

Dear friends and colleagues,

Once the power of absolute sovereigns and the omnipotence of the church gave way to democracy and separation of powers to reduce the risk of abuse.

Nowadays, our world is deeply flawed, primarily initiated by autocratic leaders who have mastered the art of taking advantage of the flaws. Fabrications, threats and hard power are the tools that are used to gain more and more influence and in this way to limit the freedoms and rights acquired.

'The figure of Peace personally recites her complaint about the fact that she is not being heard', typified Erasmus in 1517 in one of the earliest pacifist writings.

The world, we, must no longer remain deaf to this, because living in an autocracy means living in a society where power and oppression reign, and where living in unfreedom is a constant.

Exactly the intended situation what autocrats are pushing for.

What life should really be about is cultivating yourself (**Bildung**), taking care of the earth, being kind to your fellow man (**comity**), working on democracy to be a civilizing force and handing over the legacy of culture.

But in 2023 we failed in this: people waged wars, spread hatred, became entangled in aggression. Terror, violence and intolerance increased in intensity and fake news kept us busy.

This is in stark contrast with taking care for planet Earth and building a better society.

We live on a continent of greatness, but if we do not want achievements to be lost and not want to become a continent of great irrelevance, we must wake up and take appropriate action towards the idea of Europe and the European project to fight a Great Decline or a destruction by autocratic powers.

Nov. 4, 2008, former President Barack Obama delivered his victory speech and expressed, among other things, the strength of a country and a people:

*"The true strength of a nation comes from the enduring power of ideals: democracy, liberty, opportunity, and unyielded hope. What we've already achieved gives us hope for what we can and must achieve tomorrow - the fundamental truth that out of many we are one - that while we breathe, we hope.*

*And where we are met with cynicism and doubt and those who tell us that we can't, we will respond with that timeless creed that sums up the spirit of a people."*

In this era, we must be determined and strengthen our resilience and imagination, have an answer to aggression, fight evil, obscurantism, apathy and ignorance and continue '**A Search for Good Practices in a Rattling World**' to stand up for and to defend the true essence of the values of freedom, peace and justice.

Developing practical methodologies for new beginnings and launching an impressive offensive to project our common strength on the map, will underline who we are and how we live our lives.

Best regards.

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Feeling EUROPE FNDN promotes and guides European values and affairs, with the aim to improve living conditions, as human condition. The foundation is an outgrowth from the conferences 'Europe: A Beautiful Idea?' (5th) and 'The Sound of Europe'

Established at Wassenaar 05-12-2007, Commercial Register The Hague number 27308610 and included in the UBO register 05-09-2022.