



MAY, 9th 2020.

70th ANNIVERSARY OF INTEGRATION AND PEACE FOR EUROPE

The date of 9 May recalls the birth of the European integration process and has got a significant symbolic value.

This year we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of that historic press conference, summoned on 9th May 1950, in the Quai d'Orsay Clock Hall in Paris, by the then French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Robert Schuman.

He launched a new European cooperation plan in the field of coal and steel, thus envisaged the overcoming of the rivalry between France and Germany and laid the foundations for lasting friendship and cooperation between peoples.

Indeed, Schuman's was a formidable act, through which he not only sealed the end of an era of conflict, lasting more than two centuries, between France and Germany, but also marked the beginning of a deep collaboration that would have favored a process of European integration, which the other states of our Europe would gradually join.

With this declaration, in fact, the European integration project is launched.

Schuman openly declares France's willingness to put aside any grudge against Germany, to jointly embark on this new path towards an economic and political future of democratic development.

When this project started in the name of peace and solidarity in the 1950s, coal is the primary energy source. Thanks to this economic agreement of coal and steel, this path together is made possible, as well as the process of integration between the adhering European nations starts. through the establishment of a High Authority.



At the time when, in the late afternoon of 9 May 1950, Schuman said that there had been a war because Europe was not made, just five years had passed, since the end of the Second World War.

That war was born out of the degeneration of the concept of nation into nationalism, which idolizes the power and ability of self-assertion of a State struggling with others. And from nationalism to war the step was short, since war was not considered madness, but a necessary and logical consequence of power.

Right in that Europe still covered with rubble and dead, Robert Schuman had the audacity to transform coal and steel, means of war and contention for more than eighty years between France and Germany, into peaceful instruments of reconciliation.

In the press statement, Schuman announces that France and Germany have reconciled: he, as winner, reaches out to the loser, in order to get rid of all the causes that had led to the war.

Schuman's words are very incisive and strong, when he affirms that "world peace cannot be safeguarded, unless creative efforts will be made, proportional to the dangers threatening it" and when he affirms that "Europe cannot be done at once, nor it will be built all together; it will arise from concrete achievements that first of all create a de facto solidarity".

His courageous and farsighted action opens a radiant future for the whole Europe, in which peoples can understand each other, in order to complete a common work of unity based not only on the economy, but on the spiritual and cultural values of Europe.

The Schuman Declaration is clearly the founding document of the European unification process. With it began the effective construction of a united Europe and a decisive contribution was made for the realization of peace.



Already on August 5th, 1943 Jean Monnet, a friend and adviser of Schuman, said: “There will be no peace in Europe if the States are reconstituted based on national sovereignty. European states are too small to guarantee their peoples the necessary prosperity and social development. The European nations will have to be united in federation”.

To unite Europe, the path of harmonization of economies was chosen. Through "small achievements", step by step, he was confident of being able to reach political unity.

Seventy years after the Schuman Declaration, the great progress made by European integration is evident. These developments clearly demonstrate the validity of the choice made in 1950 to overcome simple intergovernmental cooperation and to introduce the federal perspective into European unification policy.

Although significant progress has been made in the European integration process, the final goal, after 70 years, has not been reached yet. We must therefore ask ourselves whether the Schuman Declaration is still relevant. This question must be asked, as there are many voices that today contest and deny that the European integration process should or can lead us to the creation of a federal state.

We, for our part, are firmly convinced that the federalist thesis is fully current and that the 1950 Schuman declaration still retains the values of great relevance today.

The need to achieve the ultimate goal of the Declaration, the European federation, therefore, remains urgently relevant, as well as the strategy of the avant-garde nucleus indicated by it is also current. Indeed, Schuman says that Europe cannot be built all together but it will arise from concrete achievements. This means that all possible progress must be made within the framework of the Lisbon Treaty, especially as regards the European economic government and the international role of the European Union.



It is also necessary to start, based on the available countries, a transition process towards the European federation. This means the transfer to a European level of sovereignty in foreign, policy, economic security, at least in general aspects, with the allocation of financial resources and sufficient means to allow adequate capacity for action and governance. It is, also, necessary to provide for the creation of a Constitution, paying a respectful attention to the will to join this project later, by the States that want to do it.

In conclusion, it must be carefully remembered that from hatred, discord, fratricidal struggle, Schuman made the sprouts of peace blossom and turned the hope of millions of citizens into a concrete act of brotherhood.

This act appears obvious today and it could become very uncertain if the Europeans did not take the important lesson of 9th May seventy years ago.