



Make Europe the World Leader of Sustainable Development: A Unique Opportunity to Build a Stronger European Union

Brussels, 15th July 2019.

Mrs. Ursula von der Leyen

President designated of the European Commission

Dear Mrs von der Leyen,

On behalf of Europe Ambition 2030, we would submit you the following proposals in view of your statement in front of the European Parliament the 16th of July:

1. Your ambition should be to make the European Union the global leader, a true champion of sustainable development, as foreseen by the Lisbon Treaty.

As an integral part of the globalised world, European society has a historical responsibility to recognise and resolve the challenges of today and tomorrow. It is our natural obligation to work towards the achievement of an environmentally, socially, as well as economically sustainable world, within the framework of Agenda 2030 of the United Nations, unanimously approved by the EU and all its Member States. The Commission should aim to achieve this by contributing to development and justice through the Four Big 'I's of transformation described by the German Advisory Council on Global Change: innovation, infrastructure, investment, inclusion.

2. Your goal should be to develop a new sense of 'public happiness' in Europe.

By partnering for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), working together in the public space, we are not only working in partnership with many around the world, for a new civilization but also - since the 1989 falling down of the Berlin Wall - developing a new sense of 'public happiness', as defined by Hannah Arendt, in Europe.

Indeed, more than ever, people demand a sustainable world where all can live well in harmony with the environment, benefitting from prosperous and peaceful economic and social development, within the capacities of our Earth: the planetary boundaries. If this demand goes unmet, the risk of instability will grow, and eventually the fire of social unrest will be ignited. Therefore, we must take this as our Vision and develop a new, collaborative model of development for our economic, social and environmental governance. A model built on 'unconventional alliances', as suggested by Chancellor Merkel, between actors of the public, private and civilian spheres, one that mobilises the youth as the main stakeholders in our sustainable future. Collaboration that increases our preparedness to efficiently tackle risks of global magnitude, such as climate change, biodiversity collapse and growing socio-economic inequalities and injustices.

3. The Commission should transform itself to adapt to 'system leadership' and 'enhanced partnerships'.





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We, Europeans are in a unique position to start this change, despite our internal challenges. Our ethos is built on the solid foundations of peaceful development, inclusivity and empathy, which are all cornerstones of sustainability. We are present in the field of sustainability action and cooperate actively with champions of the SDGs across the entire world: our success stories are numerous. We also have a significant capital of knowledge in Systems Thinking and Leadership, which is essential to addressing the complex challenges facing us and multi-level governance.

To take a brave step on this path, we need the unwavering support of our high-level leaders: a clear commitment to sustainable design, collaborative action and systems leadership. In particular, the EU and Member States' Governments must develop transparent, strong and innovative governance tools to achieve the SDGs, the Paris Agreement objectives, as well as shape the future of the EU Common Agricultural Policy and budgets in a sustainability-aware manner. There must be unity, and risks to society inherent in burning global environmental risks must be swiftly addressed through common approaches rooted in science. At the same time, the process and outcomes of this transformative governance should guide and underpin the EU Green Budget ("MFF") towards 2027.

4. With that, we call upon the Members of the European Council to take the lead for Europe on sustainable development, and deliver our society a better future by:
 - The European Commission, as already requested by the Council, the EP and the Economic and Social Committee, will adopt its own strategic agenda 2019-2024 making 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals the overarching framework of the Commission policies paving the new development model - a European people-centred agenda – as proposed by the OECD, with a new social contract and, tackling global challenges, sustainable production and consumption patterns.
 - The composition of the Commission will respect the political majority in the EP and will have three or four vice-presidents, with clear responsibilities according to the economic, social, environmental and institutional pillars of the 2030 Agenda and a mandate to work towards the achievement of SDGs.
 - The Commission will propose to the EP and to the Council an interinstitutional agreement to introduce a financial cooperation on the content and the amount of the own resources (as it was the case at the beginning of the years seventies).
 - The Commission will propose a new MFF having a quinquennial periodicity (2021-2025) designed around the 2030 Agenda.
 - The Commission will support a European Youth Convention on the 2030 Agenda with the objective to contribute to the EU action plan 2020-2030 (new social contract, zero poverty, zero hunger, reduced inequalities, all living well within the limits of our planet) and to related treaty reviews.

With our partners all over the world, we are inviting the Commission to partner with a large citizens movement - uniting values of economic development, social equality and environmental integrity - to lead a new social, economic and financial model, relaunching "A European Vision" in the service of humanity and of our European society.





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Yours sincerely,

Mr. Enrico Giovannini
ASVIS

Ms. Geraldine Walsh
European Partners for the Environment

Mr. Pier Virgilio Dastoli
European Movement-Italy

Ms. Dasa Silovic
CEE Gender Network

