



Dear Mr. President Joseph Daul,
Dear colleagues from EPP sister parties

EPP, our political family, is heading for a vote regarding a future status of one of our sister parties, FIDESZ. It is my firm belief that we have to avoid a split in our ranks because we live a crucial political moment when we shall stay united and united, we shall fight for Europe.

The outlook is very different now than it was in 2004 when my country entered the European Union and politically attached our destiny with other nations of the European civilization.

In the decade and a half that followed, we spent the first few years in a honeymoon period of a reunited Europe, then struggled with the economic crisis of the developed world, and ultimately faced pressure of the massive migration to our rich and old continent. Without pause to take a break, Brexit followed, representing the biggest shock for the EU since its onset. One of its biggest members is leaving the EU, which had so far only been expanding.

The EU did not fall apart because of that and will not fall apart tomorrow either, but it did halt. Suddenly even reversing became possible. Only the fact itself that such a possibility exists ferments insecurity. Unstable surroundings nurture egoisms and hinder compromises, which are the basis for a well-functioning Union.

For almost twenty years, the EPP has been a big political confederation joining together a vast number of political parties from across the continent. Being big means being able to live with differences. It means being able to make compromises on many things except on our core values. The EPP shares a destiny with the EU itself in regards to being big and different.

Indeed, some of those who proposed a vote on FIDESZ, they claimed that the party violated core values of the EPP. Unfortunately, a description of these violations has remained shallow. Which core values exactly have been violated by FIDESZ?

We all know that Mr. Viktor Orban and his party fought for freedom, human rights and political liberties 30 years ago when those values were considered a counter-revolution by totalitarian communist regimes in our part of Europe. And when we had fought for these

values, we were arrested, persecuted and sent to jail. It is one thing to speak about values if you were simply born into wealth and democracy. And totally another if you sacrificed a substantial part of your life fighting for freedom and democracy. Don't underestimate this distinction.

Speaking of values and human rights, have you maybe noticed a single political prisoner in Hungary during the last 10 years? Any politically motivated judiciary process against the opposition? Or any kind of selective justice being performed against any opposition politician? Any journalist being beaten or killed? Do we know about one single case where they appointed to Hungarian Supreme court anybody who drastically violated human rights during his/her judicial career? Did Hungarian parliament vote against the Resolution on European conscience and totalitarianism?

I don't think so. But all of the above has happened in Slovenia under left-liberal governments. Since 2009, left and liberal political parties voted four times against the Resolution on European conscience and totalitarianism. The last time this happened was this past Friday (15.3.2019). They condemn fascism, but they praise idols of communism. A government-critical journalist Miro Petek was almost murdered without any serious investigation afterwards. A catholic priest Tadej Strehovec was indicted and put to court last year because he publicly opposed abortion. After entering the EU, the left-liberal government appointed persons who drastically violated human rights in communist regime, to the post of the president of the Slovenian Supreme court and to the post of the Prosecutor general. In June 2014, a president of the main opposition party was sent to jail a month after his party won last EU elections and 3 weeks before general elections which were held in July 2014. The general elections were simply stolen with a total abuse of the judiciary system. While EPP reacted, sent a fact-finding mission to Slovenia and protested against a selective justice, there was no reaction from the EU institutions. Not before the elections and not after a decision of the Slovenian Constitutional court, which 8 months later unanimously canceled ridiculous accusations against the SDS president. Moreover, our EPP candidate for the president of the European Commission Jean Claude Juncker invited a lady who was a part of this political abuse to become the vice-president of the European Commission. Loyalty? A single set of principles?

No, since 2014 it is obvious that double standards are becoming almost a rule in the EU parliament and in the proceedings of other EU institutions, especially the Commission. When comparing EU judgement for rule of law in Hungary and Poland vis-à-vis situation in Slovenia (and we face similar situation regarding wrong doings of left or liberal governments in Malta, Romania or Slovakia) this is very apparent. And there is no stronger weapon for destroying any community than the persistent use of double standards.

We, the EPP, are a big political family and every sister party is fighting in different circumstances in different countries and with a different history. And believe me, it is a big difference when you run a campaign in the EU member country where an average monthly pension is less than 500€ or when you are addressing voters with 2000, 3000 or even 4000€ pensions.

There were accusations of disloyalty because FIDESZ had run a campaign with photos of Jean Claude Juncker and George Soros accompanied with the text: "You have the right to know what decisions they are taking in Brussels" on posters.

Well, a loyalty is a two-way street. We agreed before last congress at Helsinki not to discuss a FIDESZ membership in the EPP before the EU elections. But it was JC Juncker who (as a president of the EC should in principle stay out of a pure party politics) publicly called for FIDESZ to be expelled from the EPP.

We voted in Helsinki with overwhelming majority for Manfred Weber to be our single candidate for the next president of the EC. But it was JC Juncker who, after the congress, said in the interview for Le Soir that it is too early to support Manfred as his successor. Where is the loyalty in this case?

I am not alone thinking that our candidate Manfred Weber should stay out of this political conflict in the EPP. He is a candidate for the president of the EC and not for the leading position in the EPP. With his involvement in the conflict we gave a great gift to our political competitors just before the final phase of the electoral campaign for a very crucial EU election. I don't think that a vast majority of the Europeans are very interested in internal party disputes. It is also very unlikely that they will award somebody who is defending the good name of the EU institutions and politicians over somebody defending a security and wealth of the voters.

During the last debates, many of you clearly stated that the main issue of this dispute are not posters with Juncker and Soros, but migration problem. That we have different opinions on how to answer the most strategic challenge for Europe which is clearly a demographic question. Well, if we look at the adopted resolutions of the last two congresses of the EPP, there shouldn't be any doubt who was right and who was wrong in this conflict since 2015. Prime minister Viktor Orban was right and chancellor Angela Merkel was wrong. With all the EPP resolutions after 2015 we clearly supported pro family policy, fight against illegal migrations and strict, EU supported border security on our external and particularly Schengen borders.

The same week when French president Mr. Macron issued his manifesto on the future of Europe, some of our sister parties sent a proposal to expel FIDESZ from the EPP. I met an old wise friend from Austria that day and he asked me: "What are you doing in the EPP, for Christ sake? Today Macron triggered a debate about the future of the EU, and the EPP pulled the trigger to shoot itself in the knee."

I see very clearly that there are only two possible outcomes of the next Political assembly meeting. One with voting on FIDESZ and the other not voting and with that gaining more time to finish the discussion on values. We started this discussion before our congress in Helsinki and obviously it has not been yet concluded.

If we vote, no matter the outcome, we face an unavoidable split in the EPP. A split in the middle of the election campaign for next EU parliament. Picking this specific time for voting couldn't be more self-destructive. With the split in the EPP - as an unavoidable result of the vote - we are endangering our victory at the upcoming election; we are reducing chances for our candidate Manfred Weber to become the next president of the EC and we are clearly saying goodbye to the EPP as a mainstream European political force of the Wilfried Martens era.

Once again, Mr. President Daal, dear colleagues, please, do everything to avoid a split in the EPP family at the very beginning of the main EU elections campaign. Cancel or postpone the voting. Whatever the result would be, we lose.

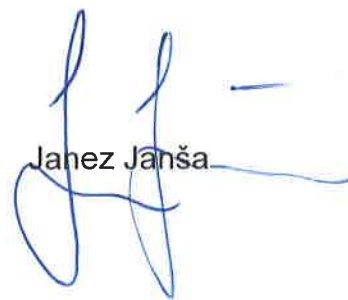
I'm afraid that with the possible expulsion of FIDESZ from the EPP, our political family will significantly lose ground in the major part of the Central and Eastern Europe. Much like it already happened for the socialists - except for Slovenia where socialists turned liberals and stay in power with brutal abuse of state institutions without any reaction from the EU Commission.

It is a high time to stop the debate about ourselves and to concentrate on issues of people's concerns and on how to win the next EU elections. How to win EU elections in very different political landscapes in 27 different EU member states.

After his party lost elections 100 years ago, a famous Slovenian writer Ivan Cankar wrote: "The party didn't see the people and the people didn't see the party."

I still believe that EPP can avoid such a destiny, but only by wise decisions to be made very soon.

Best regards,


Janez Janša

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