

EUROPEAN MOVEMENT

ITALIAN COUNCIL

UNITED EUROPE IS THE RESPONSE TO FASCISM AND NATIONALISM, 100 YEARS AFTER THE "MARCH ON ROME" Rome, September 22, 2022

Between October 27 and October 30, 1922, with the so-called "*March on Rome*", the violence of the fascist movement (known as the **National Fascist Party**) led by **Benito Mussolini** reached its peak in Italy.

Despite the modest electoral results of the NFP in the last democratic elections and after the resignation of the unreliable government led by the liberal **Luigi Facta**, **King Vittorio Emanuele the III** gave in to the threat of a *coup d'état* and commissioned **Benito Mussolini** to form a new government. The new government quickly characterized itself as an **authoritarian, anti-parliamentary, and nationalist** regime, finding emulators in many countries and mainly in Eastern Europe.

Together with the suppression of personal freedoms, fascism developed as a regime founded – as Benito Mussolini wrote – on the "*compactness of the nation*" and on the construction of a "*great Italy*" against the so-called *plutocracies* of the world.

In a text published in 1935, the socialist philosopher **Eugenio Colorni** stressed the inseparable relationship between fascism and nationalism as the cause of conflicts between peoples and the root cause of wars. It is a monstrous relationship that was the origin of Nazism in Germany, of the World War II, of anti-Semitic genocide and, earlier, of the defense of the so-called "*race*", theorized in Italy by the magazine to which **Giorgio Almirante** also contributed.

From the first reflections of **Eugenio Colorni** developed that "*school*" of thought and action animated by **Altiero Spinelli** and **Ernesto Rossi** that led a group of confined anti-fascists on the Island of Ventotene to write in the winter of 1941 a "*project of Manifesto for a free and united Europe*".

Similarly, many anti-fascists **across Europe** realized that the only way to achieve peace on the continent was to secure law and democracy across national borders, creating supranational democratic institutions that made armed conflicts impossible. Striving to solve international issues in a new way, in 1944 a "*Federalist Declaration of European Resistance Movements*" was approved in Geneva and then disseminated among the anti-fascist movements and parties of the various countries. Representatives of Italy, France, Germany, Yugoslavia, Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Czechoslovakia, and Poland participated in elaborating the Declaration.

Europe has come a long way since then, but it has not yet truly united, and the process of integration has remained unfinished. Democracy itself is a process that requires constant commitment, and in a globalised world cannot be stifled within national borders.

Faced with the revival of **nationalism** and **absolute sovereignties** in Europe and in the world, together with the growth of **racist intolerance**, the **European Movement** – whose ideas are rooted in the **Resistance to Nazi fascism** – decided to promote between October **24 and October 29**, on the occasion of the **centenary** of the coming to power of fascism in Italy, events spread throughout the EU of historical and pedagogical character aimed in particular at the world of schools, universities and culture. We call for civil society organisations in Italy and other European countries to be involved in this initiative.

We ask all associations and movements that support this initiative to express their willingness to quickly create an operational network and to define the program and venues of the events.

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