



EUROPE, A PROJECT OF HOPE



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Festival della Diplomazia, 23 October
2017, Roma

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Europe, A project of hope

FESTIVAL DELLA DIPLOMAZIA, 23 OCTOBER 2017, ROMA

THE EVENT

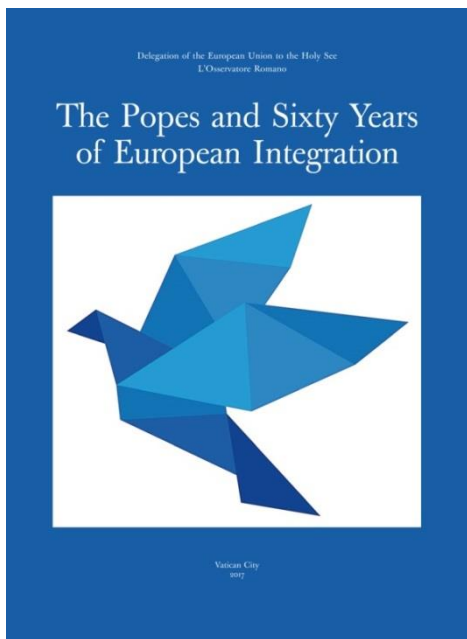
During the yearly Festival of the Diplomacy, the EU Delegation in Rome organised the event "Europe: A project of hope" hosted by the second oldest University of Rome, LUMSA, and featuring : Monsignor Massimiliano Boiardi, Section for Relations with States, Secretariat of State; Vatican, Stefano Manservigi, Director-General for International Cooperation and Development; European Commission, Francesco Bonini, Rector of the University LUMSA and host; Giovanni Maria Vian, Director of L'Osservatore Romano; Jan Tombiński, Ambassador, Head of EU Delegation to the Holy See in Rome. The Event was moderated by Carmen Lasorella, journalist and former Chairman RaiNet.



OUTCOME

Taking the European integration process as a starting point, the speakers exchanged views on the correlation between sustainable development and peace. The Sustainable Development Goals, through their universal and indivisible nature, present a unique opportunity for a paradigm shift. They resonate strongly with Pope Francis' "*Laudato Si*", as they involve the entire world – developed and developing countries alike. They break the paradigm where poor countries carry the burden for change. They also recognise that the three dimensions of sustainable development – environment, economy and society must be addressed together. This echoes strongly the Catholic Social Teaching and messages from the encyclical.

In this context, the EU and the Holy See announced their intention to deepen their dialogue on development policy.



This discussion was used to launch the publication "The Pope and the Sixty years of European Integration", edited by the EU Delegation to the Holy See and produced by the European Commission with L'Osservatore Romano.

The book presents a selection of Papal speeches revealing the Church's position regarding the process of European construction. The EU and Catholic Church have always been in favour of closer cooperation around the principles of peace and solidarity, as well as the search for solutions to global challenges.

Link to the publication: https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-rome/area/press_en



Introductory speech of Ambassador Jan Tombiński (translation from Italian):

Link the article in L'Osservatore Romano: <http://bit.ly/2zDkkO6>



Delegation of the European Union
Rome

*Introductory speech of Ambassador Jan Tombinski,
Festival della Diplomazia, 23 October 2017,
Università LUMSA, Europe: a project of hope*

Good morning,

I wish to welcome you all wholeheartedly to the event that we named: "Europe, a project of Hope".

I'm very grateful to the university LUMSA for hosting our event today and to the "Festival della Diplomazia" for putting this subject on its agenda.

Today we will discuss about Europe as a project of hope that not only leads us to dwell on history but also to touch deeper meaning and farther horizons of the process that marked the European continent so significantly.

In 1945 European continent began a recovering from the most dramatic crisis of its own history.

The wounds of death, of moral, social and material destruction, industrial extermination of people, annihilation of core values – and all of it in the centre of dominantly Christian continent - gave a booster to the idea to eliminate war as an instrument of settlement of conflictual situation between engaged states. A Common search for solutions should have replaced negotiations one against other and clash of interests.

Peace, reconciliation, stability and economic development have been in the centre of attention from the very beginning. The Vatican has taken very positive take on the process of the EU integration as the means to ensure the protection of lives in Europe and to progressively reconcile European nations.

Pope Pius XII observed and supported the process with attention and his various interventions testify it. His approach was very pragmatic – he dreamed of European infrastructures of transportation roads, on example of Roman roads, of European free trade and exchange of goods, of progressive dismantlement of administrative barriers between states. He didn't call for a "Europa Vaticana", as Europe doesn't belong exclusively to Catholics or even Christians.

Democracy, human rights, ability to develop individual skills, rules of law were implemented progressively by participating states. Without making explicit reference to Christian teaching, regulations of European Union were in practice implementing the principle of centrality of human person: antimonopoly rules creates chances for all subjects in economic sphere, consumer protection places the individual consumer in focus, small and weak were granted better protection, minorities were granted bigger privileges than the dominant nations.

However, not all the rules were done to the liking of the Catholic Church. In ethics, national structures, under the pressure of liberal circles, were pushing for solutions going beyond the natural laws, often against them. The Church issued warnings and appeals to the leaders and societies, reminding about the need to respect the sanctity of Creation and the commandments of the faith.

The success of the first decades of integration was so big that nations excluded from the process (by the imposed divide by the Iron Curtain) started challenging communist regimes in order to join what deemed to them their right place on the political map of Europe. While remembering, rightly, all those who gave shape to the integration process with their ideas and work, we shall always remember those nameless, who did not have the chance to freely speak up and formulate their wishes for living in united Europe.

The wave of changes in Central Europe in 1989 has put an end to the Cold War and led to the dismantlement of the Soviet Union. European integration got a new impetus, a second youth.

Suddenly the European euphoria dominated and all horizons seemed open, new and better Europe under construction and in reach.

However, this sense of achievement would soon be overshadowed by the multiplication of crisis: some due to negligence in financial or administrative sphere, some because of external tensions.

Inside the European Union, movements claiming for regain of competence from supranational back to national level reappeared, arguing that European institutions are no longer able to secure internal security, stability, further development.

More countries wanted to adhere to the European project than the institutions and members were able to accept. Other big world powers became suspicious about the increasing ambition and impact of the European Union on the world stage.

Success in ensuring peace and reduction of poverty triggered massive migration towards Europe, shaking the sense of stability and security;

Fear replaced hope and casts again a shadow over Europe.

Although Europe, if it acts united, disposes of enormous assets and ability to help to remedy global problems, if divided, it risks to become once again a global problem and not a tool for solutions.

Sixty years of difficult, yet successful process of integration, offers knowledge and experience of universal value in order to:

- reconstruct,
- reconcile,
- create peaceful coexistence between different religions and beliefs,
- eliminate famine and extreme poverty,
- integrate millions of homeless, displaced or mutilated by the war.

All these European achievements could be offered as a general good for those who still struggle with similar problems in other parts of the planet.

Whoever visits Eastern or Southern European neighbourhood, or different regions in Africa, Asia or Middle East, understands how many people look with hope towards Europe as a partner for solving their problems.

During the past sixty years the Popes commented the European development and gave encouragements to foster the way of peace and reconciliation between all people, Christians and non-Christians, with always focus on dignity of human person, centrepiece of Christian teaching.

All of this is motivated by the main idea to leave the world a bit better for the future generations and to centre on every individual person as a treasure of humanity.

As the European project was born from Hope after the immense tragedy, wisdom imposes to use all skills and knowledge for preventive actions in order to avoid another drama.

Pope Francis calls upon Europe to return to its ability to integrate, to dialogue and to generate. His voice represents strong appeal to all, citizens and their representatives, to translate these principles in action.

I would be very happy to see our discussion today focusing on the ways how to make it happen, in Europe and beyond its undefined borders.
