

In Memoriam



ECPD and its constituency are deeply saddened by the passing away of **Boutros Boutros-Ghali**, President of the ECPD Honorary Council. The Centre was greatly honoured and happy when BBG, as Boutros-Ghali was affectionately known, agreed, in spite of his advanced age, to assume the function of the President of its Honorary Council. While his frail health prevented him from travelling to attend annual ECPD conferences, BBG encouraged and took an active interest in ECPD work on reconciliation, tolerance and cooperation among the republics and peoples of the Balkans. He submitted his statements to ECPD conferences, which were read to the participants and made available to the media, and he was regularly consulted and his advice and involvement sought on issues of strategic importance for the work and development of ECPD within its international mandate.

It is not surprising that Boutros Boutros-Ghali favourably responded to the invitation to be associated with ECPD. His deep interest in and lifetime work for peace, development and the democratization of international affairs coincided with the mandate of ECPD, which was established under the aegis of the University for Peace, founded by the United Nations while SFR Yugoslavia was still in existence. Boutros-Ghali's links with and affection for SFR Yugoslavia and its peoples go back to the heyday of Non-Alignment and his work as university professor and Egypt's minister of state for foreign affairs. He saw the link with ECPD as a continuation, while in retirement, of his lifelong struggle for noble causes embodied in the UN Charter and the pursuit, in the theatre of the Balkans, of his work and goals initiated and undertaken as the UN Secretary-General.



Boutros-Ghali assumed the function of the UN Secretary-General during a critical and turbulent period of discontinuity in world politics. His initiatives led to the elaboration of landmark UN agendas for peace, development and democratization. He was directly engaged in the complex Yugoslav crisis that resulted in the dismemberment of this country, a crisis that showed the weaknesses and limitations of the United Nations, including those constraints under which a UN Secretary-General has to operate. Some of these constraints are masterfully depicted by him in his landmark book **Unvanquished**, a title with a deliberate, double-meaning, i.e. the author of the book remains "unvanquished", with the "UN-vanquished".

His forced departure from the UN Secretary-General post after a veto on his second term marked the end of an era in the United Nations, an era that had held hope and a promise of democratization and equity in international relations. The importance of Boutros-Ghali's tenure in the UN, and of his efforts to steer a viable course between the dominant powers and the rest, including the Third World, where his own roots were and whose broad objectives he championed, offers many valuable lessons for the future of this organization. His contribution to democratic global governance and the United Nations, as the embodiment and instrument of this aspiration, is of historic importance and merits a close study and follow-up. His own writings, statements and actions in the post-UN period offer an added insight into his experiences, thinking and personality.

With Boutros-Ghali's passing, his country, Egypt, loses a leader of world stature and importance. The developing countries of Africa, Asia and South America lose one of their own, who represented them and held their interests and feelings in his heart even in the most difficult moments of the balancing act in the whirlpool of global power politics. And, the international community loses a giant figure and intellect, who, as an "international civil servant", had laboured for the creation of a democratic, enlightened and equitable world order and for a United Nations empowered and enabled to implement and sustain such an order.

Boutros Boutros-Ghali was a very unique and outstanding personality, a historic figure of the 20th century, and ECPD was highly privileged to have had him associated with its name and work and to have benefited from his guidance and wisdom during the closing years of his life. ECPD, members of its Honorary Council, ECPD Executive Director and staff, associates and constituency say farewell and thank you to this remarkable man!