

Ladies and Gentlemen!

The Weimar Triangle, das Weimarer Dreieck, le triangle de Weimar, troikat Weimarski was founded in 1991 in Weimar by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of France (Mr. Roland Dumas), Poland (Mr. Krzysztof Skubiszewski) and Germany (Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher).

In addition to the Elysée-treaty which was signed in 1963, exactly 50 years ago, by Konrad Adenauer and Charles De-Gaulle, the Weimar Triangle was founded to develop the European integration and to “deepen” the relationship between France, Poland and Germany.

Three former enemies with the same cultural roots cared about reconciliation.

After the fall of the Iron Curtain the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe prepared for their accession to the Nato and the European Union. In 1999 Poland became a member of the NATO and 5 years later, in 2004 they became a part of the European Union.

The main idea now is – as was said by Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle (2012) - to create a forum of equal partners in the heart of Europe. „The dialogue between Germany, France and Poland on key European issues plays a valuable role in the emergence of a European identity.“

In opposite to the Elysée-treaty the Weimar Triangle was not a contract. It was not an association. It was founded as a forum for consultation and for dialogue.

And indeed, there are many issues which are worth to be discussed:

For example the

European Energy Policy

Germany decided to quit nuclear power and promotes renewable energy.

France is going to expand the nuclear programs

In Poland there are no nuclear power stations yet, but Poland is planning to build some.

Economic Policy

Germany and France are a part of the EURO zone, Poland is still not a member of the Euro zone, but in line with the Economic and Monetary Union - EMU. So the Weimar Triangle is helpful for the balance between the EMU-members and the candidate countries.

The Maastricht treaty gave the limit that the government dept shouldn't be larger than 60 % of the countries Gross domestic product (GDP). (GDP is the market value of all officially recognized final goods and services produced within a country in a given period of time.)

The dept in France amounts to more than 90 % of the GDP.

The dept in Germany is more than 80 % of the GDP.

The dept in Poland is less than 60 % of the GDP, thanks to Balcerovicz.

In Poland there was economic growth, even during the economic crisis in 2009.

Security Policy:

In 2004 the defense ministers of the European Union initiated the institution of mobile combat units for use in crisis situations, called Battle Groups. On July 5, 2011, France, Poland and Germany signed an agreement to form a joint Weimar Triangle combat group. 1700 soldiers from France, Poland and Germany shall be ready to deploy in crisis zones by the first half of 2013.

Cultural and educational cooperation:

There are many bilateral institutions for example the German-French Youth Office and the German-Polish Youth office and important institutions with trinational projects as the Stiftung Genshagen or the Thüringer Institut für Lehrerfortbildung, Lehrplanentwicklung und Medien (Thillm)

European Integration

The Weimar Triangle can stabilise the European integration, perhaps it can be seen as an european engine to bring forward wealth and security on the continent.

The President of the French Republic, Francois Hollande, and the Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, and the Heads of Government of Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia (the Visegrad

Group), met last month (on March 6, 2013) in Warsaw to discuss the economic development in the European Union, the future architecture of the Economic and Monetary Union and the strengthening of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

In the last 22 years eight summits took place:

21.09.1993: Gdansk, Poland: presidents of France, Germany and Poland (Francois Mitterand, Lech Walesa, Richard von Weizsäcker)

21.02.1998: Poznan: presidents of France and Poland and the German chancellor (Jacques Chirac, Aleksander Kwasniewski, Helmut Kohl)

07.05.1999: Nancy (Schröder, Chirac, Kwasniewski)

27.02.2001: Hambach (Palatinate) (Schröder, Chirac, Kwasniewski)

09.05.2003: Wroclaw (Schröder, Chirac, Kwasniewski)

19.05.2005: Nancy(Schröder, Chirac, Kwasniewski)

05.12.2006: Mettlach (Saar): Merkel, Jacques Chirac, Lech Kaczynski

07.02.2011: Warsaw (Komorowski, Sarkozy, Merkel)

In all summits the leaders of the three states agreed to expand and strengthen their cooperation

The meetings at the ministerial level took place more frequently.

Partnerships of regions and cities were initiated. Thuringia, for example, is connected with Picardie and Malopolska, where the capital is Krakow.

Or: North-Rhine-Westfalia is connected with Nord-Pas-de-Calais, Silesia

There are many activities all over Europe but the break-through of the triangle, especially regarding the acceptance and appreciation of the people, could not be achieved so far.

The reason for this may lie in the absence of an institution similar to the German-French Youth-Office, which was founded in 1963, too.

The complement and the counterpart to the meetings of the politicians is the reunion of the civil society. When countries should find themselves coming together, only the people are able.

So in 2010 the association „Weimarer Dreieck e.V.“ was established in Weimar.

The association „Weimar Triangle“ is a contact point for all the people who want to actively support the French-Polish-German relationship .

The Weimarer Dreieck Association was founded for the civil society. But it is helpful that there is prominent support. Famous members are, for example, the Polish and French Embassy, the European Ministry in Thüringen and the Mayor of Weimar, The EJBW and last but not least the Thillm.

Honorary member of our association is the former foreign secretary of Germany Mr. Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

Everything that brings people together as friends of the multicultural and multinational idea, is good. It does not matter under which topic we will meet or under which circumstances. Important thing is that we will do so! It matters that the reunions take place. To share each other's knowledge and to learn from each other. Little by little one goes far.

It is our aspiration to make the Weimar Triangle more popular and increase its importance and relevance. The main idea of the triangle is that the people of Poland, France and Germany are going to meet each other and talk about their thoughts and experiences.

The possibilities of involvement have no limits. If you are interested in music, languages, travelling, literature, you can do whatever you like in relation to the multinational relationship of Poland, France and Germany.

The activities in the context of the Weimar Triangle, especially in Weimar in Thuringia, are multifaceted. To get a general idea once a year the association Weimarer Dreieck arranges a so called „Multiplikatortreffen“; a meeting where the actors and participants inform each other about their projects and aims. The next meeting will take place next month, on May twenty-first, in Erfurt, in the Thüringer Staatskanzlei.

The EJBW will inform about their international youth projects

The Thillm will give an overview of their educational projects.

The Bauhaus-University will report on the offers for students

The Weimarer Rendez-vous with History will talk about the trinational projects.

In the meeting information on literature, music and film and generally youth cooperation will be given.

This year on August, 29 the association Weimarer Dreieck and the town of Weimar will again donate a prize for joint efforts of the civil society.

Last year we awarded a prize not for an institution and not for professionals but for three young people from Poland, France and Germany, who had organized a project for adolescents .

They had organised a circus for young people from different countries and especially France, Poland and Germany. The three young people at the age of 15 to 24 years had never before reflected about the sense of the Weimar Triangle. They have realised it by doing it, with pleasure, tolerance and openness to experience. That is civil society in the Weimar Triangle. That is Europe.

Thank you very much for your attention!