

**“CRACKING BORDERS, GROWING WALLS. EUROPEANS FACING THE UKRAINIAN CRISIS”
CONFERENCE**

On the 40th anniversary of the declaration of the Helsinki Final Act, Kultura Liberalna in partnership with Stiftung für deutsch-polnische Zusammenarbeit (Büro Warschau), Allianz Kulturstiftung and S. Fischer Stiftung are holding an international conference entitled **“Cracking borders, growing walls. Europeans facing the Ukrainian Crisis”**, taking place on the 8th of September 2015 in Warsaw.

It has now been a quarter of a century since we celebrated the wave of democratic transitions in 1989, but the general mood among Europeans today is decidedly pessimistic. Euromaidan protests and the change of government in Kiev were meant to help “Europeanise” Ukraine, according to ideals of liberty and democratic values. Instead, they helped bring about the most serious European crisis since the end of the Cold War. Vladimir Putin is not hesitating to challenge fundamental laws of international order: respect for territorial integrity, peaceful negotiations and the sanctity of human rights. At the same time, Europe is facing further problems. Among southern member states of the EU, particularly Greece, people have lost their Euro-enthusiasm. In this atmosphere of crisis, populist parties have made worrying electoral gains in a number of Western European countries, while Hungary's move towards illiberal democracy is alarming.

Until recently, the Helsinki Final Act helped bolster international security, as well as underlining the importance of human rights and common European values as a basis for political cooperation, not only between European Union member states.

Now, as this order once built upon human rights and mutual respect is being challenged by the Ukrainian crisis and the growth of illiberal sentiments in Europe, we are required to bring together lessons learnt from history and reflect carefully on the new challenges we face.

The debate will take place on the 8th of September at 5.00 pm in the Polish Theatre in Warsaw (No.2 Karasia Street).

The panelists taking part include:

- Robert Cooper (Special Advisor at the European Commission)
- Viola von Cramon (Alliance '90/The Greens)
- Adam Garfinkle (*The American Interest*)
- Katya Gorchinskaya (*Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*)

- Ulrike Guérot (European Democracy Lab)
- Ola Hnatiuk (Polish Academy of Sciences)
- Yaroslav Hrytsak (Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv)
- Josef Joffe (publisher-editor of *Die Zeit*, Hoover Institution, Harvard University)
- Sylvie Kaufmann (*Le Monde*)
- Roman Kuźniar (former foreign policy advisor to President Bronisław Komorowski)
- Jarosław Pietras (General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union)
- Adam Daniel Rotfeld (University of Warsaw, Poland's former Minister of Foreign Affairs)
- Aleksander Smolar (President of Stefan Batory Foundation, CNRS Paris)
- Matt Steinglass (*The Economist*)
- Asle Toje (Norwegian Nobel Institute).

The discussion will be hosted by Jarosław Kuisz (Editor-in-chief, *Kultura Liberalna*) and Karolina Wigura (Head of the Political Department, *Kultura Liberalna*).

The event is held under the honorable patronage of the Warsaw Mayor Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz.

The conference forms part of the lecture series “**Debate on Europe**” which was first started in 2006 by the Allianz Kulturstiftung. The series consistently brings together important voices from the world of culture and politics, business and science to share their perspectives on current and pressing question on the European integration process.

Kultura Liberalna (www.kulturaliberalna.pl) is a major liberal and centrist milieu in Poland, established in 2009 by a group of young academics and journalists. Its high reputation stems from the *Kultura Liberalna* weekly magazine which features high-quality articles, international events and journalistic partnerships on Polish issues with *The Economist* and *Le Monde*, among others. *Kultura Liberalna* also co-organizes the *Józef Tischner International Debates* which for almost a decade have regularly brought together renowned intellectuals such as Timothy Snyder, John Gray, Ivan Krastev, Anthony Giddens, Michael Sandel and Ralf Dahrendorf, as well as politicians such as Karel Schwarzenberg, Joschka Fischer, Szymon Peres, Madelein Albright and Tadeusz Mazowiecki.