

ATHENS DECLARATION ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND DEMOCRATIC VALUES

We, the Patriots for Europe Group, **reaffirm our commitment to the inalienable right to free expression and self-governance**. In Athens, birthplace of democracy and philosophical discourse, serving as the enduring foundation of Western civilization and political thought, **we stand as the defenders of national sovereignty, cultural identity rooted in our Christian heritage and democratic freedoms**.

Today, our fundamental democratic values are under threat. Our Nations and Peoples are faced with forced centralization, excessive bureaucracy and supranational overreach by the EU institutions, manifesting in censorship and the suppression of legitimate political dissent. However, the future of Europe does not lie in further centralization, but in a **renaissance of freedom and patriotism**.

We regard Freedom of speech as the lifeblood of democracy, which must remain free from arbitrary restrictions and ideological manipulation. **We insist that citizens retain their right to express their convictions freely** without fear of censorship, legal reprisal and punishment.

We call for the protection of digital rights and the enforcement of strict transparency standards to ensure that the internet remains a space of free ideas, not a tool of ideological domination.

We believe that the **European Union must serve as a framework for cooperation**, not as an unaccountable regime imposing its rules upon free Nations. True democracy derives its legitimacy solely from the people, expressed through direct representation in national governments.

We call on the European Union and its institutions to respect Member States' national identity and competences, and refrain from interference in the internal affairs and electoral processes of the Member States.

We call for enhancing peace, security, prosperity and competitiveness for our continent instead of pursuing ideologically driven policies.

We reject attempts to restrict or redefine fundamental freedoms and democratic norms, and to degrade values such as the rule of law and democracy to political weapons. **National constitutional traditions and differences must be respected**.

We vow to protect Heritage and Identity. European Nations possess the right and moral obligation to uphold their cultural heritage and preserve their unique identities by defending their borders. Illegal migration and the forced dilution of national character are assaults on democracy itself. **We reject the agenda of open borders** affirming instead the right of every Nation to determine its own future in accordance with its history, tradition and values.

We oppose the activities and funding of certain Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that, while claiming to represent civil society, operate as political actors aiming to shape public policy and undermine national sovereignty. Such practices amount to ideological propaganda that threatens European traditions, democratic pluralism, and freedom of thought.

We call for full transparency regarding the funding of NGOs, and we reaffirm that only the elected representatives of the people may legitimately shape the future of our Nations.

We underline our unwavering commitment to forge a Europe of proud and independent Nation States, bound by mutual respect, shared heritage and an unbreakable commitment to liberty.