

Address given by René van der Linden on the 50th anniversary of the European flag
(Strasbourg, 16 November 2005)

Caption: On 16 November 2005, at the celebrations held to mark the 50th anniversary of the European flag, the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, René van der Linden, delivers an address in front of the Palais de l'Europe in Strasbourg.

Source: Speech of René van der Linden on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary Celebrations for the European flag.

[ON-LINE]. [s.l.]: Council of Europe, [20.02.2006]. Available on

<http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/APFeaturesManager/defaultArtSiteView.asp?ArtId=331>.

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Address given by René van der Linden, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, at the celebrations held to mark the 50th anniversary of the European flag (Strasbourg, 16 November 2005)

Ladies and gentlemen,

If only everything we did in politics was as successful as the European Flag!

It is natural that we in the Parliamentary Assembly feel a little thrill of pride every time we see the European flag. Not only because we are all good Europeans, but because it came about thanks to a decision of the Assembly. And thanks, I should add, to the artistry and European vision of a staff member of the Council of Europe.

One might wonder whether we also feel a twinge of jealousy, now that our beloved offspring has taken on a life of its own. But of course not! We are good Europeans in the widest sense.

The flag is a symbol of an open community, united by respect for our fundamental values, which are democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Indeed, it was always our intention that the flag become the symbol not only of the Council of Europe, but of all those who belong to the same value community. So when the European Community also adopted the flag, we felt renewed pride rather than any sense of loss.

My wish is that this flag becomes an integral part of the lives of all European citizens, and that their feelings for this flag become the same as those they have for their national flags.

I hope that the flag, and the values it represents, will have as much success in Europe in the next fifty years as it has had so far!