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BRETTON WOODS
THE FOUNDERS AND THE FUTURE

Welcome Message

Letter from
Jacques de Larosière¹
September 2, 2014

Dear Larry,

I would like to congratulate you and my colleagues on the Honorary Committee wholeheartedly for the initiative to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Bretton Woods Agreement.

This has been one of the rare moments in history where leaders got together to build a truly cooperative international order.

This was the result of two essential factors:

- A bold - but realistic - concept defined by the best economists of the time;
- A visionary and comprehensive political leadership.

The world has prospered and economic growth has expanded during the following 25 years. The Bretton Woods Agreement played a major role in these developments.

But since the early seventies, the Bretton Woods Agreement has collapsed and we have witnessed, over the years, exchange rate volatility and misalignments, excessive debt and capital flows that allowed the easy funding of persistent balance of payments disequilibria.

Given the drawbacks of the present "anti-system" it is most appropriate to ponder and to work on what could be a new international monetary order.

Even if the present political environment - too often exclusively focused on national considerations - does not seem ready to show the leadership that is needed, it is good to have people like you trying relentlessly to draw the lessons of the Bretton Woods successes and of its demise.

Best wishes,
Jacques de Larosière

¹ Bretton Woods 2014 Honorary Committee Member; Conseiller at BNP Paribas; former President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; former Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund; former Governor of the Banque de France.