



FINAL DECLARATION

5th Summer University for Democracy 28 June – 2 July 2010

We, the 650 participants of the Council of Europe Schools of Political Studies, meeting at the Palais de l'Europe in Strasbourg from 28 June to 2 July 2010 for the 5th Summer University for Democracy, declare that:

Europe is facing a serious economic and social crisis which is affecting society as a whole. Stringent budgetary cuts by governments have resulted in dissatisfaction and protests by citizens, calling for strategies to bring about economic recovery, and protect the most vulnerable.

Present circumstances call for bold, competent and visionary leaders, capable of meeting the challenges of today without sacrificing tomorrow, and safeguarding democratic principles, human rights and the rule of law in these difficult times. We expect them to understand the importance of empowering a new generation of leaders.

We, therefore, expect them to support programmes promoting democracy, providing invaluable education and exchange of best practices for those who will soon be stepping up to these challenges in their respective countries.

We call on Member States' Governments, Council of Europe Observer countries and the institutions of the European Union to reaffirm their political support and maintain their financial contribution to the Council of Europe network of Schools of Political Studies to enable it to expand and promote a political culture based on respect and dialogue.

Can we afford to economise on democracy today, particularly when society is threatened by populism, nationalism, corruption, and social exclusion, all of which are inevitably aggravated by the current crisis?

We urge the leaders of the Council of Europe, the European Union and all co-operation organisations across our continent to facilitate exchanges between the peoples of Europe and safeguard the rights enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights.

We, the participants of the 5th Summer University for Democracy bear witness to the unique role the Schools play in disseminating these values among the decision and opinion makers, in our countries with their different social and political circumstances.

We call on the authorities of Belarus to release our colleague, Andre Bandarenko, a participant of the East European School of Political Studies in 2009, a member of the National Committee of the United Civil Party of Belarus and a former candidate at parliamentary elections, who has been unjustly sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment.

The 16 Schools which constitute the Network of Schools of Political Studies of the Council of Europe welcome all opportunities for meetings and exchanges which help to strengthen our mutual understanding and to overcome our prejudices.

We were pleased to welcome for the second year participants from Africa, invited by the OIF. Their presence was evidence of the universal character of the principles and values underlying our activities. We look forward to further co-operation and to the possible creation of similar Schools in Africa and other continents.

We extend our gratitude to the institutions and local authorities, whose unswerving commitment makes it possible for us to hold the Summer University for Democracy every year, in particular the French government, the City of Strasbourg, the *Conseil Général du Bas-Rhin* and the Regional Council of Alsace.

We would like to thank the Council of Europe and the European Union for their support and invite them, along with the European Association of Schools of Political Studies, to make our Summer University for Democracy an annual international event - the Strasbourg Forum for Democracy.

Strasbourg, 2 July 2010