

## **Viķe-Freiberga, Vaira (Latvia)**

### **Curriculum Vitae**

[Original: English]

Prof. Dr. Vaira Vike-Freiberga was President of the Republic of Latvia from 1999 to 2007. She successfully implemented Latvia's foreign policy interests by guiding its entry into the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and raised the nation's recognition in the world through her work at the United Nations (UN), the EU and other international activities. She remains active in the international arena and continues to speak up in defense of liberty, equality and social justice. In 2007 she was named vice-president of the Reflection group on the long term future of the EU, and she is the Chair of the High-level group on Freedom and Pluralism of the Media in the EU.

Vaira Vike was born in Riga, Latvia, but left her home with her parents at the end of World War II. She spent part of her childhood in refugee camps in Germany, attended schools in French-administered Morocco, and in 1954 settled in Canada. After obtaining a Ph.D. at McGill University in 1965, she emerged as a prominent spokesperson on politics and science whilst Professor of Psychology and interdisciplinary scholar at the University of Montreal, having published eleven books and numerous articles, essays and book chapters in addition to her extensive speaking engagements.

In 1998, she returned to her native country to become the Director of the newly founded Latvian Institute. She was elected President by the Latvian Parliament in 1999 and reelected in 2003.

She is a member, board member or patron of twenty-four international organizations, including the Council of Women World Leaders, the Club of Madrid, and the European Council on Foreign Relations. She has been awarded thirty-seven Orders of Merit (1<sup>st</sup> class) and seventeen honorary doctorates, as well as many prizes and honors, including the 2005 Hannah Arendt Prize for political thinking, the 2009 Hayek Medal for promotion of freedom and free trade, and the 2010 Konrad Adenauer Prize for her work in the political construction of a united Europe.

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