

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF FORMER MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

BERLIN COLLOQUY – HELD BY EMAIL
25 November 2021

EUROPE FACING GLOBAL POWERS AT A HORIZON OF 10 YEARS

BERLIN DECLARATION

Adopted unanimously by the associations () representing the members of the
European Association of Former Members of Parliament of the
Member States of the Council of Europe*

(*) only 21 of the 23 associations have a voting right

External Unity - Internal Diversity

Protecting and promoting Europe's way of life!

Europe – in this context the member States of the Council of Europe – must face the new international situation

1. The international order since 1989 has changed fundamentally. New powers are gaining significantly in influence, and since then others have relatively less importance. How can Europe's voice be brought to the fore in this process of change? How can we maintain our position in the world – besides the US, China, Russia and India with their different systems of values? This is not a theoretical question as we must learn even in democratic organized countries. This means protecting, defending and promoting Europe's values, Europe's interests and, therefore, Europe's way of life.

Defending Europe's way of life

2. The resolute protection of the life forms of European citizens must become the decisive objective of politics in and for Europe. In a world that is constantly changing the issues regarding the sense of security of European citizens are of first priority. It is clear that Europe can exert its influence sufficiently only as an internally united entity - to the outside world, so as not to be degraded to the mere object of the actions of others.
3. Europe's values, as established notably by the Council of Europe and the European Union, remain decisive for us: the liberal, democratic state based on the rule of law, powerful parliaments, the open society, and the respect for human rights with the freedoms of conscience, the practice of religion, expression and the organizational right, the inviolability of human dignity and the free development of personality, preservation of peace, climate and environment protection, the full provision of education and health services for all European citizens, justice and solidarity as well as equal rights based on gender and racial neutrality. Since these values including democracy are under manifold threats and attacks, people and politicians must resist authoritarian temptations and support democracy and its institutions. We, former parliamentarians united in the FP-AP, will be in the forefront to defend human rights and democracy and forge an Appeal for Democracy and Dialogue with like-minded former MPs. Close international cooperation also in the health field must be intensified in the face of new pandemics which pose risks not only to lives and livelihoods, but to democracies, too.
4. The forms of life in Europe are varied and diverse for historical and cultural reasons. That is not a weakness, it is Europe's strength! Europe will not live up to its role in the world if it becomes the plaything of powers. Power and influence in the international field of forces are not only based on economic and military strength ('hard power'), but not least on cultural strength of free, constitutional democracies ('soft power'). Freedom and democracy in Europe have always been underpinned by education and research. Europeans have to cooperate in particular in emerging fields of science and empower researchers and scientists, as well as encourage cultural activities. Therefore political and historical education is most important. The latter needs awareness raising and dissemination of Europe's historical roots as well as the strengthening of civic education for democracy and human rights.

Pragmatism and Realpolitik

5. Europe needs a parallel foreign and security policy: multilateralism and European unity.
6. It is the own interest of Europe to defend multilateralism, as expressed above all in international cooperation within the framework of the UN – especially the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and within the framework of the UN Paris Agreement on climate change (2015)¹. Multilateral institutions ought to be strengthened against the "law of the strongest". This requires pragmatic action and a sober realpolitik on the international stage – hence, cooperation with partners according to our interests.

¹ The agreement is a legally binding international treaty and entered into force on 4 November 2016.

7. We need to strengthen the values- and rules-based international order and its institutions. To achieve this, the EU – wherever possible together with other European countries – must unite beyond trade agreements to political-strategic agreements with like-minded partners from North and Latin America, Africa, Asia and Australia, such as the Strategic Partnership Agreement concluded between the EU and Japan in July 2018. Such a global alliance of values and interests must use its political, economic and cultural strength in the United Nations, as in international organizations, for maintaining and strengthening a values- and rules-based order. Transatlantic cooperation remains an important element of European self-assertion.

European Security Forum / European Security Council

8. Europe needs a new format for those European states that want to work together to defend, maintain and promote European forms of life: ideally a European Security Forum / European Security Council. Besides traditional military questions, this organization shall also consider issues of democratic security, human security and cybersecurity. The protection of Europe's borders (e.g. Frontex) is most important. After Brexit and after a temporary stop of the enlargement process everyone can see, that Europe is more than the 27 member states of the EU. And OSCE's structure is too weak, because decisions are taken by consensus on a politically, but not legally binding basis.
9. This outwardly united Europe is fighting for European values in all multilateral institutions and bringing them into its bilateral relations. UK and France, with their two permanent seats on the UN Security Council, remain anchor powers for Europe's international influence.
10. Europe develops a common policy towards a security architecture of Europe including NATO member Turkey. In the spirit of good neighbourhood we expect Russia to act as a partner rather than as an enemy. From a European partner and member state of the Council of Europe we expect respect for our fundamental values. Important as well is a constructive cooperation with Africa to promote sustainable, human, resilient development and also to reduce population and migratory pressures. In the turmoil of the Middle East we stand firm on a policy that safeguards Israel's right to exist, recognizing the two-state solution with Palestine.
11. Europe, as a power of peace, conflict avoidance and diplomacy, must use its security and defence potential more efficiently. The establishment of a European capacity to defend itself must be compatible with NATO, which remains indispensable. Each state must contribute according to its capabilities. Aid upgrading and better protection of the external borders of the European countries, especially of the south that in the recent years are affected by massive refugee and migration flows are most important; we appreciate the relevant international agreements.
12. In order to secure the economic basis for Europe's influence in the international field of power, our economy must become more innovative for competition with other economic powers. Free trade agreements with partners committed to humane, sustainable globalization and development are essential for this.
13. In this context, the euro must become a decisive building block for Europe's international influence.

The responsibility of European politics

14. Europe's architecture should be changed in this way: the European Security Forum / European Security Council brings together those states that have understood that European values, and therefore the interests of their citizens, can only be safeguarded in the medium and long term, if they are willing to act globally on a common ground. A common domestic policy is not mandatory, but desirable. States that also want to entangle their domestic policy do so as before within the EU and the euro zone.

Motto of a new European policy:

"External unity – internal diversity: protecting and promoting Europe's way of life!"