

PRESS RELEASE on Europe Day on May 9, 2024

## **DARING MORE EUROPE TO PROMOTE PEACE AND THE WELL-BEING OF PEOPLES**

Our continent of Europe is experiencing a precarious situation. For more than two years, the Russian war of aggression, which violates international law, has been raging in our midst, bringing terrible suffering to the Ukrainian people and leading to dramatic consequences for many countries, especially poorer ones. In addition to the fatal conflict in the Holy Land, we are experiencing numerous other forms of violence. Many countries are being shaken by crises and are experiencing nationalist tendencies that are turning against coexistence on our continent. At the same time, in some European societies, the willingness to take the perspective of others in order to question one's own convictions is dwindling. This fills us with great concern. The *Together for Europe* manifesto from 2012 in Brussels states: "This crisis must not lead us to seek refuge behind new walls of political and economic egoism. They would divide us on our continent and separate the North from the South of the world. Europe needs more unity."

Looking at the history of Europe over the past century shows that European unification is a direct consequence of the horrors of the Second World War, with the Shoah as its low point. In the decades that followed, Europe experienced an unprecedented era of peace, walls came down and a new prosperous coexistence became possible in many countries, reconciliation was dared and lived. Today, many people fleeing war, misery and oppression seek protection in Europe, not least because of this, and they trust in values such as freedom and humanity on our continent, which have emerged from Europe's Christian traditions. Isolating our continent or even going backwards on this path would not only harm all European peoples, it would also be a great loss for the whole world and a major threat to peace.

The ecumenical network *Together for Europe* has been working for 25 years to promote this process of European unification and reconciliation, which is open to the demands of the world and inspired by the Christian view of humanity. As communities and movements working together, we have experienced that unity in diversity is possible. We are therefore convinced that a future in peace depends on a united Europe that is open to the world and uses its resources for the benefit of all peoples.

We therefore encourage all citizens to embrace the commandment to love one's neighbor anew and therefore to work for understanding and peaceful coexistence between all people, groups, nations and religions and to actively participate in building European unity. In the upcoming European elections (June 6-9, 2024), let us therefore strengthen the democratic forces that live in the spirit of *Together for Europe*. Let us dare more Europe and thus promote the cause of peace worldwide!

The Steering Committee of *Together for Europe*

**TOGETHER FOR EUROPE - INTERNATIONAL OFFICE**

Press officer: **Beatriz Lauenroth** | [beatriz.lauenroth@together4europe.org](mailto:beatriz.lauenroth@together4europe.org)

Mobile Phone 0031 6 50593387 (the Netherlands) | Website: [www.together4europe.org](http://www.together4europe.org)

[twitter.com/together4europe](https://twitter.com/together4europe)