

University of Haifa

The Senate of the University of Haifa, by virtue of the authority vested in it by the constitution of the University and in accordance with the recommendations of the President and the Executive Committee

hereby confers upon

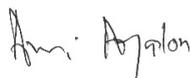
Gianni Pittella

the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy, Honoris Causa

In recognition of his longstanding struggle against discrimination, racism and antisemitism and his dedication to fortifying and instilling the values of democracy, pluralism, and multiculturalism – fundamental values for the University of Haifa; for his efforts in strengthening relations between countries and cultures through research and higher education, while understanding that humanity can be advanced by striving to dissolve cultural and national divides and not only through groundbreaking research; for his friendship with the State of Israel and his involvement in promoting peace in the Middle East; and for his collaboration with the University of Haifa and role in strengthening its international status as an outstanding international university.

Conferred in Haifa, Israel
24 Sivan 5773/June 2, 2013



Ami Ayalon

Chairman of the Executive Committee



Amos Shapira

President



Prof. David Faraggi

Rector



GIANNI PITTELLA

Vice President of the European Parliament

Gianni Pittella was born in 1958 in Lauria, Italy. He graduated with a degree in Medicine from the University of Naples. He has authored 12 books and holds a visiting professorship at the London Academy of Diplomacy of the University of East Anglia.

Gianni Pittella began his political career in 1979 when he was elected as a municipal councilor in his home town of Lauria. In 1996, he was first elected to the Italian Parliament as a representative of the Democratic Party and took part in the Social-Democrat Parliamentary Coalition. His ambitions to engage in the international public arena led to his resignation from the Italian Parliament and in 1999 he was elected to the European Parliament where he has been serving ever since. In 2009 he was unanimously voted to become the First Vice President of the European Parliament.

In his capacity as Vice President, he is responsible, amongst his many other duties, for EMUNI University (Euro-Mediterranean University), an international network of universities in the Euro-Mediterranean region that engages in academic collaboration, student and faculty exchanges, and other activities. The University of Haifa is a member of EMUNI and as such Gianni Pittella has invested great efforts to enable European students to participate in the excellent international programs offered at the University of Haifa. He has also contributed to strengthening scientific ties between the University of Haifa and the European Parliament.

Gianni Pittella is President of "Prima Persona", a center that aims to promote the values of democracy. He is also co-founder of MESEURO - the Centre for Mediterranean Europe Studies. At the time of establishing MESEURO, he expressed his pluralistic views, stating that the Mediterranean Sea is the cradle of the great civilizations, from the Phoenicians and Greeks to the Romans, Christians, Muslims, and Jews.

Over the years of public activity, Pittella has promoted integration between the countries of northern and southern Europe, denounced discrimination, advanced minorities, and all the while speaking out against racism and nationalism.

Gianni Pittella is very active on social networks to connect with the younger generation. On the 70th anniversary of Kristallnacht, he strongly objected to the presence of many racist groups on the Internet and joined the petition demanding that Facebook's management remove seven Italian Neo-Nazi groups from its network. He also signed a letter of support for a bill in the European Parliament to commemorate the Righteous Among the Nations with a special remembrance day, a bill that was passed in May 2010.

Gianni Pittella is involved in promoting peace between Israel and its neighbors through mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance of the other. He supports the position that Europe must be involved in bringing an end to the conflict through dialogue.