



## Joint statement

### Call on the European Parliament to support funding for democracy as a smart investment to achieve EU foreign policy goals

In today's geopolitical context, the EU must navigate multiple, urgent priorities – from security threats and migration pressures to economic competition and disruptions in supply chains. **Amid these challenges, democracy support stands out as one of the most effective, highest-return investments the EU can make.** Democracies are more stable, predictable and reliable partners; they strengthen the rules-based order, enable resilient economies, reduce drivers of conflict and migration, and make Europe safer and more prosperous. **Democracy is not a competing priority – it is an enabler of all other EU goals.**

The European Parliament has long been a principled champion of values-driven EU external action. Today, the Parliament has a crucial **opportunity to ensure the Global Europe instrument of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) prioritises democracy, human rights and the rule of law.** These principles are enshrined in Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union, which guides the EU's external action. Member States and civil society have already stressed the need to raise the ambitions of the proposed regulation and prioritise strengthening democracy as an enabler of investments, stability and human development.

Ahead of negotiations on the next MFF and the Global Europe funding instrument, **we call on the European Parliament to firmly anchor democracy in plans,** ensuring it is anchored in strong objectives and general principles, as well as sufficiently funded.

#### To deliver on this, we call on the European Parliament to:

- **Reinforce the overall commitment to democracy** by strengthening this priority in budgets and programmes in different parts of the regulation and ensuring consistent democracy funding through targets, markers, transparent reporting and robust oversight.

- **Resource democratic resilience and democratic openings**, including support for electoral integrity, civic space, independent media, countering foreign information manipulation, and reinforcing institutions that defend democracy.
- **Maintain and fully resource the global democracy and human rights programme**, and preserve the necessary support structures in the European Commission and the EEAS.
- **Ensure funding for democracy and rule of law support within Global Gateway**. Investment environments built on transparency and rule of law reduce risk and enhance the sustainability and impact of EU investments.
- **Ensure adequate, flexible and responsive funding for fundamentals in EU Enlargement**, supporting democratic reform and long term resilience at Europe's democratic frontline in the EU neighbourhood.
- **Enhance the monitoring role of the European Parliament** in the implementation of the Global Europe instrument.

**By embedding democracy firmly in the next Global Europe instrument, the European Parliament can help build a democratic future for people in Europe and its partners around the world –and ensure that EU resources are invested where they most effectively support peace, stability and sustainable development. Only through strong, clear improvements to the proposed regulation can the European Parliament guarantee delivery on these goals.**

### **Signatories:**

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*European Network for Political Foundations*

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