

PRESS ADVISORY

“By Europe we Stand”: A Call to Action by National Parliamentarians in the EU

Berlin, 23rd March 2017

As the dust settles on the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, a key group of Europeans take the stage: the elected representatives—from the European Union’s national parliaments.

National Parliamentarians have a critical role to play in European politics. Both institutionally, through the mechanisms of review granted by the Lisbon Treaty, and more importantly, as the elected representatives of European citizens, they shape the European debate and provide a closer link with constituents than the European Institutions. There are circa 10,000 members of parliaments across Europe, with the power to approve or reject billions worth in eurozone bailout packages and EU trade deals such as CETA. National Parliaments are essential for the accountability, and legitimacy of the Union’s actions.

60 national members of parliaments – including from Greece, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, Hungary and the UK – have decided to take to the stage in unity, across the borders and boundaries of countries, political parties, and levels of seniority. In an open letter to their colleagues across the EU, signatories vow to take on political and personal responsibility for the future of the EU project.

The Initiative, started by 57 parliamentarians from 12 Member States and 17 political parties, invites colleagues from other parliaments to add their signature to the Open Letter and fulfill the critical role parliamentarians collectively hold in shaping the future of Europe. To work to promote collaboration across borders and be the drivers of a conversation around new ways forward and a renewed social contract for Europe.

The Open Letter for Europe will be published on March 24th. Two members of parliaments, Stephen Gethins, Scottish National Party, UK and Harry Theocharis, Independent, Greece, will begin promoting the initiative at the German Marshall Fund’s Brussels Forum conference.

An online campaign will then be launched to mobilize national parliamentarians from across Europe. The full text of the Open Letter for Europe is available here: www.OpenLetterforEurope.org.

The core initiators, **Carles Campuzano i Canades** (Partido Demócrata Catalán, Spain), **Lolita Cigane** (Unity Parliamentary Group, Latvia), **Stephen Gethins** (Scottish National Party, UK), **Duarte Marques** (Partido Social Democrata, Portugal) and **Harry Theocharis** (Independent, Greece), had the chance to get to know each other and work together on European issues through the [Mercator European Dialogue](#).

The Mercator European Dialogue is a project by the German Marshall Fund of the United States in cooperation with the Barcelona Center for International Affairs, the Istituto Affari Internazionali and the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy. The project is funded by Stiftung Mercator and since 2017 also by the King Baudouin Foundation.

The Open Letter for Europe Initiative is hosted by the Mercator European Dialogue secretariat, yet it does not reflect the views of the Mercator European Dialogue and is not representative of the different views and voices of our network. The views expressed in the Open Letter are those of the signatories alone.

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