

Appeal

to civil organizations, foundations and associations in European countries

in view of Russia's aggression in Ukraine and the challenges facing Europe today

Europe's situation has changed. Russia is waging war on Ukraine. It is a typical colonial war in which a declining empire tries to regain its formerly conquered territories. It would be as if today the UK tried to conquer Ireland or France tried to conquer Algeria.

We know that it is thanks to the protective umbrella of the USA that for many years European countries have been building their prosperity, developing democracy and social and civil rights, and now our ally, the USA, has turned its back on us.

The great European potential must now be used to build a common, strong defense position to protect all our achievements of recent decades. European history shows that you can only help those who start to defend themselves. This is what happened on February 24, 2022, in Ukraine. When Ukraine began to resist Russia's brutal aggression and defend its freedom and sovereignty, the West – wanting to preserve the post-World War II peace order based on respect for international law – rushed to Ukraine's aid.

We Europeans have created the economically strong, democratic and most socially just region in the world. The basis for this success was a peaceful community of states. However, this could be ruined if Ukraine is forced to capitulate by what would be peace on Russian terms. Ukraine's surrender, caused by violence and war crimes, would mean a victory of force over law, the end of an 80-year golden age of peace and security. Ukraine's surrender would mean the end of a Europe of prosperity and human rights, to which people from other parts of the world are drawn with hope.

We, the inhabitants of border countries, know very well what will happen next. War will come to our doorsteps.

These are our fears. You in France, Italy or Spain should not be afraid that this time war will come to you. But are you ready to accept another wave of millions of war refugees? First from Ukraine, then from the Baltic States and Moldova, then from Poland, and finally perhaps from Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Bulgaria?

That is why we must now use Europe's strong economic position, created over many years, to build up an equally strong, deterring and common European defense capability.

We appeal to you, civil society organizations, professional organizations, foundations, associations, unions and federations in European countries, to actively build social understanding of the challenges facing Europe today. We ask you to put pressure on your governments, European institutions and Members of European Parliaments (MEPs) to take swift action to support Ukraine in its resistance and contribute to the signing of a just peace. They will also

build a common defense of Europe as a whole, so that might does not once again begin to mean more than right.

Let's inform the members of our organizations. Let's write letters to members of parliaments and to MEPs. Let us raise public awareness of the current dangers and the need for countermeasures. Let us organize rallies, pickets and demonstrations. Let us explain our position in the media. Let us support candidates in the election campaigns who understand the current dangers and propose adequate measures. Let us use every available means to explain to our fellow citizens that a radically increased and accelerated defense effort in Europe – even if it may temporarily lead to inconveniences and sacrifices – is a prerequisite for the survival of our achievements, our democracy and our prosperity.