

## APPEAL FOR A NEW EUROPEAN REFORM INITIATIVE – THE BERLIN DECLARATION

The UEF Federal Committee, meeting in Berlin on 21 April 2018,

calls for the realization of a comprehensive reform agenda in Europe.

There is an urgent need for new initiatives in Europe. Multiple crises are still threatening the political project of peace and integration in Europe. Some EU countries still have not recovered from the prolonged economic and financial crisis, and the EU has not succeeded in successfully dealing with the refugee emergency and the problem of domestic security. For the first time in European history a member state is about to leave the Union. Moreover, the integration process is jeopardized by the rise of populist and anti-European parties all over the EU and by the violation of common values and basic rights in some of the Member States.

But at the same time there are important positive signs with regard to the future of Europe:

- After the Brexit decision the remaining 27 EU governments unanimously declared their commitment to continue the European integration process in Bratislava.
- President Macron was elected on the basis of an explicitly pro-European programme and offered far reaching reform proposals for the EU.
- Commission President Juncker initiated a new reform debate with the White Paper on the Future of Europe and listed some concrete reform proposals in his speech on the State of the Union in September 2017.
- In Germany the new CDU/CSU and SPD government gave top priority to the future of Europe in its coalition agreement.

Until the next European election in May 2019 there is a window of opportunity for decisive reform steps. The UEF is deeply convinced that only with an effective, democratic and accountable system of government at the European level can Europe become strong enough to guarantee European citizens' future, both with regards to growth, employment and social welfare and in terms of internal and external security.

Demands the following reform steps:

- Without any delay the German and the French governments should come up with common proposals able to address the serious flaws in the current EU governance, especially as regards the completion of the Economic and Monetary Union, the question of migration, the need for a strong European economic policy and improved common management of internal and external security affairs.
- Right from the beginning those proposals should be communicated to the governments of the other EU Member States. Of major importance is the inclusion of the smaller EU-partners.
- On the basis of those proposals national and European institutions should be invited to promote further political co-ordination among the UE countries to manage the refugees'



flows, the internal and external security affairs, and to promote the economic plans to foster growth, sustainable development and employment within the existing Treaties. Another important aim is to overcome the existing intergovernmental agreements by including them into a new and more effective and democratically controlled ordinary law system.

- Moreover national and European institutions should be invited to launch a new phase of integration going beyond the existing Treaties in order to preserve the Union's achievements and to solve the institutional instability the UK referendum has created. This new phase would be needed to consolidate the Economic and Monetary Union into a political union – enabling to build up a truly European sovereignty, creating a federal system of coordinated and independent levels of government – and to overcome the current deficits in efficiency, democracy and accountability.
- In parallel there should be well structured and organized consultations of the civil organizations and town hall meetings of citizens in all EU Member States on the future of Europe, which should be preceded by basic training on EU affairs.

The UEF and its national sections are prepared to support the reform process and to play a key role in the organisation of citizens' consultations and town hall meetings on the future of Europe. Further reform initiatives will only be successful if they are supported by the pro-Europe components of the society, political parties and the public opinion, becoming a driving force in the process of European unification.