

Building a world community

# mondial

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## March for Europe! by Domenico Moro

At least 10,000 European citizens, coming from all European countries, attended the March 25 “March for Europe!” organized by European Federalists.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Rome, which established the European Economic Community and from which the process of European unification has, in the following decades, been consolidated. Seemingly, the political circumstances for a demonstration in favour of Europe were not as favourable as they could have been. Populism and nationalism are rising in all European countries and the European project is in question. But these same developments provide important reasons to demonstrate that European people favour a European federation.

In fact, the March 25 demonstration was preceded by two main events: one that took place on 24th March and the other one the same day as the demonstration. The first one, a European intellectuals’ forum, was arranged by Fabio Masini and Roberto Castaldi, and took place at the University of Rome. This initiative followed signature by 300 European intellectuals, such as Giuliano Amato, Yves Bertoncini, Stephan Collignon, Anthony Giddens and Miguel Maduro, of a manifesto calling for a more European unification, and whose title was “A genuine European Union to ensure welfare, security and democracy.” Key participants at the forum included Yuri Ratas, Prime minister of Estonia, Mario Monti and Enrico Letta, former Italian Prime Ministers, Edmond Alphandery, former French Minister of Economy and Markku Markkula, President of the European Committee of the Regions.

The manifesto calls upon Heads of State and Government to celebrate the Treaties of Rome and open the way to a re-foundation of the EU on the basis of the European Parliament’s recent proposals to strengthen EU institutions and policies, especially on foreign and security, economic and social policies. The manifesto also includes an articulation of an improved EU foreign policy: “We European citizens are aware that globalization is transforming the world. We need a European government to foster our common values and contribute to the solution of the global problems threatening humanity. The world needs an outward-looking cosmopolitan Europe to help build a more effective and democratic global governance to cope with climate change, peace, global poverty, and the transition to an environmentally and socially sustainable economy.”

On the morning before the march a forum on the future of Europe was held, on the theme, “Europe Fights Back: Re-gaining Vision, Rebuilding Trust, Relaunching Unity.” Dozens of regions, counties

and municipalities were represented, many with their local banners, as well as dozens of European parliamentarians.

Among the speakers who took the floor at the forum were, Giulio Saputo, General Secretary of Young European Federalists (JEF), Pier Virgilio Dastoli, President of the Italian Council of the European Movement, Bálint Gyévai, General Secretary of Stand Up for Europe, Gianni Pittella, President of Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, Sergei Stanishev, President of European Socialist Party, Guy Verhofstadt, MEP of Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, Benedetto Della Vedova, Italian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Stavros Theodorakis, founder of Greece's To Potami Party, Jo Leinen, President of European Movement International, Christopher Glück, President of JEF Europe, Guillaume Klossa, President of Europa Nova, Elmar Brok, President of Union of European Federalists, Alyn Smith, MEP and Giorgio Anselmi, President of European Federalist Movement. Alyn Smith, of the Scottish National Party, was welcomed by a standing ovation, in recognition of his passionate speech spoken in the hemicycle of the European Parliament, "Don't leave us," expressing the views of Scottish and English citizens against the Brexit.

The federalist demonstration, was joined by another demonstration (more than 5,000 people) in favour of Europe, mainly organized by trade unions, environmental groups and other organizations of civil society. Both demonstrations headed toward a common rendezvous: Rome's Colosseum. Timed to coincide with a meeting of the EU Council, this means that at least 15,000 people have attended a demonstration in favour of Europe, sending a clear message to European leaders and publics that there is much support for a stronger European Union.

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Documents, links, and other items referenced in the June 2017 issue of Mondial are available at <http://www.wfmcanada.org/mondial-links-june-2017/>