

CO-OPERATION WITH THE EUI

2018 STATE OF THE UNION CONFERENCE

On 10-12 May the eighth State of the Union conference took place at the EUI.

The State of the Union is a high-level conference for reflection on the European Union. This year the main topic was "Solidarity in Europe", a topic of crucial importance to face the future of the EU.

Three heads of state were present: Sergio Mattarella, President of the Italian Republic; Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland; and Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Portuguese Republic, as well as distinguished academics, practitioners, and members of civil society.

Jean-Claude Juncker, Mario Draghi, Antonio Tajani and Federica Mogherini gave their view on the importance of 'Solidarity in Europe'. As President Tajani said, the last ten years of crisis have slowed down the virtuous solidarity process and the same pro-European momentum. The spirit of solidarity between countries that has been the real driver of the integration process is failing.

Distracted politics feeds anger and sellers of illusions. According to President Tajani, the only answer to reconnect the Institutions to their citizens is a different Europe, more



Enrique Barón Crespo at the 2018 State of Union in Florence



From left to right: Enrique Barón Crespo, Renaud Dehousse - President of the European University Institute, Monica Baldi and Vincenzo Grassi - Secretary General of the European University Institute

political, more democratic, more solidary.

A Europe which is incapable of supporting solidarity is in danger of losing its own souls and its own values. He concluded his speech by saying that Europe's respect for culture and diversity should be at the

heart of its public discourse.

As President Higgins said "Solidarity in Europe must be the foundation on which our Union's action is built. It must be the star which guides our action at home and in the wider world."

The need for a more unified and solid Union has been exposed through a series of panels that followed the opening, ranging from EMU, development and humanitarian aid strategies, energy and climate change, social investment, immigration and EU foreign, security and defence policies.

The FMA was represented by Former President Enrique Barón Crespo and Monica Baldi, FMA Board member responsible for relations with the European University Institute.



Keynote Speech by Antonio Tajani, President of the European Parliament ©EUI

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