



FINAL DECLARATION

Second Summer University for Democracy (Strasbourg, 2-6 July 2007)

We, the 600 participants in the Second Summer University for Democracy, representing the Council of Europe's 15 Schools of Political Studies, in Strasbourg, from 2 to 6 July:

- In this year of the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, reaffirm our commitment to the grand design for Europe, which was launched immediately after the Second World War, on the basis of the fundamental values shared by the peoples of Europe, namely: democracy, protection of human rights and human dignity, the rule of law, respect for national identities and tolerance;
- Recall that European unity is a goal to be pursued and that, to this end, it is equally important to build institutions as it is to establish ever-closer co-operation in the institutional and economic fields and in respect of civil society;
- Consider that the resolution of the issue of identities is crucial to the establishment of a stable democratic Europe: the forging of a European identity will enable all the citizens of Europe to support a common blueprint and the respect of national identities, open to all, will make it possible to counter the threat that nationalism is posing to democracy and human rights;
- Reaffirm our firm conviction that the holding of free and fair elections is a prerequisite for any genuine democracy;
- Consider that the consolidation of democracy entails, in particular, the strengthening of the links between the political authorities and civil society, the existence of independent, high-quality media that foster rather than undermine the democratic debate, and enhanced local self-government, which ensures that policy-makers are close to the grassroots;
- Undertake to continue our combat against all forms of discrimination and social exclusion, which breed populism and nationalism to excess and which undermine democratic institutions;
- Intend, particularly through the networks of former students, to step up our individual and collective action in order to ensure that Europe and its institutions are closer to

the concerns of its citizens, thus contributing to a truly democratic European project, regardless of which institutions are pursuing it;

- Congratulate the European Union member states and the European Commission for the success of the recent European Council in Brussels and await with anticipation the future *Reform Treaty*;
- Call on the governments of member states to provide the Council of Europe, the Organisation which safeguards the values underpinning any grand design for Europe, with the political support and human and financial resources it needs in order to pursue its vocation for the benefit of 800 million fellow citizens;
- Invite the Council of Europe, the European Union, the governments of member states, observers and all public and private partners, to continue and to step up their support for the development and growth of the Schools of Political Studies, a unique initiative of European civil society, designed to ensure that democratic values, institutions and practices are firmly rooted in day-to-day reality;
- Welcome, in this connection, the recent signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Council of Europe and the European Union and hope that, as a result of their renewed partnership, the network of Schools will benefit from even greater and more effective support from these two European institutions;
- Express our satisfaction at being joined by our new colleagues from the Schools in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania and Montenegro; this undeniably bears witness to the vitality of the movement launched in Moscow, in the early 1990s, to promote democracy in societies in transition;
- Express our solidarity with our colleagues from Belarus and hope that a School of Political Studies will shortly be set up in that country, in order to promote European values and help bring Belarus into the fold of European democracies as quickly as possible;
- Thank all the eminent personalities, speakers and experts who have contributed to making these past five days of discussion a rare opportunity for sharing views and ideas;
- Express our gratitude to the City of Strasbourg and to all the local and regional authorities, universities and other academic institutions concerned, the Ecole Nationale d'Administration, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and to all the staff, as well as to all the financial partners, for the excellent organisation of this Second Summer University in Strasbourg;
- Look forward to the Third Summer University for Democracy, in July 2008.

Strasbourg, 6 July 2007