

MAURIZIO MELANI

Foreign policy, security and common defence. Past obstacles, present and future needs.

In the present dangerous international context, the re-launch of the European integration process among those who want it (unfortunately not all the current member states) is now imperative. It is widely considered that nothing or little will happen before the French and German general elections. But next months will be crucial for the shaping of the threatening world order announced by the new American Administration. And Europe can't be absent and irrelevant amid the growth of anti-European, nationalist and autarkic forces. The three major founder members, together with others in the Eurozone who want to join them and the European Institutions, should launch a strong initiative focused on the gradual building up of a common defence, based on what has already been put in place and on a coherent and effective foreign policy. This would be strengthened if implemented together with the completion of the EMU, banking and capital market union, fiscal harmonization, energy union, a common management of external borders and migration flows, with appropriate financial instruments through a common spending and borrowing capacity, own resources and full democratic legitimacy and control.

Italy should make bold proposals on what is possible as it has done on several occasions in the past, especially in times of crisis, since the failure of EDC which was followed by the Messina Conference and the Treaty of Rome.

The three plus should have a firm joint attitude in front of those who pretend to undermine the EU, NATO, the United Nations, free trade, the international rules on asylum, the fight against climate change with foreseeable disastrous consequences on global security and prosperity. They should put aside rivalries especially in the Mediterranean and in the Middle East, where announced confused policies are a source of great concern and need a common European stand, They should also work to revise the EU economic policies, focusing them on growth, employment, solidarity, fight against poverty and inequalities. And, together with the very many in the United States institutions, political community and civil society who have the same concern, help the new American President to understand the value of the transatlantic bond and of having a strong, united partner in Europe whose security and economic sustainable growth are essential also for the US.