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Together for Europe – in dialogue with Members of the European Parliament

Reviving Europe: A “Soul” for Dialogue and Reconciliation

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I am a Masters student in International Relations and one of the founders of **Ut Omnes**, an intergenerational initiative created to promote dialogue between young people, institutions and civil society, through paths of exchange, participation and shared responsibility.

Being here today, at the European Parliament, doesn't simply mean speaking in a prestigious institutional place. It means entering, even if only for a few minutes, the political heart of a project that can't afford to become distant from people. Europe doesn't live only in treaties, institutions or negotiation tables. It lives in the trust of those who still feel it as a common space. It lives in the real possibility to participate, to be heard, and to have an impact. It lives when it is able to speak not only the language of procedures, but also the language of **shared responsibility**.

And this is exactly where the **Intergenerational Pact** takes on its deepest meaning.

Not as a symbolic act. Not as a signature to add to an already full agenda. Not as a photo to be kept in the archives of an institutional day. The Intergenerational Pact is, first of all, a question addressed to all of us: **are we truly ready to move from the rhetoric of listening to the courage of co-responsibility?**

To take each other seriously across generations, between institutions and citizens and between those **who make decisions today** and those who live with the **consequences of those decisions**.

For too long, in public language, we have said that **young people are “the future of Europe”**. **It is a beautiful sentence, of course**. But it can also be a comfortable one. Because if young people are always the future, then they can be listened to tomorrow, involved tomorrow, made responsible tomorrow.

But we are not only the future.
We are the present of Europe.

We are present in universities, in cities, in places of work and volunteering. We are present in crises, in transitions, in economic difficulties, in environmental challenges, and in the conflicts that mark our time. We are present when Europe speaks about peace, sustainability, rights, participation, innovation and social cohesion.

So the question is not whether one day we will be ready to participate.

The question is whether Europe is ready to recognize that we are already participating.

This Pact is born precisely from this awareness: participation can't be granted as an **occasional space**. It must be built as a method. It isn't enough to invite young people to celebratory moments; they must be involved in **processes, choices and responsibilities**. It isn't enough to speak "about young people"; we must speak "**with young people**" and, above all, accept that young people speak with their own voice.

But this Pact isn't a one-way request. And this is perhaps its most important element.

Because we, as young people, must also avoid one temptation: limiting ourselves to asking for space without accepting the **weight of responsibility**. Participating doesn't only mean being heard.

It also means preparing ourselves, studying, understanding complexity, accepting dialogue, building proposals, and sustaining over time the commitments we make.

We can't ask for more open institutions if we are not willing to be more conscious citizens. And we can't expect our voice to have weight if we are not the first to give it content, continuity and credibility.

For this reason, the **Intergenerational Pact doesn't place one generation against another**. It wasn't created to say that one generation has failed and another one will save everything. That would be a simplification, and Europe doesn't need simplifications. Europe needs alliances.

It needs the experience of those who have built, defended and protected the European project. But it also needs the perspective of those who today ask that project not to be satisfied with itself, not to close itself off, and not to speak only to itself.

Because the real risk today isn't only that Europe may be criticized. The real risk is that Europe may be perceived as distant: a necessary but cold structure, important but far away, present in decisions but absent from people's daily imagination.

This is why today we are not here only to sign a Pact. We are here to affirm a method: **walking together, across generations**, without paternalism and without the illusion that any generation can be self-sufficient.

We, as young people, are not asking to replace anyone.

We are asking to be present.

We are asking to contribute.

We are asking that our presence not be considered decorative, but necessary.

And at the same time, we commit ourselves to doing our part: with seriousness, competence, critical spirit, and with the awareness that democracy is not passively inherited, but practiced every day.

I would like to conclude with a reflection.

Perhaps Europe doesn't only need to be explained better. It needs to be lived more. It needs to become again a place where people don't feel like simple recipients of decisions, but active members of a common responsibility.

The Intergenerational Pact tries to say exactly this: that **no generation is enough on its own**. That the present of Europe can't be built by a few and then explained to everyone else afterwards.

And so, the challenge we launch today, **with respect but also with conviction, is this**: let us not limit ourselves to speaking about participation. Let us make it demanding, concrete and continuous.

Because we, as young people, are not waiting for the future.

We are already inside the present of Europe.

And if Europe has the courage to recognize this, it will not only be closer to young people. It will be more faithful to itself. **Thank you for your attention.**