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1. FOREWORD BY JOAN MARC SIMON

Dear friends,

UEF is already working on the campaign for the European Parliament elections of June 2009! In the last Federal Committee of the organization that took place in Brussels on Saturday the 5th of April, the organization agreed on the main points of our campaign for the European Parliament elections.

Firstly and most importantly there is the contribution of UEF to politicize the EP elections by linking the vote for the EP with the election of the president of the European Commission. Making Europe more transparent and democratic is crucial in order to bring the European project closer to the citizens. We believe that an elected president of the Commission would bring legitimacy to the European Commission. UEF together with other civil society organizations is launching www.who-is-your-candidate.eu an online petition in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish that aims at collecting signatures and raising awareness about the necessity of politicizing the EP elections. Please promote the initiative in your local sections and if you want to have it translated to your language please contact the secretariat.

Secondly, UEF will be promoting European cross-border lists and spreading information about the European Parliament among our fellow citizens. We will explore the possibilities of cross-border lists and promote the organization of political events with candidates from neighbouring countries.

During the last Federal Committee we also had the chance to debate the future political strategy of the organization. The role

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of the President of the European Council, the shaping of the External Action Service, how to better influence the implementation of Lisbon Treaty… These are ongoing issues that will continue to be discussed until the next Congress of the organization taking place in Paris in October 2008.

The Federal Committee also committed to start cooperation with the African Federalist Movement and the World Federalist Movement in order to improve relations with our neighbours and promote good governance.

Moreover, a delegation of Federalists came to the European Parliament on the 3rd of April to meet MEPs and present UEF ideas. The meeting was a success and we aim at repeating the experience because it was clear that the MEPs need to get familiar with our ideas. Federalists in the Parliament are now a bit timid because of the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty and this is a reason why UEF should be more active in promoting the federalist ideas.

The consolidated version of the Lisbon Treaty is finally available online bringing transparency to the process. Let's hope that the Irish will read the text and realize the democratic improvements that it brings. Then it will be the time to start thinking about the new steps necessary to bring more democracy, transparency and accountability to the European level together with the legitimacy necessary to make a success out of a political process. I encourage you to keep organizing activities and promoting the federalist ideas in the next month and during the celebrations of the Europe's Day on the 9th of May!

Federalist regards,

Joan Marc Simon (UEF Secretary General)

2. PAST EVENTS

Debate with Jacques Santer, "Europe after the treaty of Lisbon", 3rd of April, Eastman building of the European Parliament

The Groupe Europe and the Union of European Federalists (UEF) organized a lively and very interesting debate with Jacques SANTER, President of the UEF Groupe Europe and former President of the European Commission, in the Eastman building of the European Parliament on the 3rd of April 2008. The given topic was "After the treaty of Lisbon, on the way to a more intergovernmental or more citizens orientated Europe?". Attended by more than 200 participants the event was a major success.

From left to right: Catherine VIEILLEDENT- MONFORT, Jacques SANTER, Mario GRECO.

Mr. Jacques SANTER mentioned that the European Union is functioning very well. The only problem in today's time was the lack of motivation, especially to find something that motivates young people, new generations to become active in Europe. Here the institutions and the reform of the institutions were, according to Mr. SANTER, not the best topic to attract and motivate young people for Europe,

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but it was a very essential topic people should get interested in, as it makes the system lasting.

In the picture: Around 200 participants attended the debate.

Europe was always characterized by crises. They passed through Europe and they were always an occasion, a chance to develop and to improve Europe. Reform and improvements were implemented through compromises, which became more and more difficult due to the number of states.

Mr. SANTER then explained the changes of the Lisbon treaty in greater detail. He finally believed and concluded that it was important to continue the European strategy of finding compromises. Also the Lisbon treaty was the result of a compromise. It was the result of amendments of the two previous treaties and it preserves the essence of the European Union.

Meeting with the European Parliament's Federalist Intergroup, April 3rd, Brussels

Representatives from the sections of the Union of European Federalists together with the Young European Federalists (JEF) were invited to meet the members of the Federalist Intergroup of the European Parliament in order to exchange their views regarding the ratification of Lisbon Treaty and the common strategy for the European Parliament elections in 2009.

From left to right: Nicolae Vlad POPA (EPP-EP, Romania), Victor BOȘTINARU (PES, Rumania), Monica Frassoni (Co-President of the GREENS/EFA, Italia) and Olle SCHMIDT (ALDE, Sweden).

The Federalist Intergroup and the representatives from UEF and JEF discussed three proposals in greater detail.

- The President of the European Commission should be elected by the citizens.
- The national campaigns have to discuss European challenges and not be a repetition of local or national elections.
- Parties should be able to present cross-country lists.

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Mr. Joan Marc SIMON, Secretary General of UEF and member of federalist delegation, underlined that one core element of the campaign is to ask the European parties to nominate their candidates for the post of the President of the European Commission. The UEF has already implemented different tools to gather public support.

Mr. Jacek SARYUSZ-WOLSKI (EPP-ED, Poland) contributed that the problem of proposing a common candidate was not a question of the political groups. It was more a question of nation states and the European public space.

In the picture: Federalist Delegation

Mrs. Monica FRASSONI (Co-President of the GREENS/EFA, Italia) agreed with the general terms of campaigning. She underlined that national tendencies are still dominating European politics. From her point of view it should be easy to establish a discussion about European issues on the national level as most of the national topics also have a European dimension. Here it was important for her that an elections campaign should focus only on some issues, should not be very technical, in order to present Europe as easy and simple as possible. Moreover she suggested not only to ask for a candidate for President of the European Commission but also for the post of the Higher Representative.

The MEPs and the representatives of UEF/JEF were concerned that the implementation of a discussion which challenges European issues on national levels could be successful.

Therefore, Philipp AGATHONOS (Vice-president of UEF) finally concluded, that we should engage more local initiatives, more civil society organizations and more MEPs, to move and change Europe from the federalist point of view.

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3. FEDERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

UEF Federal Committee, April 5th, Brussels

The last meeting of the UEF Federal Committee took place in Brussels on April 5th. About 60 delegates and observers attended the meeting.

After the report by the Secretary General, the meeting tackled the question of the 2009 EP elections campaign. Joan Marc Simon presented the political objectives and the global philosophy of the campaign.

From left to right: Michele Ciavarini AZZI, Alison WESTON, Mercedes BRESSO and Philipp AGATHONOS.

This weekend has also been the occasion to launch the Campaign www.who-is-your-candidate.eu, the campaign for a democratically elected president of the European Commission. In the frame of the upcoming election the UEF, together with many other partners, set up a petition aiming to ask the political parties to nominate their candidates for the position of President of the European Commission when they contest the European elections in June 2009.

Following the presentation of the new tools that the UEF will implement to improve its communication and visibility, the Federal Committee came to the core of the meeting, the political debate on the strategy of the UEF. This debate led to common agreement on several points.

From left to right: Antonio ANSELMI, Joan Marc SIMON and Alfonso IOZZO.

On the one hand, concerning the elaboration of the discussion papers for the Congress, a task force will prepare the subject of discussions for the Congress, such as the strategy of the UEF concerning the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, the world financial crises or the global climate change, as well as the Cross country Party list initiative that has to be supported in view of the EP elections. A series of possible working groups and commissions were already drafted in view of the Congress.

On the other hand, the UEF agreed on the need to involve new people and create new sections; for that aim the UEF will have to elaborate and adapt the message to the potential new members.

After the political debate and the vote on the resolutions, the Secretary General presented the events and campaigns the UEF

will be organising and taking part of in the following months. The delegates then presented a short report of their sections' activities and also presented their upcoming events.

The FC closed the debate and the delegates carried on informal conversations over the dinner.

In the picture: Participants of the UEF Federal Committee.

Adopted resolutions

During the FC the following resolutions were adopted:

EP3: New Leaders shall shape the profile of the European Union

EP4: Languages

IP1: UEF cooperation with the African Federalist Movement and the World Federalist Movement

All resolutions can be found on our website:

http://en.federaleurope.org/index.php?id=6719&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=1426&tx_ttnews[backPid]=3327&cHash=7d29e9df92

4. FUTURE EVENTS

Open doors day of the European institutions, 4th – 9th May, Strasbourg – Brussels

On the 9th of May, Europe celebrates the anniversary of May 9th 1950, when France's Foreign Affairs Minister Robert Schuman urged European nations to pool their coal and steel production, which later turned out to be a first foundation on which to build closer European integration.

On what has become a traditional celebration, the European Union's main Institutions open their doors to the public on the "Europe day".

Each year, the interested public is invited to visit Europe's main institutions such as the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Committee of Regions, or even take a rare guided tour of the Council of the European Union. There will be several outdoor events as well, such as concerts and exhibitions.

Congress of Europe 1948-2008, May 23rd-24th, The Hague

On the 23rd and 24th of May the European Movement will celebrate its 60th anniversary of the Congress of Europe in The Hague.

Congress of Europe 1948 - 2008

The Congress of Europe in The Hague was held from the 7th to the 11th of May 1948 with 750 delegates from 26 European countries

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participating as well as observers from Canada and the United States. It had a profound influence on the shape of the European Union, based on the subsidiary principle, shared sovereignty rights, democracy, the rule of law and solidarity.

Besides the Congress in The Hague the European Movement will celebrate with a coordinated series of events across Europe.

5. PROJECT

Who is your Candidate?

The campaign *"Who is your Candidate?"* was launched on April 5th during the UEF Federal Committee meeting in Brussels.

The campaign seeks to turn into a platform that hosts as many organizations as possible. The website www.Who-is-Your-Candidate.eu is now available in English, French, German and Spanish. Other languages will soon be ready.

This initiative is a project to follow-up on our last action to send letters to political parties asking them to nominate their candidate for President of the European Commission.

It will be used as on-line campaign, but it should also brand and host local street actions in the countries, where local section will implement those.

We would like to encourage everybody who has not signed the petition for a transparently and democratically elected President of the European Commission to do so. Your signature is valuable and makes a real difference. Please encourage also other to sign the petition on www.Who-is-Your-Candidate.eu

Thank you very much!

Why Europe Project

The Why Europe Projects will start its phase of evaluation very soon. Therefore and to present the outcome of the different events that already took place, the UEF set up a brand new project website. The address of the website is:

www.whyeurope.eu

There you will also find additional information and a detailed time schedule for the last events still to come.

6. NEWS FROM THE SECTIONS

News from Federal Union

Federal Union held its Annual General Meeting in London on Saturday 15 March. The team of officers was re-elected to serve for another year - chair: Brendan Donnelly, deputy chair: Stephen Haseler, secretary: Richard Laming, treasurer: Lawrence Fullick - and several new members were welcomed to the committee.

You can find details of the committee here: http://www.federalunion.org.uk/about/committee.shtml

The main political decision was to adopt a Manifesto, largely drafted by Ernest Wistrich and Brendan Donnelly, to summarise in two pages the political achievements of European

integration and the challenges which it still faces. You can read the Manifesto online here: http://www.federalunion.org.uk/europe/080315manifesto.shtml

The AGM also agreed to seek to reunite Federal Union with the Association of World Federalists. Federal Union had been founded with both European and world federalist interests in 1938, but a separate organisation for world federalism had been founded subsequently. Now that the major item on the European agenda is Europe's future role in the world, European and world federalism were converging again and so a renewed combined organisation becomes desirable. Plans for the reunification will be discussed between the two organisations during the summer, with a view to a final agreement in the autumn.

A Why Europe? conference was held in conjunction with the AGM, on the subject of constitutional affairs. The discussions covered fundamental rights, introduced by Owen Tudor, Head of TUC European Union and International Relations Department, Patrick Diamond, Director of Strategy, Equality and Human Rights Commission, and John Parry, honorary member of the bureau, Union of European Federalists, and the future of Europe after the Lisbon treaty, introduced by Joan Marc Simon, secretary-general of the Union of European Federalists, and Brendan Donnelly, director of the Federal Trust and chair of Federal Union.

A report on those discussions is online at: http://www.federalunion.org.uk/news/2008/080315AGMreport.shtml

News from UEF Finland

UEF-Finland elected a new board in its first annual meeting on the 20th of April.

The new President of UEF-Finland is Elina Kiiski. Henrik SÖDERMAN and Juha MUSTONEN will serve as Vice-presidents. Lauri TIERALA, Joonas TURUNEN, Pekko PULAKKA and JP KALEVA complete the board.

UEF-Finland is now preparing its first steps. They will actively participate and contribute within the Who is Your Candidate? Campaign and organise an event with party leaders in the autumn this year to discuss the European Parliament elections in 2009. Since the organization is very new, the first things to do are to produce a leaflet on federalism and to start the engagement in the EU-debate in Finland from the federalist point of view.

The UEF-Finland can be reached via email: suomi@federaleurope.org

7. PRESS RELEASE

Offener Brief der EFB zur Ratifizierung des Vertrages von Lissabon, 7. April 2008, Wien

Sehr geehrte Abgeordnete zum Nationalrat!
Sehr geehrte Mitglieder des Bundesrates!

Wenn Sie am 9. April über den Reformvertrag abstimmen, werden Sie einen unverzichtbaren parlamentarischen Beitrag zur Überwindung des drohenden Stillstands der europäischen Integration und zur Sicherung der künftigen Handlungsfähigkeit Europas leisten.

Als Repräsentanten aktiver, europäisch orientierter zivilgesellschaftlicher Organisationen Österreichs hoffen wir auf eine breitestmögliche Mehrheit in Österreichs Volksvertretungen.

Wir rufen auch jene Abgeordneten, die dem Lissabonner Vertrag aus verschiedensten Gründen bisher skeptisch gegenüber standen auf, sich ihrer Verantwortung gegenüber Österreich und Europa, und damit auch gegenüber allen Österreicherinnen und Österreichern bewusst zu sein und danach zu handeln.

Der Reformvertrag stellt eine wichtige Weiterentwicklung jener Grundsätze und Regelungen dar, die bereits dem Vertrag über den Beitritt Österreichs zum Europäischen Union im Jahr 1995 zu Grunde lagen. Durch diesen Vertrag soll sichergestellt werden, dass die EU auch nach der erfolgten Erweiterung um zwölf neue Mitgliedsländer weiter handlungsfähig bleibt. Mit dem Vertrag soll gleichzeitig die notwendige Durchsetzungsfähigkeit der Union im Kreis der übrigen globalen Akteure ermöglicht werden.

Der Lissabonner Vertrag verbessert die Möglichkeiten Europas, auf dem Gebiet des Klimaschutzes, der Energie – sowie der Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik gemeinsam aufzutreten und europäische Interessen durchzusetzen.
Der Reformvertrag stärkt die Rechte der Staatsbürgerinnen und Staatsbürger durch die europäische Grundrechtscharta und die erstmals vorgesehene Möglichkeit eines europäischen Volksbegehrens.
Dem Europäischen Parlament räumt der Reformvertrag deutlich stärkere Mitwirkungsrechte an der Gesetzgebung der Europäischen Union und verstärkte Kontrollrechte gegenüber der Europäischen Kommission ein.

Der Lissabonner Vertrag stärkt auch die Stellung der nationalen Parlamente im Rahmen der Unionsgesetzgebung durch die Kontrolle des Subsidiaritätsprinzips.

Der Lissabonner Vertrag steht nicht im Widerspruch zum Bundesverfassungsgesetz über die immerwährende Neutralität Österreichs. Der Vertrag besagt ausdrücklich, dass der „besondere Charakter der Sicherheits- und Verteidigungspolitik bestimmter Mitgliedstaaten unberührt“ bleibt. Dies betrifft im besonderen Maße auch auf Österreich zu.

Die Ratifikation des Reformvertrages ist unabdingbar, soll die Chance auf eine Weiterentwicklung des Friedensprojektes EU und die damit verbundene Verbesserung der Lebensverhältnisse all ihrer Bürgerinnen und Bürger gewahrt bleiben.

Die Bundesregierung rufen wir auf, die österreichische Bevölkerung über den Inhalt und die Bedeutung des Lissabonner Vertrages umfassend zu informieren.

Sehr geehrte Abgeordnete zum Nationalrat, sehr geehrte Mitglieder des Bundesrates, wir ersuchen Sie, durch die Ratifikation des Lissabonner Vertrages Ihren persönlichen Beitrag für ein starkes Österreich in einem starken Europa zu leisten.

Auf unseren Beitrag als Europa-Organisationen können Sie sich dabei verlassen.

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8. CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

- *Open doors day of the European institutions, Strasbourg, 4th May*
- *Why Europe? Project, Citizens' Participation Today: Why and How? 15th May 2008, Vienna, Austria.*
- *Congress of Europe 1948-2008, The Hague, Netherlands, May 23rd-24th*
- *UEF Belgique, section de Mons vous invite à « LA FÊTE DE L'EUROPE », Mercredi 7 mai 2008 à 18 heures, Conservatoire Royal de Musique 7, rue de Nimy, 7000 Mons*
- *UEF-Congress, 11/12 of October 2008, Paris, France.*

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The UEF, founded in 1946, is an independent and non-governmental European organisation, campaigning for a federal Europe. Since April 2005, it is presided over by Mrs. Mercedes BRESSO, President of the Italian Region of Piedmont, Member of the EU Committee of the Regions.

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