

DECLARATION OF NOTRE EUROPE'S COMMITTEE ON NOVEMBER 7th 2009

The European Union after Lisbon: a three-part counterpoint

The Lisbon Treaty offers a re-written score for Europe: it is up to its newly strengthened institutions, led by men and women freshly summoned for the task, to interpret it in a way which will rise to the challenges of this century. A new season has arrived for Europe: in the years to come, it will not be a case of amending the Treaties, but of fully exploiting their potential.

The context is one of a globalised, multipolar world, marked by a major economic crisis, and confronted with challenges concerning security, climate change and migrations. Only the big policy actors will influence their future and the one of this world; only a shared sovereignty will avoid conflicts; and only the Union has developed and implemented (in areas such as social and environmental policies or the regulation of the market) the solutions that the global system needs.

The condition for success is to rediscover the original element the Union brought to History and which we named the 'Community method': a virtuous and dynamic counterpoint between the three institutions responsible for the well-being of the Union and its people, a triangle formed by the Council, the Parliament and the Commission. Each of these institutions has been or is soon to be renewed; each has enhanced its power through the Treaty. But they must come out of their recent gloom. Only by acting together can they save our societies from decline and marginalisation.

The Commission, led by a President voted by the Parliament, must once again become the driving force of the Union. Whilst it should be ready to listen to the Council, it must cease to act its self-effacing secretariat. It must regain its collegiality, its assertiveness and use its powers of initiative, control and implementation resolutely and ambitiously. The High Representative, Vice-president of the Commission, must be able to make proposals and draw a synthesis, thus becoming the artisan of a genuine European foreign policy to be pursued in all the domains.

The Council must become a college in which the states, rather than impeding it, implement the Union's sovereignty. This is impossible without a generalisation of the majority vote and without a publicising of its work. A key role will be that of the future full-time President of the European Council, who must be a convinced European, belonging to a country that subscribes to all Union policies.

The Parliament, strengthened by the legitimacy which it draws from the citizens and by its independence from the national governments, must fully apply its reinforced powers to break the inaction of the Council-Commission. It must dare to develop a firm and constructive strategy, even, if necessary, temporarily delaying decisions, in order to obtain a budget reform worthy of oncoming challenges, truly European revenues and the resources required to achieve the common policies inscribed in the Treaties.

Only the harmony of the counterpoint will allow the Union to be heard around the world.

Jerzy Buzek: President of the European Parliament, former Prime Minister of Poland

Enrique Baron-Crespo : Former President of the European Parliament, Former President of the Parliamentary group of the European Socialists

Joachim Bitterlich: Former Ambassador, Vice-president of Notre Europe

Jean-Louis Boulanges: Former MEP

Etienne Davignon: State Minister, Belgium, Former Vice-President of the European Commission

Renaud Dehousse : Director of the Center for European Studies Sciences Po Paris

Jacques Delors : Founding President of Notre Europe, former President of the European Commission

Franz Fishler: Former European Commissioner

Emilio Gabaglio : Former General Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), Italy

Nicole Gnesotto : Professor of the chair of European Union studies at the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Vice-President of *Notre Europe* and member of *Notre Europe's* Board of Directors

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Ana de Palacio: Former Minister of Spain

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Romano Prodi: President of the UN High Level Group on Peacekeeping in Africa, former Italian Prime Minister, former President of the European Commission

Gaëtane Ricard-Nihoul: Secretary General of *Notre Europe*

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Philippe de Schoutheete : Former Belgium's permanent representative to the European Union, member of *Notre Europe's* Board of Directors

Antoinette Spaack : State Minister, Belgium, former MEP

Christian Stoffaës: Professor Associate at the University Paris IX-Dauphine and Chairman of the Board of the CEPPII and member of *Notre Europe's* Board of Directors

Christine Verger : Director at the European Parliament, Former Secretary General of *Notre Europe* and member of *Notre Europe's* Board of Directors