

A UNION OF VALUES

- final text agreed at XIV Congress

PREFACE

001. The last decade of the 20th century saw, at least in Europe, the triumph of liberty, democracy and the rule of law. The 21st century poses new challenges to our values. Globalization, the new economy, the Information Society and new technologies demand new answers. The EPP will respond on the basis of our traditional values. These have to be reaffirmed, rethought, and modernised in order to make them applicable in the 21st century. Pragmatism, efficiency, or some undefined 'third way' do not address people's real concerns. The European model is based on values, culture, and history. That is where the answers to the new questions come from. That is the starting point for us as Christian Democrats, moderates, and centrists, members of the EPP. And that is the European People's Party's new vision of a Union of Values. The 21st century offers Europe the chance to build a European Union worthy of the name - a Europe that is whole, free, and prosperous. The human person must and will be at the very centre of our politics.

002. The immediate challenges are to enlarge the Union, to include the new democracies in a Europe in which values are the driving force of progress and integration.

003. Full employment remains our main goal, because it is the best guarantee of social cohesion. Sustainable welfare systems must be built to ensure that a just and equitable society is also the birthright of future generations.

004. The explosive success of information technology creates another opportunity - a Society of Knowledge, in which education and a new spirit of enterprise are central.

005. The challenge is to safeguard what is truly, uniquely valuable in our civilisation as we embrace a radically different world, one in which many facets of people's lives are changing.

006. Coming from many different cultures and traditions, secular and confessional, the EPP's 39 member parties have remained united by certain core values: freedom and responsibility, dignity of the human person, solidarity, subsidiarity, justice, the rule of law and democracy as they were defined in the Athens Basic Programme.

007. The European People's Party, rich in its universal spirit, represents the strongest hope of finding new ways which are in keeping with the tradition of Europe's classic, humanistic and Christian roots. The EPP is more than ready to

innovate because we are sure of our own identity. The process of transforming the European People's Party from a union of national people's parties into a genuinely European Party, is in the process of being completed.

008. The founding fathers of the Union - Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Alcide de Gasperi and Konrad Adenauer - were also the founders of the party. The EPP is the great European party, the only one capable of tackling the huge tasks ahead. Our political approach politics is based on dialogue and consensus. Now a new generation of political architects is needed, to realise our vision of Europe, and our conception of what it means to be a European.

009. That is the purpose of this document: to outline the party's vision of the future of Europe and the World and our response to it as a union of political parties - fighting for a Union of Values - heading towards a real Union of citizens.

I People at the Centre of the Union

101. Every person counts. The future development of the Union must have at its core the freedom and dignity of the human person. This is the only base on which we can build popular support for the process of integration. We must create a Union which protects and promotes common European values; and in which fundamental rights are respected and no form of discrimination is accepted.

102. Families where fathers and mothers take responsibility for their children are the foundation of our society. We recognise the existence of other forms of life communities and their needs. In order to give priority to the needs of children, and respect the equality of men and women, legislative and economic measures must be developed which enable parents to strike an appropriate balance between family and work commitments. The Party supports all measures to improve the position of children.

103. Inclusion. The party rejects all forms of racism, xenophobia, or social exclusion; considers that, on grounds of social justice and solidarity, it is the duty of the State to meet basic needs where the individual is unable to do so; and endorses the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which sets out both the rights and responsibilities of Union citizenship. Rejecting social exclusion the party will support the smaller and natural units in the civil society, from the individual and the family to the associations of civil society.

104. Equal opportunity is fundamental. Consequently all citizens must have access to the basic services of healthcare, old-age pension provision, housing, and education.

105. The Union must be open to those seeking asylum from persecution. Common rules on asylum policy in the European Union, based on the Geneva Convention, with a fair distribution of asylum seekers and refugees among EU Member States are of decisive importance for the EPP. On the other hand adequate measures must be taken to deal with the increasing abuses which cannot be tolerated within the Union. A transparent, planned approach to immigration and integration, taking account of the Member States' capacity to receive and integrate immigrants, is needed for those who come to live and work in the Union. The Member States should elaborate an active policy to integrate immigrants who have entered the state legally. While accepting established European values such as the rule of law, equality of men and women, Judeo-Christian values and the values of secular humanism as a step towards integration in European society, people of other religious backgrounds may organize themselves on the basis of their own background. A controlled immigration policy must also embrace political and economic cooperation with the countries of origin, the fight against illegal immigration and an effective mechanism for surveillance of external borders. Europe is a pluralist culture in function of the unity of its values.

106. The population of Europe is living longer because of medical advances and falling birth rates, so that social security needs to be adapted to these changes. Clear and resolute support of the family, stimulating political and economic support for childcare and children's education would help to rejuvenate Europe and to turn around the current drop in birth rates. We believe that extending one's working life should be offered as a possibility in future. Ageism is a form of discrimination which is as unacceptable as other forms of discrimination. We have to encourage private initiative and the non-commercial sector.

107. A civilized Europe means a Europe based on the rule of law. Free movement must not mean that the Union, especially in the cities, becomes a haven for criminals. This means decisively reinforcing judicial cooperation and direct contacts between police forces of current and future Member States and, where necessary, European and international law. Organised crime and terrorism must be efficiently and jointly fought because they represent a serious threat to the peoples of a united Europe. We demand more rigour in the struggle against the most dangerous crimes and in particular such as the exploitation of prostitution and paedophilia.

108. It also means a Europe that enjoys quality of life. Policy must be directed to improving and preserving both the urban and the rural environment.

109. The political challenge ahead is to build an enlarged European Union based on common principles and values, a Union which puts the concerns of people at the centre of its work. A Union based on enterprise and social justice and care for

the environment will enable us to fulfill that dream which is now, for the first time, within our grasp.

II Europe's New Economy in the World

201. From the euro to full employment

202. Full employment and well functioning labour markets are the objective of the European Union which can be attained if people are given the opportunity to adjust to the structural changes of our technology and information-driven age. For the EPP, employment is more than just ensuring material existence. It is also a decisive factor of self-achievement and it opens up the opportunity of participating in the construction of society.

The Single European Currency is an important factor in a period of economic dynamism driven by global competition, technological advance, and ever-wider acceptance of the market economy. The euro has delivered the following key advantages:

203. Elimination of exchange-rate fluctuations and removal of competitive devaluations between Member States. Even before circulating as cash, the euro has improved the availability of capital, reduced costs, enhanced competition, and increased productivity. It has also softened the impact of external financial crises.

204. The independence of the ECB is vital to the success of the EURO and any attempts to subdue it should be strongly rejected. Its independence and the clear strategy in favour of price stability is the one single biggest improvement of economic policy making of the last century. But management of monetary policy should become more transparent and have more coherent external representation. This will strengthen the euro's standing as a global currency. There is a need for prudential control of the banking system on an EU level. The Central Bank's neutral money policy must be balanced by a more coordinated economic policy on the part of Member States. But this must not lead to a single economic policy.

205. Balanced budgets as an obligation of the Pact of Stability and Growth need to be achieved by lowering expenditure rather than increased taxes. Budget surpluses should primarily be used to reduce debt and taxation. The favourable economic trend should be exploited to create margins of manoeuvre, for instance to deal with the growing problem of an ageing European population.

206. The Euro is much more than a monetary project. It is also to a large extent a political project. The Euro is a policy of peace for the 21st century by monetary means. The credibility and the confidence which the euro should enjoy as a major international reserve currency will also depend on the EU's capacity to

better coordinate its economic policies, which is an essential condition for convergence and the joint achievement by the Member States, acting jointly, of price stability and growth objectives.

207. Promoting competitiveness

208. In the framework of a social market economy, we support increased liberalisation of the European economy in order to complete the Single Market. In the particular cases of telecommunications, electricity, gas, and transport, the advantages for employment and for the consumer have been proven, and contribute to the promotion of the Information Society within an environmental and social framework.

209. The promotion of the European economy presupposes the improvement and development of infrastructure for all modes of transport, and in particular the extension of the trans-European transport network to the candidate states of Central and Eastern Europe.

210. Subsidies are not the way to create new jobs. As a general rule, resources must not be taken from growing areas of the economy to preserve old jobs, but must be concentrated on providing opportunities for training and specialization. Sustainability demands that we invest our credits in the future and alleviate the social impact of a sector whose time is past rather than maintaining no-hope-sectors. Any legislation discouraging private initiative must be avoided.

The state's obligation to provide some public services for people must not be unduly restricted by European rules. The local, regional and national communities must be enabled to decide about the services they provide for its citizens. This is an important part of the European model and forms part of the political scope of local and regional authorities.

Hence, cutting subsidies and real liberalisation of, for example, the postal service, the railway systems, banking, housing, and waste management sectors will bring the public welfare witnessed in the telecom and electricity markets.

211. Spirit of enterprise

212. Innovation. Freedom is also freedom for enterprise. The human person is at the centre of our view of the new economy. We must combat materialistic thinking, reducing the human person to a consumer or a client. Personal initiative is the most important element in generating work and wealth for everybody. Europe's best chance of a permanently high level of exports and low unemployment is to create new, high value-added, products or services. Europe cannot, over the long term, compete with low-wage countries manufacturing products which do not incorporate advanced technology. The EPP is against subsidizing loss-making enterprises on such pretexts as maintaining

employment. This distorts the market and diverts resource from research, training, and investment in competitive enterprises.

213. More competition decreases prices. The cost of capital can be reduced by monetary stability, lower interest rates, and better organisation of the capital-markets. A general European legal framework for companies will also reduce the cost of investment. Opening national markets to competition will reduce e.g.: energy and capital costs. Increased rationalization of public services can reduce costs and improve services and customer orientation. Better access to risk capital will be essential to support growth sectors and job creation. Finalising the internal market for financial services and foster the use of venture capital and stock options for employees thereby is one of the prerequisites of improving Europe's competitiveness. As things stand, taxation and other levies are much higher in Europe than anywhere else in the world. The EPP intends to reduce them.

214. Encouraging use of the Internet. General telecoms policy should seek to support the liberalization and privatization of markets, so that increased competition can bring down prices and encourage the growth of the IT economy.

215. The right framework for enterprise. The high cost of setting up an enterprise in the EU is a massive disadvantage for Europe and a key reason for the eye-popping difference in employment rates and growth with the United States. Direct production costs are only one factor affecting competitiveness. Others are: the quality of education and training, the efficiency of public administration, transport and communications, research, people's propensity to save, wider share-holding, and - something which cannot be legislated for - the solidity of the social consensus. All EU governments can learn from successes beyond their own borders. Therefore there should be EU bench marking studies on all these factors measuring not the state expenses but the effectiveness of each euro spent.

216. Policies aimed at creating durable new jobs. Non-labour costs are one of the major causes of unemployment, especially amongst unskilled workers. Such burdens need to be reduced by cutting social security costs through improved management of social security expenditure and by reducing people's tendency to think in terms of what entitlements they can claim. Wage increases must be clearly related to increased productivity.

217. Flexibility, employability

218. Labour flexibility is essential in a fast-moving and unpredictable global economy if redundancies and / or higher production costs are to be avoided. This is especially true in the new, fast-growing, but volatile, IT sector. The EPP therefore supports initiatives and derogations which free SMEs from excessively burdensome administrative regulation, and encourage them to recruit staff as

SMEs are the one most important single source of job growth in Europe. Part-time work while safeguarding social protection equal to full-time work should also be encouraged for men and women, both as an element of flexible labour and as a means of reconciling work with family life. The EPP supports the idea of a European basic pillar of labour rights. The EPP supports the initiatives taken by the EU social partners to find mutually acceptable measures to deregulate the labour market.

219. Employability. Most of the durable "real" jobs cannot be created by the state. While claiming to do the opposite, job creation by the state or agreeing to such proposals as reductions in working hours without loss of income can deteriorate overall employment. Policy should rather concentrate on training and retraining, as well as the promotion of mobility, and adaptation. Policy must not interfere in the wage negotiations. The EPP therefore strongly supports the independence of the social partners. However the EPP clearly recognises the trend towards collective bargaining on the regional and company level. In the shorter term, linking unemployment benefits to individual efforts to find work or acquire marketable skills, and encouraging young people to set up their own businesses, have all demonstrably produced results. Labour market rules must be reformed in order to support new working patterns. Such labour regulations that are tailored for an outgoing industrial society will be an obstacle to efforts to make Europe more competitive .

220. Education and training

221. In a knowledge-based society the opportunity of education is the key to progress and equality and sustainability. For the EPP it is not only a way of becoming more competitive. Education and training need to be widened as a concept and as a policy area, and to be understood as a lifelong process and a personal investment. The transmission of Europe's humanistic heritage to new generations must be an essential task of the educational system. This can be encouraged by special education savings accounts.

222. Europe should take a lead as the new economy develops. In doing so, the EPP realises that major efforts have to be made to change the way knowledge is being taught and spread. The demands both of academia and industry must be met. A close co-operation with the labour market is necessary in order to match education and needs.

223. Universities and other scientific and technological institutions must be given better possibilities, both for education and for research. Since education policy remains the responsibility of the nation states and regions, the European Union shall focus its policies on the extension of its exchange and research programmes. These programmes are essential in providing opportunities for students and scholars to mutually exchange information, which is decisive for high-quality research and high-quality learning and teaching. The European

Union should take initiatives aimed at getting member states to agree on a division of work. The most advanced resources have to be concentrated in order to create the scientific environments needed.

Systems for the mutual recognition of degrees such as ECTS shall be extended to all sectors of education. In order to achieve the success of its mobility-schemes, the European Commission shall implement a policy to remove remaining bureaucratic obstacles enforced by the Member States.

224. Information technology is a remarkable tool not just of commerce but in helping schools to put more emphasis on teaching students to learn for themselves, and to draw their own conclusions. Every school should be connected to the Internet, and every student should ideally be given personal access. Europe is lagging behind in this area and it is deplorable that the continent of culture and history is lagging behind in the decisive area of e-content which means what is actually on the web. A concentrated effort by political, business, cultural and academic circles is needed to successfully face this challenge.

225. Schools must give each student a solid base for continuous learning. School education of the highest quality will be more important than before. Schools must also teach students to learn. This means that more emphasis must be put on understanding, problem solving and the evaluation of information. The family must be encouraged to work as a vehicle of education and assistance to the individual in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity.

226. Initiative and independence are a key to success in modern society. This principle should also apply to the education system. The state should encourage a variety of both schools and of teaching methods. Students must be given the right to choose their school based on their own interests. A European-wide system of school choice should be encouraged as well as a system which enables university students at European level to select the university of their preference.

227. Education and learning must be given the highest priority when policies for the new economy are being formulated. Despite the fact that learning is not a first hand EU-responsibility, exchanging information and experiences within the EU could be useful for developing constructive national strategies. Acting as such a partner, the EU could assist both in making use of the variety of traditions and experiences of different member states and to combine forces where this is necessary to make Europe as a whole competitive. The EPP considers that the establishment of a European educational area contributes to the promotion of a Knowledge-based Europe, encouraging cooperation in the field of lifelong learning.

228. The European Social Model

229. Europe will have no meaning unless it is both an economic and social Europe. The social market

economy links the market mechanisms of supply and demand with the obligation to respect the

dignity of every human being. The values of the European social model (performance and social

justice, competition and solidarity, personal responsibility and social security) remain relevant in

conditions of globalized markets and rapid industrial change.

230. The challenge is to combine powerful new market forces with humanity - economic dynamism with social responsibility - in the way we organise our social security systems. The EPP believes this is possible and essential to more favourable combine conditions for entrepreneurship and economic dynamism with social responsibility. We will therefore seek to reform and modernise European social security systems. Social peace must be based on social partnership, which covers participation and joint responsibility of the social partners as well as of the government. The EPP supports negotiations between social partners on framework agreements at European Union level. These agreements should be made legally binding for the Union as a whole.

The main responsibility for social security lies with the member states. The EPP however, welcomes the fact that member states exchange their experiences at European level and diminish - wherever possible - existing qualitative differences between the systems of social security. Following the principle of subsidiarity, the Union must take those responsibilities in this field which cannot be dealt with by the member state alone. On the international level the European Union should actively promote a strengthening of social standards. Within the framework of the World Trade Organisation internationally binding rules on competition and codes of conduct in the fields of social, ecological and human rights standards must be progressively developed.

231. Europeans live longer and healthier lives than ever before. This is a great achievement in quality of life. But the demographic situation also poses new challenges as the working population decreases and the number of retired persons increases. This needs to be provided for in financial and fiscal planning. The EPP is committed to defend the principle of justice between generations. The society of the future will more than ever need human potential, that of women as well as men.

232. The other special concern is also more familiar: the poor and the marginalised. Generally speaking our modern society is very prosperous. Nevertheless the division of society between rich and poor must be overcome. The EPP believes that individuals have a duty to take responsibility for themselves, and to earn a living if they can. We are equally committed to the belief that a just society helps the helpless.

233. While acknowledging their shifting importance, the EPP accepts the legitimate and useful role of the social partnership of trade unions and employers' organisations in creating durable employment. The EPP's attitude to work goes beyond mere jobs. Work is a means of individual self-realisation and of playing a part in society. The European Union, as much as every Member State, should be guided by this perspective, and aim for the objective of full employment.

The inseparable connection between economic and social order becomes particularly clear in the endeavour to bring as many people as possible into work. Therefore the EPP is convinced that working conditions which offend human dignity must be prevented in the same way as the temptation to regard work only as a matter of price. At the same time it means the obligation of the European Union as a whole as well as of every Member State to fight unemployment and strive actively for more employment. In this context the EPP strongly emphasises the procedure of European employment guidelines implemented by Christian Democrats, which combine common objectives - the obligation to take concrete measures as well as the exchange of experiences.

Greening the Economy.

Though industrial expansion has generated unprecedented economic gains there are many related environmental costs that have yet to be paid. The challenge is to bring harmony between economic growth, social development, and environmental concerns. Hence, the need for public interventions to integrate environmental costs.

III. Challenges of the Information Age

301. The Society of Knowledge

302. Information technology increases the potential of the person. The EPP supports the freedoms which are embodied in such potentials. Equality demands that everyone be given the opportunity to profit from the new possibilities. Information technology results in greater productivity. New jobs will be created wherever there is systematic training and education in the new technology.

303. E-commerce in particular is developing exponentially as an efficient market mechanism, and enhancing sound economic management. All barriers to e-commerce within the EU should be eliminated.

304. The success of the new high-tech economy depends on low telecommunications costs. High costs in Europe are a result of inadequate competition, on which the EU should intervene. The target should be to achieve open cost-free access to the Net as soon as possible.

305. Joint European action needs to be taken on security of contracts, confidentiality, and signature authentication; measures are also needed to prevent tax evasion or fraud, in particular regarding transactions based on non-localised services; and also against use of new technology for money-laundering, illegal trafficking of humans, drugs, and prostitution.

306. This implies extending EU powers when negotiating international agreements in the services area. Given the international, or even global, character of e-commerce, purely national legislation is inadequate. Member States must present a united front at international level.

307. But the Information Age also poses new social dangers. The growing "virtual" character of business, and new types of employment such as teleworking, pose risks such as covert electronic intrusion into consumers' and employees' private lives, and manipulative advertising, especially that one aimed at children. Where appropriate under the subsidiarity principle, EU-wide regulations should be drawn up on these matters. The gathering and the use of information owned by or related to individuals should always respect the concept of privacy, as understood in other parts of communication.

308. Technically, the European telecommunications market, until 15 years ago divided into national markets dominated by state monopolies, has largely been deregulated and integrated thanks to EU initiatives. These have also ensured that the GSM standard has become the dominant standard; for the same reason the UMTS standard will soon achieve a leading position.

309. Opportunities for everyone. The information and knowledge society brings about many new opportunities. It is important to make these opportunities available to all citizens. Therefore member states and the EU should redouble their efforts to encourage dissemination of new information technology. Europe should aid developing countries to participate in the world of Information Society.

310. The "New Democracy"

311. The information revolution will have important consequences for the way our democracies work. New and more direct forms of relationship between citizens and politics will emerge, bringing public administration, parties and the political

actors closer to European citizens. The new technologies will bring new ways of conducting politics, from collecting funds to following political rallies through the Net from any part of the world. This fact will change the traditional ways of running political parties, especially during election campaigns.

312. The EPP supports the implementation of electronic voting as an option in the next European elections, and progressively at a national, regional, and local level.

313. The EPP will strive to use the new technology to give citizens full and updated information about its political work. It will also strive to simplify the means of communication between voters and our politicians at all levels. We believe that technological innovation opens up new possibilities for an intensified and meaningful democratic dialogue in society.

314. Administration on line. Administration at all levels should be able to relate with the citizens as quickly as possible. Paying taxes, applying for a position in the public sector, or resolving "red tape" questions, should be possible for everyone via the Internet. This will also ensure greater transparency in politics.

315. Bio-ethics poses a special challenge to the EPP.

316. In the field of bio-ethics, the EPP recognises the exciting progress of science and technology, which contributes considerably to health and welfare. The EPP follows the principles of the protection and promotion of human dignity and, consequently, respect for the right to life and the uniqueness of every human being from the moment of conception to death; the special responsibility of parents and families; human beings' fundamental equality; the promotion of health, and the freedom of research and scientific investigation. The dignity of the human person implies that science is subservient to the human person and the human person is not subservient to science. Distinctions between "human person" and "person", or between the embryo as "a potential human being", cannot be made without introducing an unacceptable kind of discrimination.

317. The free of movement of people, goods, capital, and services in the European Union affects the possibilities of national governments to guarantee the dignity of human life in the field of bio-technology. Therefore, there is reason for involvement of the European Union in setting common legal standards concerning the protection of the dignity of human life and the responsibility of bio-medical research.

318. The EPP supports a political course which seeks to develop guidelines and rules that promote bio-medical research in favour of guaranteeing human dignity, health and welfare. New knowledge of the structure of living matter and the possibilities opened up by the techniques for modifying such matter must be used to benefit human health (provided that human dignity and freedom are

always safeguarded) and must not serve as a means to an end which is alien to human life. EPP policy is an alternative to uncritical support for technological developments, in which the human embryo is seen as an instrument, an alternative to the politics of endorsing unlimited individual self-realisation, and an alternative to the policy of closing doors to any new development. This attitude runs the risk of being overtaken by reality, and as a result influence on research and the ethical debate could be minimal.

319. All individuals must be protected at every stage of life, from conception to death, particularly if they are weak, handicapped, or powerless. Human life, in whatever form, whatever its appearance or capacity, is dignified in itself. Any deliberate form of eugenics must be banned.

In the field of biotechnology, without using cells from living embryos experiments on human embryos should only be permitted if they are designed to protect the life and health of the specific embryo which is the subject of the experiment, as is the case with all other human individuals. Very strict world-wide rules should be adopted. The EPP is in favour of enhanced and joint efforts to promote pre-conception research techniques which will make research on embryos unnecessary, and of encouraging scientific research in the field of artificial insemination, which avoids the serious problem of overproduction of embryos. Commercial exploitation of human embryos must be forbidden in all cases.

320. The EPP refuses to consider abortion as "a solution" to problems created by unwanted pregnancies. The EPP promotes programmes and initiatives to help parents and families to accommodate every child, in particular when difficult or unwanted pregnancies occur. No pressure should be exerted on parents who decide to accept a child with a handicap. Modern pre-natal diagnostics must be used only after the parents concerned have had thorough consultations. They are entitled to professional, humane, and life-protecting guidance that supports them in making the choice which is best under the given circumstances.

321. Research in the fields of bio-medicine and bio-technology promoted by the European Union, and the resources provided by the Commission for bio-medical research, should be granted in accordance with the ethical principles set out above.

322. The EPP supports strict controls on food safety. Europeans have a right to be confident that the food they buy is safe. But the growing market for "bio" food has a political and economic message which goes further than understandable scares about BSE and dioxin. People are increasingly interested in what they eat, and prepared to pay to eat healthily. Food marked as biologically produced must prove that this claim is absolutely valid, preferably by established EU standards controlled at national level. Europeans have a right to accurate information on product ingredients, particularly GMOs. Therefore, correct labelling of foodstuffs which allows consumer choice must be the priority.

Consumers need to be better educated and given current information on the scientific aims, GMOs and their effects on food quality, health and the environment.

323. The EPP therefore believes that new thinking must be supported, by promoting the potential of traditional agriculture and particularly by realising the value of typical traditional quality products. The EPP supports encouraging young farmers and diversifying production to satisfy consumer demand. Food safety, quality requirements and reliable information for consumers should all be taken into consideration, irrespective of the type of agricultural production used. In Central and Eastern Europe, an unthinking policy of modernisation will mostly serve to drive people from the land, and add to the glut of food in Europe.

324. New rural areas

325. Information Technology offers enormous opportunities to rural areas. As information is available everywhere, the role of the centres fades. The EPP firmly supports a pro-active policy for rural areas to make use of these opportunities. Rural depopulation, and the general malaise on the land affects everyone, including urban dwellers, disrupting their quality of life and even their sense of identity. The EPP is against a subsidized theme-park policy to the land, and favours policies which encourage a genuine rural economy. This will necessarily include more light industry in farming areas.

326. Traditional agriculture in order both to improve the quality of agricultural products for human and animal feed, to protect consumers from unsafe innovations and to promote consumers' consciousness remains a very important branch of the economy. Agriculture is not an ordinary branch of industry. Agriculture is more than just producing goods. Agriculture is culture in rural areas. Therefore we support and defend the concept of multi functional agriculture. There is a difference in farm sizes, social and environmental regulations etc. The EU farmers must be prepared to cope with world markets in a way which enables them to cope with this challenge.

IV European Identity in the 21st Century

400. The choice for the European Union is the result of history, and a response to the challenges of the future.

Through the European Union, we intend to :

- develop a system which - in the era of globalization - combines a free economy with a society based on solidarity;
- consolidate and stabilise peace throughout the continent of Europe;

- make a contribution to a better world.

401. Over one and a half millennia, Europe's people have evolved into distinct and self-confident nations. Despite their national differences, they have preserved their shared cultural heritage - rooted in Hebrew prophecy, Greek philosophy and Roman law, as they have been harmonized by the Christian message and Judeo-Christian values. It has remained intact throughout each phase of cultural development: the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment. With the nation state, we have equipped ourselves with a form of political organization, and a way of life, which has become a model for the whole world.

402. But nation states on their own are less and less capable of safeguarding welfare, internal security, and peace. As a legal community, the European Union safeguards peace, enhances the interdependence of nations, and creates the conditions for their welfare and prosperity. The challenge for the future is to create a new form of political organisation.

403. European Union is the Europeans' contribution to the challenge of globalization. The European project is not to destroy the nation states of Europe, but to avoid nationalism and restore to them, through union - the real capacity to fulfil their central responsibilities. Europe is the prerequisite for the solution of the fundamental problems our nations face. As the essential means to this end, Europe is also an end in itself. In order to clarify the relationship between the European Union, its Member States and its citizens, the European Union needs a constitution which is treaty-based and compatible with the values of the rule of law, democracy, subsidiarity, and accountability.

404. The EPP advocates a governance which is capable of acting to realise our values. It follows from globalization and the Europeanisation of life that a European level of state-action has to be sustained not only to create a free trade area, but to set up a framework which generates freedom, equal opportunities, solidarity, and sustainability in so far as the nation state alone is not able to secure that anymore.

405. Europe must have the capacity to act if it is to safeguard the nation as a way of life. This is the basic condition for its acceptance by our citizens.

406. But Europe must only take on those tasks which can be dealt with solely - or at least far more effectively - at European level. As far as possible, Europe should restrict itself to fundamental and/or framework decisions. In a Union of up to 30 member states EU must limit itself to the core European tasks. Increasing diversity and a mounting work load ask for streamlining activities if the essential

tasks are to be fulfilled. A lean Europe is built on self-governance by local and regional authorities and the enduring power of the nation state.

407. Europe must be democratic. Its institutions must reflect, directly or indirectly, the will of its citizens. It must function in a way which citizens can understand, and its procedures must be transparent. Citizens must also have a real say in influencing the Union's policies through their European Political Parties. It is also important to ensure fundamental improvements in the openness of EU institutions.

408. All three elements - a capacity to act, a restriction of action to certain key tasks, and democratic procedures - form the bases of Europe's legitimacy and are an integral part of its identity. In all these respects, Europe epitomizes not the disintegration but the evolution of its constituent nations.

409. Europe must further develop its existing common cultural and political identity. Europe defines itself in equal measure through its common intellectual and spiritual heritage, its diverse national origins, and its will for a common future. European civil society must be reinforced. Civil initiatives for social purposes have to be encouraged. The ties between individuals have to be strengthened.

The EPP considers that the establishment of a European cultural area centred on respect for and promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity contributes to the ideal of the European Union, namely to unite the citizens and peoples of Europe in respect for their culture and their national and regional traditions.

410. Europe's constitutional form and structure

411. Europe's future is not merely an extension of the national origin. As Europe is a new form of political organisation, sole, ultimate, or universal responsibility will no longer exist at any level. Europe will not be a federation in the conventional sense, but a new form of federal system, of which economic and monetary union is the precursor. This unique form of political organisation will follow the objectives of federalism and the community method.

412. European federalism is based on solidarity between Member States but also on competition in order to establish best practices. The aim is to learn from each other and to establish Europe as a learning community. Economic and monetary union has centralized just one element - monetary policy - of one key area of public policy, the economy. The others, in contrast to a traditional federation, remain the responsibility of participating states.

413. Competition and solidarity are two mutually dependent elements of this federalism. The fundamental expression of solidarity in EMU is adherence to the rules agreed in the Maastricht Treaty which aim to modernise and revitalise

European economies and societies. But within this framework Member States are free to decide how to achieve this goal. Member States have to be given enough room for manoeuvre to adapt themselves to new challenges in respect of their specific problems, needs, and experiences. Harmonisation in the field of economic policy must ensure that a level playing field will come about for economic actors. Within this new federal system of economic and monetary union, the objectives of federalism - welfare, equality, and justice - are therefore not primarily the outcome of transfers and harmonisation as in classical federal states, but the result of a fair and rule-based competition between the Member States. The division of competences has to be clear, precise, transparent and dynamic over time. The citizen has to know who is responsible for what in Europe. Subsidiarity must be comprehensively applied.

414. The European People's Party advocates a thoroughgoing institutional reform which will ensure the proper functioning of the Union while taking account of the values of freedom, democracy, responsibility, equality, justice, solidarity, subsidiarity, the rule of law and accountability which are the values guiding its political action.

415. The European Union has need of a constitutional treaty to define the decision-making procedures among the European institutions and the allocation of powers between the European Union and the individual Member States, in accordance with the subsidiarity principle. This constitutional treaty must also include a Charter of Fundamental Rights. This constitutional treaty, which should be able to be adopted by the peoples of Europe in accordance with the most democratic procedures, should be drafted by a Convention similarly composed as the Convention for the Charter on Fundamental Rights.

416. The borders of the European Union

417. The sense of belonging together is nurtured by shared experience of the past - even in conflict and discord, the shared experience of the present, and the imagined experience of the future. This three-fold experience is interpreted in the light of common cultural values and convictions which extend far beyond a commitment to human rights and democracy. The more these values and convictions resemble each other, the greater the sense of a common identity.

418. The European Union should be an open community to European countries that would like

to join. The enlargement of the union represents an opportunity to safeguard freedom and democracy in those parts of Europe where dictatorship previously destroyed the lives of millions of people. An enlarged union is an important opportunity to secure peace in our part of the world.

This process gives rise to a certain fluidity of boundaries. Nevertheless, clear defined borders remain essential. The borders of the EU will be the result of a political process of shaping a self-confident European community whose members share a common sentiment of belonging and acting together. At the same time the Union has to develop a coherent strategy for the policy towards their neighbouring countries, which are bound to become important partners. In many cases relations based on the specific needs and interests seem to be much more appropriate than membership.

V A Europe Open to the World

501. The EU is a global economic player but very weak in other areas of foreign policy, notably security, intelligence, and sometimes even diplomacy. This imbalance creates a dichotomy in public attitudes to the EU and contains latent potential for conflict. The EPP recognizes that the European Union can only survive as a political project if it evolves into a Union with a dynamic Common Foreign, Security, and Defence policy. The EPP believes that politics have a general responsibility in establishing a framework regulating liberalisation and globalization to pass from growth to welfare for all. It is an absolute necessity if globalization is to be accepted by all countries and peoples. Cooperation must be promoted between the WTO and other international institutions, including the Bretton Woods institutions, ILO and other UN organisations, with a view to attaining a more consistent approach to trade, social, monetary, financial, ecological and political issues.

502. Europe must take responsibility for asserting its vital interests in global freedom, peace and prosperity. All European nations agree on this point, but cannot in practice play a major role on an individual basis. Only Europe - as a unit - can do so, and this is also what is expected by the European public. Europe must match its economic power with the political, diplomatic, and military resources required to represent its interests and exercise its responsibilities. The EPP supports every effort to achieve this goal, and urgently calls for this process to be accelerated.

503. Europe's strength

504. Europe is a model for the rest of the world in legally regulating cooperation between free and self-confident nations, and in safeguarding peace to their mutual benefit as a response to supranational reality. Europe is the most advanced project of political integration, and the Europeans can be proud of their achievement.

505. Representing European interests in the world is one of Europe's prime tasks. Progressive globalization requires regulatory framework. Many international organisations such as the UN, the World Trade Organization, the International Labour Organisation, and international environmental projects, have

already made a start on solving global problems with global policies. The European Union must represent European interests in such areas effectively, since Member States cannot achieve this on their own.

506. In the long term, a better world cannot be based on hegemony, a balance of power, or deterrence. Europe can - and must - make a major contribution to the urgent task of developing globally binding rules in areas ranging from security policy to the environment and the economy. The United Nations must therefore be strengthened through comprehensive organizational and structural reform. It can contribute much to the gradual process of replacing anarchy around the world with the rule of law, as it did in Europe itself. The EPP supports a fundamental reform of the UN and a single Security Council seat for the European Union.

507. Peace and democracy

508. Europe must learn to think and act on a long-term basis. A better world is above all a more peaceful world. Peace is based on freedom and respect for human dignity, and on democracy and justice. Promoting these values and helping to establish structures committed to social justice, democracy, and the market economy must be a key foreign policy goal, both of the EU and its Member States. The resources needed for this purpose must be substantially increased. They are modest compared with the costs of the military and its deployment, and represent an investment in a shared and better future.

509. Solidarity and cooperation

510. The development policy of the European Union and its Member States is the expression of Europe's solidarity with other parts of the world. Europe must not only pursue an active policy of economic cooperation with the countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, but also provide assistance with democratization, the creation of a socio-social market economy, and the establishment of a functioning public administration to the states in these regions. In this context the charge of coordinating and integrating the development policies of the Member States must be assigned to the EU, in order to improve the efficacy of initiatives and to encourage a more rational use of investment. Moreover, Europe - the EU and its Member States - must be the advocate and champion of its development policy partners within the bodies of international organisations. The arms trade is one area where Europe has a particular responsibility towards the safeguarding of human rights internationally. Governments must ensure that profits made from the arms trade are not gained at the expense of human rights.

511. For its part, Europe will take its responsibility. The EPP strongly urges all Member States to meet the internationally agreed standard to devote 0,7% of their gross domestic product to development aid. The European Union should

open its markets further to import products from developing countries. This is fundamental in helping poor nations to combat poverty.

512. Cancellation of Third World debt. The EPP is in favour of a conditional cancellation of Third World debt. That implies the drawing-up and implementation of specific development plans for each country; their acceptance should be a precondition of cancellation. Democratisation as well as good governance"] and enrolment in schools must be the main common pillars of these plans as the only ways of investing in the future. Investment in these countries should primarily be directed to the support of grass-root SME networks as they are the only solid basis of a sustainable growth perspective in developing countries. The establishment of the rule of law and the respect of the right of property and its protection is essential.

513. Joint European crisis management forces

514. EU foreign policy must be backed by military resources. The widespread use of force for non-defence purposes - for instance, to oppress minorities within a state, or to perpetrate other grave violations of human rights - must be met with sanctions by the international community. The EPP recognizes the concept of Human Security as a principle of at least equal weight to State sovereignty. However, as military intervention invariably can - at best - only create the preconditions for a political solution to the problems underlying the conflict, it must be subject to careful political as well as military scrutiny, and action must be taken in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter.

515. In a globalized world, the impact of wars and conflicts is more difficult to contain. Deterrence and conflict prevention are the real purposes of the armed forces.

The EPP calls on the Commission to submit budgetary proposals to the Member States so that investment expenditure in the field of new military communications and transport technology can be planned jointly, thereby reducing unit costs and increasing the operational capacity of the future European army.

516. Together, EU Member States have armed forces which numerically exceed those of the US. There should be greater and more consistent investment in European armed forces since these increasingly threaten to become second rate armies. Now that the Cold War is over, it is paradoxical that the countries which decided to combine their destinies within the European Union are finding it easier to reach an agreement on preserving peace outside the Union (the "Petersburg missions") than on the joint defence of the security of the Union itself.

517. The EU is a common security area; its members have common security policy interests but lack the capacity to act on an individual basis. Common European armed forces could be a smaller but more effective force. This is the

way forward following the establishment of the Eurocorps, and the decision to set up a 60,000-strong joint force for crisis-management.

518. Joint security analysis, joint long-term force planning, adequate funding, joint planning and procurement of equipment, a common defence industry, and a common arms exports policy, are crucial.

519. The security of Europe also requires the improvement of our co-operation in civil crisis-management, such as police and rescue operations. The EU therefore must be provided with a common police-force. Further, it is desirable that Europe improves its co-operation in crisis-prevention and democratic institution-building.

520. Europe and America

521. Democratic ideals have now taken root in the eastern part of Europe. Europe and America are jointly extending the Euro-Atlantic structures of the EU and NATO to this region in order to safeguard long-term peace, stability, and welfare there too. Both partners are also seeking to help Russia and Ukraine to find their place in Europe.

522. The key strategic project in shaping Europe as a whole is eastward enlargement of the EU. The institutional guarantee of peace and stability is the EU's greatest challenge and it requires American support. NATO has already admitted new Central European Members. NATO reform must progress towards an Alliance between America and a Europe capable of acting as a single European unit.

523. Anchoring Russia in Europe and promoting democracy and a social market economy are key interests for Europe and the USA alike. Europe requires this support, above all, in view of Russia's situation. Through the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, and the NATO-Russia Founding Act, the EU and NATO have clearly signalled their willingness to enter into partnership with Russia. Partnership also entails being able to voice opposition.

With regard to the EU's largest neighbour, Russia, the EPP must seek to build on the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) with Russia and other former republics of the USSR.

The EPP will also seek to develop the EU Common Strategy on relations with Russia which will give further strength to the PCA in areas of political, economic and trade relations and lay the basis for cooperation in the social, financial, scientific, technological and cultural fields with a goal of incrementally liberalizing trade throughout the continent. This must be understood in the context that the EU is the major trading partner for Russia and most of the newly independent states, accounting for 40 to 50% of their global trade.

524. Sharing the real challenges to both Europe and the USA outside Europe is a natural implication of a European Common Foreign, Security, and Defence Policy.

525. Europe and Africa

Africa is a priority for Europe. The dramatic situation in many African countries - economic and social situation, conflicts and increase of refugees and internally displaced persons, declining health services and growing threat of HIV/AIDS - concern all European countries.

Therefore, we must continue the Africa-Europe dialogue and co-operation to integrate Africa in the world. It means :

- Integrate Africa into the global economy;
- Promote regional economic co-operation and integration;
- Develop a European development policy for sustainable development and poverty eradication;
- Promote human rights, democratic principles and institutions, good governance and the rule of law;
- Implement peace-building, conflicts prevention and resolution.

526. Europe and Latin America

The European Union should strengthen its relations with Latin America and give a positive and clear signal to the expectations of our partners in the region. Support for regional integration should be an important part of our policy.

527. Our view of the world

528. Europe must undertake its own joint evaluation of global security. The proliferation of modern military technology, especially weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems - also in unstable countries with aggressive regimes - domestic conflicts which spill across borders and trigger migration, and the links between unstable countries with aggressive regimes with terrorism and international organized crime, pose a threat to our security.

529. The EPP, however, tends to a more optimistic view. Without underestimating the dangers, there are powerful positive trends in global development, and new opportunities for a better world.

530. To avoid new conflicts on a global scale, a comprehensive range of cooperation and assistance from the West, along with a policy of conflict prevention, regionally and globally binding security policy agreements, arms control and disarmament, are vital. Europe's experience of living through and overcoming this phase in its history means that Europe can and should make a significant contribution to this.

531. The overwhelming majority of nations and leaders are aware of the need to adapt to the modern world, and that by promoting economic development they not only enhance their countries' welfare and prosperity but also change the structure of their societies, and that this increases the desire and the need for democratic participation. They know that they need international cooperation and help to achieve these goals. Europe serves as a shining example of allowing nations to go their own way, and respects their desire for a global order based on diversity and multi centism. Despite the ambiguities and setbacks in the global development of civilization, the European People's Party believes in the opportunity for a better world and is convinced of the need for an essential European contribution to this process. The real challenge for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy is to develop global policies in genuine partnership with the USA.

532. Geopolitics is an important instrument of political analysis. But it should not be the determining factor in international politics. Our view of the world is based in the human person and our values.

533. Environmental audit is needed. Europe is also vulnerable to environmental destruction caused by the industrial civilization. The answers can only be found when environmental aspects are integrated into the economy. New technologies can also be a strong ally in reducing pollution and environmental degradation.

The EU must continue to play a leading role in the fight against climate change and must also endeavour, to that end, to obtain the ratification and implementation by the USA of the Kyoto Protocol. We must do all we can to ensure that the EU adopts legislation on environmental responsibility which is based on the principle that the "polluter pays".

534. Europe and Islam

535. The Islamic world, from Morocco to Iran, is Europe's nearest and most important neighbour. Its rich culture, its political and economic potential, and its internal conflicts make this region, in the EPP's view, the greatest long-term challenge for European policy-making. This acquires an extra dimension through the growing presence of Islam within European societies. Cultural dialogue with Islam is therefore essential in safeguarding peace and tolerance within the European nations, and in promoting good-neighbourly relations with Islamic nations. More access to the European market and more assistance, above all in

developing democratic and market economic structures, are further key elements in achieving this goal.

536. The European Union cannot neglect the need to play a greater political role in this region. This applies especially to the Middle East, where the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction will pose security problems for Europe even sooner than for America. Within the field of European defence, a new form of non-confrontational deterrence must be developed in conjunction with America. Within the field of European diplomacy, strategies for disarmament and arms control, as well as comprehensive security policy agreements, must be developed for the region. However, these ultimately depend on a solution to the conflicts underlying the build-up of arsenals within the region.

537. Europe's history and especially its geographic location together with its global responsibilities make it incumbent for it to play a key role in the Middle East Peace Process. This must extend beyond the provision of necessary financial resources, so that the Essen European Council's decision to confer "privileged status" on Israel in its relations with the European Union can become reality. In this context, the European People's Party calls for the intensification and expansion of the Barcelona process.

538 Europe and Immigration

Europe is a prosperous region enjoying democratic rights and fundamental freedoms and as such is an attractive target for immigration. It directly borders regions with a spiralling population growth, poverty and shortage of water, in which human rights are frequently violated. The migration problems will never be solved if Europe does not follow an intensified policy of development cooperation, including the establishment of a free trade area with the countries of the Mediterranean, and more generally, under the conditions laid down under the MEDA Programme, access to the European market for export products from developing countries, and of promotion of democracy, good governance and the rule of law.

The EPP calls for a Europe-wide law on immigration and the harmonisation of the way that we deal with newcomers to Europe. The EPP believes that we should help people to live and prosper in their own regions. This implies increased aid and investment in poorer areas and practical assistance to improve the basic standard of living in all such areas. The EPP believes that the transfer of knowledge and technology and investment in developing economies is very important in preventing massive migration flows which produce populations without roots and potential marginalization.

539. Common Foreign and Security Policy

540. European Foreign, Security and Defence Policy should be anchored within the single institutional framework of the EU. However, this policy area requires particular flexibility, above all in the military field. A common foreign policy must not fail on account of imprecise institutional provisions on when unanimity or majority voting should apply. A revision of the Amsterdam Treaty is therefore required. A Common European Foreign, Security, and Defence Policy does not signify the end of national foreign policy. The EU should adopt framework and strategic policies that must be elaborated and defined through the community method. It is then for Member States to flesh out this framework and contribute their own particular skills to the process.

541. Member States wishing to act militarily must be able to do so in the EU's name provided that they obtain a quorum (yet to be specified, but different from the present one). All Members of the Union must act with solidarity, including financial solidarity.

600. VI New approaches and firm values

601. New questions will always arise in the European project, along with unexpected developments, new opportunities, and new horizons. Given the dynamism of the present times, concrete political choices may change. The EPP's firm values are more than ever essential, a clear beacon and frame of reference: to distinguish between what to conserve, what to improve, what to avoid, and what to combat.

602. We ultimately derive our strength and motivation from our values (freedom and responsibility, dignity of the human person, solidarity, justice and the rule of law), which are a whole vision of life, and cannot be separated from each other.

603. Freedom and responsibility of persons

604. We see men and women as responsible persons, each endowed with a unique and transcendent dignity. In order to fulfil themselves, people need freedom, autonomy and responsibility. Each person must be guaranteed the right to develop and use his or her gifts, talents, and abilities to create a meaningful life for themselves, their neighbours, and their environment. For us, this not only relates to their material, but to their cultural and spiritual needs as well. Each person has rights and obligations to receive and to give responsibility and care to and from other people, their communities and their societies, if necessary, be provided for by the government. This fundamental dignity gives each person the inalienable right to conduct his life in freedom. It also gives each person the duty to accept responsibility for his life and actions. This responsibility, which follows upon our freedom, must be shown towards all fellow human beings, to past and to future generations.

605. An essential part of this freedom and responsibility is the possibility for people to live and to organise themselves in civil society according to their fundamental beliefs and convictions. In the economy, the market is an instrument which enables people to deploy their gifts and talents on the basis of their own freedom and responsibility. The market should be free and responsible, both in a social sense and in its approach towards the natural environment. Civil society, the market, and the government are not ends in themselves, but ultimately serve to foster freedom, responsibility, and the dignity of the human person. The government should not take over those tasks that can best be performed by society itself. The subsidiarity principle must inform all decision-making in the European Union.

606. Fundamental Equality

607. All human beings, men and women, are equal and endowed with the same dignity. Relations between people should be based on respect for this equality, and on fundamental equality before the law. Thus, they are enabled to develop in freedom and responsibility according to their talents and abilities, irrespective of origin, age, race, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, conviction, social status or physical abilities. This starts at the very beginning of human life and continues until its fragile end.

608. Solidarity

609. As human beings we are by nature dependent on society and on one another. Every citizen has a duty to contribute to the building of society. The EPP will therefore seek to preserve and strengthen the sense of civic community and solidarity among all social groups and all individuals. On the basis of this view of society we will work to strengthen the smaller units of community life; from the individual and the family to the associations of civil society.

610. Solidarity, the care of the human person for his or her neighbour, is an indispensable part of the freedom and responsibility of the person as it is of government. Solidarity begins with the protection of those who are weakest, by civil society as well as by public institutions. Solidarity should colour the relationships between people and their communities. Solidarity is no less relevant to relationships with people further away and with future generations. This includes respect for the integrity of Creation. We reject concepts that consider a person as an atomised individual guided by self-interest alone, as we also reject ideologies which think solidarity can only work through state institutions.

Europe must also deepen its common identity and solidarity in order to promote its social and economic cohesion and reduce the disparities between the levels of development of the various regions. The European People's Party is firmly persuaded that all the regions of the EU must have the same opportunities to

participate in the development of the Union. This identity and solidarity must be extended to the candidate states.

611. Justice

612. Society can and should be shaped in freedom, responsibility, and solidarity. The value of justice particularly applies to the role of government, whether at the local, regional, national or at the European level. It is the basic task of government to create the conditions thanks to which persons, civil society, and the actors in the market, can optimally enjoy their freedom, responsibility, and solidarity on the basis of equality. This not only entails respect for civil and political rights and liberties, but the economic, social, and cultural preconditions for a life in dignity as well.

613. The law is the instrument government use to promote justice. Democratic politics - free elections, open and representative dialogue - is the best way through which a just order may come about. Genuine democracy can therefore never be incompatible with the rule of law. Accountability and integrity in political behaviour are essential safeguards. Democracy should be as close to the concerns of the people as possible. Only where the scale of problems so requires should a task be taken to a higher level. In many fields, European integration is an essential contribution to promote justice. Europe is not an end in itself, but is our contribution to a more peaceful and just global order.

A society of justice must provide for the safety of its citizens. Laws must exist and be upheld to combat criminality and corruption. But a good and safe society is first and foremost created through the upbringing of new generations which must be lead by certain principles and values. Parents and schools share the responsibility of teaching our children about what is right and wrong and what is the meaning of democracy, solidarity and equality. A "valueless" upbringing and education causes disorientation and distrust.

614. Subsidiarity

615. Society and the State have to serve the human person and the common good. Human persons and communities must have the right to accomplish what they can by their own initiative. What smaller scale and independent organizations cannot do has to be assigned to a greater and higher association (region, state, supranational organization). Therefore, subsidiarity is also the key principle of decentralisation, federalism, and European integration. Every social activity is by nature subsidiary. Politics must support the activities of human persons, families, and the intermediate society, not destroy or absorb them. In order to allow individuals and their free associations to develop to the maximum in the social field, the States - in all possible fields - should employ the resources saved for supporting a policy aimed at strong fiscal deduction for those citizens

who pay contributions to socially characterized private bodies which work in the cultural, political, scientific and charitable fields.

616. Sustainability

617. Society must safeguard the opportunities of coming generations. Politics have to bear in mind sustainability not only of the environment, but also of public finance, pension schemes, and solidarity. We are as strongly aware of their heritage as of their future.