

# The Europe we want

Report of the Task force “The Europe we want”

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# Report of the Task force “The Europe we want”

## Summary

A task force has been reflecting, between September 2009 and March 2010, on the European construction concept that the European Movement- France defends.

### ***I – Europe at the crossroads***

For 60 years, the European Movement has defended the idea of a federal Europe to public opinion. The Movement endeavours to develop the European conscience in the minds of French people and to help them become more conscious of Europe and of the common destiny of the people of which it is composed.

The construction of Europe has erased the risks of conflicts between Europeans, it has brought prosperity, it has created a common space for living, and it has politically reunified Europe. It is a precious heritage that we must not only preserve but also strengthen. More than ever in the past the construction of Europe is the Europeans' political plan.

However, this invaluable *acquis* is not enough to face the new challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Challenges are piling up as globalisation has continued to loom for years and Europe remains unprepared.

#### Internal challenges:

Due to its successive enlargements, European society is more and more heterogeneous; inequalities are increasing under the pressure of globalisation; facing their waning demographic, Europeans are not keen to accept more immigration; the population is growing older which puts the European social model at risk.

#### External challenges:

Several international failures must alarm Europeans: Humiliation in Copenhagen where Europeans have been marginalised, the new American president's indifference for the EU, the Euro's difficulties, lack of solidarity between countries' economies within the Eurozone. Global issues that affect the future of all Europeans are multiplying. Europe must be ready for a relative decline in demographic and economic power that it will not be able to avoid. The only way for Europe to inflect these trends is to unite in order to boost its population and its economy.

Precisely, at a moment where Europe faces globalisation realities, the united and integrated Europe plan is slowing down in the minds of the public and in the will of our leaders.

The European plan is losing steam. The last genuine common policy, the Euro, dates back to ten years ago. Not every Member State wishes do to progress towards integration. The

practice of the EU institutions is becoming more and more intergovernmental in nature.

It is decision time for Europe:

- Power or deletion : Do Europeans wish to have a neutral Europe on an international level or that accept its world wide role?
- Integration or co-operation: Do Europeans have to act in an intergovernmental method or a community one?
- All together or led by a few: New policies are complicated between 27 Member states, is there a group of countries ready to go further with European integration?

## ***II - The Europe we want***

The European Movement-France, staying faithful to its principles, wishes to actively participate in the debate on the revival of European integration. It hereby specifies the kind of Europe it wants.

### **A Europe with a plan**

To get Europeans trust back it is absolutely necessary to redefine what is in the Europeans' common interest and to give a meaning to European integration. The process we favour is the establishment of a Convention, widely open to the participation of citizens and devoted to the future of Europe and its plan.

### **A European power**

The Europeans' new destiny is to build an area of freedom, security, justice and peace in a dangerous world where they must assert themselves and contribute. This destiny is also to defend its economic interests by being more competitive in the global market. In order to overcome the challenges it meets and assert its place in the world, the EU must follow the path of a political construction and focus on strategic competencies such as economics, diplomacy, taxation, and military policies.

### **A more united Europe within the framework of the Lisbon Treaty**

The modified treaties give tools that allow Europe to move forward. They need to be used to the fullest. The Community method must be emphasised notably by giving preference to the Commission rather than intergovernmental logic. Community policies must be favoured at the expense of intergovernmental ones; The latter being ineffective and being an hindrance for a political Europe.

### **Preparing the federal Europe**

A federal Europe for all EU countries is the goal to reach. A decisive step to do so will be, in the first place, the gathering of a group of volunteer states followed by others. The European Union would be then built on a federal pattern observing the twofold legitimacy of the states and the peoples and keeping the institutional triangle.

### **Giving the EU policies a meaning**

A European power must have strategic common competencies: political, economical,

fiscal, and foreign policies.

Existing policies must be adapted for sustainable development. They need to be pursued and strengthened by favouring a new development model that is more respectful of the environment, more economical in natural resources, and by correcting their current deficit towards social fields and solidarity between Europeans.

New policies must be adapted to 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges such as social issues, energy, the environment, research, industry.

### **Giving the EU ambitions the means they require**

None will be done without financial and budgetary means. The EU needs its own resources, a stronger budget to prop up new policies and a deeper solidarity, and the faculty to be both active borrower and investor.

### **A Europe that unites**

The EU is not an area of common life for Europeans yet. The constitution of a European society must be sped up by getting ride of the hindrances to a common life between Europeans from different nationalities and by gathering them on the ground of values and on their common culture.

### **A EU that refuses to indefinitely extend its borders**

In order to avoid a EU without territory and permit the existence of a European identity the EU must define in advance set borders. This question will be sorted out more easily with the constitution of a group of countries heading toward a federal Europe. Enlargement will be then considered without fearing the dissolution of the political Europe project.

## ***III – European Movement – France proposals***

Several concrete proposals have been made in order to involve the European Movement - France in the debate to re-launch European integration.

- Drafting of a declaration aiming to situate the Movement within the necessary debate on European construction
- Start of European citizen initiatives

NB : this paper will be further discussed within EM-France in order to adopt an amended version at the end of 2010.