



202nd Executive Committee London Liberal International

5-6 July 2019



INLW board members, Margaret de Vos van Steenwijk-Groeneveld and Lysbeth van Valkenburg-Lely were participants during this meeting. At the impressive Institute of Civil Engineers, we were present at the opening by Hakima El Haité, President of Liberal International.

Hakima El Haité gave us food for thought; “the importance to fight for freedom and for climate



justice all over the world is a new challenge for all of us. We must reform our organization into a movement and help each other. People from all over who believe in our values and our constitution are very welcome”

The partnership in the programmes of VVD, ALDE, FNF and our friends in SENEGAL will enhance to build Liberal International and make our values a daily reality. “Reactive, responsive and aggressive are the words for our communication. Good communication is a tool to democracy and our values and a weapon to answer populism. Share our activities via phone and other means”.



Hans van Baalen gave us some positive news about the new group of President Macron in the European Parliament. The cooperation between the liberal parties is going well. Alde will remain member of LI. “We Liberals must give our own story ‘. ALDE together with the new group of Macron, “En March” now form the group “Renew Europe” and together we have 108 seats in the European Parliament.

Rt. Hon. Baroness Sal Brinton, President of Liberal Democrats, underlined the importance of our liberal values and possibilities for responsibility in



government. “We must all fight like a liberal . We have the courage of our convictions. We are talking about new politics where the Lib.Dem might be leading in government” .

Ms Naomi Long, MEP & Leader of Alliance Party of Northern Ireland. “Liberals lead the way in gender equality and gender balance. More women must get more involved, as that could be part of the solution of

several problems. Brexit is a huge problem for Northern Ireland and the result of English nationalism. This crisis can break up the UK. Scotland and Ireland want to stay in the EU.

Nationalism is part of the problem. But:

- We must go for prosperity, progress and hope. Nationalism ignores that progress can better the world.
- We must fight for our values, that makes it difficult to be a liberal.
- Clean and consistent communication. Populism simplifies everything.



Most people don’t have time to wrestle with complex difficulties; we must communicate better and therein we can learn from populists. People must see benefit, so we must demonstrate delivering our promises”.

Rt.Hon. Baroness Lindsay Northover, President of the British Group of Liberal International. “All changes are a challenge, unfortunately the British are so divided about Brexit. These complex challenges we must tackle together. Climate change and migration cannot be defeated in isolation. UK will weaken by leaving the EU. We pushed the EU away”.

During the afternoon we attended one of the political sessions. The theme was “**Europe Better In or Out?**” The moderator was **Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck**, President of Honour of LI.



Hans van Baalen, President of ALDE party, gave some more details about the EU parliament. The rule of law, freedom of press, no exceptions and the Lisbon treaty are still valid in the EU parliament. The EU is functioning well.

Mr. Ümit Yalcin, ambassador of the Republic of Turkey, Turkey still wants to become a member of the EU. Perhaps that is better than Turkey going in the wrong direction, that was his question to the liberals to think about.



Ms. Trine Skei Grande, Minister of Culture & Gender equality, Venstre Norway. A system with only 2 parties gives the wrong challenge. Democracy means that small minorities are also to be heard not only the majority. That is not possible in a 2-party system. Structure builds the small countries. Trade is important but must combine with climate change. The Young vote for the climate. Problems: We find strong pollution in the seas and a fast-growing China. The change in our climate causes us to get more refugees and more problems. In Europe we are caught between Trump and China. In the Council of Europe cooperation with all countries is the future. It's important

that rules and the rule of Law must work.

Some more remarks were made by the speakers: The EU makes rules, but those rules are not always above the laws in Britain, but Britain must reform. Turkey is a neighbor and member of NATO. Political reform according to Hans van Baalen could help reform China to become a democracy.

The next day we were welcome at the National Liberal Club, established by Liberal Minister William Ewart Gladstone in 1882, home to the headquarters of Liberal International.

In this political session the theme was “**Defending the Democratic Space**”. Moderator was Astrid Thors, LI vice-president of LI.

Will Moy, director of Full Fact, gave us some ideas: we must get improvement of public information, trustworthy information. Elections - outsourcing transparency of content. For internet companies, it would be good to make better legislation.



Politicians are often using false information,

- some as a standard,
- some as personal data as campaign,
- some use it just to kick up dust, undermining democracy. Politicians respond to this.

Education is important to understand new technical skills and to develop awareness of information. We

need new laws on how to work with this new tech.

Legislation though is not **the** solution. How we choose to behave

in politics and in civil society is! We must promote good examples. Remember 5 years ago, is different from now – for elections be aware of that!!





During the lunch period participants were able to visit both the Houses of Parliament.

In the evening the farewell dinner

was given in the dining room of the National Liberal Club. We were welcomed by Karl-Heinze Paqué, deputy president of LI.

President Hakima el Haité wished us already a warm welcome for the next LI exc. Meeting which will be held in Morocco in November 2019.

