

**Speech of Mr. László Kövér, Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly
in Session I of the Conference of Speakers of the European Union
Parliaments:**

***The future European Union: general perspectives, federalism or
national sovereignty***

(Hungarian Parliament – 12 May 2025)

Honourable Conference Participants,

There is a lot of uncertainty about the future of Europe, however, I can perhaps say without the risk of being wrong, that we all know one thing for certain: we know the future we do not wish for our continent, our countries, our nations and our children.

We don't want a future shaped for us by some Big Brother, as George Orwell wrote in his novel titled '1984'. We don't want to become the subjects of an empire in a permanent state of war psychosis, stripped of our personality, identity and natural human communities. Well, we certainly don't want such a future for Europe, and therefore, starting out from this conviction, we might as well agree on what it is that we all do want. What we want is exactly what the greatest European political project since the Second World War, the European Union, which is based on co-operation between European nation states, was created for: we want peace, democracy and prosperity in Europe!

Instead, today, the European Union is turning from a promise of peace, democracy and prosperity into a reality of war, dictatorship and impoverishment before our very eyes.

The European Union had neither the political power - nor perhaps even the will - to prevent the Russia-Ukraine war through diplomacy, nor the economic power to contain Russia through its sanctions policy, as economic statistics show that EU sanctions have done more harm to EU Member States than to Russia.

Last year the GDP growth was 0.9% in the European Union, only 0.7% in the euro area, while growth of 4.3% was registered in Russia.

Despite the previous failures, the current EU political elite is trying to drag the EU into the war in a military sense as well. The current EU political elite is about to overturn the rule of internal democracy in the EU, the order of unanimous decision-making by Member States, guaranteed by the Treaties, which, opens the way to the dictatorship of a small group of people who claim political majority but have no real mandate, and to the complete abolition of national sovereignty. EU decisions that affect the economy will make European industry uncompetitive and chase it away elsewhere; make it impossible for farmers to make a living; impoverish the middle class and cut off market links that are vital to the European economy.

The European Union is losing in all dimensions of the global realignment, which, as suggested by recent democratic elections, is being directly felt by a growing proportion of Europeans.

The question is, why is this happening? The answer: because the European Union has lost its balance.

This imbalance is evident in the European Union's political relations, as well as in its social, economic, energy and foreign policies. The balance of political power in the EU's internal relations has veered off-balance between the European Commission and national governments, as well as between the European Parliament and the national parliaments of Member States.

In the EU's social policy, the EU's political elite in Brussels has become disconnected from the will of European voters. In the EU's economic policy, the balance between, for example, industrial policy and climate policy interests has been upset, and political ideology has taken precedence over the laws of the real economy.

In the EU's energy policy, the balance between conventional and renewable energy production has been thrown off-balance. This imbalance was evident, for example, in the recent power supply disturbances that affected 70 million Europeans.

In the EU's foreign policy, transatlantic co-operation, which forms the axis of the Western world, has been thrown off track: while the current US leadership is seeking peace, the European Union aims to continue the Russia-Ukraine war fought on European soil - a misguided policy that is already causing long-term damage to the European economy.

These imbalances are obvious; however, there is another imbalance that is not quite as noticeable by the European public as a ten-hour blackout – yet, it is there.

This imbalance, dear Colleagues, is something we do not talk about in European politics, although we really should: namely, the relationship between public state power based on the common good and public interest, and global private economic powers.

Europe's success in the global economic arena over the past five hundred years has been attributed to a variety of reasons. The accusers of Europe claim that the exploitation of the rest of the world, i.e. European colonialism, was behind Europe's achievements. Others, the defenders of Europe, claim that the secret of its success has been the quality of European education and creativity. Both explanations have some element of truth; however, there is another element of truth that is rarely mentioned: for the past 500 years in Europe - or, if we also include the United States, for the past 250 years - in the Western world there has always been an extremely complex, delicate but existent balance between the sovereign power of the state - be it monarchy or republic - and private economic powers.

Let's just remember the British East India Company, dear Colleagues. According to economic historians, for more than two hundred years starting from 1600, they were the world's first global private economic power, with their own money, military and judiciary, and more wealth than held by all the global capital managers, banks and technology companies of today combined. This company, in a quite reprehensible way, exploited India as a colony, but did not aim to colonise England; it did not want to change the form of government of European countries, and did not work to abuse its capital strength to indebt and then consolidate European states into a modern empire in order to dominate and exploit them with more ease.

The first private global economic power in the history of the world did not yet want to dominate the European public powers of the time – instead, it wanted to co-operate with them, because, under its business model, this way it could boost its own profits.

It is a historical fact that over the past centuries nowhere in the world has there been such a balance of power between the main legitimate state power and the private economic powers as in the Western world, in Europe and in the United States.

This was the main strength of the Western world – and although not the only factor, yet an indispensable one in the success of the Western world, dear Audience.

The bad news is that today this balance has been upset throughout the Western world. And it has been upset because today's global private powers, the biggest winners of the concentration of capital and information in world economy seen in recent decades, no longer want to co-operate with the public powers of the Western world. Instead, they aim to dominate them, since their business model is not to increase their profits by co-operating with the public powers of the state, but to gain control over the financial, economic and human resources of the state, i.e. to extend their influence to the public powers of the state.

In the Western world, including in the European Union, the fruits of economic growth, i.e. profits, are everywhere reaped by private global economic powers, while the burdens - such as the cost of training the workforce, environmental damage and many other costs - are borne by the public authorities.

Public authorities have budgets, while private authorities have money. The debt of public authorities is growing, while private authorities are increasing the size of the outstanding loan portfolio and their interest income. The power of public authorities to enforce public interest is on the decline, while the power of private authorities to enforce private interests is on the rise.

Dear Colleagues, similarly to me, you are also aware of this situation, because every year you are confronted with the financial limitations your governments face when your parliaments are adopting your countries' budgets.

World Bank figures show that the world's total debt – i.e. the combined debt of governments, businesses and households – stood at USD 7 000 billion dollars in 1971. Last year it was USD 307 000 billion dollars. Within total world debt, sovereign debt reached USD 100 thousand billion last year. Figures issued by the International Monetary Fund earlier this year show that the combined debt of the world's states will exceed the aggregate gross domestic product, or GDP, of the world's states in just a few years.

It is clear, therefore, that without change, today's international financial system is unsustainable, and its collapsing is unavoidable; the only question is the exact timing.

The indebtedness of public authorities is not only the result of economic pressure, but is also in the interest of key powers: this is the way of economic powers to try and take control of and rule public authorities.

You may remember the historic moment when an overseas speculator offered, as a way of tackling the economic difficulties caused by the COVID pandemic, an additional EUR 1 000 billion in 'perpetual bonds' in addition to the extraordinary common borrowing already decided by the EU - i.e. 'interest slavery' until the end of the world, to not only, so to say, tackle the climate crisis but also to reinforce European unity.

The idea of European federalism, the plan for a United States of Europe, which is reappearing more and more frequently these days, is not the will of European nations, but the interest of creditors outside Europe. This is because the majority of the Member States of the European Union will, in fact, become too risky to lend to in a few years' time, and they must therefore be brought together under a new entity that is still creditworthy and can continue to borrow. Its justification varies from the global financial crisis, through the mitigation of economic damage caused by the pandemic, right to the integration of migrants or the threat of war.

This is the real driving force behind European federalist attempts, dear Colleagues, but not the goal or the interest of Europeans.

In the Western world, including in Europe, what is in the interest of the people is to restore the balance of power between the state as a public power and global private economic powers, to facilitate the rebalancing of public and private interest in politics.

While in the Western world the current leadership of the United States is making a heroic attempt to restore this rational balance of power in his own country - in the words of the US President, they want to give America back to the Americans - the current leadership of the European Union is attempting to place the European Union at the mercy of global private economic powers forever.

Today, the EU political elite in Brussels is working to take Europe away from Europeans and give it to others. They do not represent the interests of the European

Union in the world, but the interests of non-Europeans in Europe. Unless there is a change, the European people will become victims of current EU policies.

Dear Conference Participants,

Both real challenges and artificially generated crises offer a reference point for federalist aspirations, which, in practical politics, take the form of an increasingly unconcealed and violent centralisation of power, the stifling of genuine debate, and, at the same time increasingly violent attacks on the sovereignty of EU Member States and the elimination of political actors who question the legitimacy of Brussels' ambitions.

The European Union, built from the bottom up by the sovereign states of nations in a spirit of subsidiarity, and the United States of Europe as an empire dominated by private powers, are mutually exclusive. If we do not want to destroy the European Union, but instead aim to strengthen our Continent, which is currently facing multiple crises, we must accept a practical compromise between the representatives of these two positions regarding the future of Europe, which are incompatible in their principles – a compromise which would lead to respecting the status quo as originally laid down in the Treaties that created the European Union. We are convinced that this is in the interest of the Hungarian and European people and is also a guarantee for preserving European democracy, to which we should feel committed.