

Statement

The Senators of the Republic of Poland from the Parliamentary Group for Promoting Robert Schuman's Ideas, concerned about the current crisis of the European Union, call upon the politicians to respect the ideas and objectives promoted by Europe's fathers: Jean Monnet, Konrad Adenauer, Alcide De Gasperi and Robert Schuman.

One of the main ideas of the founding fathers is expressed in Robert Schuman's thought: "To serve a humanity finally emancipated from hatred and fear, and which is relearning after too much heartbreak the lesson of Christian fraternity." Setting out the directions of Europe's development, Robert Schuman emphasised: "My idea is not about the fusion of states in order to create a super-state. Our European states are a historical reality. It would be psychologically impossible and unreasonable to make them disappear. Their diversities are a very happy circumstance and there is no reason to remove them, bring them to a common level or equalize them."

Nowadays Europe is at a turning point because it has moved away from the foundations of its integration identified by Robert Schuman. There will be no solidarity without reconciliation and the unity in truly Christian spirit, and without solidarity there will be no peace either. Therefore, we are facing the challenge originally presented by Schuman shortly after World War II, which is the need to return to build relationships through reconciliation.

The unification process must be accompanied by a strong desire for spiritual values. It is not possible to effectively build the European unity without the unity of spirit. It is difficult to build a house which lacks solid foundation and, undoubtedly, this foundation is represented by the Christian values present in our culture since the very beginning of Europe.

Holy Father John Paul II emphasised that on June 11, 1999 at the Sejm saying: "If we wish Europe's new unity to last, we must build on the basis of the spiritual values which were once its foundation, keeping in mind the wealth and diversity of the cultures and traditions of individual nations. This must be the great European Community of the Spirit". According to John Paul II, it is this creative faithfulness to Christian roots that will allow Europe's citizens and nations experience that authentic freedom based on truth and combined with love and

sacrifice, freedom which grows and is expressed through solidarity and giving the gift of oneself to others.

Thus, the Polish Parliamentary Group for Promoting Robert Schuman's Ideas appeals to the Members of the European Parliament to form a parliamentary group inspired by Schuman's ideas, which may become an important mechanism facilitating Europe's return to the Christian values. Such a parliamentary group should build the European Community upon Robert Schuman's proposals, which reject liberal and relativistic ideologies that stand in opposition to human dignity and properly understood humanism.

It is the Christians, in particular Catholics, who hold unique responsibility to actively participate in the process of forming Europe, because Europe's roots originate from Jesus Christ, and in this context Europe does not have any other identity. Cutting off these roots would lead to the destruction and annihilation of Europe. Do we want to move towards a Europe full of chaos, where unity, solidarity and peace are destroyed? Or do we want a Europe based on Christian values? The Church supports Europe's integration understood as the Europe of homelands rather than a federation of individual countries. Although the concepts of nation and homeland only developed in the 19th century, they still constitute very important values in social life. The Church strives to preserve these concepts and appeals to shape social life on their basis. The Church defends national, cultural and ethnic identity of individual countries. It wishes to co-create the Europe of homelands, nations and families, not the Europe of units and market.

Let us respond to John Paul II's call from his speech in the European Parliament in Strasbourg on October 11, 1988: "It is Europe that for almost two thousand years has been an illustrious example of fertile cultural Christianity, which due to its very nature cannot be pushed into the private sphere. After all, public profession of faith and active participation in all fields of life make for Christianity's calling. It is therefore my obligation to firmly preach the truth: Should the religious and Christian foundations of this continent's culture be deprived of their influence on societies' shape and ethics, it would mean not only denying the whole heritage of the European past but also a significant threat to decent future for all inhabitants of Europe. All of them – both believers and non-believers."

Signed by: Andrzej Kamiński, Chair of the Parliamentary Group for Promoting Robert Schuman's Ideas, and the members of the Group.