



DECLARATION **A SECOND SCHUMAN PLAN: FOR A COMMON DEFENCE AND POLITICAL UNION**

ACTION COMMITTEE
FOR THE
UNITED STATES OF EUROPE



A SECOND SCHUMAN PLAN: FOR A COMMON DEFENCE AND POLITICAL UNION

In view of the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the 75th anniversary of the 9th May Declaration, the reconstituted Monnet Action Committee for the United States of Europe calls for launching a Second Schuman Plan, thus paving the way for a Common Defence and Security, and a European Federation, as envisaged already in 1941 by the Ventotene Manifesto.

The German poet Friedrich Hölderlin wrote: “Wherein lies the danger, grows also the saving power”. And indeed, a new European citizen’s spirit is emerging across the Continent. We witnessed it on the 15th of March 2025, from Rome to Tbilisi, in Budapest, Bucharest, Belgrade, and in many other cities across Europe, and also today in Brussels and other European capitals. Support for European integration is high according to the latest Eurobarometer. It is a popular sentiment to defend peace, democracy and multilateralism, against imperialism, authoritarianism, and trade wars, and in support of the Ukrainian resistance and the European ideal. Citizens understand that today the EU, like at the time of Brexit, is under threat from Putin and Trump, and its European minions. The European people is expressing a strong attachment to the European project and our common culture, but it is also calling for concrete actions to ensuring our own security and defence, our competitiveness, our social model, and stronger political unity and capacity to act.

The EU institutions, and particularly its national governments, must provide an answer which is commensurate to the great geopolitical challenges we are facing, and the demands of the citizens. In fact, 75 years ago, the Schuman Declaration already stated that “world peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers which threaten it”. This sentence strongly resonates in our time. The document also proposed an “action [to] be taken immediately on one limited but decisive point: (...) that Franco-German production of coal and steel as a whole be placed under a common High Authority, within the framework of an organization open to the participation of the other countries of Europe”.

We believe that the setting up of a European Common Defence is today the clear and decisive point to be tackled in the European construction. This step is now a necessity, in view of Trump’s transatlantic security disengagement. On the 12th of March 2025, the European Parliament called the European Council to activate the different provisions of article 42 of the Lisbon Treaty to the said effect.

Such an important decision will pave the way for the creation of an autonomous European Defence and Security System (EDSS), endowed with its own chain of command and in charge of territorial defence, acting as the European pillar of NATO

or otherwise in compatibility with it. Such an EDSS will not be dependent on the will and whims of the current US President, and it will operationalize the mutual assistance clause foreseen in article 42.7 of the Treaty.

We also need a larger EU budget financed with Eurobonds and new own resources collected by the Union, to provide for our common defence and security needs and other European public goods, including the fight against climate change, among other critical challenges. A renewed European financial framework should include the creation of investment instruments allowing EU citizens to directly channel their savings for these purposes.

We must remind Member States that a true European defence and security framework cannot be reduced to the different national rearmament proposals currently on the table, which could also result in waste and inefficiencies if not properly coordinated at the EU level. Moreover, security is multidimensional and should include tackling hybrid threats, cybersecurity, espionage and sabotage, etc. Finally, there will not be a proper European Defence and Security Union without the required political, strategic, and operational dimensions (planning, command-and-control, etc.)

At the same time, the proposed step can generate strong political spill-over effects in European integration, including the opening of the process to reform the Treaties in accordance with the Parliament's proposal of November 2023. We must emphasize that any viable EDSS also requires overcoming as soon as possible the national vetoes and the intergovernmental approach, thereby ensuring the proper parliamentary and democratic control of the said security architecture. This is why we suggest the adoption of a **"Union Act"** comprising the parallel activation of articles 42.2 (on common defence) and 48 (on constitutional reform) of the Lisbon Treaty as a common package.

Therefore, we propose to all supportive Member States, the European Parliament, and the European Commission, call on the European Council to adopt the proposed **"Union Act"**. The said governments shall make it clear that they will proceed to activate the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), foreseen in article 46 TEU, for the establishment of the autonomous EDSS if there is no quick unanimous agreement among the Twenty-Seven Member States. This institutional PESCO shall remain open to all Member States willing to join.

At the most dangerous geopolitical moment in Europe since 1945 we must not fall below the ambition mustered on the 9th of May 1950. The EU must live up to Europe.

Brussels, 9th May 2025

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- **Christelle Savall**, President of the Young European Federalists, France
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