

## **cep's Freiburg Appeal: Europe will only succeed together!**

### **60 years of the Treaty of Rome. An appeal to politics and society: Say yes to Europe.**

60 years ago, the Treaty of Rome laid the foundations for today's European Union. The Common Market brought Europe closer together, but European integration stands for more than just economic interests. It not only brings prosperity but also safeguards peace and freedom. The Treaty of Rome embodies our European community of values which for decades has made us the envy of the world.

However, a series of crises has been sending shock waves through the continent. The very existence of the European Union is under threat. Many people are unsettled and increasingly sceptical about European integration.

The cross-border challenges of our time cannot be solved by any one state alone and yet, when it comes to joint crisis management, solidarity is waning at the very moment when it is most vital for the development of effective instruments to handle the challenges facing us all.

The EU, and that means all of us, are standing at a crossroads. It is time to remember that in a democracy not only politics but society as a whole is responsible for the future:

#### **An Appeal to EU politicians:**

- Respect for European values and the preservation and enforcement of European law form the basis of all cooperation in the EU. Do not tolerate violations.
- Refrain from actionism that gives rise to false hopes. Member States have given limited powers to the EU. Do not make promises that you cannot keep.
- Respect the principle of subsidiarity: limit your actions to projects with real European added value. Stand up for this.

#### **An Appeal to national politicians:**

- Do not focus exclusively on electoral periods but keep in mind the long-term future of Europe.
- Respect and protect European values. Observe EU law.
- Stop blaming the EU for all your woes. Not only is this usually unfounded but it also unsettles people and damages the EU at a time when its role in solving many problems is so vital.
- Do not pretend to be able to solve cross-border problems by yourself. This gives rise to false expectations. You too depend on cooperation within the EU. Tell your voters the truth. They can handle it.
- Promote EU decisions which have a particular European added value. Explain this value to your voters.

#### **An Appeal to the citizens:**

- Find out about the EU. A well-informed public can challenge the populists and play a constructive role in the debate on the state and the future of the EU.
- Be aware that the EU can only accomplish what Member States allow.
- Be fair in your judgment. Different countries have different concerns. It is legitimate to stand up for your own interests. The EU, however, lives on compromise.
- In the face of the current crisis: do not forget what Europe was like 70 years ago. Do not turn your back on the EU. Do not throw away what we have achieved together. It is your future that is at stake.

### **Europe will only succeed together!**

*cep stands for the reinforcement of a democratic, constitutional and liberal Europe. cep is the European-policy think tank of the non-profit-making foundation Stiftung Ordnungspolitik. It is an independent centre of excellence for the examination, analysis and evaluation of EU policy.*