



# ICELAND WITHDRAWS EU MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The Government of Iceland, after extensive talks with the European Union officials, over the past weeks, has decided, not to start accession negotiations once again with the troubled bloc. The Government has also asked that EU leaders should act accordingly. Foreign Minister Gunnar Bragi Sveinsson, informed Latvia (Presently holding the EU Presidency) and the European Commission this week that, the Icelandic Cabinet had made its decision. The Icelandic Cabinet at present includes AEER members from the Independence Party.

Bjarni Benediktsson who is the Finance Minister and the Independence Party Chairman said that the Icelandic Government's decisions not to join the European Union should not come as a surprise to the Union especially in light of the same Government's opposition to EU membership. He held that the new

government that was formed back in 2013 after the elections of the same year had always opposed such membership and was backed by the majority of Parliament. After the 2013 election Iceland dissolved the team that was negotiation membership of Iceland to the EU and all grants that had been given by the EU in relation to the accession process from that point onwards had been rejected by the same newly formed government or in some cases even withdrawn by Brussels. "Therefore it is perfectly normal for the government to stress at this point that Iceland will not seek membership of the EU. But it shouldn't be the EU's decision if Iceland is considered as a candidate country or not," added the Finance Minister.

*Continues on Back Page*



## EFF TAKES PART IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PEACE IN IRAQ

On March 2nd – 3rd, 2015 the International Conference “Toward Peace and Reconciliation in Iraq” took place in Riga, Latvia. It brought together parliamentarians, ambassadors, researchers, academics and political leaders from the European Union, the USA, the UN and Iraq. The main focus and objectives of this high level conference was the development of an effective, global solution platform, to end the crisis in Iraq peacefully.

“The aim of the conference is to raise awareness and facilitate discussions on the present situation in Iraq, misconceptions of Iraqi internal politics and how to DEAL with ISIS”, announced Sheikh Jamal Abdulwahhab Khamees, Honorary President of the International Foundation “Peace Ambassadors for Iraq” (PAFI). PAFI is a Non-Governmental Organization founded and registered in the Republic of Latvia. The Foundation is confident in the interest and goodwill of global political leaders from the European Union, the USA, and the UN regarding the Iraqi crisis.

PAFI believes that Iraq’s issues can still be resolved peacefully when Iraqis can sit together with the help, guidance and even pressure from the European Union, the USA and the UN.

“Striving for peace and reconciliation in Iraq now that Latvia has assumed the Presidency of the Council of European Union in 2015, PAFI instead of sowing one season seeds is now planting a tree with the fruits mellowing soon for decades” expressed Mr. Karlis Boldisevics International Foundation “Peace Ambassadors for Iraq” Head of the Parliamentary Affairs Division.

During the conference, solutions that are based on a number of political and social reforms that could put an end to Iraq’s division on political, social, religious or ethnic grounds, which are largely the main cause of the conflicts coupled with misunderstandings by the international community, were discussed.



In the two-day conference sessions and workshops on the current situation in Iraq and the Middle East, ISIS roots, history, causes and external forces were also discussed and covered. The role and responsibility of Europe, the USA and the UN have been clearly highlighted. The positive engagement and involvement will no doubt show the possible gains for all of the parties involved in the peace and reconciliation process in Iraq and especially the ordinary people of Iraq.

Speakers at the conference included Mr. Peter Hoekstra, former member United States House of Representatives, Dr. Hassan Fahmi Jumaah, Secretary General of the Iraqi Forum for Intellectuals & Academics, Mr.



Robert Torricelli, former US Senator, Mr. Mokhtar Lamani, Former Special Permanent Representative for Iraq, Mr. Struan Stevenson, Former Chairman EP Delegation for relations with Iraq,

Mr. Ramzy Mardini, Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East at the Atlantic Council, Dr. Steven O'Brien, Editor at The London Magazine, and many others.

European Foundation for Freedom was represented by its Researcher Ms. Tijana Tufek. The participation in the conference offered a valuable insight in the actual situation in Iraq as well as possible future scenarios for that area. Bringing peace in Iraq and stabilising the area of Middle East must be brought forward in the foreign policy discussion at the EU decision making level, in order to stop the continuous humanitarian crisis, that mostly affects the countries of the European Union in terms of immigration and humanitarian aid.

# ICELAND WITHDRAWS EU MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

## *Continues from Front Page*

Sveinsson Iceland's Foreign Minister said that he had "delivered a letter to the Presidency of the Union and the Commission announcing that the government of Iceland had decided at its cabinet meeting last Tuesday that it did not intend to restart accession negotiations with the EU". He continued that "Hence, the government considers that Iceland is no longer a candidate country and requests the EU to act in accordance with this from now on".

On the other hand the European Socialist Party had demanded that a referendum



should be held before Iceland would be allowed to withdraw its application. As a reaction to this AECR Secretary General Daniel Hannan then tweeted that "This is beyond parody. Euro-socialists want a referendum before Iceland is allowed to withdraw its EU application."

The fact remains that in Iceland support for EU integration has declined since Iceland's economy is doing much better than that of the EU, which the Icelandic's are believing is a clear indication of the benefits of a country having its own independent monetary policy. The country's economy is back on track and recovering daily. This is a major issue which has led to a decrease in the support of handing over sovereign powers to Brussels, with its distant institutions. AECR's Independence Party and the Progressive Party have succeeded in ending the process for EU accession after having ardently campaigned to remain outside the European Union.

European Alliance for Freedom  
www.eurallfree.org

**SUPPORT US**

TO DONATE BY CHECK/MONEY ORDER

The European Foundation for Freedom accepts checks/Money Orders as donations.

PLEASE SEND YOUR TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION PAYABLE TO:  
EUROPEAN ALLIANCE FOR FREEDOM  
AND MAIL TO:

RUE PASCALE 16,  
1040 BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

# SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER

**KINDLY FILL IN THE FORM AND SEND IT TO:**

European Alliance for Freedom, Rue Pascale 16, 1040 Brussels, BELGIUM

Name

Address:

email: