

Houjarray Declaration 2025 ¹ *A Roadmap for Vision and Action*

“I’ve never lacked the opportunity to act. The most important thing is to be prepared. For that, I need a conviction, formed by long reflection. When the moment comes, everything is simple, because necessity leaves no room for hesitation.”.

Jean Monnet

Promoting peace has always been at the heart of European integration, and the European Union today aims at promoting European Values², progress, stability, security and Well-Being of its citizens. From the Treaty of Rome to the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Union has evolved, by facing and adapting many crisis and challenges. Today, however, Europe stands at a historic turning point. Security, trust, climate, and the rule of law are under pressure, citizens increasingly feel distant from institutions, young people are disengaged, and cohesion among member states is fragile. With globalization weakening, war at our borders, and the transatlantic alliance less reliable, the Union must be prepared to act as a sovereign power in a less stable global order. Unless we act, irrelevance and fragmentation loom.

We share a common dream of a European Union that protects health, security, and climate for its citizens³; a Union that unites across borders and generations in solidarity and resilience; a Union that defends democracy by earning trust through honesty, clarity, and accountability; and a Union that builds a resilient sustainable economy, capable of competing without sacrificing its values or its soul. This vision cannot be written by institutions alone. It must be shaped by our citizens, and above all by the imagination and strength of our youth. Their vision and demands for dignity, justice, and sustainability must guide our European Union. Only by placing their dreams at the heart of our course will the European Union gain the courage to act, the legitimacy to lead, and the unity to endure.

To transform this vision into reality, we affirm four core objectives:

- Europe must rebuild trust by delivering safety and inclusive opportunities for citizen participation.
- Europe must secure its industrial autonomy by producing critical materials, emerging technologies, and energy independently and sustainably.
- Europe must remain a global actor by forging partnerships grounded in fairness, solidarity, and respect for a rules-based and climate-responsible order².
- Europe must safeguard the rule of law, protecting democracy and human rights; and hold all institutions accountable for this.

Rebuilding trust requires strengthening our communication and education systems. In an era of digital disruption, with misinformation and disinformation threatening democratic cohesion, Europe needs an independent EU-wide media infrastructure, strict transparency in digital platforms, and widespread media literacy. Communication must be clear and accessible, adhering to Jean Monnet’s principle⁴: Policies must be communicated in clear and accessible language, without losing precision. This approach also addresses the current reliance on national mediation, which often distances citizens from the European project.

¹ As result of the Houjarray Foresight Talks 2025 organised by the Jean Monnet Association in the House of Jean Monnet, on the topic Innovation, Power and Diplomacy in an age of permanent polycrisis. Where is the World heading to and what place is in it for the EU and Europe?

² Human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law and human rights

³ “We don’t unite states, we unite people”, Jean Monnet

⁴ Jean Monnet Driver’s test: Jean Monnet used to consult with his driver about the decisions to be taken in order to check that he fully understood them, so that these could be communicated in a way that the population could understand.

Education must highlight Europe's common history, climate responsibility, and solidarity, while ensuring that the voices of workers, minorities, younger generations and underrepresented groups are heard. This is not only about transmitting knowledge but about building a shared sense of belonging and citizenship.

Solidarity and preparedness must be visible in times of crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed fragmentation in health readiness⁴, while the war in Ukraine exposed vulnerabilities in defence and solidarity. Europe must strengthen transnational mechanisms to respond jointly to pandemics, natural disasters, and defence emergencies. Accountability of decision-makers must be expanded to prevent power abuse and restore citizens' confidence. **For these reasons**, Europe should also make a step forward promoting "Sisu"⁵ in civil and military preparedness. The European Union should establish strategic capability hubs across member states to create strategic interdependency and spend money efficiently for common defence and innovation, harmonize procurement, and expand financing for innovation. Research and industry must collaborate on disruptive technologies, from AI, biotechnology and cyber to quantum and defence innovation.

National ministers dedicated to resilience should be appointed, and EU institutions strengthened to combat propaganda and disinformation. Financing mechanisms such as the European Investment Bank's initiatives must be scaled up, complemented by new tools that attract private funds into defence and security innovation.

A broader European Defence Area should include not only EU members but also close partners such as Ukraine, Norway, the UK, Canada, and Switzerland, ensuring collective resilience and coordinated response to threats in a more volatile world.

Facing the climate crisis demands honesty and urgency. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has warned that risks are structurally underestimated; Europe already faces rising oscillations in climate as the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation weakens, melting glaciers, destabilized permafrost, water scarcity – threatening agriculture, energy and daily life -, and rising seas threatening and putting low-lying regions at existential risk. These are not distant threats but unfolding realities. Our energy systems cannot be sustained on renewables alone. Without breakthroughs - such as advanced thorium⁶ technology, large-scale storage, and systemic breakthrough innovation - Europe will not meet its needs. Beyond energy, the collapse of natural systems accelerates migration pressures, destabilizes societies, and magnifies geopolitical risks. It is imperative to redesign the European Union to lead with foresight, coherence, and bold ambition.

Leaders must speak openly about the trade-offs between climate action, defence, and welfare spending. Accelerating the energy transition requires investment in renewables, advanced storage, circular industries, and innovation in nuclear alternatives. Climate policy must protect current and future generations, extending solidarity across time. Sustainability should not be framed as a burden, but as an opportunity to give Europe pride in leading the global green transition.

Closing Reflection: European Union must redesign itself to protect its citizens, unite its people, and lead the preservation of the planet. Security and preparedness are the Union's shield. Trust, unity and democracy are its glue. Climate and sustainability are its promise for future generations. Innovation and education are its path forward. Together, they define a united Europe that delivers dignity, security, and dreams — a Europe worth building and defending.

Signatories :

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⁵ Sisu: Finish word for perseverance and determination. Refers to a profound national character trait encompassing stoic determination, resilience, courage and tenacity in the face of adversity.

⁶ Thorium technology involves using the abundant element thorium as a nuclear fuel source, primarily in molten salt reactors (MSRs) or High-Temperature Gas-Cooled Reactors (HTGRs). This approach offers potential benefits such as a greater fuel supply, reduced production of long-lived radioactive waste compared to uranium, and improved safety through the use of liquid fluoride salts as coolant and fuel.