



CREATIVE ASSOCIATION FOR ARTS AND CULTURE DROM

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PRESS RELEASE

WORLD-FAMOUS FINNISH WRITER AND CULTURAL FIGURE VEIJO BALTZAR VISITING LATVIA IN CONNECTION TO HIS CROSS-EUROPEAN INITIATIVES

Author and Cultural Counsellor Mr. **Veijo Baltzar** (Finland) is visiting Riga, Latvia 29.9-1.10.2018. Main purpose of his visit is the Finnish-Latvian Networking and Follow-up Meeting on Monday, October 1st, hosted by Ambassador of Finland H.E. Riitta Korpivaara. The meeting of Latvian-Finnish dialogue will be attended by cultural, academic and political leaders of Latvia. Held at the premises of the Embassy of Finland in Latvia meeting will discuss the promotion of issues of European cultural heritage and renewal of multicultural policies of European Union as based on current initiatives of Mr Baltzar.

Cultural Counsellor Veijo Baltzar, is a world-renowned Finnish author and all-rounder in culture, who is a travelling Roma by his roots. He pursued his life's work for the Roma people through his artistic, cultural and social activity. Since starting his literary career in 1960s, Baltzar has discussed intercultural relations in more than 72 literary works including novels, plays, prose and poetry collections, librettos and film manuscripts. He has directed numerous plays, served as teacher at the Theatre Academy Helsinki, and is also actively involved in the visual arts.

Cultural Counsellor Veijo Baltzar is an author of **20 cross-disciplinary law initiatives for renewing European Union's policies of multiculturalism**. The initiatives were discussed in a successful seminar "Upgrade2018!" in Riga, EU house 28-29.5.2018 (see attached Declaration). Their renewed version was discussed in Vilnius, Embassy of Finland, on September 26-27, after which they will be sent to European Commission. Mr Baltzar's 20 law initiatives are largely cross-sectoral, addressing all spheres of society, including perspectives of cultural and educational policies as well as promotion of European cultural heritage in form of innovative actions and policies.

With the above-described activity, Mr Veijo Baltzar has attempted to promote cooperation of cultural leaders and decision-makers within the Baltic region as well their competence and mutual dialogue on issues of building sustainable multicultural Europe. This activity has formed a network of representatives of Latvian intelligencia, dedicated to promotion of Baltzar's ideas and initiatives in form of international collaboration, with the objective of reaching their practical execution in European decision-making and society-building processes. Embassy of Finland supports this activity, enabling joint elaboration of further plans and mutual collaboration among its participants.

"We need political initiativeness and fights on various fronts to build sustainable European future. Therefore Veijo Baltzar's law initiatives to renew policies of multiculturalism in Europe were a crucial turning point. Currently they are topical and of utmost importance."

Finland's former Prime Minister **Paavo Lipponen** at Veijo Baltzar's 50-year artistic career's anniversary celebration 6.4.2018

Veijo Baltzar is available for interviews in connection to his initiatives in Riga during Mon 1 Oct (best after 4.30 pm.)

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