BİLGİ HOSTED THE FORMER UK PRIME MINISTER THE RIGHT HONOURABLE TONY BLAIR

İstanbul Bilgi University hosted the former UK Prime Minister The Right Honourable Tony Blair on 11 October 2011. Tony Blair addressed a wide range of participants including leading figures of business, education and politics as well as students while he mentioned the significance of cultural integration and alliance of civilizations in the 21st century.

İstanbul Bilgi University hosted on October 11, 2011 the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom The Right Honourable Tony Blair, one of the most prominent actors on the world stage. Mr. Blair was accompanied by his wife Cherie Blair through his Energy Museum tour together with İstanbul Bilgi University Board of Trustees members. Mr. Blair addressed approximately to 300 guests from business, education and politics as well as İstanbul Bilgi University students, alumni and academics.

The conference was held at İstanbul Bilgi University Santral Campus, Energy Museum. The opening speech was delivered by Prof. M. Remzi Sanver, Rector of İstanbul Bilgi University who started his speech by thanking The Right Honourable Tony Blair. Mr. Sanver, who drew attention to the significant contribution İstanbul Bilgi University has made to Turkey’s educational life, stressed that BİLGİ continues to host world leaders and offer BİLGİ students their vision thanks to the Laureate International Universities network. Mr. Sanver has also thanked Mr. Blair for the valuable support he provided to Turkey for European Union accession process during his office years.

The Right Honourable Tony Blair began his speech by emphasizing the changing role and promising economic potential of Turkey in the world. Mr. Blair underlined the changing dynamics of the world we are living in and continued his speech with the following words: “The world we are living in today is a world where people have been brought much closer together. The major questions is, do people see integration as a threat that makes them anxious, something that would make us lose our unique identities? Or do they see strength in that diversity, something that enriches society? This is today’s most significant issue. The 21st century is unlikely to see a fundamental conflict of political ideology in the way the 20th century was dominated by it. But it might well see a clash of religious or cultural ideology. Therefore, the notion of alliance of civilization is of great significance.”

Tony Blair answered the questions addressed to him by İstanbul Bilgi University students and alumni after his speech. Following the conference, Tony Blair was presented with “The Şükreden Vase”, a special product of Paşabahçe. The Şükreden Vase symbolizes the Aşure Day, that is, 10 Muharram (the tenth of the First month of the Arabic calendar) on which miracles are believed to take place and it was designed to depict the peaceful existence of all. The Şükreden Vase is handmade, all the designs of the stained glass is the outcome of the skill of dexterous hands in applying special glass dyes.
İstanbul Bilgi University, one of the most significant members of Laureate International Universities network, has hosted many globally prominent figures. The Right Honourable Tony Blair’s visit to BİLGİ coincides with the start of the academic year. Mr. Blair became the Prime Minister of the UK at the age of 43 following the 1997 General Election, becoming the second youngest person to assume the title of “The Prime Minister” since Lord Liverpool in 1812. Blair won re-election three times before, handing his duties to Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

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