



INTERVENCIÓN DE IMANOL PRADALES EN EL GLOBAL EUROPE FORUM

The Basque National Party, founder of the European Democratic Party and one of the few centenarian political parties in Europe, faces these upcoming elections to the European Parliament, first of all as a necessary reinforcement of democracy and our democratic values in Europe. We must strengthen the legitimacy of the next European Parliament and combat growing populism, coming both from right-wing and left-wing parties, which is trying to prevent us from making further progress in our common project.

Europe must regain its competitiveness in the leading sectors of the future. To this end, it is essential to have a robust industrial policy, combined with a technological, training and innovation effort, with a special focus on SMEs, where resides most of our quality employment. At the same time, we must secure the activity of our primary sectors, which are fundamental for our sovereignty and food safety, territorial balance and due care for the environment.

A more competitive Europe will allow us to move towards a social Europe, that protects its most vulnerable groups, shows greater solidarity between generations, and makes significant progress in the field of equality and social justice policies.

But above all, in 2024, when elections in more than 70 countries around the world will condition the next geopolitical map, Europe must play again the role of a relevant political actor on the international scenario, it must endow itself with true strategic sovereignty and reclaim its global leadership. We will only gain global influence if we are united and determined to apply common policies on the international stage.

We must tackle profound changes in the current institutional architecture of the European project. This is why, the Basque National Party would like to lead in organising the much - needed Convention to amend the current Treaties, in accordance with the Resolution of this European Parliament of 4 May 2022.

We must grant the Union more competences, make progress in greater citizen participation, transparency and accountability, and deepen its model of multilevel governance, thus better integrating local and regional powers and also national realities such as the Basque reality.

Our political party had the vision and the privilege of being part of the origins of the European institutions. And now, it is clearly determined to have the Basque Country, *Euskadi*, participate on an equal footing in its future, through projects such as the Atlantic Macro-region, which is more necessary than ever in a cohesive Europe. We also want our language, the Basque language, which is the oldest living language in Europe, to participate on an equal footing in the future of the European Institutions where we hope it will be officially heard in the near future.

Thank you very much / Eskerrik asko.