

Dr. BENITA FERRERO-WALDNER



President of Euroamerica Foundation
Former Commissioner for External Relations and European
Neighborhood Policy, and Trade
Foreign Secretary Austria (2000-2004)

Benita Ferrero-Waldner is one of the most distinguished figures in European diplomacy and politics. As Austria's Minister of Foreign Affairs and EU Commissioner for External Relations, she shaped the international stage for decades, advocating with determination for a strong European foreign policy. Through her impressive career in diplomacy and politics, she has paved the way for international cooperation, breaking boundaries and fostering dialogue across continents.

After earning her law degree from the University of Salzburg and gaining initial professional experience in the business sector, she decided in 1984 to pursue a career in the Austrian diplomatic service. Her exceptional skills quickly led her to leadership positions, and ten years later, she became Chief of Protocol under UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali at the United Nations in New York. International politics became her sphere of influence, which she shaped with great diplomatic acumen and strategic foresight.

In 1995, she embarked on her political career in Austria as State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs for the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP). Five years later, she assumed the role of Minister of Foreign Affairs, taking significant responsibility for Austria's foreign policy and playing a key role in deepening European and international relations. Her political engagement ultimately led her to the European Commission in 2004, where she served as EU Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighborhood Policy until 2010, laying the groundwork for closer cooperation with Europe's neighboring countries. Her efforts to secure the release of the Bulgarian nurses sentenced to death in Libya during the HIV trial earned her international recognition and Bulgaria's highest honor, the "Stara Planina" award.

In her keynotes, she offers fascinating insights into the world of international diplomacy, discusses the challenges of global politics, and shares her extensive experience. She provides inspiring perspectives on current geopolitical developments and the future of international cooperation.

Topics (Selection):

- The Future of Europe
- Europe and its International Role
- Europe and its Neighbours