



Indian Council of World Affairs
Sapru House, Barakhamba Road
New Delhi

December 17, 2013

Press Release

Roundtable Discussion

on

‘The European Union in 2020’

with

Sir Michael Leigh

Senior Adviser, German Marshall Fund of the United States
(16 December 2013)

A Roundtable Discussion on ‘The European Union in 2020’ was organized by the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), at Sapru House, New Delhi on December 16, 2013. The Roundtable was addressed by Sir Michael Leigh, Senior Adviser, German Marshall Fund of the United States and former Director-General for Enlargement, the EU. The event was chaired by Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar. Shri Nagendra K. Saxena, Acting Director General, ICWA, delivered the welcome remarks.

The Chair, Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar, noted that the EU had come a long way traversing the Treaty of Rome (1957) to the Treaty of Lisbon (2009), and facing several challenges. He emphasized that in the wake of the current economic crisis, it was a daunting task for the EU to reinvent itself.



Sir Michael Leigh, in his address, discussed the European integration process,

Shri Nagendra K. Saxena, Acting Director General (ADG), ICWA welcoming Sir Michael Leigh, Senior Adviser, German Marshall Fund of the United States

and issues of environment, Sir Michael Leigh, in his address, discussed the European integration process, Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and issues of environment, climate change and energy. He noted that the EU's expansion from 6 to 28 in the last five decades had strengthened the organization. He was optimistic that the EU would be able to tide over the current Eurozone crisis by devising a coherent, centralized fiscal and banking policy. The EU could further build on its strengths of global competitiveness and cutting-edge technologies, he added. He considered the demographic decline as a challenge for the EU and suggested immigration as a solution in the short-term, but noted that the rising xenophobia was another challenge for EU leaders. Sir Michael opined that EU had declined, but only relatively and not in absolute terms.

During the Q&A session, a number of issues pertaining to the eurozone crisis, the CFSP, Turkey's membership, Germany's role in resolving the economic crisis, rights of the Roma community and sanctions on Iran, etc. were raised. In this response, Sir Michael ruled out that Turkey would acquire EU membership anytime soon, but the negotiations between the two sides would continue. On EU's Trans-Atlantic



(L-R) Sir Michael Leigh, Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar and Shri Nagendra K. Saxena

relations, he suggested that this partnership remained a top priority in the second Obama administration. He added that the US's rebalancing to Asia was more rhetoric than reality. On the Roma community, he said that the EU had adopted cooperative measures to address their issues. Regarding environment and energy issues, he held that the US could meet the Kyoto Protocol targets easily, without being a signatory to the treaty due to its shale gas production, while the EU was still lagging behind in this context.
