

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,
dear friends from the FÖS,
dear Jos,

when I saw Jos Delbeke last year in Brussels in my new function as state minister, I asked myself: When did I meet this guy first and when did I hear about him and his work first. Was it during my time as a young researcher at the Institute for Ecological Economics in Berlin around 1990, when we tried to push the Ecological Tax Reform on the European Agenda? Was it when I worked as Senior Researcher at the Wuppertal Institute between 1992 and 1998, when we tried to make sustainable development more concrete in the Netherlands, in Germany, in Europe? Or was it while I was member of the German Federal Parliament from 1998 on when we had to work hard to bring the Kyoto Protocol into force and implement the European emissions trading system or REACH, the European Chemicals Directive? I couldn't remember precisely.

To be honest, I didn't try very hard to find an answer. In fact, the answer is very simple: Jos was always there. He is the great Constant in European Environmental Policy, be it Clean Air or Climate, Clean Cars or Renewables, GMOs or CCS. He grew with the European Environmental Policy; and the European Environmental Policy grew with him. He shaped it, and he was shaped by it. It is justified to call him one of the founding fathers of the European Environmental and Climate Policy. I would like to congratulate the FÖS for having selected such an impressive Prize winner. It is a good choice, a very good choice.

Jos started to work for the EU in 1986, that means 23 years ago, he started as Administrator and then climbed up the ladder step by step in the DG Environment: from head of the Unit "Economic Analysis and Environmental Perspective" to the Unit "Climate Change" to Director "Climate Change and Air" to Deputy Director-General for the Environment. In our time, where job hopping is normality, this is a rare example of constancy, continuity and reliability.

European Policy is often regarded as the lowest common denominator of the Member States. There is no doubt some truth in it. It is very rarely the case that the Council is the driving force behind positive developments. On the contrary. All too often it is just the market place, where national interests negotiate, bargain and make deals with each other, sometimes dirty. You accept my VW-Law, and I accept your preferential treatment of EdF and GdF. You support my concept of agricultural subsidies and I support you in protecting your steel industry. This kind of European Policy is part of reality, if we like it or not. One can complain about this, but it is difficult to change it.

Maybe one day the European Parliament will be strong enough to domesticate these national interest and prevent those dirty deals. However, presently it's mainly the Commission, that really tries to develop a coherent European Policy that looks at the total and not just at the various parts of the total. We urgently need such an agent of truly European interests. I don't say, that I agree with all the proposals coming from Brussels. For my taste the Commission is often too fixed on economic growth, defining competitiveness all too narrow and leaving out of consideration diversity in Europe. But the basic idea, to develop European strategies that are more than the sum of the national interest of the member states, is a good concept. It unites us, it is

fairness oriented, it makes us stronger, and it allows us better to take our responsibility in the international arena, be it on climate protection, on fair trade or on human rights. For this purpose we need idealistic professionals or professional idealists in the European institutions.

For me Jos Delbeke is the European Civil Servant par excellence. The American Environmental Economist Denny Ellermann recently said: "If there were a Nobel Prize for Civil Service, Jos would be a certain nominee." Ok, today Jos gets the real Adam-Smith-Prize which is better than a theoretical Nobel Prize for Civil Service.

Jos, your loyalty goes to an institution: the European Union. And it goes to an idea: the idea that environmental, social and economic development should and can go hand in hand. Some people call this sustainable development. You have always tried to overcome the unfruitful confrontation between economics and the environment by pushing economic instruments in environmental policy, be it Eco Taxes, Emissions Trading or Liability systems. But when you saw the need for stricter regulation, you did not hesitate to make adequate proposals. CO₂-limits for cars were such an example. And here again you did not only argue from an environmental point of view, but also from an economic perspective. Costs of Climate Change could escalate in the future, so let us better act now to avoid them, because it's cheaper. And you had another argument: CO₂ limits are good for the competitiveness of the European car manufacturers. There is no future for gas guzzlers on the global car markets. So let's prepare.

Let me say that I feel ashamed that it was the German Government that watered down the ambitious proposals for CO₂ limits in cars.

One could assume that a man who always looks at both sides of the coin, the environmental and the economic one, is everybody's darling. But listening to representatives of heavy industries this sounds different. In the Financial Times Germany I read that they called you – I quote – "the man who started a campaign to push energy intensive industries out of Europe". I guess that you don't regard this emotional and aggressive statement as fair. I guess, they don't mean you, they simply refuse to learn and instead of this make noise.

In this Financial Times article you are also quoted. Answering this steel industry man you say: "We have done a lot of economic analyses. I'm not blind concerning the costs. This is why the Greens also don't like me."

Sorry, Jos, this statement makes no sense. First of all: It's them, who ignore the cost, not you. So there is no reason for excuses or justifications. And secondly, as a Green I can assure you: It is not true, that we don't like you.

We do like you and we congratulate you for the Adam Smith Prize because we think you really deserve it.

Let us continue to work for a better world.

Congratulations and Thank you, Jos!