

January 2019

In January 2018, Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, Regional President Universal Peace Federation (UPF), Europe Chapter, paid a short visit to the Netherlands. UPF is a UN related global network of peacebuilders. During the visit there was an introduction and an extensive exchange of ideas.



This age of globalization needs enlightened leaders in each faith who can examine their sacred writings and traditions and identify the aspects that can benefit all humanity as well as those that preserve each religion's identity. Much of the success and fulfillment in life depends on creating healthy relationships, yet this is one of the most challenging tasks.

One of UPF's core principles is living for the sake of others. UPF promotes this through a variety of experiential-learning activities that cultivate good character, build friendships among diverse people, mentor young leaders, teach good sportsmanship and alleviate suffering.

UPF acknowledges the need for careful and proportionate use of power, including political, economic, military and civil society power to sustain lasting peace.

UPF is an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the **United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**.

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
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| | | 1 New Year's Day Romania EU Presidency | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 Epiphany | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
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February 2019



In cooperation with the European Parliament information office in the Netherlands, the **Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs** and the **Clingendael Institute** organised the '**STATE of the UNION Conference 2018**', a high-level reflection on the future of the European Union.

On January 25, 2018 more than 100 EU experts gathered in The Hague focusing on **the Future of European Defence Cooperation, managing Globalisation - EU Trade Policy in the Trump era, social Europe in the context of deepening European Integration, the European Monetary Fund - Financial Risks and Political Consequences, EU Migration Policies - From Crisis to Strategy? And the State of the Union - Prospects for 2018.**

Recent initiatives by key European politicians and officials underline that the EU needs to change. The EU needs to find effective responses to challenges that have become apparent during the Euro crisis as well as those resulting from the changes in the EU's geopolitical environment.

The Union is facing a full agenda concerning the stabilisation of the Euro, looming Brexit, a changing transatlantic relationship, growing Great Power rivalries, persistent public expectations regarding an effective and humane migration policy, and EU budget reform. In addition, discussions revolving around the European elections in 2019 will commence. Yet it is far from clear what reforms should look like and many questions are still unanswered.

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| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 Valentine's day | 15 | 16 |
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March 2019

On March 10, 2018, Volt Netherlands, The Hague Chapter met for the kickoff. Together with the other Dutch Chapters, they transformed on 5 May the movement into a political party. In October, the General Assembly adopted the [Amsterdam Declaration](#).

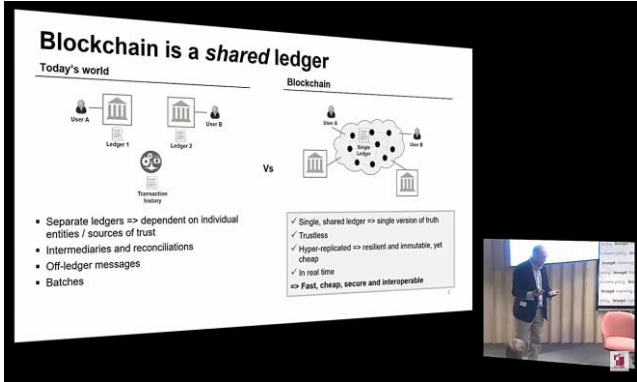


Volt is a pan-European, progressive movement that offers a new way of doing politics. The movement want to change the political dynamics in the European Union by implementing measures that invest in the potential of EU citizens, make our public sector efficient and our economies fairer & stronger, and that protect human rights and our environment, while ensuring that no one is left behind. Policies that are driven by evidence, empathy, and integrity, not misled ideology. To achieve this change, we are convinced that a solution to our joint problems can only be a pan-European one that puts citizens at the center. At the end of May 2019, the party wants to have obtained over 24 seats in the European Parliament.

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APRIL 2019

Artificial Intelligence, Algorithms, the Blockchain and **cyptocurrencies**: transparency and people's will or 'algocracy'? We're building a commonized public digital infrastructure and we want to tokenize it. Why and how?



Not only a discussion on the value that **Blockchain** brings to transactions and industrial relations as well as its implications for entrepreneurship and growth, and on the challenges for the operation and success of EU-wide Blockchain platforms, but also on stewardship, trust and a legal and ethical deep dive.

Vitalik Buterin, programmer and writer once said: *'it's not so much tokenizing the real-world assets, but I guess the question is what value are you getting by blocks unifying it'*.

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| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 Good Friday | 20 |
| 21 Easter Sunday | 22 Easter Monday Day of the Earth | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
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MAY 2019



2018: 70 Years Congress of Europe

25 May 2018, 70 years The Congress of Europe was celebrated. For over 2 days, around 550 delegates from 20 European countries and beyond met in The Hague for a collective exploration of our common ground in addressing the current major transformations more constructively together and imagining the future of our continent, and the world. the spotlight was firmly on dialoguing, debating, taking time for the great transitions of our days and for each other. The Congress of The Hague 2018 highlighted that a more constructive Europe is possible and willed by many citizens. In fact, it is everywhere in the making. A new foundational moment for Europe: it is possible: let's Action This Day!

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June 2019

Patti Smith, the 'Godmother of Punk'

NEXUS symposium



What music can bring about, Patti Smith, a singer and poet. As the 'Godmother of Punk', she protested against social conventions, mindless factory labour and the commercialised world with her powerful and controversial music. Together with Lenny Kaye, she lived through and helped shape the remarkable period of the social and cultural revolt in the 1960s.

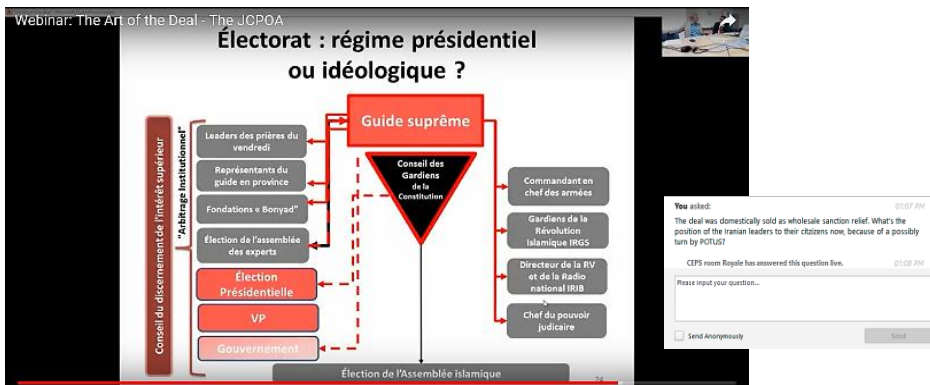
People have the power is probably one of the most famous and powerful protest songs of all time. It could easily adapt to any cause and eventually inspires optimism in those who sing the song, clearly stating that we have the individual power to realize our dreams of a better society by standing together.

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| 9 1st day of Pentecost | 10 2st day of Pentecost | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
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July 2019

23 April 2018, CEPS organized the webinar **“The art of the deal: what will happen if the US withdraws from the nuclear agreement with Iran?”**

President Trump has been building up suspense over whether or not to withdraw the US from the Iran nuclear deal. There is a very real prospect that he will do so when the statutory deadline for recertification of the JCPOA (**Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action**) expires on 12 May 2018.



Trump’s ultimatum to Europe that flaws in the deal be fixed, and Iran’s response that the US would pay a high price for breaking the JCPOA, pile pressure on the EU to prevent the international agreement and hence regional security from being plunged into even more uncertainty.

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August 2019

CEPS discussed ECB's monetary policies. The ECB started buying assets from commercial banks in March 2015 as part of its non-standard monetary policy measures. These asset purchases, also known as **quantitative easing** or QE, support economic growth across the euro area and help us return to inflation levels below, but close to, 2%. June 2018, European Central Bank has voted to stop (to phase out) its huge bond-buying programme, but leaves interest rates remain at record lows for a long time.

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|  <p>“The end of QE in the euro area: A game changer?”</p> <p>Daniel Gros</p> <p>CEPS Webinar April 16, 2018</p> <p><small>Brussels, 16 April, 2018</small></p> <p><small>Thinking ahead for Europe • Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) • www.ceps.eu</small></p> <p>exit should have no adverse impact on inflation, could start now since recovery is ‘self-sustaining’</p> |  <p>Financial stability implications of increasing interest rates</p> <p>Daniel Gros</p> <p><small>No 2018/10, September 2018</small></p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <p>Policy Findings</p> <p>Increasing interest rates appear to pose little risk to financial stability at present. The basic reason is simple: Monetary policy normalisation, which comes as a reaction to the ‘normalisation’ of the economy, should not lead to a deterioration of the creditworthiness of most debtors.</p> <p>The end of the bond-buying programme of the ECB, per se, should not pose a threat to financial stability. It has already been anticipated in the markets, and the public sector purchase programme (PSPP) seems to have had only a minor and temporary impact on yield spreads within the euro area. The remaining risks to the stability of national government bond markets appear to be mainly political.</p> <p>Policy normalisation more in general, including bringing policy rates into positive territory, might have some stabilising impact on the banking system, as it would tend to improve net interest margins.</p> <p>A legacy of the PSPP is that the cost of servicing government debt will be less exposed to market rates, but more directly and quickly exposed to increases in ECB policy rates. Conversely, banks would benefit more from higher revenues on the €2 thousand billion they hold in central bank deposits at present, potentially strengthening their capital position and ability to lend.</p> <p>Given the limited role of the euro as a reserve currency, the global impact of normalisation by the ECB should also remain limited since it has been preceded by normalisation in the US. Pockets of vulnerability remain in emerging markets, however, especially those in the European neighbourhood with large current account deficits.</p> </div> <p>“Increasing interest rates appear to pose little risk to financial stability at present.”</p> |
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September 2019

The Republic of Kosovo, a partially recognised state, wants to join the European Union. Countries wishing to join need to have:

- stable institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities;
- a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competition and market forces in the EU;
- ability to take on and implement effectively the obligations of membership, incl. the aims of political, economic and monetary union.



The President of Kosovo, invited by the Dutch Institute for International Relations “Clingendael” held a lecture in The Hague on **“Vision, challenges, and possibilities for Kosovo”** in front of many state representatives, diplomats, journalists and representatives of the civil society.

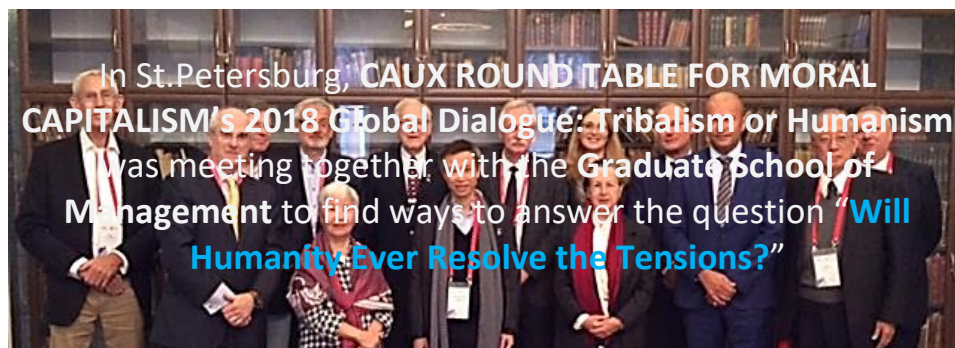
He said that The Hague is the place where Kosovo’s independence was legally confirmed by the International Court of Justice and that after this advising opinion in 2010, the political dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia started, which produced a historic agreement in Brussels, five years ago. “This happened after 100 years of conflict,” Thaci said.

“We are proud of our war for freedom and we have nothing to neither hide nor fear the truth. No one has ever tried to escape of hiding from justice, compare to the other countries in the region,” Thaci said. Speaking about the challenges of Kosovo, Thaci said “the main one remains conclusion of the dialogue with Serbia”.

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| 15 International Day of Democracy | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 International Day of Peace |
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October 2019

Are we a global community seeking optimal advantage for all through continuing creation of the "**wealth of nations?**" Or are we turning more Hobbesian in economics, finance, ethnic distancing and religious separatism, where we will condemn ourselves to live in conditions of a "**war of all against all?**"



Tribalism or Humanism: Will Humanity Ever Resolve the Tensions?

CAUX Round Table for Moral Capitalism's 2018 Global Dialogue
October 25-27, 2019
St. Petersburg, Russia



“What our global community needs today are ethical standards by which to become trustworthy. Ethics thereby must move from the margins of our concerns to the center of our convictions and our endeavors.” A statement was discussed on the **ethics of comity** between and among peoples and religions, between immigrants and host nationals, and among citizens one with another and on how to place a **reasonable market value on companies and financial investments.**

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| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 United Nations Day | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 Halloween | | |

November 2019

In its tenth year, Washington Ideas became **The Atlantic Festival**. The new name pays homage to 161 years of award-winning journalism, analysis and storytelling, and captures the expansive nature of the event.



#theatlanticfest

Through in-depth interviews with some of today’s biggest thinkers and leaders in technology, politics, business and the arts, new ideas were illuminated, and was grappled with the most consequential issues of our time. ([#theatlanticfest](#)).

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December 2019

It is the oldest tale in the history of humankind: the story of **The Battle Between Good and Evil**, between light and darkness, truth and lies, creation and destruction. Theologians, philosophers and moral leaders debated for centuries how to achieve victory over the forces of evil: through divine grace, good works, or through the power of human reason?



With **Marilynne Robinson**, Jean Marie Guéhenno, Catherine Nixey, David S. Rose, Anders Sandberg, Wole Soyinka, Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson, Kassem Eid, John Hare, Michael Hayden, Tarek Mitri, Caroline Sommerfeld, Tatyana Tolstaya, Natasha Vita-More, Leon Wieseltier.

On 15 December 2018, the speakers at the **Nexus** Conference took up this battle in two roundtable discussions. How did we lose our values? Are there absolute or universal values, and what should these be based on? Which values are dominant today, and do the notions of ‘good’ and ‘evil’ still play a role in this? What are the dangers of a world dominated by technology, utility and commercial values? What is a ‘good’ society, and how can it be made a reality?

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| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 day of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 Start Chanoeka | 24 | 25 1st Christmas | 26 2nd Christmas | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 New Year's Eve | | | | |