

Joint Declaration on European elections by Presidents Mattarella, Steinmeier, and  
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In 2024, elections will be held in Countries that represent more than half of the world population. It will be a crucial year for democracy in Europe and in many parts of the world. In the not-too-distant future, it could be considered to be a decisive year in outlining a roadmap for the decades to come.

More than four hundred million European citizens are able to choose their representatives in the European Parliament, entrusting them with the construction of our future Europe. We must jointly reflect on what future prospects we want to guarantee and on how we intend to tackle the wide-ranging challenges awaiting us.

In our capacity as Presidents of the Republic, we call on our citizens to participate in this decision by going to vote!

We see that the fundamental values – our values – of pluralism, human rights and the Rule of Law are being challenged, if not openly threatened, all over the world. At stake here is none other than the foundations of our democratic order. An order in which governments are held accountable to an informed citizenry, in which strong institutions guarantee everybody's rights, especially those of minorities, and in which politics is a process that seeks solutions through a lively albeit civilized debate.

Our three Countries know that the fact of achieving democracy does not guarantee it. We know that liberty and democracy need to be upheld and consolidated, and that the confrontation between extreme nationalisms generates war. History teaches us that where democracy fails, humanity and political reasoning are stifled.

In our capacity as presidents of liberal democracies, we are honoured to represent our different societies with their multiple opinions and cultures. As presidents, we know that to represent said societies means listening to many voices and uniting many opinions. It is therefore essential to defend democratic institutions and values, the guarantees of freedom, the independence of the media, the role of democratic political oppositions, the separation of powers, the value of limits to the exercise of power.

Our liberal democratic order is deeply intertwined with the unification of Europe: by anchoring ourselves to a European community of values and legal norms, we have presented to the world a coexistence based on democratic order and peace.

It is not surprising that those who question basic democratic principles also question the European project. They forget that in a world in which authoritarian systems are on the rise, European democracies must be truly united. Only in a strong European Union will we have sufficient weight to defend our freedom and our democracy in a world that is increasingly precarious, to work towards a global order

characterised by liberty, the dignity of every individual, respect for every State and for international law.

A United Europe is unthinkable without democracy and European democracy needs democrats in all of Europe: citizens who see democratic freedom as a cause of their own to uphold.

Voting in the elections is a simple but powerful way of reaffirming and consolidating this model.

It is encouraging that many of our fellow-citizens work hard every day to reinforce and defend the democratic fabric that unites us. They voluntarily employ their time and energies to help the less fortunate, assuming responsibilities within associations, communities, and in politics.

Our democracies are strong because they have the support of committed citizens. This makes them radically different from the regimes that oppress their citizens, sowing fear within their societies and threatening their neighbours.

The upcoming elections for the European Parliament will offer the opportunity to elect representatives committed to finding constructive solutions and to accepting the complexity of the democratic system. We exploit this opportunity when we exercise this fundamental right.

By participating in the elections we uphold liberal institutions, the Rule of Law, our founding values, and our common freedoms.

We are truly “united in diversity”, within our Countries and in the European Union.

This has enabled us to live in the most prosperous and peaceful Europe ever known so far. It is a great heritage that is worthwhile defending and developing by exercising our democratic right to vote.

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