



**For peace and freedom! Against terror and violence! For unity in diversity!  
Against isolation!**

World War I, the original crisis of the 20th century, was concluded 100 years ago. The inferno left behind a damaged continent which suffered in body and soul. All unity and European spirit grown over centuries had died – along with millions of dead people over four years of misery and horror.

The planned European new beginning after 1918 failed: the hostility was too prominent, and the willingness to reconcile was too weak. Europe remained divided – by toll bars and, above all, by barriers in people's heads.

Even 100 years after the ending of World War I, national egoisms are an obstacle to European unity. A real European thinking is hindered by the lack of understanding for the situation and position of each other. The European Union's achievements, a Union founded as a community securing peace and freedom, are increasingly disprized.

Anti-European forces that wish to raise national egoisms above the common good and that want to fan fear and oppress minorities are gaining influence. A persistent danger is that barriers in people's heads resurge and result in isolation from each other.

In order to surpass those new barriers, one must be aware of an old realisation: there can only be a mutual way of candour for Europe. Each and everyone can and has to contribute to this. Peace and Freedom are secured by personal encounters and honest friendship.

Thus, in these days of reminiscence of the ending of World War I, accomplishing a meeting of European friends of tradition in the Netherlands is a hopeful sign. A Europe of Unity in Diversity needs joy and friendship as strengthening elements.

A fundamental part for the European community of historic guilds is the acknowledgement of peaceful, tolerant and appreciative interactions. This brought to life by people of different origins approaching each other full of trust and celebrating together.

Only in this way, lack of understanding can be overcome, and hatred, terror and violence can be restrained.

Leudal, 19.08.2018