

RESOLUTION

A Europe of concentric circles: a model of democracy, openness, and respect for fundamental rights

Adopted by the Federal Committee of UEF, Brussels 10 July 2021

The Federal Committee of the UEF, meeting in Brussels on July 9 and 10, 2022

underlining with concern

- that Russia's invasion of Ukraine has brought war back to the Union's borders, sweeping away the illusion that the European Union can establish itself as a model and prevent the use of force in inter-state relations thanks solely to the success of its Single Market;
- that Putin's rhetoric against the Western world and its values, his claims based on a Russian ethnic identity and on strongly nationalist arguments, attitudes essentially shared by the Chinese government, bring out a picture of international relations in which a model based on democracy, respect for rights, and openness to peaceful cooperation with other states is contrasted with a strongly nationalist, authoritarian model aimed at domination over surrounding areas;
- that an inertia of Europeans and an inability of the Union to react to this situation risks leading to the total irrelevance of Europe on the world stage, the end of the very process of integration and the consequent disappearance of the values on which it is based;

welcoming

- the support shown for Ukraine by the vast majority of European states and the institutions of the Union;
- the support of the Commission and the European Parliament for Ukraine's accession and the June 23, 2022 European Council decision to grant candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova;

recalling

- the success of the Conference on the Future of Europe, which brought out clearly the demand of European citizens for a stronger, more democratic European Union, capable of acting and responding to global challenges;
- the fact that many of the citizens' demands can only be met through a revision of the Treaties that lays the groundwork for the transformation of the Union into a federal one;
- the position expressed by the Commission, the European Parliament and the leaders of some countries in favor of convening a Convention to open the process of treaty reform on the basis of Article 48 TEU,

believes

- that this is a crucial moment in the process of European integration and that the results of the Conference on the Future of Europe provide an opportunity to give birth to a core federal, sovereign and democratic Europe, as demanded by European citizens;
- that the very need to welcome Ukraine and Moldova into the European Union in order to irreversibly include them in the European community highlights the profound transformation that Europe must be able to make in order to rise to the political challenges imposed by the return of war to its territory. The European Union must become a political power, and for this it is essential to change its mechanisms of decision-making and operation, establishing majority voting in all areas and strengthening democratic accountability, in accordance with the recommendations of the Conference;
- that such a transformation in a federal direction cannot be blocked by the veto of some states and therefore if necessary, either opt-out clauses for states opposed to such a transformation will have to be provided or an agreement that allows the willing states to go ahead, safeguarding the unity of the European Union but reforming it as to provide for different level of integration will have to be found;
- that in the absence of an agreement providing for different speeds of integration, it cannot be ruled out that states determined to take the federal step will conclude a treaty among themselves outside the framework of the Union;
- that it is also necessary to provide states wishing to join the European Union with a prospect of approaching it that does not entail accepting all obligations under EU law, but at the same time creates a stronger bond than that arising from association agreements;

welcomes

- the idea, endorsed by the June 23-24, 2022 European Council summit, of political coordination with states located on the borders of the Union with the goal of forming a “political community” aimed at “promoting political dialogue and cooperation to address issues of common concern so as to strengthen the security, stability and prosperity of the European continent”;

notes with regret, however

- that the recent decision of the European Parliament to initiate the revision of the Treaties was not followed by a similar decision of the European Council;

is therefore convinced

- that deepening and widening must go hand in hand, and that the time has come to launch the Convention for the Reform of the Treaties, as called for by the European Parliament. In order to avoid that some member states can block treaty revision, a Europe of concentric circles could be envisioned, in which a federal core, open to all states that wish to join it, coexists with a circle constituted by the single market, and a wider circle of states constituted by the “political community” mentioned above;

- that the European institutions have to make use of all instruments at their disposal to ensure the rule of law and application of European values in all EU member states;
- that only by articulating itself around a federal political union, giving rise to a shared and democratic European sovereignty, will the European Union be able to defend its interests and values and defeat autocratic and nationalist models, promoting a new model of international relations based on cooperation and solidarity.