MEDIA RELEASE
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Europe can play the main role in uniting the world against the existential threat of climate change says the former Vice-Chancellor of Germany

January 20, Zurich — Europe might be old, "but it is not so old to retire," said Joschka Fischer, the former German minister of Foreign affairs and Vice-Chancellor in the cabinet of Gerhard Schröder. Joschka Fischer is one of those politicians that simply does not sound like one. As he likes to say he is "the last Rock'n'Roller of German politics". In the 1970s he was a radical leftist and member of the militant group "Revolutionärer Kampf" (Revolutionary Struggle) which would get into street battles with the police. And for that reason, his repeated calls for the young generation of Europe to rise up to the global challenges ahead, reached far and deep, equalling maybe only Extinction Rebellion's co-founder, Roger Hallam, who multiplied similar visceral calls for action at the Worldwebforum. "Don't overestimate technology and don't underestimate politics! In the end, politics is all about people [...] the future is not mine, but I know we [in Europe] have a young generation who can move forward and take over," the ex-minister exclaimed.

The United States and China may be superpowers but the difference is that Europe does not want to become one. That does not mean, however, that it cannot lead the efforts for a greener and less belligerent international order. On the contrary, that makes it best suited to facilitate international cooperation. "There is enough potential in Europe for addressing the coming challenges," but it needs to be careful not to be left behind, specifically on the technological front which has historically given the old continent an advantage over other more populated trade partners.

While he was careful not to downplay the climate emergency in any way, which is an issue he has dedicated most of his political life to as the leader of the Green Party of Germany, Mr. Fischer described "liberty" as the most pressing issue of our time. In fact, the former minister tied the struggle for liberty to the fight to address the climate crisis, to reduce global conflict, and to the embedding of essential human values to the creation and deployment of emerging technologies. "In a digital world if you don't know who holds your data... we are lost" he explained as he attempted to convince the audience that Europe's ability create better systems and keep its population safe from foreign monopolies starts with safeguarding what has become one of the most valuable resources in the

world: **data**. Mr Fischer's continued insistence on emergent solutions struck a chord with the audience at the Worldwebforum and the end of his speech was greeted with resounding applause from the audience.

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ABOUT Worldwebforum

Over the past eight years, the Worldwebforum in Zurich has developed into a meeting place for decision-makers who create sustainable value in entrepreneurially managed companies.

Thanks to close relationships with leaders in Silicon Valley, China, Europe and top academics globally, Worldwebforum brings together the most progressive minds with the aim of empowering radical change in the world. The annual meeting in Zurich convenes influential speakers such as Steve Wozniak, Cofounder of Apple, Jay Simons, President of Atlassian, Tim Berners-Lee, Inventor of the World Wide Web, Ed Catmull, Founder of Pixar, Marian Goodell, CEO of Burning Man, David Sable, Global CEO of Young & Rubicam and Bill Wyman, Co-Founder and Former Bassist of The Rolling Stones. In 2020, Lars Ulrich, Co-founder and Drummer for Metallica; Roger Hallam, co-founder Extinction Rebellion; Brittany Kaiser, Cambridge Analytica Whistleblower and Sepp Blatter, former FIFA President joined the list of acclaimed headlining speakers.

Facts & Figures
- 1,500 attendees
- 75% executives
- 570’000 live-stream viewers

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