PROPOSAL OF A MANIFESTO FOR A FEDERAL EUROPE: SOVEREIGN, SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL

TO THE MEMORY
OF DAVID MARIA
SASSOLI

"The multiple problems which poison international life on the continent have proved to be insoluble: tracing boundaries through areas inhabited by mixed populations, defence of alien minorities, seaports for landlocked countries, the Balkan Question, the Irish problem, and so on. All matters which would find easy solutions in the European Federation"

Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi,
For a Free and United Europe. A Draft Manifesto, 1941

"The pooling of coal and steel production should immediately provide for the setting up of common foundations for economic development as a first step in the federation of Europe"

Robert Schuman,
French Minister of Foreign Affairs
Declaration of 9th May 1950

"We must invent a simpler, more efficient framework that will enable citizens to feel a part of the political process. That is why I suggested that the European Union move in the direction of a federation of nation-States. Only this type of political entity will allow us to strike the necessary balance between ensuring the vital continuity of our nations and establishing supranational institutions that have genuine political capacity"

Jacques Delors,
Former President of the European Commission,
Where is the European Union heading? 2001

"We can and must build a new European sovereignty by which we will provide the clear and firm answer to our fellow citizens that we can protect them and provide an answer to these disorders of the world"

Emmanuel Macron,
President of the French Republic,
Speech on the Future of Europe in the European Parliament, 17 April 2018

"To protect Europe is to advance in the social Europe, in the Europe of defence and the Economic and Monetary Union. In short, a federal Europe"

Pedro Sánchez,
President of the Government of Spain
Address to the European Parliament, 16th of January 2019

"We not only need pragmatic federalism; we need a federalism based on ideals. If this means embarking on a path that leads to a revision of the Treaties, then this must be embraced with courage and with confidence"

Mario Draghi,
Prime Minister of Italy,
Speech in the European Parliament, 3rd of May 2022

"What we need in Europe today is not less solidarity and more borders but a new social contract for social cohesion and the well-being of our peoples, deepening political unification, a stronger Parliament and stronger European institutions with democratic and social control"

Alexis Tsipras.
Former Prime Minister of Greece,
Speech on the Future of Europe in the European Parliament, 11 September 2018

"People are now realising, especially young people, that what they take for granted, European integration, European togetherness, it's not for granted and they really need to start moving in order to keep it"

Ska Keller,
Co-President of the Greens/European Free Alliance at the European Parliament,
on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the treaties of Rome and the Future of Europe,
24 March 2017

"Federal Europe is what I call a "plausible utopia". That is the last political utopia which could emerge from our continent which has been savagely devastated by totalitarian and murderous utopias"

Daniel Cohn-Bendit,
Former Co-President of the Greens / European Free Alliance,
For Europe: Manifesto for a postnational revolution in Europe, 2012

"I am convinced most that Europe can shape this new world if it works together and rediscovers its pioneering spirit. And for this, I want to cite a sentence from the Ventotene Manifesto written by two of Italy's and Europe's greatest visionaries. Ernesto Rossi and Altiero Spinelli, one of our founding fathers writing from their prison on a remote island at the height of the war, when all hope of a united Europe seemed lost. They gave us these words of confidence: *The moment has arrived in which we must know how to discard all the old burdens, how to be ready for the new world that is coming that will be so different from what we have imagined*"

This moment has arrived once again. The moment to put behind us the old divisions, disputes and recriminations to come out of our entrenched positions. The moment to be ready for that new world, to use all the power and our common spirit and the strength of our shared purposes"

Ursula von der Leyen,
President of European Commission,
Speech in the European Parliament, 16th April 2020

"A federal Europe is the only option. It is both logical and inevitable. But that federal Europe will not create itself. We will have to fight for it. We will have to forge it with all the strength we possess"

Guy Verhofstadt,
Member of the European Parliament,
Europe's Last Chance: Why the European States Must Form a More Perfect Union, 2017

"We must recover the spirit of Ventotene and the pioneering spirt of the founding fathers, who were able to put aside the hostilities of war, put an end to the failures of nationalism by giving us a project capable of combining peace, democracy, rights, development and equality"

David Maria Sassoli,
President of the European Parliament,
Address to the European Parliament, 3rd of July 2019

"Eighty years on, it may be time for a new Ventotene Manifesto. One that focuses not just on the critique of nation-states as the source of wars and international anarchy but that highlights their limitations to address the big transnational challenges of our time, such as pandemics, climate change, migration, and digital transition"

Josep Borrell Fontelles,
High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of
the European Commission,
80 years of the Ventotene Manifesto and the future of Europe, The Federalist, 2021

"The road to pursue is neither easy nor certain, but it must be followed and it will be done"

Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi,
For a Free and United Europe. A Draft Manifesto, 1941

PREAMBLE

On 6 April 2022, the European Parliament declared the island of Ventotene, Italy, the historical, moral and intellectual capital of Europe. It also recalled the importance of the young people's seminar titled Federalism in Europe and the World, which takes place every summer in Ventotene since 1982, as proposed by Altiero Spinelli. On 23 April, the European Commission awarded this emblematic place the European Heritage Label. In addition, at the same time, the governmental project for the recovery and enhancement of the former Bourbon prison of Santo Stefano, recently named after the memory of David Sassoli, continues, which will become a future multicultural centre of inspiration for the Next Generation Eu.

Indeed, in 1941, while triumphant Nazism was dominating Europe, antifascist fighters Altiero Spinelli and Ernesto Rossi, while captive on the said island, called instead for a Federal Europe in For a Free and United Europe. A Draft Manifesto, simply and more famously known as the Ventotene Manifesto. It became hugely influential among resistance circles and thereafter in the post-war period, inspiring the birth of prominent and still active civil society movements advocating for this federalist goal, such as the Union of European Federalists (founded in 1946), and the European Movement International (created in 1948 as a result of the Congress of the Hague).

Spinelli devoted the rest of his life to the cause spelled out in this seminal document for European integration, reiterated in the proposed Manifesto for the Union of European Federalists of 1957, whose key goal was to establish a popularly elected European constituent assembly in charge of adopting a federal constitution. First, he was a leading activist and counsellor to key policymakers, with the initiative of the European Political Community of 1954 and the Congress of the European People (a grassroots initiative), and was later a member of the European Commission and the European Parliament.

As Member of the European Parliament (MEP), he created the cross-party 'Crocodile Club' in 1980 and managed to achieve a majority in Parliament, already a body directly elected by the people since 1979, and thus interpreted as a constituent assembly, to adopt the draft Treaty on the European Union (14 February 1984). Though never adopted by the European Council,

the Spinelli Project nonetheless paved the way for an increasing role of the European Parliament in continental integration with the approval of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Its influence reached far beyond and into the project of the European Constitution of 2004, whose main tenants were adopted in the Lisbon Treaty of 2007, particularly as regards the general co-legislative role of the European Parliament alongside the Council of the European Union.

Altiero Spinelli died on 23 May 1986, but his always relevant legacy and vision have been carried forward at the European Parliament, first by the Federalist Intergroup, constituted that very same year on 9 July, and since 2010 by the Spinelli Group itself, which includes representatives of five different pro-European political groups, with the conviction that the federalist promise embedded in the Ventotene Manifesto and the 1984 draft Treaty is yet to be fully realised.

It is important to recall this vision since the post-Cold War historical phase had just ended. Similar to 1939, 1989, and 2001, Europe and the world entered a new, evermore dangerous era with the 2020 coronavirus pandemic and the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine. Crude geopolitics and balance of power have reasserted themselves in international relations. A new and grave security challenge, including a greater risk of nuclear escalation, is complicating the many crises and challenges that have piled up since the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US and the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty: jihadism, the financial and Euro crisis, the Arab Spring, Brexit, the Trump presidency in the US and the Covid-19 pandemic, alongside secular trends such as rising global inequalities, climate change, digitalisation and migrations.

Now, in view of this challenging environment for Europe and humanity, and eight decades after the 1941 Manifesto, we members of the Spinelli Group of the European Parliament gather in Ventotene with other personalities, academics, activists and citizens, convinced that its reading is evermore so illuminating and relevant to the current predicament. This is true both in its critique of the dogma of the absolute sovereignty of nation-states in an era of interdependence and in its alternative federal proposal of establishing a democratic, multilevel governance to address the most fundamental transnational issues. We, therefore, on this day, humbly take the opportunity to render tribute to the Ventotene Manifesto by recommitting in full to its philosophy and goals, taking stock of its pending, unrealised programme for European unification and presenting, under the same federal outlook, a general diagnosis of today's

European and world crises, including in regards to the new, current challenges of our time, an updated common program of action and a strategy to realise it.

The first draft of the document containing the above-mentioned exercise was uploaded to the digital platform of the Conference on the Future of Europe on 21 February 2022. A first public discussion on the paper took place at the National Press Club of Brussels on 2 March. Thereafter, on 9 May, the adopted conclusions of the Conference called for more and a better Europe, including by way of adopting a new treaty that can only be a more federal one if it is to be consistent with the outcome of that process. The European Parliament, on its 9 June Resolution, proposed to the Council amendments to the Treaty under the revision procedure of article 48 of the Lisbon Treaty to convene a constitutional convention to this effect. We take the opportunity to reiterate this demand to implement, in the spirit of Ventotene, and after its final adoption by the plenary of the Spinelli Group on 22 July, the roadmap that must be pursued and that it is envisaged in the following:

PROPOSAL OF A MANIFESTO FOR A FEDERAL EUROPE: SOVEREIGN, SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL

INTRODUCTION

Federalism is based on the critique of the dogma of the absolute sovereignty of nation-states, brilliantly argued in the 1941 Ventotene Manifesto. It advocates a voluntary universal political association for humanity to peacefully overcome the anarchic nature of the international system based on power relations and guarantee democracy, human rights and rule of law for all irrespective of birthplace, nationality, gender, religion and others.

Indeed, we, the inhabitants of planet Earth, constitute a single humanity. We have the same biological and social needs. We are cultural and cultured beings. While embedded in our own culture, which is never closed nor static, we also live in multicultural settings. We face similar, intimately linked individual and collective challenges. We all aspire to a peaceful and free existence. Human beings across the world want to secure decent living standards, including access to food, water, housing, health and education and to contribute to society through work.

We also need to establish a new relationship with the other living beings and nature as a whole, preserving biodiversity, reversing global warming and nuclear proliferation.

Certainly, what is common among the flow of ideas, trade, digital data, viruses, CO2 emissions, people and invading soldiers is precisely the transnational nature of these movements, their cross-border nature. They are public goods and bads that can only be addressed effectively through a system of democratic supranational governance.

The coronavirus pandemic and the war of aggression in Ukraine are just the latest confirmation of that truth, known since the beginning of our time on Earth: we are all connected as members of the *Homo sapiens* species and irreversibly linked to nature. Interdependence has never been as clearly a feature of human civilisation as today, as transnational challenges continue to accumulate, from financial crises to the climate and health emergencies.

As Mario Albertini once observed, the national idea was a necessary moment in European history because it meant entrusting the state to the people instead of the king. It brought the unification of markets, education and legal systems, thus overcoming feudalism and absolute monarchy. However, the political division of Europe into fully sovereign and independent states led to the nationalistic degeneration of the national idea. Even today, nationalism continues to politically divide Europe and humankind. Intellectually, it frames the analysis of the reality of most government policies.

Similarly, the creation of multilateral institutions was also an important improvement in the anarchic international system vis-a-vis the world before 1919–1945. However, their intergovernmental, veto-based, non-federal nature remains an important constraint, as the example of the Society of Nations showed in its inability to prevent the Second World War. It is clear that the United Nations does not yet provide a true system of fair, effective and democratic global governance based on the rule of law, equal global citizenship and the majority principle as envisioned by Kant in The Perpetual Peace. Given this vacuum, the West sometimes acts by default as if it were the guarantor of international norms, under the waning leadership of the United States, but so-called 'national interests' tend to prevail when in conflict with higher aims.

In 1949, Karl Jaspers observed that humankind was moving towards its own unity but added that it was not yet possible to predict whether world unity would take the form of a federation or an empire. Only in Europe, a true form of supranational governance has been taking shape for more than 70 years. The European Union (EU) has provided the longest period of peace and prosperity in the Old Continent alongside the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. It is nonetheless far from a complete system of democratic multilevel governance, unable to play a strong role in the multipolar world in support of the eternal values of liberty, equality, sisterhood and fraternity (solidarity).

The Ventotene Manifesto identified the problem of the international system in the absolute sovereignty of nation-states and brought supranational democracy and the value of union to the fore. It was the result of intense discussions among Altiero Spinelli, Ernesto Rossi, Eugenio Colorni and Ursula Hirschmann during their political confinement. At the time, Europe was a shattered continent. It was experiencing the evils of Nazi Fascism and a catastrophic Second World War, which included the shameful experience of the Holocaust. This war was the result of the rise of totalitarian ideologies that combined nationalism with racism and anti-Semitism on the background of the 1919 Versailles Peace Treaty and the social effects of the economic depression that started in 1929.

Spinelli and Rossi identified the supremacy, selfishness and self-deification of European nation-states as the historical root causes that led to the deep catastrophe of the two world wars. Their goal was to strengthen the value of freedom and the basic principle that "man must not be a mere instrument of others but an autonomous centre of life". This required the institutionalisation of a European federation as a first step towards a world federation. In the meantime, personalist philosophers such as Mounier and Denis de Rougemont also made important contributions to federalist thinking. For them, federalism meant a multilevel system of democratic government that started at the level of the individual and included associations, local communities, regions, the states, the European continent and the world, foreseeing the principle of subsidiarity and a proper balance between the private enterprise, the non-profit associations, and the state. Indeed subsidiarity and collaboration should constantly guide the relations between the federal, national, regional, and local levels. Federalism is not the end of the nations nor the local authorities but the best way to protect and empower them in a globalized world, in order to serve effectively their citizens on a daily basis. A federal Europe can reconcile European, national and regional interests and identities. Rougemont also recalled

the common cultural roots of Europe, going back to the Greek–Roman heritage, the Judeo–Christian tradition and the Enlightenment, among others, such as the contribution of the Arab–Islamic civilisation.

The Manifesto was followed by the Federalist Declaration of the European Resistance (1944) and the Congress of the European Movement in The Hague in 1948 (attended also by Ursula Hirschmann and Altiero Spinelli). It was convened by the first pan-European organisations, with the Union of European Federalists playing a central role. Its conclusions were federalist in political, economic and cultural terms. The congress, organised by József Retinger, saw the participation of eclectic minds such as Salvador de Madariaga, important intellectual and political leaders from different democratic tendencies (christian democrats, liberals, republicans, social-democrats, conservatives), such as Alcide de Gasperi, Konrad Adenauer, François Mitterrand, Paul-Henri Spaak and Winston Churchill, who presided over the event, as well as thinkers, philosophers and writers such as Albert Camus and Etienne Hirsch (a Jewish resistance fighter who later contributed to the draft of the Schuman Declaration written by Jean Monnet and became president of the Union of European Federalists in 1964), among others.

The federalist aspiration at the core of the Manifesto and the Congress itself would be reflected in the 1950 Schuman Declaration. It affirmed that the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was the first step towards the establishment of a 'federation in Europe' to prevent wars between states by establishing a supranational community of values and interests. While sharing the same goal, at the time this gradual process (functionalism) emerged in opposition to the direct constitutionalist method defended by Spinelli and other federalists as reflected in the draft Manifesto for the Union of European Federalists that he wrote in 1957 and the grassroots initiative of the Congress of the European People.

In any event, the first European community opened up a European integration process. Later, Spinelli accepted to act within the framework of the Communities, becoming a Commissioner for industry and Research and a Member of the European Parliament. The European construction at different times has received critical impulses from the pro-European organised civil society and the emerging European political class as a result of the direct elections to the European Parliament in a constitutional direction, over and above the functionalist and technocratic dynamic.

I. THE REALISATION OF THE VENTOTENE MANIFESTO, THE LIMITS OF INTERGOVERNMENTALISM AND THE END OF THE LISBON DECADE

Federalists must always take stock of, and defend, what has been achieved in the European supranational construction, identify the limitations and advocate for further steps in the integration process. Since the writing of the Ventotene Manifesto and the foundation of the ECSC, EU institutions have taken significant and decisive steps towards a more united Europe. The Treaty of Paris of 1951 established the common institutions, including the executive body (at the time called the High Authority, which later merged with the Commission), the Court of Justice, and the parliamentary assembly composed of national parliamentarians (originally only with consultative powers except for budget approval). With the Rome Treaty of 1957, the common market was launched, with a common external tariff and the abolition of internal non-regulatory barriers. A strong competition policy was developed. The federalist campaigns also led the European Parliament to become a directly elected body in 1979. The Single Act of 1986, though failing to implement the Spinelli Project of 1984, extended qualified Majority voting in the Council, enlarged the competencies of the Union and launched the single market to abolish the national regulatory barriers that had emerged over time. The 1992 Treaty of Maastricht introduced limited legislative co-decision powers for Parliament, launched the Monetary Union and the Common Foreign and Security Policy and constitutionalised the European political parties. With the European Constitution and the Lisbon Treaty, co-decision between Parliament and Council became the ordinary legislative procedure. The European External Action Service was created.

If we compare the evolution of the Union with the 1941 Manifesto and the 1984 Spinelli Project, some proposals have indeed been implemented. EU Member States are at peace with one another as part of an economic and political union of sorts based on liberal and democratic values.

As proposed in the Manifesto (including its 1944 preface written by Eugenio Colorni), customs barriers have been abolished allowing for the free movement of workers and goods (Treaty of Rome, 1957), citizens directly elect a parliamentary body (1979) and there is a single currency in 19 of 27 countries (Treaty of Maastricht, 1992). National monopolies were broken up by competition policy. Further progress has been made in the democratic domain because of the

entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, which recovered most of the reforms envisaged by the Constitutional Treaty of 2004 (empowerment of the European Parliament as co- legislator with the Council, except in some key areas such as taxation and own resources, a binding Charter of Fundamental Rights). Regarding the social dimension advocated by the Manifesto, the Union has put in place EU-level collective bargaining and working time rules. Though not referred at the time by the document, because of a different historical context but certainly in line with its spirit, the Union has also developed extensive protections for consumers and the environment.

Meanwhile, the Union lacks a single foreign policy and armed forces under its sole command as advocated in the 1941 paper. It is also fair to say that despite the advances in EU labour legislation, social Europe remains underdeveloped since the European Pillar of Social Rights is not binding, and also in the field of minimum wages at the Union level. The power to tax remains exclusively in the hands of Member States and the European Parliament lacks the power to initiate legislation.

Therefore, the EU is not yet a fully federal endeavour in line with the Manifesto and the Spinelli Project of 1984. Our Union remains a hybrid entity that combines intergovernmental and federalist features, thereby posing some fundamental dilemmas in the domains of democratic legitimacy and capacity to act.

The methodology has diverged too, with a predominance of gradualist technocratic functionalism over constitutional federalism, even though the Spinelli Project of 1984 did have considerable influence in the later evolution of the Union, with the increasing of the powers of the European Parliament in the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 and the fight for the European Constitution.

The limitations and internal contradictions of this model have become more apparent over time, with more competencies being attributed to the Union while Member States kept resisting a commensurate increase in democratic accountability or unfinished projects with lethal consequences, such as the setting up of a monetary union without a corresponding fiscal and financial union. There has also been a huge concentration of power in the European Council since the Euro crisis, becoming a de facto legislator and overreaching the treaty provisions.

Furthermore, many still perceive the EU as remote, fundamentally bureaucratic and even wholly undemocratic. This perception does not correspond to reality. However, this shows that the European construction suffers from a serious deficit of knowledge and communication, transparency and, partly, extremely long chains of legitimation. Member states have not made any serious attempt at correcting this strategic gap, which in turn has fostered disinformation and Eurosceptic and Europhobic rhetoric. In addition, some governments using nationalistic and anti-European policies to cover up corruption and the autocratic takeover of democratic institutions have become a serious threat. This is typically compounded by a serious challenge to the rule of law and pluralistic and democratic values by some national governments and by working in sync with other world powers that aim to undermine our union, such as Russia.

Therefore, the dividing line between pro-European forces and Eurosceptics had deepened also because of the failed referenda of 2005 and the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty in 2007. In addition, the North–South and West–East divides were exacerbated by both the Euro economic crisis, managed under the one-sided focus on budget discipline (2008–2012) and the badly managed refugee flows that started in 2014 with the civil wars in Syria and Iraq respectively. The narrow but successful vote in favour of Brexit in 2016, in a country that was never at the core of the integration process, came to symbolise the triumph of nationalist populism in Europe and the West, further compounded by the election of Trump as US president later that year.

Initially, and for the first time since 1950, this set of internal and external shocks that emerged after the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty did not strengthen European integration except for the launching of the banking union, still an incomplete project. Later on, and somewhat paradoxically, the pro-European opinion on the continent was reinvigorated by the twin challenges of Brexit and Trump (2016) and the turn from austerity undertaken since 2012–2014. This new set of policies helped keep the Union together, with the Investment Plan for Europe, the Declaration of the European Pillar of Social Rights in 2017 and the expansive monetary policies of the European Central Bank. In 2019, the new Commission president von der Leyen launched the European Green Deal, thereby making the ecological transition the engine of the union's relaunch, mirroring the role played by coal and steel in 1950.

In any event, the long decade of Lisbon showed that the world had radically changed since 2007, time of the adoption of the last treaty. The financial and Euro crisis, the Arab Spring and

the migration flows from Syria and Iraq, the first invasion of Ukraine, Brexit, the election of Trump as US president, the geopolitical rise of autocratic China and the surge of Eurosceptic national populism, happened after its adoption or even entry into force. In the meantime, secular trends such as rising inequalities, digitalisation and climate change have only accelerated.

Furthermore, the 2020 pandemic outbreak and the 2022 Russian aggression against Ukraine have become turning points also for European integration, in clear contrast with the lacklustre, narrow-minded approach to the 2010 financial and Euro crises. A great opportunity has arisen with the launching of the Health Union, including the common acquisition of vaccines and the nascent financial and fiscal union that is embodied in the Recovery Plan for Europe (July 2020).

This plan was based on the solidarity principle, with the landmark issuance of EU bonds for the financing of European investments and transfers to Member States. It must be considered a fundamental step towards the federal economic and political union: for the first time, the Union has taken up a common debt to support investments for recovery and resilience, for energy transition, for the digital modernisation and for social and territorial cohesion. Faced with the pandemic and economic crisis, the Union has found its unity around a new principle: there can be solidarity between states if there is a common purpose and control over the use of resources. The veto power of the states has fallen, and now the Council votes by Qualified Majority on the implementation of the national plans related to the Next Generation EU Fund.

If the pandemic has given Europe the Health Union and the beginning of a financial and fiscal union, the war in Ukraine must give Europe a union on migration based on solidarity and mandatory responsibility sharing (the exodus could reach up to 5 million refugees), an energy union (end of dependence from Russia), a defensive union and others. A federal political union that ensures efficient and democratic decision-making must necessarily underpin these new unions in the different domains. This is even more urgent after the commitment taken to expand the union not only to the Western Balkans but also to Ukraine and Moldova. This requires a radical democratic deepening of the union. There cannot be enlargement without deepening.

Therefore, more than 80 years after the writing of the Ventotene Manifesto and in the wake of the conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe, which call for more and a better Europe, pro-European social and political forces must launch, in the same spirit, and in view

of the great transnational challenges of our time, a deep reflection on the current crisis of human civilisation to reinvigorate our federalist action for Europe and the world.

II. THE CRISIS OF POSTMODERN CIVILISATION

The fall of the Berlin Wall opened a period in which the best hopes of a more democratic and peaceful world seemed immediately possible. At the time, the American political scientist Francis Fukuyama famously interpreted the end of the Cold War as the "End of History", understood as the end of the ideological evolution with the triumph of the capitalist liberal democracies. Certainly, there is no real alternative with universal appeal to the liberal democratic paradigm. However, the expected general democratisation of the world has not taken place, as shown by the authoritarian state capitalism in China and the dictatorial oligarchic capitalism in Russia more than three decades after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Furthermore, the stability of the international system requires not only a large community of national democracies but also a democratic regional and global governance of the common goods, including a proper social and environmental regulation of the market economy. This is particularly more relevant in view of accelerated, human-made global warming and radical transformations of the workplace brought about by open trade and technological advances in computer science and telecommunications.

Therefore, between 1989 and 2001, a tremendous opportunity for applying federal and democratic principles to the international arena was wasted because of lack of clarity, political determination and leadership. In retrospect, we must acknowledge that the achievements were few, with the enlargement of the EU, the empowerment of its Parliament and the creation of the International Criminal Court (promoted by the World Federalist Movement) probably the most remarkable ones. The September 11 terrorist attacks, the unwarranted US invasion of Iraq in 2003, and the 2008 economic crisis left a new conflictive scenario in which the 2022 invasion of Ukraine constitutes its consequential expression. Our planet now is less stable, with a third world war between the West and Russia fought by proxy in Ukraine, its environment more fragile and with larger social inequalities than at the end of the Cold War. Other cross-border threats have also worsened, such as drug trafficking and organised crime and international terrorism. These failures must open our eyes to the risks of shyness and conservatism.

The return of war in Europe and the geopolitics of the Great Spaces

The post-Cold War is over. The West has witnessed, somehow passively, a two-decade authoritarian regression in Russia, which has become an existential threat to our Union. Perhaps it also failed to lock Russia in the liberal democratic system early on. The presidency of George W. Bush in the US did not help either with the unilateral of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002 and with the unnecessary and unlawful invasion of Iraq in 2003. Nevertheless, Putin's aggression towards Ukraine is a direct attack on democratic values, national sovereignty, European security and international law. It is causing untold human suffering and physical destruction to impose a nationalistic and expansionist ideology that echoes the worst episodes of the 1930s. Precisely, the Ventotene Manifesto itself diagnosed and deconstructed these harmful ideas. Like in the Second World War, and thereafter in the Cold War, this aggression has brought together the liberal democracies of the world in a strong response towards Russia, short of direct military conflict. The EU in particular has increased its hard power, with direct military assistance to Ukraine, while leading the introduction of major financial and trade sanctions in coordination with other Western powers.

War is indeed one of the paramount transnational questions. Federalism advocates democracy without borders to deliver peace and shared prosperity. While borders are arbitrary divisions of humankind resulting from history, federalists also recognise that nation- states are the building blocks of regional federations and ultimately of a global one. Unlike imperialism, federation is based on the voluntary sharing of sovereignty. Borders are overcome not by unilateral aggression but by the free adherence of currently existing states. Federalism is peaceful in two different dimensions: in its construction, by voluntarily joining the supranational entity, and in its outcome, by abolishing wars between its component members. The unprecedented seven decades of peace within the Member States of the EU proves this after centuries of war between the major European powers. The federal method also decreases the chances of external aggression in the presence of mutual assistance clauses, even if purely intergovernmental organisations such as NATO are also entrusted to deliver collective security.

In light of the aggression towards Ukraine, including the consequences on the borders of the Union, common EU foreign, defence and security policy and strategic sovereignty in general, including the question of energy self-sufficiency and technological competition must be upgraded. Europe cannot defend its interests and values in the world without stronger internal political unity, which would allow it to speak the 'language of power' and deploy the necessary

means and capabilities to play a stronger role in the world. It is not just Russia but also China, India, the United States and other continental powers or 'Great Spaces' that will shape global relations if Europe is not more united. Therefore, there is a clear and direct link between a federal political union and the ability of Europe to project power abroad.

Furthermore, now more than ever, it is necessary to commit ourselves to thinking about a new common security and peacekeeping system in the multipolar world, that 'planetary pact of coexistence' called for by Pope Francis.

The erosion of the European social model and rising global inequalities

After the Second World War, two different solutions were given to the social question (class relations after the Industrial Revolution). The Soviet Union expanded to Central and Eastern Europe its formula of totalitarian communism, which eliminated civil and political freedoms and the market system as a whole. Geopolitically and practically, the countries also lost their sovereignty and independence vis-a-vis Moscow. The human, economic and ecological failure of this model was made apparent in the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the accession of the former communist states in Central and Eastern Europe to NATO and the EU. This was a great moment of victory for freedom and democracy in the history of humanity.

After 1945, the West instead established the social market economy under the model of liberal democracy, guaranteed by the NATO security umbrella and a voluntary process of supranational integration in Western Europe. This parallel dynamic was underwritten both domestically and at the European level by a social pact between entrepreneurs and workers and a political consensus among Christian democrats, liberals and social democrats. Thus, several Western European countries embarked on a double process of construction of welfare states and continental market integration. While national governments were in charge of taxing, public spending, social policies, and macroeconomic management, the European communities were tasked with ensuring the four fundamental market freedoms of goods, services, labour and capital, and compliance with competition rules. Since the start, this model has shown some imbalances since national taxation (to this day) can distort market competition. The construction of a common market without a common currency also posed challenges to fair competition since countries could resort to currency devaluations. In time, this led to the adoption of the Euro and a single monetary policy but without a fiscal pillar at the EU level.

Still, over three decades, Western Europe enjoyed continued economic growth on the backdrop of the reconstruction effort, strong public sectors, the common market and the security umbrella provided by the US and NATO in the context of the Cold War. Large unionisation and collective bargaining ensured high wages and good workplace conditions for the working classes, combined with public education and health systems. However, by the early 1970s, several shocks, from the end of the international monetary system based on the linkage between the gold ounce and the US dollar to the increase of oil prices and automatic wage increases generated low growth and high inflation, putting an end to the post-war economic boom and its corresponding political and social consensus. Since then, neoliberalism has dominated the public discourse, political thinking and economic policies throughout the world as a rejection of the prevailing Keynesian outlook of the immediate post-war period.

The new doctrine emphasised the benefits of free markets, including free trade and competition of salaries and labour standards, liberalisation of product and labour markets privatisation of public sector companies and services and financialisation of the economy (including the liberalisation of the capital accounts). Macroeconomic policy focused on containing inflation and government deficits and debt to the detriment of social needs, job creation and the environment. Technological change, particularly computerisation and telecommunications, compounded with the removal of restrictions to capital flows, enabled the rise of financial capitalism.

Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, as the main neoliberal political leaders of the time, had a strong influence also in continental Europe during the 1980s and 1990s to the detriment of the social-Christian tradition at the heart of the European construction. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 provided an additional boost to the notion of competition and free trade even if this event constituted above all the triumph of liberal democracy over totalitarian communism. It also accelerated globalisation in the financial and trade dimensions, with the incorporation and of the former communist bloc into the world market economy.

This undoubtedly helped lift millions of people out of poverty, particularly in Asia, but it also had highly negative effects in many developing countries. In the developing world and transition countries, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank promoted and enforced severe adjustment programs and 'shock therapy', which produced dramatic social

effects. For all its benefits, globalisation also led to a race to the bottom in which nation-states attempted to out-compete each other to offer favourable regulatory conditions to global corporations. The diffusion of the Internet in the 1990s added a communication and cultural dimension to globalisation with a faster and larger exchange of ideas, but in the absence of a true global governance structure, it remained strongly biased against the political, social and environmental dimensions. In the end, the neoliberal paradigm was based on a dual model: a closely integrated global economy in a world of divided nation-states, with the weaker ones dominated by the largest ones and their multinationals.

During the neoliberal era, the social welfare of EU Member States also eroded. The EU liberalised capital flows with the rest of the world, focused on deepening the single market and launching the monetary union but without a fiscal component at the union level. Meanwhile, the fiscal powers of national governments are being eroded by the increased mobility of business assets of major financial and industrial corporations, capable of provoking capital flights or the loss of blue-collar jobs. Consequently, economic growth became less balanced, and wealth and income less evenly distributed across the world. Globalisation has brought great prosperity and improved quality of life for many, but the other side of the coin is deepened inequalities, massive environmental damage and faster climate change, more conflicts and the continued rise of large corporations.

However, the major shock of the financial and economic crisis of 2007–2008 was a massive wake-up call. Originating in the US in a poorly regulated mortgage market, it quickly spread across the entire planet, given the degree of financial integration of the global capitalist economy. Initially, governments across the world agreed to expand public spending. Banks, and often their shareholders, were bailed out by taxpayers' money. In 2010, in view of the Greek debt crisis, which morphed into a Euro crisis, EU governments, under pressure from the German chancellor, reversed policy: strict fiscal and labour adjustment followed, causing a second recession and unemployment. In addition, national governments have been unable and unwilling to modernise the welfare state, adding to growing inequalities, particularly intergenerational. Progressive achievements in reducing inequality, exclusion and discrimination against women, LGBTI people and ethnic minorities further fuelled the fear and anger of certain groups in society. Traditional governing political parties across Europe, particularly those on the left, lost popular support, alongside the EU institutions. National populist parties rose, promising nothing had to change or even the return to an imaginary idyllic

past. We witnessed a resurgence of nationalism and authoritarianism, generating a retro topic return to the nation in which humankind has plunged. We know that this nationalism does not have the exact characteristics as fascist nationalism, but it is just as insidious because it claims to solve the problems of contemporary society by building walls and barriers, defending borders and blood, centralising decisions and closing its eyes and heart to the different and the foreign. The coronavirus pandemic has only strengthened the return of the common good and public services as pillars of society as well as the need for deeper international cooperation. To combat the crisis of democracies and avoid the resurgence of totalitarian doctrines, the economic function of the EU must be redefined so that the citizen is out at its centre. The growth in Gross Domestic Product cannot be the only measure of economic and social progress. We need a new European humanism based on the equilibrium between the society, the market, the state and the environment.

Environmental destruction and the climate crisis

The advent of the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century and ongoing technological progress have brought about the modern world and a continuous average increase in incomes and living standards. However, it has also radically altered nature because of over-reliance on fossil fuels, dumping of dangerous residues in water sources and gases in the atmosphere, among other things. This has only accelerated the destructive process implemented by man on nature, amplifying what Homo sapiens had started thousands of years ago. Human activities that have exploited nature for centuries produce today serious health consequences and damaged biodiversity and ecosystem. An awareness of the resulting ecological preoccupation started to gain traction by the 1970s, with the first evidence of polluted rivers and increases in cancer rates, disappearance of species, acid rain, ozone layer perforation and global warming. The new ecological awareness was strengthened in Europe through the Green political movement, now also part of the pro-European political forces alongside Christian democrats, liberals, social-democrats, and the new left. The landmark Club of Rome Limits to Growth reports highlighted the planetary constraints to economic growth, and the Bruntland Report launched the key idea of sustainable development. Therefore, the ecological dimension had to be internalised in the economic system. Global cooperation in the 1980s and 1990s succeeded in reversing ozone layer damage with the prohibition of Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). Around the same time, in Europe, our Union took environmental problems more seriously than Member States, imposing strict regulations on water and forest protection, the need to undertake

environmental impact assessments for productive activities and the preservation of biodiversity.

However, global warming, that is the result of the long-term heating of Earth's surface, has transnational consequences and disastrous impact on the daily lives of citizens around the world, representing the most characteristic transnational public evil as noticed during the Río Earth Summit of 1992. The Paris Climate Agreement of 2016 is a fundamental milestone of this process, which is still falling short, seen the continued rise in global temperatures against the backdrop of an ever-increasing energy-intensive world economy.

Since the 1980s, each decade has been warmer than the previous one. Yet, climate change has accelerated in the second half of the second decade of the 21st century. The 2015- 2019 has been the warmest five-year period on record, with greenhouse concentrations in the atmosphere increasing to record levels. This was also visible in other indicators such as sea level rise, ice loss, and extreme weather, with recurrent drier winters, droughts, and heat waves in summertime. The global temperature has risen 1.1C since the pre-industrial level, and 0.2C compared to period 2011-2015. The warmest seven years on record have all been since 2015, with 2016, 2019, and 2020 constituting the top three. The year 2021 was also exceptionally warm. Canada recorded +49C in summertime while in Siberia winter averages remain at -46. This means that in the world, the temperature spread can reach almost a 100- degree difference from one hemisphere to another. The summer of 2022 has been particularly hard globally and also in Europe. Recurrent heatwaves starting as early as June and exceptionally low rainfalls during the winter and spring had a devastating impact in agriculture, the river´s levels like in the Rhine, but also in lives lost to heat and in apocalyptic forest fires throughout Europe and beyond the Mediterranean basin. July 2022 ranks among the three hottest Julys since 1991. 60% of Europe's land is suffering a severe drought.

This accelerating climate change and its consequences constitutes a catastrophe never before experienced by humankind, bringing the Earth's climate and environmental systems to irreversible tipping points if no drastic action is taken. All over the world, we have witnessed changes resulting in an upsurge or downturn in precipitation events that do not reflect the normal course of nature. Blazing fires and death of elderly people due to heat are just some of the consequences of this accelerated shift taking place on the planet. Millions of people become refugees each year as a direct result of climate disasters. Desertification is also a process closely

linked to climate change, leading to the loss of biodiversity in many areas of the world. The continued reliance on fossil fuel resources contributes not only to rising temperatures but also to air pollution. The scenarios that appear in front of our eyes if we do not immediately change our habits, and above our policies, are almost dystopian. Policy changes coordinated at the global level are essential and urgent. Consumers on their own can only reduce a part of their carbon footprint.

Among the many dangers linked to climate change, heat waves and the resulting wildfires are among the most urgent to solve. Hundreds of hectares have burned worldwide since the beginning of the century because of the violent summer heat that is getting ever drier. Fires around the world, like those that in 2021 were burning in Australia, Canada, California or the Mediterranean and those in Europe during the summer of 2022, (so far this year in the EU 657,988 hectares have burned) have consequences that not only affect crops or the destruction of houses but also undermine the biodiversity of our world, which represents a wealth to be protected. If the woods burn, so will the possibility of disposing CO_2 through the action of forests. The entire planet will see an increase in phenomena related to climate change.

Pollution is also an urgent issue for the current generation. Plastic, derived from petrol, has become the glue that unites all the countries of the world. It is a substance on which many of our modern day-to-day goods rely. Plastic has arrived in our oceans, polluted the seas, and permeated our societies, constituting a waste that is difficult to dispose of. It has entered our bodies through micro plastics, which, now, are almost impossible not to find even in spring water at the top of mountains. The Mediterranean Sea is at risk of losing its biodiversity and beauty. Our oceans, impoverished of their flora, endure the continuous violence carried out on them every day. Plastic from fishing nets makes up much of the great Pacific garbage patch. Activist action or the adoption of vegetarian or vegan diets by some is not enough to curb these destructive trends. For them to be truly effective, it is necessary to fully involve those who live near the sea on a daily basis, such as the fishermen, the true guardians of the seas.

The alteration of the balance of the world is also present in the failure to set up sustainable disposal and recycling systems, so the modern man entered into a vicious circle where buying and throwing away became the norm without thinking about the redevelopment or recycling of an object. Hyper-production clutters our modern society. Moreover, given the high number of inhabitants of planet earth, consumption and production in general are steadily increasing

whereby the ecological and carbon footprints of people in industrialised countries are orders of magnitude higher than those living elsewhere.

This concerns not only an accumulation of waste materials and garbage around the planet but also the systems deployed to the feeding of humankind. Intensive animal breeding, agricultural monocultures and intensive illegal fishing practices represent today not only ethical problems. Enormous quantities of grain are consumed for cattle breeding, at an industrial mass scale, with a vastly negative caloric output. The increasing desire for meat leads to environmental damage and loss of biodiversity, such as the Amazon forest, which is razed to the ground to allow for the cultivation of monoculture cereals that will serve to feed intensive livestock, while hunger persists in many parts of the world. In addition to the loss of global biodiversity, the production and excessive consumption of meat also contribute to global warming as well as health problems because of the introduction of antibiotics in cereals these animals are fed (now banned in Europe), which cause the emergence of new viruses and bacteria that can also be transmitted to humans.

The health emergency

In November 2019, a new virus appeared on the planet. The first outbreak happened in Wuhan, a city in central China, and from there, the virus quickly spread throughout the world reaching the scale of a pandemic and showing once again the futility of borders. The virus, named Covid-19 in 2020 by the World Health Organization, infected the entire population of the world. A health crisis of such magnitude has not been observed since 1918 with the outbreak of the so-called Spanish flu. By mid August 2022, there have been 6.428.661 deaths worldwide and 587.396.589 registered cases. Probably even more, as many authoritarian regimes underreported their figures.

This new challenge is also connected to the environmental crisis because Covid-19 may have been transmitted from nature to humans because of poor animal health and food standards and the continued biodiversity loss, or it may have been created or modified in experiments and escaped a laboratory by accident. This second scenario is no better, though, as it reveals the danger of high-risk virus research that is carried out throughout the world.

Covid-19 spreads faster than the flu and it is more lethal. As a result, national health systems in Europe, including intensive care units, reached full capacity and veered towards collapse in the early winter of 2020. Strict lockdowns and business closures were imposed across the Union by Member States' governments to control the pandemic until the development of vaccines but with dire consequences for workers and companies, fundamental rights and mental health. Most governments provided income support with furlough schemes with financial backing from the EU (SURE program).

The pandemic made clear that the sole action of Member States was inefficient and unequal, with national governments competing for scarce resources (masks, equipment, etc.) while undermining the Schengen area of free movement. In the end, the Union realised that bold action was needed. The summer of 2020 saw the birth of two new unions: an embryo of the Health Union with a common scheme to purchase vaccines and a nascent financial and fiscal union (the €750 billion Recovery Plan for Europe).

Vaccines were developed with unprecedented rapidity in 2020. They have proven to be the most effective way of containing the pandemic alongside the use of masks indoors. However, international cooperation failed to make them available in an equitable way to the entirety of humankind, and specifically to poorer countries, despite the efforts made by the COVAX initiative.

Covid-19 has changed the world as much as the 9/11 attacks did. If back then security became the priority, with new border and transportation controls and a focus on fighting terrorism, the pandemic has put public health at the centre of society, hopefully with more benign consequences. We foresee annual vaccination campaigns for the entire population against the pandemic and additional financial resources raised for health systems and the World Health Organisation.

Furthermore, since the winter of 2020, many aspects of society have been challenged. National governments and the EU should seize the moment to rethink the scale of values and the set of policies that must be implemented in the coming years. If on the one hand, the pandemic has represented a global trauma, on the other hand it could help to realise that we are a single humanity. Our condition on the planet is precarious. Let us focus on what really counts

freedom, equality, health, welfare, solidarity and protection of nature, all to be delivered by a more united, democratic and cooperative global system.

Increased migration flows

Migrating from one place to another is a natural human activity as old as humankind itself, irrespective of borders, an artificial human creation. Global movements of people are usually not voluntary and are often a result of the need to escape conflicts and persecution, therefore in search of personal safety. The lack of equal global citizenship encompassing a guaranteed set of civil, political and social rights fosters migration movements. The right to asylum, specifically, is a subsidiary remedy for the lack of guaranteed global citizenship rights, which to a degree is granted in accordance with the Geneva Convention. Europe and the West, seen as rich societies with the most developed set of rights, are the logical destinations of those fleeing war, persecution and lack of opportunities. Furthermore, the degradation of habitats is also increasing migration movements in search of better environmental conditions and resources.

Paradoxically, the state-centric neoliberal order that has prevailed since the late 1970s is based on allowing for the maximum movement of goods, services and capital and of super-rich individuals while restricting that of ordinary people and workers, especially in the Global South. This is not just a theoretical contradiction given the increasing global inequalities and demographic imbalances. The security bias after 9/11 has strengthened this trend, with an ever-increasing bureaucracy of screenings, requirements, fees, visa applications, etc. in the developed world. EU Member States have consistently decreased the awarding of work visas in the first two decades of the 21st century, thereby fostering irregular and dangerous migration routes, with a continuous and intolerable loss of lives in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic and on the land borders themselves with the inhumane, illegal and ever-growing practice of pushbacks.

The risk of a 'Fortress Europe' started looming on the horizon, like a Death Star, because of the heavy politicisation of this topic by the far right and nationalist populism. These extremist political forces have succeeded in framing the public debate about migration, using fear, racist stereotypes and xenophobic rhetoric, while democratic forces have not seriously attempted to build an alternative and positive narrative based on values and facts in fear of electoral defeat.

From the right to the left, governments accepted agreements with nearby countries. In most of them, migrants are sold as slaves and tortured in detention centres, such as in Libya, where the UN has reported crimes against humanity. These agreements, instead of fighting smugglers and local militias, empower and legitimise their work. At the same time, the border police financed by the EU push away migrants (beating them most of the time, sometimes firing at them), constantly violating human rights. Because of citizen videos and journalistic reports, the world knows about the brutal treatment of migrants by border guards in both Bosnia and Croatia in the winter of 2021, as well as of the continued treatment of the Greek, Polish and Lithuanian authorities.

We also observe the increasing instrumentalisation of migrants to exert pressure on the Union, aware that the fear of migration is one of the weak points of many European governments. The discourse of fear has turned against Europe, inflicting upon ourselves a geostrategic blow. Instead, a new narrative shall appeal to the better instincts of people, reminding them of our inherent membership in the global human society while highlighting the social, cultural and even genetic benefits of mixed communities, and the necessary demographic revitalisation of an ever-older and smaller European population. Europe has entered a demographic winter. Its population is aging and birth rates are low. By 2050, Europe will suffer a decrease of around 49 million people, which means a dramatic loss of talent and a reduced workforce. In the meantime, the population in Africa and Asia undergoes a diametrically opposed process, and the number of new-borns keeps increasing, with estimations forecasting a population of 2.5 billion in Africa by 2050 and 5.3 billion in Asia.

In 2019, people in need of international protection represented only 0.6% of the EU's total population, and irregular entries amounted to a mere 100,000 people. Therefore, this is a perfectly acceptable influx with relocation policies for people arriving at our borders in the different countries of the Union. Furthermore, in 2019, total net immigration to the EU was 1.5 million people. Without immigration, the European population would have shrunk by half a million people in 2019 because of a combination of fewer births, more deaths and less net migration.

Currently, labour shortages exist in Europe in both highly skilled and lower-skilled employees. The demographic trends show that the share of people 65 years old and above in the EU is

projected to be around one-third by 2050, exacerbating further existing structural needs in the EU's labour market. Facilitating legal migration entails considerable European added value. Failure to tackle supply-side issues, such as the limited enforcement of third-country national worker's rights, could be costing the EU up to €74 billion per year, while the failure to address demand-side issues, such as facilitating access to regular work for third-country nationals already present in the EU or introducing new legal channels for migrants to enter the EU, could be costing up to €37.6 billion per year. While many in Europe insist on curtailing migration at all costs, even at the cost of human rights, the high barriers to legal migration are diminishing the attractiveness of Europe at the global level for workers of all skill levels, thus making the EU less competitive. Already today, 80% of Africans currently thinking about migration have no interest in leaving the African continent. Therefore, Europe must reverse its 'demographic winter' by planning safe, regular and legal immigration, as stated in the UN Global Compact, and by promoting active birth policies. Otherwise, the fear of the dangerous outsider, derived from the supposed unsurmountable differences between cultures and 'races', will do nothing but impoverish Europe and Africa and increase radicalisation, both in Muslim countries (with tragic consequences for the economy and the tourism) and in the Western world. The most important model written in history that translates the will of an open society is to be found in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. We should be aware of it and use it wisely.

The digital revolution

The flow of information is by definition a transnational phenomenon, whether transmitted by the printed press or an intelligent telephone with Internet-based social networks. The digital revolution, which began in the second half of the 20th century, has allowed humankind to connect the entire globe in real time. While a global digital divide persists, for many citizens worldwide, it is possible to browse all kinds of topics and check the global state of affairs in a simultaneous and immediate way. In 2019, 47% of people in the developing world and 86.6% in developed countries used the Internet. This is a positive fact for human evolution, allowing people to exchange ideas faster and be interconnected with the surrounding environment. At the same time, people can be closer to realities that would have been impossible to be familiar with before this revolution.

However, even if the fusion of telecommunications and the Internet would easily cross national borders, authoritarian governments have also proven highly effective in adapting to the new

conditions, restricting the free flow of information and communication in their countries, building state-controlled and censored intranet structures which in many ways are sealed off from the global Internet as China's 'Great Firewall' shows.

The digital revolution is changing the social, economic, cultural, and political paradigm. One of the most interesting aspects of communications technology is that it is constantly being updated and adapting to global trends. Companies, banks and tax systems as well as many other government infrastructures have digitalised most of their operations, not only saving time and cost but also eliminating the possibility of physical access to some of their services, putting an additional burden on the poor and senior citizens.

Indeed, while the digital revolution has opened so many possibilities to human beings, there are many dark and worrying aspects. Over-reliance on digital communication, a trend further fostered by pandemic teleworking, increases social isolation and cyberbullying, creating serious mental health problems. Some in the young generation indulge in posturing in social networks, preferring a life based on appearance instead of being.

Personal data and privacy are not sufficiently protected at the international level, and its significant commercial value is reaped by companies and not by its real owners, the people. The ability of anyone (not to mention the so-called bots) to express views and opinions, whether or not they are true and in accordance with basic facts, in social networks and the Internet in general, enables disinformation and manipulation. Many people are unsure as to what they can believe or not. In addition, in-depth investigative journalism has become a luxury that fewer and fewer media outlets can afford to maintain.

Finally, the digital evolution has allowed the rise of digital mass surveillance, with the increase of cameras placed in public places, but also on the Internet through the system of cookies that process people's Web research and predict what they will want to buy or consult online tomorrow and in the near future. Intelligence services such as the National Security Agency (NSA) in the US or the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) in the UK are engaged in sophisticated global surveillance programs, accessing and eavesdropping on the digital communication systems of millions of citizens worldwide as well as of EU institutions and dozens of heads of state, among others. Authoritarian governments like the Chinese, have set up automatic surveillance systems that enable them to monitor the day-to-day behaviour of

their population on a mass scale. Thus, a fair, inclusive, and democratic supranational governance of the digital sphere is badly needed in a field in which our Union has taken the lead in comparison with other major powers.

Fundamental rights and rule of law

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the different UN conventions on civil, political, economic and social rights made clear that nations around the world must protect the fundamental rights of their citizens. However, they are blatantly violated daily around the world, whether we talk of minorities, political opponents, civil society leaders, journalists, women and girls, children, migrants or ordinary people, by the very same entities that are tasked with protecting them: the nation-states, particularly those of totalitarian and authoritarian character. In a state-centric order, multilateral institutions cannot guarantee today an equal citizenship package for all. However 'the right to have rights' must not be unequal based on birthplace or residence, whether you are on the good side of the border or not. Thus, the equal provision of fundamental rights, including gender equality, as recognised by international declarations, charters and treaties, is a purely transnational issue that can only be guaranteed by a supranational political order endowed with direct application of judicial rulings without opposition of interference by national governments.

This is the case in the EU, even if after acceding to the union some national executives have eroded fundamental rights, democracy and the rule of law, particularly those of Hungary and Poland, in clear violation of the Copenhagen criteria and Article 2 of the Treaty of Lisbon. This regression also warrants a further strengthening of our legal and governance framework, as it clearly shows the limits of the intergovernmental method.

A permanent crisis?

The hopes of a new era of global collaboration and democratic expansion, which came up at the end of the Cold War, have been disappointed. Many in the West, by now and to a large degree, seem to have lost confidence in liberal democracy and regional integration as a political paradigm. Growing social and economic inequalities, resulting from uneven distribution of the benefits of an unbalanced globalisation in production and finance, and the recurrent crises of market capitalism, particularly that of 2008, in contrast with the illusion of an unregulated

market, eroded confidence in the performance of representative democracy and increased support for national populists across Europe and the world. The Euro crisis that began in 2010 in many quarters has also shaken the popular trust in European integration itself, adding Euroscepticism and Europhobia to the populist rhetoric. A resurgent, expansionist Russia and an ever-more assertive China, both authoritarian in their own ways, appear to some, particularly on the extremes of the ideological spectrum, as viable alternative models. Difficult challenges, such as a fairer income distribution, climate change, migration flows, rising geopolitical tensions or the pandemic appear to pile up without being ever fully addressed because of their transnational nature and the lack of proper regional and global governance systems. Therefore, we can conclude that today humankind is in a permanent state of crisis. The world's perpetual crisis generates frustration and discontent, a condition that intimately affects each individual but at the same time the entire human race. In such a globalised, interdependent and interconnected world, there is a need for truly regional and global solutions. If the world's societies do not align with the goal of transnational democratic integration, this permanent crisis will continue.

This situation requires federalism in two complementary dimensions. On the one hand, the policy issues that are by nature or development cross-border and transnational, such as international and social peace, climate, pandemics, digitalisation or the guarantee of fundamental rights, must be conferred to a supranational level of governance. On the other hand, and equally important, this governance must be effective, transparent, democratic and representative, thereby excluding purely intergovernmental, unanimity-based arrangements.

III. THE TASKS OF THE POSTPANDEMIC AND POSTWAR ERA: THE REFORM OF THE GLOBAL SOCIETY AND THE FEDERAL UNION

The tasks of the post pandemic and post-war era are twofold. We must expand the range of policies that are managed supranationally, either at the regional or the global level, in line with the transnational challenges already identified. In addition, this management should be federal, and in Europe, this means giving the European Parliament legislative initiative and full co-decision rights in taxation, own resources and debt, on the wake of the Recovery Plan and its Eurobonds, and the end of unanimity in the Council. An autonomous fiscal capacity, over and beyond Member States, is essential to make the definitive, fundamental step towards a no-return federal pact. This becomes even more necessary since the approval of the Recovery Plan

given the lack of involvement of Parliament in the decisions regarding approving the issuance of EU debt and of the future revenues required to pay it back.

A new set of transnational policies in Europe and the world

A foreign policy and security union

The Union must show that it is completing the process of political unity, thus becoming a real actor in international politics. The return of war in Europe closes the 30-year-long post–Cold War era. Europe and the West have to meet a new, great security challenge. In the short term, the Union and its allies must make sure that the Russian aggression does not succeed. Continued military aid to Ukraine is essential, including the delivery of heavy equipment, such as artillery, tanks and fighters, so it can recover its territorial integrity. It is also essential to cripple the financing of Putin's war machine by banning all energy imports from Russia.

This in itself requires consolidating the European Recovery Plan as a permanent tool (including EU debt issuances) to provide long-term financing of the ecological transition, common purchases of alternative energy supplies, the setup of strategic reserves and the building of new natural and liquefied gas and green hydrogen interconnections in Europe. A new European Assistance and Resilience Plan should also finance compensatory transfers to households and Small and Medium size Enterprises (SMEs) in view of energy and food price increases.

In the medium term, it is imperative to implement the Strategic Compass proposed by Josep Borrell, including the setup of the 5,000-strong Rapid Reaction Force. We must also establish the defence union, first by activating Article 42.2 of the Treaty of the European Union on common defence and second by creating the EU military headquarters and joint command, with full involvement of the European Parliament. In the long term, we envisage endowing the EU with its own armed forces on the model of the American dual army – an experience that lasted until the Second World War - or by establishing, what the German Social Democratic party (SPD) has called the 28th Army.

The war also shows that the EU is a provider of security for its Members and its partners. In the post-war settlement, Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova belong to the Union, and one day, a

peaceful, free and democratic Russia will take its rightful place in the Common European Home proposed by Gorbachev.

In light of the global challenges we are facing, the EU should take its responsibility to contribute to global peace by cooperating in solidarity and on equal partnership with other countries and regions, thereby bringing in our values and interests, while enhancing its standing within the transatlantic community. The EU Global Strategy of 2016 must be updated to the new external environment of the third decade of the 21st century. It shall focus on delivering the fundamental public goods of 'human security and sustainable development' with special attention to the neighboring countries (the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe: the countries of the Western Balkans are to be integrated).

Furthermore, the Strategic Compass will enable Europe to develop policies towards Africa and the Middle East. If we fail to create stability in policies towards these two world regions, all that will remain will be the politics of emergency, that is, the absence of politics, and we will fail to achieve a real migration policy. In Africa, the creation of infrastructures for the development of solar energy is essential (e.g., the Desertec project).

From an institutional point of view, EU foreign policy should not be exclusively elaborated by the Member States but also by the High Representative, subject to approval of the Council and to the control of the Parliament. Qualified majority voting in the Council shall become the standard decision–making procedure to overcome the paralysis and lack of teeth of the EU's foreign policy positions because of national vetoes. It is also necessary to relaunch the battle for a single EU seat on the Security Council. The EU also needs its own Diplomatic Academy to train true European diplomats and intelligence-gathering capabilities.

The conceptual consequence regarding its identity in the field of foreign affairs of the EU's gradual, internal evolution into a union of democratic states is that the Union has become the first regional democracy of states and citizens on the global stage. Nowadays, with the erosion of human rights observed worldwide and increasing international polarisation, the EU must become a stronger international actor and reassert its role as defender of civil and human rights and promoter of democracy. The federalisation of the UN system, understanding by this its democratisation and parliamentarisation shall become a key goal of the EU's foreign policy agenda alongside the support to regional integration all over the world. Foreign policy and

defence could be the next most suitable field for a breakthrough in European integration, as the monetary union once was.

A climate, ecological and energy union

The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated and deepened the structural crises of our times: the social and environmental unsustainability of the current systems of production and consumption – both in terms of environmental and human costs – and the absence of sovereign global institutions able to address them in an effective and democratic manner. This calls for a new global social and ecological contract with a focus on expanding renewable sources of energy and protecting biodiversity. The fight against climate change must be stepped up since most experts consider that if current trends persist, the year 2025 will be the point of no return for the goal to keep rising temperatures below an average of 1.5C. The EU shall establish a Tobin tax on financial transactions to raise the necessary funds to finance the ecological transition of the economy and society and work towards its global implementation. It shall also incorporate carbon neutrality and Paris Agreement goals in its constitutional framework in addition to the 'Fit for 55' legislative package for the implementation of the European Green Deal.

At the world level, the UN should adopt a Global Green Deal based on the Sustainable Development Goals. This should include a global carbon price system to avoid trade disparities and end combustion engine vehicles. In the meantime, the EU should adopt a carbon border tariff on goods that do not respect international climate commitments in their production process. As for the European energy transition, it will be possible largely if the EU manages to import green energy – solar, hydroelectric and wind power – especially in close and fair cooperation with African countries that have these energies in abundance. In this context, it will be necessary to include a carbon border tax as a Euro-African measure.

A health union

The EU and the world shall prepare for annual Covid-19 vaccination campaigns for the whole population. Europe should establish the European equivalent of the American National Health Institutes in the form of a European Joint Undertaking (Galileo type). Europe must strengthen the European Civil Protection Mechanism in view of probable future pandemics or food

plagues at the international level. The union must be able to harmonise anti-pandemic measures (reform of Article 168 of the treaty), and health shall become a shared competency between the Member States and EU institutions. Internationally, a Global Health Pact that includes an anti-pandemic treaty is necessary.

A migration union

Migration will continue to increase because of global inequalities and the climate emergency. The European Commission's proposed Pact for Migration and Asylum, launched on 23 September 2020, is another step towards a more Fortress Europe. Non-EU citizens in Europe represent only 5.1% of the total European population. Still, many politicians and media have created an environment of fear towards immigrants.

Europe shall organise flows and respect the rights of all humans irrespective of their provenance. It is not sustainable that countries of first arrival do not benefit from responsibility sharing in the field of migration. To start, the EU must guarantee safe legal pathways for immigrants from their countries to Europe, with a well-established system of disembarkation and relocation based on solidarity among Member States. The Commission must endow itself with the capacities to counteract illegal expulsions that disregard international obligations and EU law by introducing an independent monitoring mechanism in all Member States. Equally, it is urgent to place legal labour migration channels at the EU level as well as emergency measures that enable saving lives at sea through a permanent European search-and-rescue mission. Humanitarian visas can also increase the safety of persons seeking international protection from persecution who should be able to apply at any consulate or embassy for an EU humanitarian visa.

The Commission must put forward clear and effective resettlement schemes to deal with emergencies. Migration and asylum are a shared EU competence, and the Commission has the responsibility to act as a guardian of the Treaties. The Commission must act accordingly and launch infringement procedures towards those Member States that disregard international obligations and EU law (for instance the practice of pushbacks as policy) as well as withhold funds to those EU Member States that do not act accordingly to EU law.

At the global level, efforts should be made to agree on the right to move as a human right since it will be both unfair and unstainable to continue building walls and fences around the world. It is an insult to the citizens who have witnessed the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, that three decades later, despite the Schengen area of free movement, European countries have built more than 1,000 kilometers of fences and walls at their borders (around six times the length of the Berlin Wall).

Europe shall also intervene through massive investments to restore dignity and hope to the African people, also by reactivating the Barcelona process starting with the countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean.

A social union

The pandemic has also widened inequalities worldwide – the rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer – while putting into question the wisdom of the Stability and Growth Pact. A fairer redistribution of income is needed, but we lack a global taxation system able to track transnational financial asset movements and hidden wealth. The OECD agreement on a global minimum corporate tax rate of 15% on profits is a historic step forwards, as it requires multinational companies to pay taxes where the goods and services are effectively sold. It will be then necessary, with Europe leading the way, to institute a financial transaction tax to penalise financial speculation and a carbon tax to penalise polluters. This could also be designed to balance out CO_2 taxation by giving back equal per-capita amounts supporting both social and climate justice. All tax havens must be abolished, including those in the EU, and illicit financial flows and investments from kleptocratic regimes and organised crime cartels stopped. An international anticorruption court should be established.

To develop the European social character, the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Social Progress Protocol shall have a constitutional dimension, and therefore be binding, at the same level as the four fundamental market freedoms of the Treaty of Lisbon. It is important to reconceptualise the SURE fund, the other most important social policy measure adopted by the EU, on the wake of the pandemic with the caveat that it should not replace national measures against unemployment but complement them. It will be necessary to adopt a regulation for a mandatory minimum level of wage protection in all Member States (a federal minimum salary) to act as a social floor for all workers in Europe.

The pandemic has made more evident the existence of a new category of exploited workers, that is, 'independent' workers who deliver goods on behalf of large multinational corporations such as Amazon, Uber Eats, Deliveroo, Foodora, Just Eat and other delivery platforms. The so-called 'riders' are apparently 'masters of their own', but in fact, they are the new proletariat without any real labour rights or union guarantees. For this reason, it is necessary to change the nature of the labour collaboration that riders have with delivery platforms and provide them with fundamental rights: better working conditions, a minimum wage, sick leave, holidays and pensions. Europe shall make a globalisation of social and labour rights a foreign policy priority. Access to the largest internal market in the world endows our Union with strong bargaining power vis-à-vis global corporations. We must demand from them higher due diligence standards and make them conditional to grant trade access to Europe.

A new Economic and Monetary Union: towards a Sustainability Pact

The Stability and Growth Pact should be reformed to promote sustainable and anticyclical economic policymaking by treating differently well-defined public investments in deficit and debt calculation and providing realistic and country-specific debt reduction paths for each Member State. If this solution turns out to be too politically sensitive, then at least, investments related to climate action and environmental protection should be treated differently in deficit and debt calculations in a new fiscal, social and environmental Sustainability Pact. When calculating debt, such investments could be spread over the life of an investment. Additionally, the European Central Bank (ECB) should be allowed to provide emergency financing to the Union in exceptional circumstances and adjust the eligibility criteria for asset purchases and collateral to exclude the most carbon-intensive companies.

A digital union

Digitalisation is a purely transnational, cross-border phenomenon. It affects not only the conduct of business but also our social life and privacy. A European Digital Rights Charter, including access to the Internet as a new human right, is needed as a first step to a digital update of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and the adoption of a global Digital Rights Pact. Furthermore, a supranational authority shall establish the nature and extent of user data that a company may collect: there is a need for certain limits to how companies can collect and

exploit personal data, and with such a measure, companies would have less control over people's current and future consumption. The same authority needs to limit and regulate how social networks can be used by political advertisers, for instance, ahead of elections and should track funding to make campaigns more transparent.

A home affairs union

Organised crime is now above all a transnational network that often mixes drug trafficking, money laundering and international terrorism. Tax havens and bank secrecy are a crucial part of this system. Criminals and terrorists also exploit loopholes and differences in national legislation to their advantage. Information sharing between national police organisations is not always timely or optimal. This is why Europol should be stronger, evolving into a kind of European FBI. Internationally also, in some regions particularly affected by organised crime, supranational judicial mechanisms may be needed, such as the proposed Criminal Court for Latin America and the Caribbean or the prosecution of global environmental crimes by the International Criminal Court.

A new institutional setting: the European Federation

The first condition for the EU to become stronger in the world is more internal political unity. Furthermore, our institutional framework should be updated to the new, post-Lisbon environment and evolve into a European federal constitution, in line with the Manifesto and the Spinelli Project. This new constitutional treaty is necessary to give rise to a more perfect political union.

Protecting the rule of law: a union of values

Our democratic values as enshrined in the Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union cannot be threatened. For the future of the union, it is crucial to clearly enshrine in the Treaties the primacy of EU law. This foundational principle and EU law must be upheld through a series of mechanisms ranging from soft measures, such as a more profound understanding   of European values and principles acquired through more interactive and direct involvement of EU citizens, a better understanding of what European citizenship education is or the annual rule of law reports, to a European citizenship statute providing citizens specific rights and

freedoms, infringement proceedings, a reformed Article 7 procedure that overcomes the limitations of unanimity, as well as a stronger conditionality mechanism to withhold EU funds to those that do not comply with EU law. The conditionality mechanism must progressively evolve to fully cover Article 2 values and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Institutional reforms

Institutional reforms are indeed needed to advance towards a more effective EU in the form of a European federation. As mentioned previously, the elimination of unanimity by promoting increased decision-making in the Council by qualified majority would allow greater agility and would give the capacity to address reforms in new policies that have been paralysed by the veto of some Member states in matters such as taxation, enlargement policy, foreign policy and security and defense (to ensure a reinforced role for the EU as a geopolitical actor or social policy. We need a more transparent, democratic and efficient Council, as the Chamber of the States, that works on equal footing with Parliament in a bicameral system. The institutional reforms should further develop the European democracy by giving stronger powers to the European Parliament through the right of legislative initiative, guaranteeing a greater political control over the Commission through the introduction of the possibility of an individual no-confidence vote for Commissioners.

The strengthening of the European Parliament prerogatives and transparency mechanisms such its inquiry powers is more necessary than ever after the launch of the European Recovery Plan. Indeed, the nascent financial, fiscal and health unions are consequential steps of an intrinsic federal nature. These new unions must be complemented and further legitimised by a stronger political and constitutional union, empowering the European Parliament with co-decision rights on debt issuance and pan-European taxation: the European Parliament must adopt the Commission's proposals on its own resources.

A new political system

Council must endorse the introduction of transnational lists in a Union-wide constituency and the lead candidate system (Spitzenkandidaten) for the election of the president of the European Commission within the framework of Parliament's proposed European electoral law of 3 May 2022. This should be combined with the creation of real European parties to increase

democratic participation in the choices of the EU. Since it is still difficult to generate a pan-European debate, surpassing the paradigm of 27 simultaneous national elections that often revolve around domestic issues or examine the national governments in office, this reform will strengthen the European political sphere, increasing the citizen dimension and giving greater visibility to European political parties. Another essential objective towards the full democratisation of the European Union lies in putting participatory democracy on an equal level with representative democracy. In contrast to the Lisbon Treaty, where participative democracy has a secondary – almost inexistent – role in the overall decision-making process, a future constitutional treaty should place valid popular initiatives closer to the status of universal suffrage.

Therefore, the European model for citizens' initiatives (ECI) should be regulated in a very different way from the current failed system, with only two ECIs approved in more than 20 years. To begin, the current rule requires that one million citizens' signatures are needed for the initiative to be considered, and only if a certain distribution by countries is achieved. Above all, the European Commission – judge and party in the acceptance of ICEs – should cease to hold the control of the validity of the proposals which it has today. The Commission's intervention should be limited to verifying the formal requirements of the ICEs, whilst the deliberation and decision on whether an ECI is to be converted into law should lie with the Parliament, as it is the case in most national legislations. Strengthening the European public sphere also requires complementary mechanisms to consult citizens on a permanent basis.

To continue the unprecedented process started on 9 May 2021, we should complement a stronger representative democracy with new means of participative democracy. A permanent European Citizens' Agora would be a good way to implement this vision. Its format could be inspired by the experience of the Conference on the Future of Europe. It could serve to express their say to citizens on different subjects such as European Citizens' initiatives, pilot projects and establishing a participatory budget. The direct involvement of randomly selected citizens in European politics, with representativeness criteria and supported in their decision-making by experts and civil society organisations, should be structured, focused on an upcoming important legislative decision but also possibly cyclical and should be embedded in the decision-making process of the EU. Priorities resulting from the European Citizens' Agora could be presented to the EU institutions to feed into the consultation mechanism that leads to the establishment of the annual Work Programme of the Commission.

A citizen's union: education and culture

The introduction of a European citizenship statute providing citizen-specific rights and freedoms, which would make European values and rights more tangible for EU citizens, and the creation of a structured mechanism of consultations with the citizens at the EU level could also be tangible results of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

It is also necessary to build a common European and global community of citizens with a reinforced sense of belonging through stronger European citizenship and transnational culture. The plurality of cultures and identities within the frame of a strong and common European project must be an element of union and integration.

Even though culture is often acknowledged as one of the core strengths of Europe and an important element of its soft power, it is too often thought only within national boundaries, disregarding the centuries of cultural exchange that are at the root of our shared cultural heritage. Moreover, the lack of strong competencies in the cultural field makes European culture one of the biggest untapped sources for European integration.

Europe must stimulate and increase cultural awareness without reification or naturalisation of culture, promote the emergence of a European political conscience to bring the institutions closer to the citizens and put the individual back at the centre of political and social action.

Indeed, when all the founding fathers imagined Europe as a peace project, they referred to not only the absence of armed conflict but also a set of actions with which to encourage economic, social and environmental harmony. To make this possible, we call for the organisation of new pan-European cultural events, such as a European festival of cultures and ideas on, and around, 9 May, as well as the organisation of itinerant trade fairs for the creative sector, for example, a European book fair.

A great example of building a common feeling of belonging undoubtedly comes from the House of European History in Brussels, which was proposed by Hans-Gert Pöttering in 2007 in his inaugural speech as president of the European Parliament. The House of European

History represents a model of excellence that highlights our common cultural and historic heritage. It should be expanded and strengthened to reach out to citizens in the Member States.

In addition, the New European Bauhaus, launched in 2020, sets the seed to such Europe-wide participatory initiatives; it should evolve and be consolidated with the greater participation of artists and cultural actors and a stronger European ethos. To this end, we propose an ever-closer cultural union, where shared competencies in the field of culture enable cultural action at the EU level.

We also need to renew the European educational space to make sure it is fit for the world to come. Thus, it is urgent that full recognition of academic qualifications be achieved throughout the EU immediately. It is also important that Europeans learn about Europe and the EU in schools to fully grasp their right to European citizenship and counter the widespread knowledge deficit regarding the EU project. Thus, we must strengthen school curricula by including a subject that teaches common European citizenship education. To this end, the Commission could propose a demonstrative curriculum on European citizenship education for voluntary adoption by Member States.

In the long term, there is a need to advance towards the inclusion of shared competencies in education, at least in the field of European and global citizenship.

Indeed, European identity should acknowledge and embrace the fact that all human beings belong to one family that inhabits a common home, our planet Earth. Thus, the EU and Member States should embark on strengthening global citizenship education too, which is part of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Towards a global federation

Almost no substantial challenge the EU Member States face today is a purely national issue or only a European one: Imperialism and war, financial instability, migrations, labour and ecological dumping, nuclear proliferation, climate change, technological disruption and others are global phenomena, which means that they must be also addressed at this level. Global crises require global solutions. Building a democratic and federal global governance is therefore crucial for EU interests.

In 1941, the Ventotene Manifesto proposed a global federation as a second-order objective, considering the setting up of the European federation as the main priority. In consequence, the Manifesto did not provide any details on the characteristics of this proposal. Today, it is even more clear that a multilevel federal system of global governance is ultimately needed to combat climate change, prevent wars among rival superpowers but also to avoid their domination (and that of their multinational companies) over the rest of humanity, thus guaranteeing full and equal global citizenship rights to all in a livable planet, including girls, women, minorities and future generations. The role of the citizen of the world, and his or her rights, will have to be recognized. The first step should be to provide such recognition to all new-borns regardless of the country in which they are born. Whoever is born on planet Earth is a citizen of the world.

On the path towards global political integration, it should be clear that the democratic nature of the resulting global federation as well as its constituent parts is the only option. Federalism and autocracy cannot be reconciled. European federalism and world federalism are inherently tied to developing, strengthening and defending democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

A world federation could be progressively set up in two parallel and complementary ways. On the one hand, the creation of continental democratic regional proto-federations inspired by the EU example should be encouraged. They should gain recognition and representation in the United Nations. They will also contribute to a more balanced world system vis-à-vis continental superpowers such as the United States, Russia and China. Mercosur, the African Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Arab League are the obvious, if distant, candidates to such regional status. The launch of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in January 2021 represents an encouraging development.

On the other hand, the UN system should be reformed to make it more effective and democratic. In particular, a reform of the United Nations Security Council should include measures aimed at limiting the use of vetoes at least for matters relating to commonly agreed existential threats such as climate change and the fight against impunity. Moreover, the reform should envisage the redefinition of the composition of Council membership to better reflect geopolitical reality through, inter alia, a permanent seat for the EU and the expansion of the Security Council to ensure a more balanced representation, especially of the above-mentioned regional integration organisations and the world's great regions, to promote a genuine multilateral approach and

perspective. To this aim the Security Council should become the Council of the great regions of the world with the progressive abolition of veto power.

Strengthening the UN can be a significant opportunity to build a global federation with at least, as a first step, the creation of a UN Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA). This body should evolve towards a World Parliament elected directly by the citizens. It would allow the involvement of citizen-elected representatives of UN Member States in decisions and political negotiations on global issues, thus breaking the mere interstate decision-making mechanism between the executive branches of national governments.

Created by the UN General Assembly and merely of a consultative nature at first, over time it can be an engine to promote a reform of the UN Charter (already foreseen in its Articles 108 and 109) into a federal democratic world constitution. The cornerstone of this constitution could be a two-chamber global parliament vested with legislative rights on critical global issues: one chamber elected by the world's citizens and the other composed of representatives of Member States. This global parliament would elect and supervise an executive branch, and both would be subject to the legal oversight of a global judiciary based on the provisions of the constitution, including a guarantee of fundamental human rights.

We could also enhance direct mechanisms of citizen participation at the global stage through a United Nations World Citizens' Initiative, an instrument that would allow a certain number of citizens around the world to submit proposals to the UN Security Council or the UN General Assembly, so these proposals could be discussed and the representatives of the proposal be heard in these fora. Like the UNPA, this instrument, too could be set up by the UN General Assembly without Charter reform.

To face global issues such as climate, health and immigration challenges it is necessary to strengthen the UN Environmental Programme, the World Health Organisation, the International Organization for Migration, and the International Labour Organisation. These organisations could be jointly managed by an independent High Authority in order to tackle environmental, health, and migration emergencies in a coordinated fashion. This High Authority must be endowed with own financial resources through the establishment of a world carbon tax, a worldwide financial transaction tax, and a web digital tax. The proposed

institutional model is the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) that started the process of European unification.

All these proposals on the institutional framework need to be shaped in parallel with the promotion of international dialogue, a culture of peace and the prevention of conflicts. In this field, the Alliance of Civilizations, supported by 119 countries and 26 international organisations, seeks to foster intercultural dialogue and prevent radicalisation and conflicts between the West and the Arabic–Muslim world. We need to make a greater commitment towards this alliance, whose objectives complements in the cultural field the idea of global federalism promoting transnational, global and multilevel governance.

IV. THE POLITICAL SITUATION AND ITS CURRENTS: A NEW FEDERALIST STRATEGY

As recalled by the 1941 Manifesto, the political division will not just emerge from the left–right dialect but also between those in favour of, and against, supranational integration. In the face of the evermore assertive and influential nationalistic and anti-European movements, all the democratic political forces should act together beyond ideological differences to act as a cross-party movement able to achieve the European federation.

As also mentioned in the draft Manifesto of European Federalists published in 1957, at the centre of the renewal of democratic life, there is also the renewed commitment of the parties that condition political life; 'two currents' that do not coincide with any of the ideological and political divisions still existing today in the national frameworks of various countries. It is certainly easy to predict that reciprocal influences will be decisive, but 'federal' politics will put an end to the contradiction between political problems and the institutional tools with which they are faced today.

We are convinced – as Spinelli stated in the 1957 proposed Manifesto – that it is necessary to maintain a firm vision, also realised in concrete actions for the establishment of the United States of Europe, because it will be the difficult and patient realisation of an entire generation. The European people will not be able to achieve it if it does not have the prospect of a constitution and a federal government. These are not ends in themselves, but they are the

indispensable tools for carrying out the policy of European unification with the methods of European democracy.

Furthermore, the Conference on the Future of Europe has brought together EU institutions, citizens and the civil society. It has placed citizens at the centre of reform in the EU and offered an opportunity to deliver on a long-overdue promise to the citizens of Europe – the true association of the European demos to the European project, which will be the core of any federal endeavour alongside an organised civil society. It has also constituted an important opportunity to advance the federalist agenda. Whereas this inclusive democratic effort is unprecedented in the history of Europe, the conclusions of the Conference are the basis for necessary EU reforms by European institutions and by the Member States.

The Union of European Federalists, the European Movement International and the Spinelli Group of the European Parliament shall seize this opportunity to make sure, at a minimum, to fully harness the potential of the Lisbon Treaty, including the activation of the so-called passerelle clauses to extend qualified majority voting in the Council of the European Union.

Nonetheless, we shall strive for a Convention that goes above and beyond the current institutional framework, including a draft constitutional pact of a federal nature. The appeal Our Federal Europe: Sovereign and Democratic, of 9 May 2021, signed by more than 500 European personalities, embodies the key lines of action. The roadmap shall include the calling of a Convention to write the new constitutional treaty right after the conclusion of the Conference and its adoption by an Inter-Governmental Conference before the 2024 elections at the European Parliament, an occasion at which the federal constitution could be subject to popular ratification.

The federalist strategy is based on the request for a constitution because without one, citizens are not sovereign. During his political life, Altiero Spinelli has maintained the idea that the owners of the European constitution are the citizens ("the sovereignty belongs to the people") which could delegate it to their representatives having a democratic and European accountability. The Draft of a Treaty Establishing a European Union (Spinelli project) adopted by the European Parliament on 14 February 1984 is coherent with this idea and founded on the method of the leadership of the European Parliament. In dialogue with the national parliaments, the European Parliament had submitted a final text directly to the national ratifications,

avoiding an intergovernmental or diplomatic negotiation. This parliamentary courage gives inspiration and provides a roadmap, notwithstanding the proposed Convention, particularly in the event of national vetoes at the moment of the conclusion of the Intergovernmental Conference. We also take note that this could result in the launching of a more complete federal union based on differentiated integration.

To this end, we must reconstitute the Action Committee for a United States of Europe initially created by Jean Monnet in 1954 to gather relevant personalities from all over the continent willing to support this goal alongside the grassroots and umbrella movements and the parliamentary network. Therefore, we commit to further develop the true spirit embodied in the Ventotene Manifesto for solidarity, social equality and peace, thereby being able to shape the future for and with the people in Europe and the world. We know that this vision will not be realised at once. It should guide and inspire the sentiments and intellect of activists and citizens across the planet. We have walked along the road that Spinelli and Rossi opened up in 1941, but our journey must go on to complete the goals that they set to achieve. Our efforts to realise the promise of Ventotene should be commensurate to the challenges we are facing and the ambition required to overcoming them, thus delivering a fairer, more peaceful, just and democratic home for all humanity.

Island of Ventotene, Monday, 29 August 2022

Notes

THE **SPINELLI** GROUP

UEF Groupe Europe

Unión de Europeístas y Federalistas de España

BELGIAN SECTION OF THE EUROPEAN FEDERALIST MOVEMENT

Union of European Federalists
Union Europäischer Föderalisten
Union des Fédéralistes Européens

Union of European Federalists
Union Europäischer Föderalisten
Union des Fédéralistes Européens

UEF France

Movimento Europeo
Italia

Movimiento Europeo
Consejo Federal Español

The Ventotene Lighthouse

THE VENTOTENE FORUM