



H.E. Robert Fico

Prime Minister of Slovakia

Robert Fico was born on 15 September 1964 in Topolcany, Slovak Republic.

He is married, with one child. He studied Law, specialising in Criminal Law; he has also passed the professional judiciary examination and is qualified to act as a judge.

From 1986 to 1995, he was a researcher in criminal law at the Law Institute of the Ministry of Justice (1992-1995 Deputy Director) – and between 1994 and 2000, he represented the Slovak Republic in cases at the European Commission for Human Rights and European Court of Human Rights.

He has been a Member of the Slovak Parliament since 1992. From 1992 to 2002, he was Member of the Constitutional Committee of the Slovak Parliament. Since 1994, he has been Member of the Slovak delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (1999: Head of the Delegation). He was President of the Correctional Facilities' Committee of the Constitutional Committee of the Slovak Parliament (1995 - 2003). From 1996 to 1999, he was vice-president of the Party of Democratic Left. From 2002 to 2004, he was observer at the European Parliament on behalf of the Slovak Parliament. In 2002, he was member of the Slovak Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights, Nationalities and Equality Issues.

In 2000, he became a member of the Slovak Bar Association, representation of crime victims. As from 1999, Robert Fico is president of the political party SMER. Since 2002, he has been president of the Members of Parliament Club on behalf of the SMER and an observer at the European Parliament in the fraction of Party of European Socialists.



Vladimir Yakunin

President of Russian Railways

Vladimir Yakunin was born on 30 June 1948 in Melenki, Vladimir Oblast

Russian Railways

Vladimir Yakunin was appointed president of Russian Railways by the Government of the Russian Federation in June 2005 following the appointment of the Company's previous president, Gennady Fadeyev, as an advisor to Russian prime minister Mikhail Fradkov.

Born in 1948, Yakunin graduated from the Leningrad Institute of Mechanics as a Mechanical Engineer in 1972 and began his career as a junior research scientist at the State Institute of Applied Chemistry. After completing military service in the Soviet Army, he worked as an engineer and senior engineer at the Administration of the State Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Foreign Trade and was also head of department at the A. F. Yoffe Physics and Technical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.

Between 1985 and 1991, Yakunin was Second and then First Secretary of the USSR's Permanent Representative Office at the United Nations. He was then Chairman of the Board at the International Centre for Business Cooperation before becoming head of the North-Western Federal District Inspectorate of the Senior Control Department of the President of the Russian Federation

Yakunin became Deputy Minister of Transport in October 2000 and first Deputy Minister of Railways in February 2002. In October 2003, the Board of Russian Railways unanimously appointed Yakunin First Vice-President of the Company.

Other positions

Vladimir Yakunin is Founding President of the "World Public Forum - Dialogue of Civilizations", an International NGO. He is also Chairman of the Committee of Trustees of the Center of the National Glory

of Russia and St. Andrew's Foundation organizations which fund Orthodox Church-related projects. The centers' stated goal is the "revival of Russia's grandeur".

Yakunin is also involved in a number of additional business projects, including the construction of the Ust-Luga Baltic Sea terminal and the adaptation of the port in Murmansk for the export of liquefied natural gas. He heads the board of directors for the Black Sea port of Novorossiisk and the Far East port of Nakhodka as well.

About the World Public Forum "Dialogue of Civilizations"

The World Public Forum "Dialogue of Civilizations" is an international, independent, non-governmental, non-profit organization. It's an annual international forum, complete with the presentation of the International Prize of St. Andrew. Past recipients include UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura and Jordan's King Abdullah.

Quotes:

- "There is no religion that could justify terrorism."
- "All throughout the 20th century we had seen, probably, the most radical attempts to construct a unified world order based on different and differing positions. It is WW2 that gives us an example of the world community fighting against one of the claimants upon world supremacy."
- "Our aim is to arouse interest in a new generation to war history, and to awaken patriotism"



Alfred Gusenbauer

Former Federal Chancellor of Austria

Alfred Gusenbauer was born on 8 February 1960, in Sankt Pölten in the state of Lower Austria. Mr Gusenbauer was Chancellor of Austria between January 2007 and December 2008 and the leader of the Social Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ) from 2000 to 2008.

Mr Gusenbauer was educated at a high school in Wieselburg and studied political science, philosophy and jurisprudence at the University of Vienna, where he gained a doctorate in political science. He has since spent his whole professional life in politics, either as an employee of the SPÖ or as a parliamentary representative. He was a senior research fellow in the economic policy department of the Lower Austria Chamber of Labour from 1990 to 1999.

Mr Gusenbauer was federal leader of the SPÖ youth wing, the Socialist Youth (SJ) from 1984 to 1990, vice-president of the Socialist Youth International (IUSY) from 1985 to 1989 and vice-president of the Socialist International in 1989.

In 1991, Mr Gusenbauer was elected SPÖ chairman in Ybbs an der Donau and a member of the Lower Austria party executive. In the same year he was elected to the Bundesrat, the upper house of the Austrian Parliament, as a Deputy for Lower Austria. He was a member of the Austrian delegation to the parliamentary meeting of the Council of Europe in 1991 and was chairman of the social committee of the Council of Europe from 1995 to 1998.

In the Bundesrat, Mr Gusenbauer was Chairman of the Committee for Development Co-operation from 1996 to 1999. In 2000, he was elected leader of the SPÖ Group in the Bundesrat and also as Secretary-General of the SPÖ. Mr Gusenbauer is the Laureate of the International Prize "Dialogue of Civilizations" for 2008.

Quote:

"War still persists among us, and is in us. Personal well-being has risen to an unprecedented level, but nonetheless, local wars are continuing to take the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. Ideology and religions are the banners of either hope or hatred. But unfortunately, virtue has not triumphed and we must find answers to the new challenges."



Oleg Atkov

General Secretary of the WPF "Dialogue of Civilizations"

Oleg Yurievich Atkov was born on 5 May 1949 in Khvorostyanka, Kuybyshev Oblast, Russian SFSR

Mr Atkov graduated from Sechenov First Moscow Institute of Medicine in 1973 and carried out postgraduate training in the Scientific Institute of Cardiology of the Academy of Medical Sciences of Russia until 1978. Following this, he worked as research fellow and senior research fellow in the Myasnikov Institute of Clinical Cardiology of the Academy of Sciences.

In 1977 Mr Atkov entered the training group of the Soviet cosmonauts. On 8 February 1984 Mr Atkov made a space flight as a cosmonaut-researcher on the spaceship "Soyuz T-10V". He went on to work on the orbital station "Salyut-7" for 237 days.

After his return to Earth Mr Atkov continued his work in the Myasnikov Institute of Clinical Cardiology and in 1990 was appointed head of New Diagnostic Methods Department. From 1989 to 1996 he was Deputy Director of the Department of Space Life Science of the International Space University in Strasbourg, France. He currently works as a specialist in telemedicine with the European Commission.

Oleg Atkov has been the Head of the Instrumental Diagnostic Methods Department of the Russian State Medical University since 1991 and Editor-in-Chief of the "Journal of Clinical Imaging" since 1992.

In Year 2002 he was appointed the Head of the Health Department of the Ministry of Railways of Russian Federation and, in 2003, was appointed Head of the Medical Care Department of "Russian Railways" JSC. In August 2005 Atkov become Vice-President of "Russian Railways" JSC.

Oleg Atkov is the author of more than 150 publications, several monographs, 15 inventions and 3 patents. He is the President of Russian Telemedicine Association (since 2000) and the President of Russian Medical Association of Railway Transportation.

Oleg Atkov is the honorary Doctor of Humboldt University of Berlin (Germany).



Dr. Walter Schwimmer

Former Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Walter Schwimmer was born on 16 June 1942, in Vienna.

After being a member of the Austrian Parliament (National Council) for 28 years, serving as chairperson of several committees (Justice, Health, Housing and Construction) and deputy leader of his political group (ÖVP - Austrian People's Party), he was elected Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

Schwimmer held this post from September 1, 1999 until September 1, 2004. At the beginning of his term, UK newspaper *The Economist* accused him of being a “timid moral policeman” over his treatment of the Chechnya conflict. In June 2004, his bid to be elected to a second five-year term as secretary general did not succeed.

He currently works as a consultant on international relations and European affairs, based in Klosterneuburg near Vienna.

He is (honorary) Secretary General of the Maison de la Méditerranée/Fondazione Mediterraneo (Naples) and Chairman of the International Coordination Committee of the World Public Forum - Dialogue of Civilisations.

On April 15, 2010 he became president of the Megatrend University, Serbia’s biggest private university.

Quotes:

- *“Europe has learned to some extent, often after tragic historical experiences, to develop responses to today’s challenges based on a joint commitment to democracy, human rights and the rule of law. In a few weeks the world will celebrate the 65th anniversary of the second World War, in your country [Russia] known as the great patriotic war. Although a compatriot of mine, an Austrian female writer, Ingeborg Bachmann, once pointed out “History is teaching all the time, but it never finds pupils”, I am convinced that Europe, may be for the first time in its history of tragic conflicts, have learned the lessons from history. War and violence are never solutions but the source for immense suffering in particular of innocents”.*



Stefan Karner

Professor, Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Research of the consequences of war, Vice-President of Austrian Black Cross

The Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Research on War Consequences is located in the Austrian city of Graz. Over the course of 20 years of its humanitarian activity, its staff have discovered a huge database on Austrian prisoners of war in both local and Russian archives and discovered the fate of thousands of soldiers who were killed during the liberation of Vienna from the Nazi regime.

Stefan Karner commented: “Our work is not just scientific. It helps relatives of the fallen. Maybe some of them wish to come here, to the place where their grandfathers, father or brothers were buried”

The website of the Austrian Black Cross details, country by country, the casualties in the Republic of Austria during both World Wars. It also has a search facility for the tracing of personnel killed in action.



Viatcheslav Kantor

President, European Jewish Congress

Viatcheslav Moshe Kantor was born on 8 September 1953, in Moscow, Russia. He has three sons and a daughter. A prominent public figure, international philanthropist, entrepreneur and investor, Mr Kantor is committed to progress and has greatly contributed to revitalising Jewish life in Europe and beyond.

In 2007, Mr Kantor was appointed President of the European Jewish Congress (EJC) and he was re-elected in December 2008; he has been Chairman of the EJC Board of Governors from 2004-2007.

The EJC is a leading Jewish secular umbrella organisation that co-ordinates 40 national Jewish communities in Europe, encompassing 2.5 million Jews. The EJC's goal is to address the world's most pressing issues: protecting human rights, fighting xenophobia and anti-Semitism, promoting interfaith dialogue, implementing cultural and educational programmes, and remembering the Holocaust and other tragedies that claimed millions of human lives throughout the world.

Between 2005 and 2009 Mr Kantor was also President of the Russian Jewish Congress (RJC), a leading Russian secular organisation that represents the interests of the whole spectrum of modern Russian Jewry. And since 2008 he has been co-Chairman of the European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation (ECTR), a non-governmental organisation established to monitor European countries' adherence to the principles of tolerance, develop practical initiatives and make recommendations for promoting mutual understanding between cultures.

In 2005, Mr Kantor Initiated and organised the first "Let My People Live!" International Forum in Krakow, Poland, to mark 60 years since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. In 2005, he also founded and became President of the World Holocaust Forum Foundation (WHF), established following the Krakow Forum. The Foundation's goal is to support Holocaust remembrance activities for the sake of preserving the historical memory of nations all over the world and preventing future tragedies. The WHF convenes "Let My People Live!" International Forums on a regular basis.

The Forum enjoyed great support from leading international institutions and organisations, such as the Council of Europe and its Parliamentary Assembly (PACE), as well as high-ranking politicians from many countries.

In 2006, he founded and became Chairman of the European Jewish Fund (EJF), which focuses on promoting Jewish life throughout Europe by supporting programmes to reinforce Jewish identity and Jewish pride, especially by re-connecting people with their rich and vital Jewish heritage. The Fund also focuses on addressing pressing concerns threatening Jewish life in Europe, such as assimilation, anti-Semitism and racism.

In 2007, Mr Kantor became President of the International Luxembourg Conference on Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe, the largest non-government expert institution of its kind uniting leading, world-renowned experts on non-proliferation of nuclear arms, materials and delivery vehicles.

Mr Kantor is also co-author and co-organiser of the European Week of Tolerance – a series of events held in November 2008 in Brussels, Prague, and Kaliningrad to fight against human rights violation, xenophobia, racism, anti-Semitism, and other forms of extremism. This initiative brought together European leaders and major NGOs who reiterated their commitment to promote tolerance throughout Europe.

Business and scientific career

After graduation, Mr. Kanto headed a leading Soviet laboratory engaged in developing spacecraft. A reflector satellite was designed using his research and subsequently launched into Earth orbit to illuminate the planet's surface with reflected sunlight.

In 1993, he took the helm at Acron agrochemical company. Under Mr. Kantor's supervision, Acron has become one of the world's leading fertilizer producers and distributors. Between 1996 and 2000 he was also Economic Adviser to the Chairman of the Federation Council (the Upper House of the Russian Parliament) of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation.

In 2000, Mr Kantor contributed to founding the National Institute for Corporate Reform (NICR), a non-profit organisation uniting renowned politicians, business leaders and scholars to provide effective support for corporate reform in Russian industry. Kantor is currently President of the NICR.



Yisrael Meir Lau

Chairman of Yad Vashem and Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv

Yisrael Meir Lau was born on 1 June 1937 in the Polish town of Piotrków Trybunalski.

His father, Rabbi Moshe Chaim Lau, was the last Chief Rabbi of the town and died in the Treblinka death camp. Lau was freed from the Buchenwald concentration camp in 1945. Lau has credited a teen prisoner with protecting him in the camp. His entire family was murdered, with the exception of his older brother, Naphtali Lau-Lavie, his half brother, Yehoshua Lau-Hager, and his uncle already living in Mandate Palestine.

Lau immigrated to Mandate Palestine with his brother Naphtali in July 1945. Israel studied in various yeshivot and began to work as a teacher. After filling rabbinic posts in numerous synagogues and neighborhoods, he was appointed as chief rabbi of Netanyah, and then as chief rabbi of Tel Aviv-Yaffo. He also served as a member of the chief rabbinical council. Between the years 1999-2003 Rabbi Lau served as the Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi of Israel, returning afterwards to his position of Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv-Yaffo in 1961.

As a survivor, Rabbi Lau is intensely involved with Holocaust memories and commemoration through his worldwide speeches and appearances, as well as in his writings – including his best-selling autobiography *Do Not Harm the Child*. During his tenure as Chief Rabbi of Israel he worked to establish closer ties with the Catholic Church, ties that he still continues to strengthen. Rabbi Israel Meir Lau is the Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council.

Rabbi Lau is married and has eight children and many grandchildren. He is the author of numerous works on Jewish law and tradition. In 2005 Rabbi Lau received the Israel Prize for Lifetime Achievement.

Quotes:

- “There are common enemies – after the flood of water, after the flames of fire of WWII we crossed – we have common enemies like ignorance, hatred, violence, crime, diseases –heart, brain, AIDS, cancer - starvation, poverty. Don’t we have enemies? Is mankind saved already?”



Igor Kasatonov

Admiral, Professor of Military Academy (Russia)

Igor Kasatonov was born on 10 February 1939 in Vladivostok.

Kasatonov was the Black Sea Fleet's commander between October 1991 and December 1992. He has a daughter and two sons who all now serve in the Black Sea Fleet.

He is a member of Peter's Academy of Sciences and Arts (PANI) and is holder of the Order of the Red Star "for Service to the Homeland" I and III class, in addition to nine service medals.



Prof. Asher Maoz

Shimon Peres Academic Center (Israel)

Asher Maoz is Professor in the Faculty of Law of Tel Aviv University. His areas of expertise include constitutional law, human rights, state and religion, Jewish law, family law and succession.

Maoz is also a Fellow of the Whitney R. Harris Institute for Global Legal Studies and a former board member of ISPAC, the International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council of the UN on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.



Vilmos Hanti

Vice-President of International Federation of Resistance Fighters (Austria)

Vilmos Hanti was born on 20 January 1958 in Budapest, Hungary.

The international federation of the resistance fighters (FIR) - association of the anti-fascists is the umbrella organisation of federations of former resistance fighters, partisans, members of the anti-Hitler coalition, pursued of the Nazi-regime and anti-fascist of today's generations from over twenty countries of Europe and Israel.



H.B. Archbishop Christopher

Archbishop of Prague, Metropolitan of the Czech Lands and Slovakia

His Beatitude Metropolitan Christopher (Pulets) of Prague and the Czech Lands and Slovakia is the primate of the Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia.

Archbishop Christopher has participated in numerous theological conferences and has represented the Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia in many venues.

Fluent in his native language and also Russian, Greek, German and English, he is well known for his academic pursuits in theology and philosophy, having a doctorate in both.



H.B. Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz

Roman Catholic Archbishop of Minsk and Mahilyow (Belarus)

Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz was born on 3 January 1946, in Odelsk, near Hrodna, Belarus

Prior to becoming the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Minsk and Mahilyow, Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz had served as a bishop in Russia and was instrumental in the reestablishment of the Roman Catholic Church in Russia after the collapse of the Communist regime.

Archbishop Kondrusiewicz is a member of the special council on Europe at the General Secretariat Synod of Bishops, a member of Congregation on matters of clergy and of Pope Council "Justice and Peace". He is vice-president of the Eurasian department of the International Association of religious freedom.

In February 2009 Archbishop Kondrusiewicz was elected Deputy Chairman of the Advisory Interconfessional Council under the Commissioner for Religions and Nationalities. The council includes heads of Belarusian religious associations.

Archbishop Kondrusiewicz speaks Belarusian, Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, English and Italian.



Thierry Mariani

Member of the French National Assembly

Thierry Mariani was born on 8 August 1958 in Orange, Vaucluse (France).

Mr Mariani is a member of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and an observer of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation . The latter body came into existence as a model of multilateral political and economic initiative aimed at fostering interaction and harmony among the Member States, as well as to ensure peace, stability and prosperity encouraging friendly and good-neighbourly relations in the Black Sea region.

Since 2009, he has also served as a French Special Representative for Pakistan and Afghanistan during the Kabul elections and is a vice-president of the Russian-French friendship group.



Zalina Medoeva

Vice-president, Center of National Glory (Russia)

Zalina Medoeva was born on 5 February 1948 in Tskhinvali, the capital of South Ossetia.

Ms Medoeva is a Member of the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, as well as a member of the Chamber for Cultural and Spiritual Heritage Preservation.

The Center of National Glory

The Centre of Russian National Glory is a non-political, non-governmental organisation.

Members of the CRNG include various representatives of different social groups: teachers and doctors, scientists and priests, artists and civil servants, all united by their desire to contribute personally to the cause of reviving the Glory of Russia.

The Centre of Russian National Glory is a part of civil society, one of its institutions, which proposes its modest contribution to the important work done by the President of the Russian Federation, the Russian Orthodox Church and many other public associations in order sooner to achieve both economic prosperity and political stability for Russia and every citizen's welfare and confidence in the future.

Participants in the activities of the Centre of National Glory share the opinion that the achievement of this goal depends essentially on the state of Russian social consciousness, its attitude towards Creation, social optimism and pride in the fatherland. To restore the people and country's belief in itself, trust in its success and worthy future is one of the main tasks for all the forces orientated towards the renaissance and raising of Russia.



Drahoslav Machala

Adviser to the Prime Minister of Slovakia

Drahoslav Machala is an advisor and speechwriter for Slovakia's Prime Minister Robert Fico.