

Declaration by the Presidency of the Italian Council of the European Movement

Rome, December 15, 2011

The Presidency of the Italian Council of the European Movement met in Rome to examine the state of the European Union and the most recent decisions taken in Brussels by the Council and European Parliament.

The Presidency of the Italian Council of the European Movement recalled, a year after his death, the crucial contribution of **Tommaso Padoa Schioppa**, to the construction of a democratic and inclusive Europe.

The decision by the Heads of State and Government of the Eurozone in the night between 8 and 9 December to draw up and adopt a treaty in March next year to **ensure the government of the Euro** and the decision by the Conference of the EP group leaders of December 15 to prepare an **alternative plan** to the government's one to be approved early next February, opened a new emergency phase of strategic planning for States and the European institutions seeking to further European integration in its Federal dimension involving political, economic and social forces and the citizens themselves.

This new phase has just begun.

The CIME launches an urgent appeal primarily to the Italian government - and in particular the President of the Council whose sincere commitment to Europe is well known - to parliament, political forces, the Confederation of Industry, trade unions and civil society organizations, proposing the urgent convening of a major **National Conference on the Future of Europe** to bring forth a renewed strategy for Italy in the wake of De Gasperi and Spinelli's inspiration.

In this framework the CIME recalls the proposal to promote the convening of **inter-parliamentary fora** such as the one which gathered in Rome in November 1990, a proposal that was revived by the Chamber of Deputies in its resolution on *Italy and Europe* of September 7, 2011.

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The Italian Council of the European Movement, however, expresses its deep concern for the short-sightedness of governments. They do not see that the adoption of urgent measures (albeit dramatically partial ones as underlined once more yesterday by Mario Draghi, and by President Barroso before the EP) to ensure stability, growth and solidarity, must be accompanied by the parallel launching of a comprehensive review of the division of competences between the Union and Member States in order to give a European dimension to the government of public goods of a federal nature, and to enhance the democratic legitimacy of European institutions, the inevitable consistency between monetary Union, economic Union and political Union, and the transposition of domestic political choices in foreign security and defense policies.

Welcoming with satisfaction the decision by the Conference of the EP group leaders for an alternative plan, the CIME urges the European Parliament to accompany the approval of this plan with the request to the Council to convene a **constitutional convention** under Article 48 of the Treaty of Lisbon.

To prevent the unacceptable United Kingdom veto - which could have been overcome by countries within the Eurozone only by convening by simple majority an intergovernmental conference - institutional formulas have been taken into consideration which are incompatible with the normal institutional framework of the Commission, the European Parliament and the Court of Justice.

From a strictly legal perspective the recent European Council and Eurozone decisions are a deviation from the procedures of the Treaties and as such a violation of the **principle of loyal cooperation** that characterizes relations between Member States and European institutions as required by art. 4 of the EU Treaty which states that "The Member States shall facilitate the achievement of the Union's tasks and refrain from any measure which could jeopardise the attainment of the Union's objectives".

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To political uncertainty was thus added a serious legal uncertainty with the start of a process of which the objectives, project content, method and timetable are unclear.

Even should 26 member countries or a smaller number be able to develop and adopt a treaty outside the Union by applying the Schengen method or the Pruem method, and assuming that such a treaty is ratified by the signatory countries or a part of them, the new treaty would face serious operational problems because of the inevitable conflicts that would arise between its provisions and those of the Union.

We note in this context a dangerous divorce by Member States from the legal framework of the Union, also because it will be a deviation from what could have been the main route of a Union capable of ensuring stability and budgetary discipline, solidarity and sustainable growth, legitimacy and democratic decision-making.

The CIME remains confident in the future determination of the European Parliament to counter the risks inherent in the decision taken by governments and to bring about a turning point in European integration, and welcomes the guidelines adopted by the Spinelli Group in its meeting of 8 December hoping for a more effective cooperation between federalist organizations in Europe.

The CIME also decided to promote an information and communication campaign towards the Italian public on the cultural and social value of European unification, which takes precedence over its political and economic achievements and the risks of regression in the process of integration.