



The President

'Angel of Culture'

Angel of Culture is the best possible symbol for peaceful coexistence. The sculpture conveys a message of respect and humanity. From within a wheel of steel, the Star of David, the Cross and the Crescent emerge as symbols of the Abrahamic religions. These symbols form an angel within the wheel. It is hard to imagine a better way of showing how people are connected with one another in spite of different religions and cultural backgrounds.

The Angel thus also reflects the values of the European Union. The EU is committed, not only within its own borders, but throughout the world, to protecting human rights, peace and democracy. These can be achieved only by tolerance, mutual acceptance and diplomatic dialogue, because only with these principles is successful coexistence possible.

Last year the EU deservedly received the Nobel Prize for enabling its citizens to live together in peace for six decades. However, peaceful coexistence in Europe has now become so self-evident that many people take it for granted. That it is anything but self-evident becomes clear when one turns to look at other regions of the world.

One such region is Israel and Palestine, the next destination of *Angel of Culture*. The conflicts in the region are a source of concern not only for me but for all the citizens of Europe. For this reason, I therefore welcome Mr. Gregor Merten's visit to the region. Last summer I had the opportunity to attend the presentation of *Angel of Culture* in Brussels, and was able to see for myself how this work of art brings together people of different nationalities and different cultural backgrounds. I hope that *Angel of Culture*, now touring Israel and Palestine, will make at least a small contribution to bringing about reconciliation between people in the region.



Martin Schulz