



REPORT

Rebuilding Multilateralism: Europe's Role in UN Reform

Brussels, 3 December 2025

On 3 December 2025, from 10:00 to 12:00, in Room Spinelli 3H1 at the European Parliament in Brussels, the event *“Rebuilding Multilateralism: Europe’s Role in UN Reform”* took place, organised and coordinated by **Pax Christi International** and the **S&D Group** member **Marco Tarquinio**.

The meeting, which featured several **Members of the European Parliament** among the speakers, alongside experts in international law, civil society representatives and partner organisations, offered an important opportunity to analyse the key role of the European Union and its Member States within the current geopolitical context, marked by escalating global tensions. Power dynamics, deepening inequalities and the growing crisis of confidence in multilateral institutions highlight the risks for the United Nations in continuing to act as an impartial arbiter and a truly representative voice of the international community.

Several crucial issues were addressed during the discussions:

- the need to strengthen multilateral mechanisms to ensure that the UN can respond more effectively to contemporary conflicts;
- the inclusion of the voices of those, especially in the Global South, who feel unheard or under-represented in the dynamics linked to the use of the veto;
- the integral human disarmament as a broad ethical commitment not only to reducing weapons but to transforming the structures, mindsets, and fears that normalise

violence in our world;

- the contribution the European Union can make in promoting structural reforms, particularly concerning the Security Council;
- the role of civil society organisations in supporting processes of peace, justice and reconciliation;
- the central importance of respecting international humanitarian law, which is increasingly being challenged in today's conflict zones.

The speakers emphasised the urgency of coordinated and coherent political action by the EU, capable of countering the erosion of multilateralism and revitalising international cooperation on fairer and more equitable foundations. Several contributions also highlighted the importance of a non-violent approach to conflict management and to the promotion of foreign policies grounded in human dignity.

The discussion also focused on how our resources should be devoted to preventing conflicts, caring for and protecting our planet, investing in an interfaith, intercultural, peaceful and nonviolent dialogue, and fostering education and meaningful opportunities for youth, which is not idealism but the only path capable of serving all peoples and *leaving no one behind*.

“What I call the European method, which earned us the Nobel Peace Prize in 2012, is today at risk of being undermined,” **Tarquinio** stated. “We are introducing, in our relations with several countries, clauses that are no longer primarily linked to fundamental values, but to human migratory mobility.”

During the meeting, participants also discussed the proposal–suggestion to make Strasbourg the new main headquarters of the United Nations. “Offering the world’s Assembly the vast and beautifully organised facilities of the European Parliament would be an extraordinary innovation, an act of generosity and vision by the EU and its most democratic institution,” Tarquinio underlined, and it could “support and facilitate an urgent and radical reform of the Security Council, which today reflects an image of the world as it was 80 years ago.”

“The United Nations is the leading actor in a system built in the aftermath of the Second World War,” said **Nicola Zingaretti, Head of the S&D Italian Delegation**. “It is a system that has not prevented wars from occurring, but has nevertheless always offered a meaningful alternative for peace. Today this structure, of which the European Parliament is a reflection, is at serious risk: our processes, which must include a cultural as well as a digital transformation, must not appear as something beautiful yet outdated. We have a duty to demonstrate that this model leads to a better life.”

“If we talk about multilateralism, we must start again from the very foundations of the UN,” said **Lucia Annunziata, Member of the European Parliament**, “for too often even the UN’s own structure has been steered only by the most powerful spheres of influence. To rethink a multilateral system, we must lay the groundwork for a new architecture, one that begins at the foundations and truly serves the interests of all”.

The event continued with interventions from representatives of the civil society, scholars and university professors.

Giulia Bordin, Advocacy officer at Pax Christi International, stated that “global governance must be reshaped to reflect the voices, realities, and aspirations of all peoples and for this, we must rebuild trust” and that “Too often, relations between states and even within societies are guided by fear, fear of the other, fear of loss, fear of instability. Fear narrows our vision, it erodes solidarity, it makes us see threats where we should see partners. To renew multilateralism, we must move beyond fear and recover the confidence that cooperation is not naive but necessary, and that trust is a global public good”.

Pasquale Ferrara, Senior Advisor at ISP and former Italian Ambassador, emphasised the need to open international institutions to more countries, challenging the current oligarchic system. He noted the UN’s current limitations and highlighted the EU as a model of integration that can support inclusive institutions. He warned that without people’s involvement, any system based on a “zero-sum” logic of winners and losers cannot succeed.

Luigi Ferraioli, judge and philosopher, emphasised that lasting peace requires disarmament and attention to environmental protection for future generations. He argued that institutions must move from promises to concrete action, with the UN potentially following the EU’s example of fostering peaceful cooperation. Global equality, he noted, demands worldwide standards in fiscal, educational, health, and aid policies, underpinned by constitutionalisation of the UN and international law. Ferraioli warned that failing to achieve this urgent goal risks nuclear conflict and a global crisis.

Sr. Wamuyu Wachira, co-president of Pax Christi International stressed the need for inclusive decision-making, questioning who sits at key tables and highlighting the UN Security Council’s exclusivity. She called for changing divisive language, engaging young people, especially in Africa, safeguarding civic spaces, promoting women’s participation, and ensuring funding benefits citizens. She highlighted that reparations, debt cancellation, tailored SDGs, and ethical use of AI can be tools for justice and equality. AU-EU partnerships and transparency were also commended, with inclusivity framed as essential for sustainable development and global peace.

Alfonso Zardi, Representative of Pax Christi International at the Council of Europe, contributed by outlining a historical overview of the EU, highlighting the key points on which a multilateral process should initially focus.

Leonardo Pasquali, Professor of International law at the University of Pisa, argued that the EU is inherently multilateral and is legally bound to promote its core values internationally, primarily through trade agreements that increasingly include social and environmental principles. He noted that, because these agreements span many regions, they can help shape broader international norms. While some feared that prioritising values

could weaken the EU's competitiveness, Pasquali maintained that these principles ultimately support its long-term strategic interests.

Enrico Molinaro, RIDE/Head of Italian Network Anna Lindh Foundation, highlighted the gap between states' intentions and the instruments they employ. He suggested that a deeper analysis of the different models shaping the UN, ranging from the Westphalian system (1648) to the post-1945 framework, could clarify recurring challenges and identify opportunities to build more inclusive institutions.

Ghislain Le Ray, Coordinator of "New Foundation of International Institutions", provided a general overview of the project, which includes several NGOs in its working group, among them Pax Christi International, and is focused on developing 13 critical proposals aimed at transforming the United Nations into a more equitable and responsive global institution. These proposals address key challenges and advocate for changes that can better meet the world's evolving needs. The proposals can be read [here](#).

Matteo Lucatello, Liaison Officer at UNRWA, also spoke, highlighting how his agency remains deeply engaged in the West Bank, providing employment, education and hope amid a constant context of conflict and increasingly restrictive international policies. In this work, the European Union continues to play a crucial role, one that must be safeguarded.

Franco Dinelli, President of the Center for Socio-Economic Studies - Pax Christi Italy concluded the interventions, explaining the functioning of the UNSC from the perspective of a direct observer and the role of Italy in making the Council more participatory. He focused on the authoritative and financial crisis of the UN, which is unable to intervene in current conflicts and is responsible for budget arrears and cuts to essential programmes, arguing that the EU could play a more decisive role in bringing the UN back to the centre of global governance. He also argued that the strongest blow to the UN's authority was the US refusal to allow the Palestinian delegation entry, highlighting the United States' power to act according to its own interests, and that in recent years the growth of the BRICS and the Global South is changing the geopolitical balance and requires great involvement in UN decision-making processes. He argued that the lack of a forum for equal dialogue between states is increasingly critical and supported moving the UN headquarters to Strasbourg and believes the EU can play a key role in restoring the UN to the centre of global governance.

The event concluded with the presentation of a **joint Manifesto** gathering concrete recommendations addressed to European institutions and Member States, calling for support for a United Nations reform process that is inclusive, transparent and oriented towards global justice.