

Ventzeslav Sabev

***Vice-President, Geneva Spiritual Appeal Association
Founder, Center on Governance, Faith and Values, University of Geneva
Secretary, John Knox International Reformed Center***



Ventz Sabev was born in Bulgaria in the family of a Christian Orthodox Theologian. He grew up in Geneva, in an ecumenical and international environment which inspired him to study at the Graduate Institute of International Studies and later at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (joint program of Tufts and Harvard University), Boston, USA, focusing on Human Rights Law and International Organizations. During his studies, Ventz has worked part-time at the United Nations' Information Service in Geneva. In New York, during the UN 50th anniversary year (1995) he worked for the Political Affairs Department.

Upon his return in Europe in 1997, Ventz transitioned to the corporate world, first in the Public Affairs team of the *Coca-Cola Company* in Vienna, Austria, and then in business development at the Geneva HQ of the world leader of aroma-chemicals *Firmenich*. From 2006 to 2010, based in Singapore and Indonesia, he was in charge of the BRIC's strategic deployment of the company, building commercial teams and client base in China, India and South East Asia. In 2011 he returned to Europe to lead the CEE team out of Vienna and Cologne.

During his years in business, Ventz contributed to advocacy campaigns for education and children rights as Trustee of the *International Social Service* and Goodwill Ambassador of the *Help The Needy Foundation (Bulgaria)*. He built academic partnerships and organized cultural events in Asia as Advisor to the *Bulgarian Diplomatic Institute*. As President of the Graduate Institute of International Studies' Alumni Association (2004-2005) he facilitated conferences, put together a mentoring program and published "*Europe at 50: Change the paradigm, Save the dream*".

Back in Geneva since 2014 Ventz has been engaged in inter-faith and cross-cultural dialogue, prevention of violent extremism and promotion of value-based education. He was elected Vice-President of the Geneva Spiritual Appeal Association in 2015 with the task to expand the reach and financial resources of the organization founded in 1999 by leaders of major religions and international organizations. including the UN, the UNHCRH, the ICRC. In 2016 the organization hosted the conference "*Which Values Unite Us*" under UNESCO's patronage.

In 2021, partnering with the *Global Studies Institute, University of Geneva*, Ventz has initiated the creation of the *Center on Governance, Faith and Values*. Set up as an interdisciplinary and comparative platform on the interconnection between religion and politics, the Center organizes academic and public events in Geneva and abroad.

V. Sabev is a Board member of several foundations and associations in Switzerland (Zürcher Foundation, John Knox International Reformed Center, Juanmma Children Foundation, Globethics Investments) and Bulgaria (International Social Service, Forum for Inter-Religious Dialogue and Cooperation). He has been a speaker and moderator at international conferences organized by WIPO, UNESCO, WCC, the Caucasian Muslims Office, the Forum for Promoting Peace among Muslim Societies... He has appeared on media in Switzerland, Indonesia, Singapore, Pakistan, Morocco, France, Bulgaria, Azerbaijan. He speaks French, English, Bulgarian, German and Italian. He is married to Dessislava Dimitrova and has one child.