

Press release, January 25, 2023

Zuzana Čaputová receives Schwarzkopf Europe Award: Young Europeans honour Slovak President for her commitment against organized crime and for minority rights

For her commitment to a more peaceful, inclusive and solidary Europe, Slovak President Zuzana Čaputová received the “Schwarzkopf Europe Award” yesterday. The awardee was selected by a jury consisting of “Young Europeans of the Year”, another award of the Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe. As a guest of honour, German Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier attended the award ceremony in Berlin’s Max-Liebermann-Haus.

The young jury considers Zuzana Čaputová a role model for a new generation of political leaders – not only for other countries in Central Eastern Europe but for all of Europe. Expressing their congratulations to the Slovak President, jury members state: “Zuzana Čaputová proves that there is an alternative to a corrupt and authoritarian elite. She has the courage to stand up against organized crime, for minority rights especially for Roma people and for an eco-sustainable future.”

President Čaputová expresses her gratitude for receiving the award: “I am touched and humbled to be awarded this prize from the Foundation whose mission is something we should all aspire to: to build a more peaceful, more united and a more sustainable Europe. We owe this to the young people of today and to the generations of Europeans to come. We can build such future together, if we translate our values, such as humanism and empathy, into our everyday lives and our work.”

Representing the entire jury, the “Young Europeans” of 2020 and 2021, *Mariya Atanasova* and *Constantin-Alexandru Manda*, gave the laudation for President Čaputová. After receiving the award trophy, President Čaputová gave an acceptance speech. The trophy is a blue and yellow sculpture symbolizing the European flag and anthem, created by Syrian artist Kenan Melhem. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the award ceremony was postponed from 2021 to this year.

Since 2003, the *Schwarzkopf Europa Award* has been awarded annually by a jury of young Europeans to decision-makers and initiatives from politics or civil society. With the award, the Schwarzkopf Foundation seeks to enable the young generation to honour individuals and projects who, in their view, have made an exceptional contribution to European understanding and European ideals.

Photos of the award ceremony can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

About the Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe

The non-partisan Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe was founded in 1971 by Pauline Schwarzkopf in Hamburg. The vision of the Schwarzkopf Foundation is a Europe of openness, solidarity and democracy shaped by young people. Through events, seminars, educational programmes and youth-led networks such as the European Youth Parliament (EYP), the Young Islam Conference and Understanding Europe, as well as through awards and fellowships, it offers young Europeans opportunities for encounters and exchange, personal development and active democratic citizenship.

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