WHO IS GRAHAM WATSON

Published at: 16-05-2008

The Bulgarian premiere of the book "Power of Speech" by Graham Watson was organised by the initiative of the Bulgarian MEP Mariela Baeva, member of ALDE with the media support by Europe Gateway. The event took place in the Sofia University on May 16, 2008. The book was presented by professor Donka Aleksadrova who translated Power of speech in Bulgarian. Graham Watson has sent a [***special video message to the audience***](). ***You may read a brief CV of Graham Watson here and to read*** [***an introduction of the political principles of ALDE here***]().

Graham Watson was born in Rothesay, Scotland, in March 1956, the son of a Royal Naval Officer and a teacher. He was educated at The City of Bath Boys' School and at Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh, where he gained an honours degree in Modern Languages. He is a qualified interpreter who speaks four European languages.

From 1983 to 1987 he served as Head of the Private Office of the Rt.Hon. Sir David Steel MP, then Leader of the Liberal Party. He had previously been active as General Secretary of the Liberal International's youth movement, and was a founder of the European Communities' Youth Forum.

Immediately before entering parliament Graham Watson worked for the Hong Kong & Shanghai Banking Corporation in their London and Hong Kong offices. His six years with HSBC encompassed a three-month stint with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. He maintains an active interest in the Far East and is an Adviser to the Asia Pacific Public Affairs Forum.

Graham Watson was the first British Liberal Democrat ever to be elected to the European Parliament, winning the Somerset & North Devon constituency with a majority of over 22,500. In June 1999 Graham was elected to represent the new enlarged South West of England constituency, which covers Bristol, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire, Devon and Cornwall and which he has held since then.

From 1994 to 1999, Graham was a member of the Committee for Economic & Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy and the Budgets Committee. From July 1999 to 2002 he served as Chairman of the Committee on Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs. In January 2002 Graham Watson was elected as Leader of the European Parliament's Liberal Democrat group. Since 2004 he has been elected a leader of the group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE).

Graham's publications include 'To the Power of Ten: UK Liberal Democrats in the European Parliament' (2000); '2020 Vision: Liberalisation and Globalisation' (2001), translated in

---

WHO IS GRAHAM WATSON

Bulgarian by Mariela Baeva and published with the support of Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung; 'Liberal Language' (2003), a Bulgarian translation is pending; 'EU've got mail!' (2004); 'Liberal Democracy & Globalisation' (2006); 'Liberalism - something to shout about' (2006) and 'The Power of Speech' (2006), translated in Bulgarian by prof. Donka Aleksandrova ("St. Kliment Ohridski" Sofia University) and published according to funds allocated from 4000 Budget - political and information activities of MEPs.

His hobbies and leisure interests include sailing and listening to jazz music. Graham lives with his wife and two young children (daughter born 1992 and son born 1995) in the small market town of Langport, Somerset.