European Union, protecting the homeland from any outside forces are the wrong solutions. It may be the easiest road in the short term, but in the long run it would be a direct repudiation of the republican spirit of France. The coming regional elections next month will be a turning point for French politics and could offer some insights prior the presidential elections in 2017. The amalgam of migration and terrorism continuously hammered by the rights is misleading, wrong, unfunded and abject. But amalgams tend to be integrated by a large segment of the population across the world.

### Lessons from France's Atlantic Neighbor and Ally

France can learn three lessons from the United States. First of all invading countries is not a valuable option. The US went to war and occupy Afghanistan and Iraq for over a decade and the situation in both countries has not improved. One could even argue it has worsened as Afghanistan is seeing the return of Talibans and Iraq is highly fragmented and home of ISIS. Second, violation of the habeas corpus and invasive laws like a French Patriot Act won't be the answer as well. Some members of the French rights are calling for the creation of jails for incarcerations of



Photo: Reuters/Kevin Lamarque

suspected terrorists. The US has created Guantanamo Bay and is unable to deal with its prisoners. And it would be an error and a core violation of French democracy to start incarcerating individuals based of suspicion. Guantanamo Bay, and the other American jails in Iraq and Afghanistan such as Abu Ghraib have been instrumentalized by radical Islamic networks in order to recruit. Third, since 2001, American citizens have learned to live with terrorist threats and seen an increase of state forces in the streets. These could be the only alternative for France. The November 13th attacks could be the end of innocence for France. But these attacks remind us how precious are our values and way of life and how threatening they are to these radical movements. We have lived for too long taking for granted our freedoms and liberty, it is time to finally reflect on them, cherish them and defend them by living them consciously.

*By Dr. Maxime Larive*



# Nov. 13th, 2015 Paris Attacks: Solidarity from everywhere—Everybody in Miami stands up, prays and supports France



## PRAY FOR PARIS

13 Novembre 2015



At the Consulate General of France in Miami—Nov. 14, 2015  
From left to right: Consuls General of Germany, Spain, France, UK ,  
Xavier Capdevielle, Frank Bondrille are standing together

Miami with the Colors of France: blue, white, and red  
“Freedom, Equality, and Fraternity”



Left: At the Consulate General of France in Miami—1st vigil -Nov. 14, 2015 Right: in Miami Beach, the French and American community members march together

*Candlelight Vigil for Peace and Remembrance  
for the events in Paris on November 13th*

**Wednesday, November 18th at  
8 p.m. in the FIU housing quad**

Hosted by:  
Le Cercle Français, Pi Delta Phi, the Department of Modern  
Languages, BHA, and NPHU



At Florida International University on Nov. 18th, 2015: Candlelight Vigil Peace and Remembrance



## Euro Challenge Student Orientation Dec. 4th, 2015



"We are not only palm trees and beautiful faces, we are also smart," said Christine I. Caly-Sanchez, Associate Director of the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence, and organizer of the Euro Challenge Competition in Florida, during her opening remarks. So began the Euro Challenge 2016 Orientation where students and teachers from six different high schools attended the Euro Challenge Competition Orientation on Friday, December 4th at Florida International University. The students are preparing to participate in the 2016 Euro Challenge, and will create and present a series of presentations with hopes to win in New York this upcoming April.

The Euro Challenge is a program launched by the Delegation of the European Union to the United States in partnership with many organizations across the country, including FIU that aims to foster knowledge about the European and the Euro. 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students will work in teams to create a presentation answering questions about the European Union, the euro, and a specific Euro-Area country of their choosing. The first round of the competition will take place on March 17, 2016 at FIU. The finalists will travel to New York in April for the semi-final and final rounds, where they will com-

pete to win one of the top five spots. Friday's orientation was an opportunity for students and teachers to gain more in-depth knowledge about the logistics of the competition, as well as to receive some background knowledge about Europe from FIU professors who are experts in the Area.

The all-day event began with an introduction and overview of the Euro Challenge rules, requirements, and timeline given by Christine Caly-Sanchez and was followed by a presentation given by Dr. Markus Thiel, Director of the Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence and political science professor, on Europe, the EU, the euro, and its history. After this, Dr. Mihaela Pintea, Associate Professor of Economics, was on hand to talk to students about the economic aspect of the EU and the Euro-Area, information that will be very valuable when the students plan their presentations for next year's competition. After a lunch break, and a presentation on the Euro Challenge website resources by Christine I. Caly-Sanchez, students got the chance to put some of their practical skills to the test, with a hands-on activity and brief presentations.

Students and teachers alike were excited about the competition, many

groups having participated in previous years. The team from Felix Varela high school, winners in 2015, was happy to talk about their experience and to give some advice to the other groups, talking about the importance of playing off each other's strengths and teamwork.

Reva, a student from Archimedean Upper Conservatory was excited about the Competition, "It's good for gaining experience and to work on speaking in public," he said. Other students also showed their eagerness to learn new things through the project. "I really like history, so this challenge has given me an opportunity to see how the European Union has been impacted through history," said Amvith, also from Archimedean Upper Conservatory. Amanda, who participated in the competition last year said it was exciting to participate in something on such a big scale.

Overall, the atmosphere was of excitement and eagerness to learn. After this orientation, students are ready to go back to school and to work with their teams and teachers to choose an economic topic and to research it before presenting it to the judges in the first round next year.

*By Stephanie Sepulveda*

► To view pictures, [click here](#)

## BILAT Announcement EURAXESS Science Slam Slam your way to a free trip to Europe



### EURAXESS Science Slam

In 2015, EURAXESS Links North America is once again looking for North America's best science slammers.

Five finalists will battle it out for the title of "EURAXESS Science Slammer North America 2015" in the LIVE slam to be held in Chicago, IL, between October 17 and 21 2015.

**The first prize is a free trip to Europe!**

**Online submission of slam candidacies is open between May 29 and September 21, 2015.**



### What this is about:

EURAXESS Science Slam North America 2015 is the third edition of a contest giving researchers based in North America the chance to showcase their research projects to their peers and the wider public in a relaxed and joyful atmosphere. It is open to researchers of all nationalities and from all fields of research. Every participant at the final slam to be held in Chicago between October 17 and 21 October 2015 will present a topic related to their research to an audience of non-experts. The slam will be given in English in a max of 10 minutes and can be supported by video and audio material, ppt. slides and any other kind of media avail-

able, as well as by scientific equipment. The performances of the participants will be judged by the audience and the jury based on conceptualization, style and originality. The winner will be awarded a free trip to Europe where he or she will attend a science communication workshop along with the winners of the other EURAXESS Science Slams organized in Asia, Brazil, China, India and Japan. He/She will also have the opportunity to go to a European research institution of his/her choice

[http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/links/events/north\\_america/science\\_slam](http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/links/events/north_america/science_slam)



## BILAT Announcement Horizon 2020 work programme for 2016-2017 published



The European Commission will invest almost €16 billion in research and innovation in the next two years under Horizon 2020, the EU's research and innovation funding scheme, following a new work programme for 2016-17 adopted on 13 October. The work programme is now available on the participant portal.

The programme will support a range of cross-cutting initiatives:

the modernization of Europe's manufacturing industry (€1 billion); technologies and standards for automatic driving (over €100 million); the Internet of Things (€139 million) to address digitalisation of EU industries; Industry 2020 in the Circular Economy (€670 million) to develop strong and sustainable economies; and Smart and Sustainable Cities (€232 million) to better integrate environmental, transport, energy and digital networks in EU's urban environments.

More information is available in the press release [here](#) and on the participant portal [here](#)

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Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence

**Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence**  
European and Eurasian Studies Program



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*The Miami-Florida Jean Monnet Center of Excellence team wishes you and yours Happy Holidays and a great and prosperous New Year!*

**SOME OF OUR UPCOMING 2016 EVENTS**



- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Jan.19 –20-21 | Workshops Horizon 2020—EU Research and Innovation Funding  |
| Jan. 23       | The Netherlands and the EU Council Presidency  |
| Jan. 26       | Response to the Terrorist Attacks by Hon. Philippe Létrilliart, Consul General of France         |
| Jan. 27       | The European and Spanish policies regarding the Mediterranean area by Antonio Blanc              |
| Feb. 2        | Labor Politics in the EU by Kerstin Hamann, University of Florida                                |
| Feb. 22-23    | Two-Day EU Conference on EU Development Policy in a Global Context: approaches, issues & results |
| March 17      | Euro Challenge Competition   |
| April 18-19   | eMerge Americas Conference—Smart Cities  |

For details please visit: [miamieuc.fiu.edu](http://miamieuc.fiu.edu) - Events  
or contact Christine I. Caly-Sanchez at [calyc@fiu.edu](mailto:calyc@fiu.edu)