



Corfu, 10 -11 December 2021

DIALOGUE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

STATEMENT OF THE I.A.O. INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

During the winter meeting of the International Secretariat, the Chairpersons and the Rapporteurs of the Committees of the Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy (I.A.O.), which was held on December 10-11, 2021 in Corfu, the participants, took into account the previous talks of the I.A.O. with the institutions of the European Union, as well as the conclusions of the 28th General Assembly of the I.A.O., held on July 22-26, 2021 in Crete. The Dialogue on the Future of Europe was discussed, and the following views were recorded:

1. Despite the repeated documented proposals of the I.A.O. to the European Commission and the European Parliament – as early as 2019, and with particular emphasis on the 28th General Assembly of the organization in the summer of 2021 – for a wider and more active involvement of the International Interparliamentary Institutions in the dialogue on the Future of Europe, no provision has been made. The need to give space to the institutional expressions of parliamentarism is reiterated so that they are organized and coordinated throughout the debate on the Future of Europe. In addition, the situation that the world is experiencing with the pandemic does not provide the time and opportunity for the organized expressions of our society, to intervene effectively in the dialogue. After all, the pandemic itself creates new data, which must be taken into account. The dialogue, therefore, must be both widened and extended.

2. Historical truths are the only ones that can enlighten our future, and recording them in the dialogue process is a unique opportunity. The Christian roots of Europe are one of the solid foundations of European culture as a whole. Any attempt to conceal such decisive sources of culture for the history of the people of Europe, in the name of the so-called peaceful coexistence of the people, leads to the alteration of the historical reality. Moreover, not only do they not contribute to a peaceful and creative future, but they give a sense of purpose to a Europe devoid of its historical foundations. In support of the above, we mention that in the 2nd Interim Report of the Conference on the Future of Europe (September 2021), which covers the period from April 2021 to the beginning of September 2021, there is no reference to the worth of Christian values for the creation of the future of Europe.



3. The I.A.O. is unequivocally in favor of inclusiveness and eliminating all forms of discrimination inside and outside Europe. We realize, however, that some schools of thought, in the name of the so-called non-discrimination, tend to abolish basic principles, such as manifoldness, diversity, pluralism, and otherness. In recent years, the tendency for the prevalence of a social point of view that promotes the homogenization of the identity of nations and peoples, and thus the elimination of their particular characteristics, is becoming more and more active. It is obvious that a similar Orwellian dystopia will result in the predominance of an anthropological type without particular characteristics, the elimination of any trace of diversity, and, fatally, the easy manipulation of this human mass, which will be deprived of elementary critical thinking. A recent example of the direct undermining of Europe's fundamental pillars is the European Commission's draft Internal Guidelines for a more inclusive communication, pro-posed by European Commissioner Mrs. Helena Dalli. This is a text that has ultimately been withdrawn, that denies any difference arising from the cultural and religious heterogeneity of European citizens by introducing a "wooden," automated, and neutral vocabulary, which urges to avoid the use of terms and names referring to ethnicity, language, religion, or gender. The I.A.O. separates its position from such a view and condemns any attempt to eradicate Europe's Christian identity, wherever it may come from. The I.A.O. also condemns any attempt to eliminate other different characteristics of citizens belonging to other historical, cultural realities. The reduction of the historical truth of the European area undoubtedly contributes to the reduction of the European idea. The different religious and cultural elements should not be sacrificed on the altar of peaceful coexistence, and no at-tempt should be made to erase them from the memories of the people. Such an approach does not offer a European Future. On the contrary, peaceful coexistence can more easily arise only through the acceptance of these different elements, which leads effortlessly to their dialogue and cooperation. After all, historically, the course of religions and cultures has never been expressed as a single linear event, but as a heterogeneous alloy of interaction between the individual religious and cultural identities of different peoples.

4. Finally, the will of the I.A.O. is restated to actively contribute to the Dialogue on the Future of Europe by organizing activities and discussions, which will promote, in public discourse, the role of Christian values in shaping the future of Europe.