

## Initiative at the UN in New York



**Emil Constantinescu**, Former President of Romania, chaired a meeting at the United Nations in New York on September 14, 2016 on “Global Peace Initiative Levant, the Foundation for a New Culture of Peace.” Speakers included WAAS Fellows Ambassador **Katalin Bogyay**, Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations, and **Garry Jacobs**, CEO of WAAS and WUC. Other participants included Ambassador **Ion Jinga**, Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations;

**Lily Valtchanova**, Liaison Officer, UNESCO; **Shoshana Bekerman**, Secretary General of the Interparliamentary Coalition for Global Ethics; **Gianni Picco**, former Under-Secretary General of the United Nations; and representatives of Buddhist, Christian, Jewish and Islamic religious organizations.

The initiative of the Global Peace Levant was initially launched at the annual conference of the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy in Berlin by President Constantinescu in 2011. The UN General Assembly will promote the “Parliamentary Initiative Multi Track Council for the SDGs and the Culture of Peace” to create a culture of peace which will have its roots in the education of the younger generation. Romania’s role in promoting higher education in the field of cultural diplomacy has led to an act of the Romanian parliament establishing the Institute for the Advanced Study of Levantine Culture and Civilization in Bucharest as a center of excellence of the World Academy of Art & Science.

## Establishment of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Levantine Culture and Civilization



The Academy is extremely pleased to announce that its multi-year initiative to promote a culture of peace in the Mediterranean region has just acquired a firm foundation for future work. Headed by **Emil Constantinescu**, former President of Romania and WAAS Trustee, the initiative has already conducted several

international conferences to explore the cultural foundations and strategies in collaboration with **The Academy for Cultural Diplomacy** in Berlin, a WAAS partner, and other organizations.

On October 26, 2016 the Parliament of Romania approved a new law establishing **The Institute for the Advanced Study of Levantine Culture and Civilization** as a center of excellence recognized by the World Academy and headquartered in Bucharest. The Institute is an official public institution supported by the Government of Romania. The 25-member governing scientific council of the institute will include five members of WAAS designated by the WAAS Board of Trustees; distinguished Romanian Fellows of WAAS, the president of *The Romanian Academy* and the rectors of three leading Romanian universities.

The objective of the Institute is to expand scientific research in Levantine culture and civilization specific to this historical area (the Middle East, North Africa, the Balkans and the Caucasus), the cradle of Abrahamic religions, as well as of sciences, arts, culture and democracy; protecting geological,



biological, geographical and archeological areas that are representative of the international cultural heritage, with the cooperation of the academic community and local communities, by extending the UNESCO global geopark network to the region; promoting dialogue between peoples in the Levantine historical space to create a culture of peace through dialogue between academia, religious leaders and younger generations.

The Institute will collaborate with the Romanian Academy, intergovernmental institutions, governmental institutions, institutions of higher learning, creative unions as well as civil society organizations and associations that focus on culture and civilization in the Levant.

The establishment of this Institute represents an important step in reviving the original plan developed in the 1960s for establishment of permanent centers of excellence under the Academy as part of a World University. Two other proposals for establishment of permanent institutions are presently under development by the Board.