



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Union to Switzerland and Liechtenstein

## **Europe Day address by EU Ambassador Petros Mavromichalis - Europe Day in Bern, 8.5.2025**

Liebe Staatsekretärinnen und Staatssekretäre,

Mitglieder der Eidgenössischen Räte und Vertretungen der Kantone,

Excellencies,

Liebe Freunde, chers amis, cari amici, chars amis, dear friends of Europe.

Today we celebrate 75 years since Robert Schuman, Foreign Minister of France at that time, announced the start of a project, which would radically change the face of Europe. We also celebrate 30 years since the accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden to our European Union!

Le 9 mai 1950, Robert Schuman déclarait :

La paix mondiale ne saurait être sauvegardée sans des efforts créateurs à la mesure des dangers qui la menacent. L'Europe ne se fera pas d'un coup, ni dans une construction d'ensemble : elle se fera par des réalisations concrètes créant d'abord une solidarité de fait.

On 9 mai 1950, Robert Schuman declared:

“World peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers which threaten it. Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a de facto solidarity.”

By merging the production and control of coal and steel, the first European Community made war between the participating nations unthinkable and practically impossible.

It paved the way for the European Union as we know it today, which grew from the original 6 to 27 Member states, prosperous and at peace.

Our citizens have rights conferred to them by EU law such as the right to live and work where they choose, the right to elect their representatives at the



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European Parliament, as well as a guarantee of decent working conditions throughout Europe.

Our founding fathers, Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer and other enlightened leaders realised that only unity could allow us to face the grave challenges of the time. They knew from experience that division would lead to war and yet again the destruction of our continent, which was just emerging from the ruins of another murderous conflict.

Now as then Europe is facing mortal dangers.

Over the past year, Europe and the world have witnessed increasing conflict - military, commercial, even cultural. A narrative of exclusion and hatred has become the new normal. Freedom, democracy, openness and tolerance are in retreat.

**The post war and post cold war era is well and truly over. We have gone from “the end of history” to the “age of unpeace” and only God knows what may come next.**

Faced with these challenges, Europe has stood firm - upholding our values and defending a rules-based order, the only safeguard against the tyranny of might over right.

The European Union is stepping-up its security and defence capabilities. This isn't just a government effort – it's a society-wide mission.

As Council President Costa said: “Europe is a peace project, but peace without defence is an illusion”. To achieve this, we are cooperating with friends and partners around the world.

Over the past year, we have stepped up our support for Ukraine, which continues to face barbaric aggression - the likes of which our continent has not seen for 80 years.

Since the start of the war, the EU and our Member States have made available over \$134 billion EUR in financial, military, humanitarian, and refugee assistance. The European Union is firmly committed to support Ukraine, because we know from experience that appeasing dictators only calls for more aggression.



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Beyond Ukraine, we cannot and should not accept to live in a world, where the killing of civilians, including the cold-blooded murder of doctors and emergency workers, torture, sexual violence, and starvation are deployed as instruments of war.

**The European project has enabled us to live in peace and in the respect of human rights for longer than we had in previous centuries. Europe has never known a better time.**

**Some would like to drag us back to the darkest days of the twentieth century. We should fight back with all our strength. We don't want to go back to the past.**

But freedom and democracy cannot be taken for granted. We have to fight for it every day, otherwise we risk losing it. It's up to each and every one of us to help defend our values. As citizens, voters, activists, entrepreneurs, consumers and travellers. Each individual has it within his or her grasp to resist.

The European Union is also strengthening its economic competitiveness and easing the legislative burden on our companies. As President von der Leyen said in January, when presenting the Competitiveness Compass of the new Commission:

“Europe has everything it needs to succeed in the race to the top. The Competitiveness Compass transforms the recommendations of the Draghi report into a roadmap. It sets a path for Europe to become the place where future technologies, services, and clean products are invented, manufactured, and put on the market, while being the first continent to become climate neutral. So now we have a plan and we have the political will.”

**The European Union is reliable, predictable and open for fair business. We have trade agreements in place with 76 countries - and we are expanding this network.**

We have just concluded new or updated agreements with MERCOSUR, Chile, Mexico and of course with Switzerland! We recently concluded digital agreements with Japan, Korea & Singapore. We launched the first-ever Clean Trade and Investment Partnership with South Africa. We have ongoing negotiations with Australia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates.



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We may sometimes be referred to as the old world, but as you can see, we are still a most desirable partner!

**We will continue to build bridges with all those who, like us, care about fair and rules-based trade as the basis for shared prosperity.**

Europe wants to work alongside all countries in adapting to a changing climate. We see the clean transition not only as a moral responsibility towards our children, but also as an economic opportunity for today's and future generations, everywhere in the world – promoting access to clean energy, mobility and water resources.

L'Europe se fera par les crises et elle sera la somme des solutions apportées, disait Jean Monnet. En parlant de crises on peut dire que nous sommes servis !

Les multi-crisis que j'évoquais nous rappellent les valeurs qui lient la Suisse et l'UE. L'engagement en faveur d'un ordre mondial fondé sur des règles, l'Organisation des Nations unies étant au cœur du système pour œuvrer à trouver des solutions aux défis auxquels l'humanité est confrontée en fait certainement partie.

Dans ce domaine comme dans beaucoup d'autres, nous savons que nous pouvons compter sur notre solide partenariat avec la Suisse.

En décembre dernier, l'Union Européenne et la Suisse ont pu conclure un long processus de négociations. Nous avons à présent 10 accords, mis à jour ou nouveaux, qui forment un paquet visant à stabiliser les relations bilatérales, à les moderniser et permettre leur développement ultérieur.

Das neue Vertragspaket zwischen der Europäischen Union und der Schweiz will den aktuellen Bilateralen Weg der Schweiz stabilisieren und weiterentwickeln.

**Es ist das Ergebnis langer Arbeit. Ich möchte den Kolleginnen und Kollegen, die sich auf beiden Seiten unermüdlich dafür eingesetzt haben, meine Anerkennung und meinen Dank aussprechen.**

Das Ergebnis von solchen Verhandlungen ist immer unvollkommen. Es liegt in der Natur von Verhandlungsprozessen, dass keine Partei alle Ziele erreicht. Beide Seiten müssen Zugeständnisse machen. Sonst wäre es keine Verhandlung, sondern ein Diktat; und die haben wir beide nicht gern!



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**Das vorliegende Vertragspaket ist ein guter Kompromiss, das im Interesse beider Seiten liegt.**

Der Prozess der Unterzeichnung und Ratifizierung wird lang und umstritten sein und auf Schweizer Seite ein Referendum implizieren.

Ich wage zu hoffen, dass am Ende die Vernunft und die Weisheit des Schweizer Volkes siegen werden.

**Die EU und die Schweiz sind füreinander nicht nur sehr wichtige Partner. Sie sind vor allem auch zuverlässige Partner !**

**L'UE est pour la Suisse, non seulement le partenaire le plus important mais aussi le plus fiable !**

**L'UE non è solo il partner più importante della Svizzera, ma anche il più affidabile!**

**Zuverlässige und berechenbare Partnerschaften, basierend auf geteilten Werten, sind heute unverzichtbar!**

**Reliable and predictable partnerships based on shared values are indispensable today!**

**Now is the time for democracies to come together and stand up for each other and our common values.**

Thank you very much, danke für ihre Aufmerksamkeit, merci, grazie !

**Toast à l'unité de l'Europe, paix et prospérité**

**Auf eine neue Ära in den Beziehungen EU-Schweiz**

**And to a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and beyond**

**Let us also raise a glass to our Dean, the Apostolic Nuncio, who graces us with his presence today, and to all Catholics around the world. Congratulations on the election of new Pope Leo XIV!**