

**Prof. Ivo ŠLAUS**

World Academy of Art and Science, Trustee  
and President of South-East European Division

***Welcome address\****

*Your Excellency Prime Minister Djukanovic, President of the European Academy of Science and Art Prof. Unger, President of Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Art Prof. Djurovic, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear participants,*

It is my great honor and pleasure to welcome you on behalf of the World Academy of Art and Science and of our President J. H. Schwartz.

The topic of „Values and the 21<sup>st</sup> century” is both very timely and very relevant, since we live in a world with more than 5,000 cultures founded on different and sometimes contradicting values superimposed on multiple activities each having their own value system. Moreover, we live in an interdependent, global and fast-changing world. Changes are nowadays even accelerating so that those of you in your thirties expecting to live until you are 80 or 90 will during your lifetime undergo changes that are equivalent to the changes that occurred since the time of Enlightenment. And not only are the changes coming faster, but they are also more dramatic. Some of our values are deeply rooted in our biology, but some are shaped, molded by specific historical circumstances, and some of these circumstances have disappeared or changed, so it is appropriate to investigate whether we should still cling to values formed by past circumstances. Many of the values we currently hold could be and most likely already are incompatible with the emerging world, they might hinder the world’s development and can produce conflicts. Can this be overcome and

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\* Welcome speech

how? This broad spectrum will be discussed at our conference. Obviously, the discussion will not and cannot end at this conference. I view this conference as a beginning that demands our continuous involvement.

The global interconnectedness and fast changes are science generated and it is only appropriate that the academies of science and art: Montenegrin, European and World are organizing this conference. The credit for the initiative, for organizing this conference and for bringing all of us here goes to Momir Djurovic, President of the Montenegrin Academy and fellow of both European and World Academies.

The current global crisis, in which financial, economic and ecological issues are superimposed on demographic transition, energy shortages and climate change is essentially a moral crisis, therefore it involves values. Presently the World Academy initiated several projects, such as: From Crisis to Prosperity, Global Employment Challenge, Limits to Rationality, Dialogue on Individuality and Revolution in Human Affairs – and all of them resolve around the issue of values.

Today, we are using 30% more resources than our Earth gives and we are producing 30% more waste leading to an ecological footprint of 1.29, which constantly increases. In 1962 Rachel Carson alarmed the world by her book *Silent Spring*, in 1972 The Club of Rome accepted the first report to the Club „The Limits to Growth” and Barbara Ward coined the concept sustainable development which became popular through the famous Brundtland Report of 1987. We humans dramatically influence the Earth, currently our only habitat, and it is only appropriate to label current epoch the Anthropocene Epoch, as suggested by Paul Crutzen, another of our fellows and a Nobel laureate. Furthermore, It is appropriate that this conference is held here in Podgorica, capital of the Republic of Montenegro, since Montenegro decided to make sustainable development its basis and by doing so demonstrated that people of Montenegro want to focus on the future. Future is a moral category that we ourselves develop.