

Welcome speech by Cécile Keller (organizer of the day)

Hello everyone,

It's my great pleasure to welcome you on this political celebration day for Heide Goettner-Abendroth. For a long time, it was not at all certain whether we would be able to celebrate this day together. But we have finally made it happen, albeit with certain restrictions and some cancellations due to the still ongoing pandemic.

A huge thank you goes to Genevieve Vaughan who has supported this event with a generous donation. Without her support, this celebration day would have been a tremendous burden. We thank you, Genevieve, for your generous gift.

I would also like to welcome Heide's longtime international political friends who are attending in person or virtually. They have all come together to celebrate Heide's work, which she has brought to the world over decades, and to honour her for it. It is a work the world needs, now more than ever, using intensive research into matriarchal societies to show what a different social structure could look like. And young people in particular are looking for find ways to renounce patriarchy and all its global destructiveness.

Heide has shared her research findings with the world and, after many years of international work, a large circle of women has emerged who have been inspired by her work, some of whom are working on the basis of Heide's research. With idealism and commitment, they are actively engaged in bringing about a different kind of society.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to all the other participants who are here to honour Heide's work. A large number of women and men we have known for many years are attending, which I take as a sign of the continual respect and appreciation for her work.

Heide's path has not been an easy one. The subject of "matriarchy" has yet to be fully recognized by academia or the media and still comes under attack. Nevertheless, she has devoted her career to this subject, applying her great intellectual prowess to raise awareness of indigenous peoples who have been

silenced and of historical facts that have been obscured. This has transformed our knowledge.

Her books may be in great demand as "highlights" of her research, but Heide has also been invited to a large number of venues to share her insights. She has often been told that people leave her lectures a different person to when they walked in.

Three world congresses have been held, at which Heide has invited and interconnected people from indigenous matriarchal cultures. Through her work, they have learned to appreciate their unique societies even more.

Her spiritual work, her research and the creation of the Matriarchal Mystery Festivals, have resulted in women being able to live by and express their own spiritual power, free from patriarchal religious dogma. The matriarchal worldview has been introduced to them through celebration, allowing them to connect to this earlier holistic spirituality that has always placed the Earth at its centre as a living, sacred being.

We thank her profoundly for all of this, for creating this safe terrain, true and real, where new things can thrive. Our hope is for a matriarchal movement to emerge whose aim is to make matriarchal values an essential part of today's society.