

PROPOSAL FOR A RESOLUTION [2.2.] OF THE UEF CONGRESS “MAKING HUMAN RIGHTS A REALITY FOR ALL IN THE AREA OF GLOBALISATION - 70 YEARS AFTER THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (UDHR)”

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- 1 Born out of the two World Wars, the UDHR was drafted by representatives of diverse legal and
- 2 cultural backgrounds from all continents, with the active participation and support of the
- 3 European countries. The UDHR set out universal values and a common standard of achievement
- 4 for all peoples and all nations, establishing the right to dignity for every person, promoting the
- 5 foundation for a more just world and ensuring a link with the other two main objectives of the
- 6 United Nations: international peace and security and development and poverty reduction.
- 7 The inclusion in the UDHR of civil and political Rights on the one hand and economic, social and
- 8 cultural rights on the other was certainly the main achievement of the long negotiations
- 9 between Western and Socialist Countries at the end of the 40's and inspired the adoption by
- 10 the Council of Europe of the European Convention of Human Rights in 1950.
- 11 The equality, indivisibility and interdependence of all Human Rights were reaffirmed in
- 12 November 1990 in the Charter of Paris for a new Europe and in the wider context in the second
- 13 World Conference of Human Rights in Vienna in 1993.
- 14 Since its creation, the European Union developed a unique commitment to human rights, which
- 15 over the years took a concrete form after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, which
- 16 gave the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU the same value as the EU Treaties and listed
- 17 human rights among the Union's foundational values. This commitment means that Human
- 18 Rights must consistently act as the Union's compass for action.
- 19 Despite these clear commitments, challenges do remain though, now more than ever, in
- 20 particular with the rise of populism and nationalism in the last years. In fact, within the EU, a
- 21 number of governments are taking an authoritarian turn cracking down on media and civil
- 22 society, undermining the independence of the judiciary or discriminating against minorities. The
- 23 refugee pressure of the past 3 years has too often been used as an excuse for certain European
- 24 governments for legitimising deeply biased and problematic narratives. This had led to the issue
- 25 being tackled largely at the expense of the human rights of refugees who, if they do not drown
- 26 in the Mediterranean Sea trying to reach European coasts, suffer dire human rights conditions in
- 27 (usually) very long transit period, whilst applying for asylum or whilst being held under
- 28 unacceptable living conditions on the territory of "safe" third countries. Likewise, the austerity
- 29 measures taken to address the past years' economic crisis, despite having been driven and
- 30 supported by the Union, largely preserved powerful financial interests at the expense of the
- 31 economic and social rights of many European citizens.
- 32 Outside the Union the human rights situation is even more critical and worrisome. Violent
- 33 conflicts rage in Syria and other places, leading to the proliferation of war crimes, crimes against
- 34 humanity, and large-scale movements of forcibly displaced people. Authoritarian governments
- 35 around the world are encouraged by the international community's failure to coherently and
- 36 firmly respond to the human rights violations they inflict. Corruption and immunity for gross
- 37 human rights abuses committed by corporations doing business in the global context are
- 38 tolerated in the absence of clear international framework.

39 Several recent reports declared human rights "in danger" and called for urgent actions.

40 Where does this bleak picture leave the European Union and its commitments to democracy,
41 human rights and rule of law? In this difficult and troubled period, it is more important than
42 ever that the European Union solemnly reaffirms its commitments to its core values and
43 reinforces policies aimed at promoting human rights inside and outside the Union, ensuring
44 coherence in the European internal and external action despite the current Treaties' limitations.

45 *In this context, and in line with previous UEF positions in favour of human rights, rule of law,*
46 *democracy and a values-based Union,*

47 **Therefore UEF**

48 *Recalls that 73 years after the end of Second World War, 70 years after the adoption of UDHR,*
49 *44 years after the Helsinki Final Act and 29 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the European*
50 *Union is guided by a political philosophy of inclusion, complementarity, multilateralism based on*
51 *international law and by a common commitment to respect, fulfil and protect human rights,*
52 *democracy and rule of law in all its policies and actions.*

53 *Supports President JC Juncker proposal as mentioned in his 2018 State of the Union speech in*
54 *Strasbourg, to move to qualified majority voting in selected areas of EU external relations, such*
55 *as Human Rights policy, considering that this will strengthen Europe's role on the world scene*
56 *and improve the EU ability to speak with one voice when it comes to EU priority foreign policy*
57 *areas. In fact, making use of existing EU rules to move from unanimity to qualified majority*
58 *voting in certain areas of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), would allow the*
59 *EU to become a stronger global actor, better able to shape global events and to shoulder*
60 *international responsibilities.*

61 *Supports the development, collectively and in coherent way, of an effective strategy responding*
62 *to Human Rights attacks, promoting EU fundamental values and achievements, defending*
63 *European interests in particular within the framework of 2030 Sustainable Development Goals*
64 *and other important international fora.*

65 *Proposes the development of a strong and coherent internal EU Human Rights strategy based on*
66 *equality and pluralist conceptions of collective European belonging and fighting any expression*
67 *of racism and xenophobia.*

68 *Calls the European Institutions to launch in view of the European Elections in 2019, a range of*
69 *actions for strengthening the public awareness on founding values, informing European citizens*
70 *on the achievements of the Union, presenting the challenges and inviting them to debate on*
71 *these issues.*

72 *Invites UEF national sections to play an active role on these campaigns, in close co-operation*
73 *with JEF.*