

PANEL AND FISHBOWL DISCUSSION

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A Culture of Debate and Dialogue

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When we think about democracy, we usually think of parliaments, courts or elections. Yet its real foundation is in our own hands: the conversations we have every day.

Democracy is not a fixed state but a process that must be lived anew each day. It works only when we discuss issues respectfully. In everyday life, respect is shown above all through two abilities: listening and understanding.

Too often, we do not truly listen; we merely wait for the opportunity to contradict the other person. For a good dialogue, we must relearn how to understand other people's opinions seriously. Only when we understand one another can we act together. A strong democracy lives not only through words but through action.

The stool symbolises that every voice counts. The whole structure is stable only when all its parts are firmly connected. Respectful dialogue, genuine listening and joint action form the foundation of our society.

Editorial note: This contribution was corrected and edited on the basis of an automatically generated transcript. Obvious recognition errors, technical interruptions, repetitions and purely organisational remarks were removed. The substance of the contribution has been preserved.