

Concept Paper for Malta

(Ahead of the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Rome treaties)

The European Union is at a historical turning point, experiencing dramatic challenges both from within and outside. Externally, globalisation based on cooperation and competition is giving way to increasing rivalry, confrontation and even conflict, putting into question the fundamentals underpinning the rules-based international order. We are also facing important internal challenges as exemplified by Brexit.

In these times of global tectonic changes the EU needs strength and determination to keep unity and to better respond to the expectations of its citizens in the areas of security, economy and social inclusion. The Rome meeting should offer an ambitious vision on how to preserve unity and achieve political consolidation. Nothing will substitute goodwill and cooperation among Member States, therefore the essence of political consolidation should be the renewal of cooperation within the EU. In particular we should:

- stress the determination of the 27 Member States to remain united and emphasise that a renewed cooperation between EU governments and institutions is key to effectively addressing the current challenges;
- reaffirm the fundamental values of the EU;
- reiterate the urgent need for the EU to deliver on the priorities the European citizens care most about in order to regain their support.

While preparing the “Rome Declaration” we should reflect on how to deliver on our key priorities:

Europe as a strong global actor with greater unity in foreign policy and more investments in our defence;

Europe of prosperity promoting economic growth and jobs, investments and competitiveness, notably by further deepening the Economic and Monetary Union and developing the single market based on four freedoms;

Europe as an area without internal borders implementing our comprehensive migration policy and increasing internal security;

A Europe which benefits all by reinforcing the social dimension and promoting effective youth policies.

The outcome of the discussion in Malta should also provide guidance on the follow up to the “Rome Declaration” (‘Rome Agenda’). The June European Council could thus be seized of its operational follow up as regards measures to be taken by the EU in the short to medium term.