

RESOLUTION

Building consensus for Treaty change

The Federal Committee of the Union of European Federalists, convening in Budapest, Hungary, on 16 November 2024:

notes with concern

- that the process of European integration is today confronted with an increasingly unstable and dangerous global scenario as a result of the collapse of the post-cold war order, characterised by the outbreak of conflicts with unpredictable outcomes (the war that followed Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the conflict in Gaza that has now spread to Lebanon), and by the emergence of an axis between major powers governed by undemocratic and libertarian regimes that oppose their model to that of the Western democracies
- that Trump's recent election as President of the United States puts at risk American democracy and might raise nationalistic attitudes, strong protectionist measures combined with an attempt to divide Europeans:
- that we are living in a changing world with new and emerging powers and shifting alliances, a world in which Europe has to be not only economically but also politically strong, with a government and a parliament with strong and comprehensive rights;
- that this scenario, rooted in part in the incomplete political unification of Europe, since the end of the Second World War, that hindered the creation of a pole of stability capable of contributing to the emergence of a true multipolar equilibrium based on international law, multilateralism and global integration, risks jeopardising the very resilience of the European integration process and condemning Europeans to a slow decline and the world to anarchy
- that in this context powers with a continental dimension are competing fiercely for markets, raw materials, resources and political dominance, while the European Union finds itself increasingly side-lined and without the strength to make its voice heard.

Stresses

- that the serious risks for Europeans arising from this situation have been clearly highlighted by the recent Reports by Enrico Letta "*Much More Than a Market*" and Mario Draghi "*The Future of European Competitiveness*" and Sauli Niinistö "*Safer Together*";
- that these two reports show that Europe needs to provide for its own security and is losing competitiveness in comparison with major global powers in terms of productivity and growth in key sectors, such as defence industry, telecommunications, AI, digital, transport, energy, space and health and thus its ability to ensure prosperity; and how this weakness and decline is closely linked to the inability of the Member States to act as one and create economies of

scale, to duplications and inefficiencies caused by fragmentation and slowness and cumbersome decision-making processes, often conditioned by the right of veto;

- that this loss of competitiveness not only hampers Europe's ability to tackle major challenges like ecological and digital transitions, enlargement, and the development of a European defence, but also undermines the achievements in terms of human development, social justice, education, environmental protection, rule of law and the safeguarding of fundamental rights—the cornerstones of the European model.

- that Europe's lagging position is deepening the crisis of democracy within its Member States, which are increasingly unable to meet the needs of their citizens, is eroding trust in the EU's institutions due to slow decision-making and the lack of a true supranational democracy at the European level, and increases support to far-right;

- that Trump's victory in the USA makes the situation much worse also because it might endanger the support of the US to the EU and that the EU risks finding itself isolated in terms of international relations and above all in terms of guaranteeing its own security:

- that the EU must therefore overcome its weaknesses due to the internal divisions and fragmentation and quickly give a signal of unity and cohesion;

- that European citizens have spoken out clearly in favour of a stronger European Union at the Conference on the Future of Europe.

Recalls

- that the need to tackle in a unified manner the European Union's loss of ability to ensure prosperity for its citizens and the EU weakness vis-à-vis major continental powers such as China and the United States, highlighted by the Draghi report on competitiveness, calls for a thorough reform of the Union's structural operating mechanisms;

- that, according to the Draghi Report, the financial needs for the European Union to regain competitiveness correspond to at least EUR 750-800 billion in additional investment annually, which would be used to finance European public goods and also require joint financing and the issuance of public debt;

- that the European Union, still founded, in areas close to the heart of sovereignty, on voluntary cooperation between states and lacking a political 'head', should evolve into a body capable, in areas within its competence, of taking decisions democratically and independently of the Member States, depriving the latter of the power of veto and becoming capable of expressing the general interest of European citizens;

- that the attempt to achieve these objectives within the framework of the current Treaties comes up against the fact that the instruments available today are designed for a European Union focused on the completion of the single market and lacking a sufficient political dimension; and, therefore, do not allow for the structural changes that the Union needs;

- that the necessary reforms include a strengthening of the Union's competences in certain areas, the transformation of the Commission into an embryonic government of the Union, and a reform of the Union's decision-making and financing mechanisms that would deprive the States of their right of veto and make the Union capable of legislating and deciding on its financing democratically and autonomously with respect to the Member States, and thus of guaranteeing prosperity internally and security externally;
- that such a profound rethinking of the functioning of the Union requires a deliberate and conscious decision to create a politically integrated organisation, the basic lines of which were outlined by the European Parliament in its resolution of November 2023 to initiate the Treaty revision procedure provided for in Article 48 (2-5) TEU.

Strongly reiterates

- that the way forward for a reform of the European Union that would make it capable of responding to the demands of its citizens and facing up to the challenges of the future is the one outlined by the European Parliament: the revision of the Treaties through the ordinary revision procedure and the convening of a Convention to open the debate on the necessary reforms; ok
- that especially in a phase, such as the current one, of difficulty and weakness of several governments of the Member States, the possibility of opening a Convention can remove the debate on the Union's reforms from the narrow scope of national interests and open the way to a wide-ranging discussion on the structure of the Union and on the crucial issues to be addressed in the interests of the citizens of the Union as a whole.

Notes

- that in her keynote speech Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen underlined the need of *“a stronger Europe that delivers prosperity, that protects people and that defends democracy. A stronger Europe that delivers social fairness and supports people. A stronger Europe that implements what it agrees in a fair way. And that sticks to the targets of the European Green Deal with pragmatism, technology-neutrality and innovation”*;
- that in the same speech she announced the Commission's commitment to pushing for Treaties reform - underlying that with enlargement they become indispensable - and to working with the European Parliament in a closer partnership with this aim.

Notes, however

- that the necessity of Treaties reform was notably absent in the mission letters sent to the Commissioners-designate.

Denounces as well

- that the Presidency of the European Council has so far ignored the request of the European Parliament to put the convening of a Convention for the reform of the

Treaties on the agenda, thereby violating the principle of loyal cooperation between European institutions;

Welcomes

- the resumption of the activities of the Spinelli Group after the election of the new European Parliament and its commitment to the convening of a Convention for Treaties reform;
- the rebuilding of the Action Committee for a United States of Europe, following in the footsteps of the first Action Committee founded by Jean Monnet in 1955, which aims to unite forces and personalities in favour of a reform of the Treaties in a federal direction and to create momentum and pressure on States and institutions to move in this direction;

Notes

- that following Trump's victory in the United States, the leaders of the major European states stressed the urgency of equipping Europe with the autonomy and capability to act in view of the internal and external security challenges;

- that the pressure imposed on European States by the new uncertain relationship with the United States must be an incentive for Europeans to move decisively towards political integration

Therefore, calls on

- *the European Parliament elected in June 2024:*

to continue the battle begun in the previous parliamentary term for the opening of a Convention to reform the Treaties as proposed in the European Parliament's November 2023 Resolution, by adopting a plenary resolution on the matter alongside the other unfinished institutional business such as the electoral law, the European Parliament's powers of enquiry under Article 226 TFEU, the revision of the 2010 Framework Agreement and the regulation on European political parties and their political foundations;

to use its powers on the adoption of the budget to force the governments to take note of its request for Treaty change under art. 48 TEU;

to bring to European Council before the European Court of Justice in case it continues to ignore the request of Treaty change in violation of the principle of loyal cooperation;

- *Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen:*

to link the political priorities highlighted by the Letta, Draghi Reports and Niinistö, commissioned by the same Commission, with the European Parliament's proposal for Treaties reform and the convening of the Convention, as the objectives of the former cannot be achieved without the major reforms outlined in the latter;

to join forces with the European Parliament to:

- pressure the European Council to pronounce itself on the start of Treaties reform;
- strengthen democracy at European level by advancing the reform proposals put forward in the previous legislature, particularly on the Union wide constituency and the related uniform electoral procedure for European elections.

In parallel, the UEF calls

On those European governments aware of the need and urgency of strengthening Europe's capability to act to take the lead and to start proposing concrete measures aimed at greater integration in the areas of the budget, foreign and defence policy, and industrial policy, that will be applicable as soon as possible

and reminds

- that only by acting with the awareness that it is necessary to build a true political union - which can only be federal - will European governments be able to make real progress on the road to strengthening the EU; and that therefore sectoral initiatives unaccompanied by the will to build greater integration in other strategic areas as well will not achieve the necessary result;

Therefore, the FC commits UEF sections

- to mobilise to support the above political demands from below, starting with the urgent need to convene a Convention for the Treaties reform, in synergy with the Spinelli Group;
- to mobilise to create a front in support of the federalist claims, involving local administrations, professional associations, politicians at all levels, civil society associations, citizens.