RESOLUTION "MAKING HUMAN RIGHTS A REALITY FOR ALL IN THE ERA OF GLOBALISATION - 70 YEARS AFTER THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS "

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Born out of the two World Wars, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was drafted by representatives of diverse legal and cultural backgrounds from all continents, with the active participation and support of European countries. The UDHR set out universal values and a common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations, establishing the right to dignity for every person, promoting the foundation for a more just world and ensuring a link with the other two main objectives of the United Nations: international peace and security and development and poverty reduction.

The inclusion in the UDHR of civil and political rights on the one hand and economic, social and cultural rights on the other was certainly the main achievement of the long negotiations between Western and socialist countries at the end of the 1940s and inspired the adoption by the Council of Europe of the European Convention of Human Rights in 1950.

The equality, indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights were reaffirmed in November 1990 in the Charter of Paris for a new Europe and in the wider context in the second World Conference of Human Rights in Vienna in 1993.

Since its creation, the European Union developed a unique commitment to human rights, which over the years took a concrete form after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon, which gave the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU the same value as the EU Treaties and listed human rights among the Union's foundational values. This commitment means that human rights must consistently be the Union's compass for action.

Despite these clear commitments, however, challenges do remain, now more than ever, in particular with the rise of populism and nationalism in the last years. In fact, within the EU, a number of governments are taking an authoritarian turn, cracking down on media and civil society, undermining the independence of the judiciary or discriminating against minorities. The refugee pressure of the past 3 years has too often been used as an excuse for certain European governments to legitimise deeply biased and problematic narratives. This had led to the issue being tackled largely at the expense of the human rights of refugees who, if they do not drown in the Mediterranean Sea trying to reach European coasts, suffer dire human rights conditions in (usually) very long transit periods while applying for asylum and being held under unacceptable living conditions on the territory of "safe" third countries. Likewise, the austerity measures taken to address the recent economic crisis, despite having been driven and supported by the Union, largely preserved powerful financial interests at the expense of the economic and social rights of many European citizens.

Outside the Union the human rights situation is even more critical and worrisome. Violent conflicts rage in Syria and other places, leading to the proliferation of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and large-scale movements of forcibly displaced people. Authoritarian governments around the world are encouraged by the international community's failure to coherently and firmly respond to the human rights violations they inflict. Corruption and immunity for gross human rights abuses committed by corporations doing business in the global context are tolerated in the absence of clear international framework.

Several recent reports declared human rights "in danger" and called for urgent actions.

Where does this bleak picture leave the European Union and its commitments to democracy, human rights and rule of law? In this difficult and troubled period, it is more important than ever that the European Union solemnly reaffirms its commitments to its core values and reinforces policies aimed at promoting human rights inside and outside the Union, ensuring coherence in the European internal and external action despite the current Treaties' limitations.

In this context, therefore, and in line with previous UEF positions in favour of human rights, rule of law, democracy and a values-based Union, the **UEF Congress**:

- recalls that 73 years after the end of Second World War, 70 years after the adoption of UDHR, 44 years after the Helsinki Final Act and 29 years after the fall of the Berlin War, the European Union is guided by a political philosophy of inclusion, complementarity, multilateralism based on international law and by a common commitment to respect, fulfil and protect human rights, democracy and rule of law in all its policies and actions;
- supports President Juncker's proposal, as mentioned in his 2018 State of the Union speech in Strasbourg, to move to qualified majority voting in selected areas of EU external relations, such as human rights policy, considering that this will strengthen Europe's role on the world scene and improve the EU ability to speak with one voice when it comes to EU priority foreign policy areas. In fact, making use of existing EU rules to move from unanimity to qualified majority voting in certain areas of common foreign and security policy would allow the EU to become a stronger global actor, better able to shape global events and to shoulder international responsibilities;
- supports the development, collectively and in coherent way, of an effective strategy responding to attacks on human rights, promoting EU fundamental values and achievements, defending European interests in particular within the framework of 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and other important international fora;
- proposes the development of a strong and coherent internal EU human rights strategy based on equality and pluralist conceptions of collective European belonging and fighting any expression of racism and xenophobia;
- calls on the EU institutions to launch, in view of the European elections in 2019, a range of actions for strengthening the public awareness of founding values, informing European citizens of the achievements of the Union, presenting the challenges and inviting them to debate these issues;
- invites UEF national sections to play an active role on these campaigns, in close cooperation with JEF.