

Sandro GOZI - Candidate President



Dear friends,

In view of our Congress in Vienna in November, I am writing to explain in few words why I have decided to present my candidacy to the Presidency of UEF.

My first reason is simply and openly a political one. Non-partisan, of course, but very political. Why? Because we are witnessing a major conflict between two visions for Europe: liberal democracy versus nationalism, rule of law versus intolerance, openness versus closure, multilateralism versus unilateralism.

In a nutshell, the Spinelli's message has never been so strong and so current: that new cleavage between federalism and nationalism is more and more at the center of European and national debates. And in this context, we, European Federalists, must take on all our responsibilities and renew our commitment for the European cause.

What drives people into the hands of our enemies is that they have lost trust in the current system to deliver solutions: therefore without more delay we must get out of this status quo and relaunch a strong process of European reform addressing ourselves to all the political forces sharing our values, our concerns, our goals.

More generally, we, as UEF, have an important role to play in uniting all democratic political forces to defend the European idea from the illiberal challenges and to provide ideas for European solutions and a European reform agenda.

My second reason is a personal one, an obvious continuation of my European and professional path.

I am a committed European, with academic and professional experiences in 7 European countries. Experience in practically all the EU institutions as well as in organised civil society. I am pro-European and pro civil rights. My experience ranges from the Erasmus programme to the Italian regional government, from civil rights and pro-European associations to the European Council, passing through the Italian Government and Parliament, European Commission, Council of Ministers, European Parliament and Council of Europe.

Over the years I have basically lived Europe from many different perspectives, as an active citizen, as a professional and through my several political and institutional experiences. I thought therefore that I was now well placed to put my convictions, my commitment and my experience at the service of our common endeavour as UEF.

I am well aware of the very good job which has been done so far, on one hand, but also fully cognisant of the organisational challenges that we face on the other.

For the Federalist movement to play a successful role, we need to redouble our efforts to deliver for national sections, encourage the smallest sections to grow, and to intensify our advocacy at the European level. UEF must become a real opportunity for all the national sections to expand our common European initiative.

In light of previous discussions you held, and of my first analysis, we should be able to immediately develop some aspects of our strategy: to promote events and projects with a new added-value and able to meet the new funding priorities of our potential donors. I feel that this is a concern shared by many national sections and on which I am willing to commit through the collective action and a clear strategy of the new Executive Bureau. We must do all we can to secure our financial situation and to diversify our donors. To this end, bureau members should identify clear advocacy priorities and take ownership of tasks and responsibilities to reach our common objectives.

Last but not least, I will be always open to ideas, concerns and proposals from all the national sections. Within this well-defined context, I am ready to use my experience and networks to strengthen the presence of UEF and represent the UEF positions in the political debate at the European level in this very delicate and decisive phase of European integration.

We need to show determination, commitment, and team spirit. Above all, we need to show courage, in our ideas as well as in our actions.

As a former DJ, I would like to end this letter with a popular quote by the band Arcade Fire "*...now I'm ready to start*". However, that being said, I believe that it is imperative for us now to return to our roots and to remind ourselves of the spirit of our founding fathers - of all of them, not just of the best known ones. Think of the many unknown Federalists, active citizens, civil servants, politicians who have fought for our European project away from the limelight. Let us recall what some of them used to say and write at the beginning of this incredible European adventure and which still holds true even more for us today: "*...tut etwas Tapferes...*", it is time for an act of courage. It is time for a European Federation.

Sandro GOZI