



Statement Regarding Right to Life

The General Assembly of the European Federation ONE OF US meeting on 9th April 2025:

1. **Affirms the right to life of the unborn from the moment of conception.** The real test for any civilization is the way society treats its most vulnerable members; the unborn are indeed vulnerable for they have no voice of their own.

The Assembly is conscious of the attempts being made within the European Union and beyond to create a fundamental right to abortion; no international human rights legal instrument has ever recognized the right to the wilful termination of a pregnancy. These attempts are objectionable because terminating the life of a human being can never be elevated to a fundamental right. Furthermore, in the case of the European Union, such attempts run counter to the cherished principle of subsidiarity.

The development of science in the last decades has shown what pro-life movements have always asserted: From the earliest stages the embryo in the womb is a human being deserving protection. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child affirms the principle that *“the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth”*. That important text shows that no one should be left behind, neither women nor unborn children....

2. The attempts to include the right to abortion in the EU Charter of Fundamental Human Rights runs counter to the **principle of subsidiarity**. The Treaties reserve matters such as abortion and euthanasia, exclusively to the Member States. Any attempt by any EU institution to stealthily introduce abortion, either in EU legislation or in the Charter, amounts to a blatant breach of this principle. Besides, matters which are exclusively in the jurisdiction and powers of the Member States can only be legislated on with the unanimous consent of all Member States. Some Member States have already objected to the inclusion of such a right in the Charter.

The principle of subsidiarity is an indispensable cornerstone of the workings, functioning and existence of the EU. The EU remains a union of sovereign States who in certain matters have pooled their sovereignty with other Member States; but in other matters, Member States have reserved their right to decide for themselves. Going against this principle, creates division and tension within the Union threatening its very existence. We believe in the European project which has guaranteed peace on the continent after centuries of warfare. The project however has to abide by its fundamental norms and principles if it wants to continue to exist.

3. **The Assembly calls upon all men and women of goodwill in Europe to coalesce and unite in preserving the fundamental rights of the individual, particularly those of the unborn child,** to promote the welfare of the child before and after birth, and to safeguard and protect the family as a basic unit for the nourishment, upbringing and protection of the child.



4. **The Assembly also calls for protection and assistance to those institutions in Europe which take care of the mother who decides to give birth to her child.** The time has come for proper assistance even financially to those institutions who have taken over this noble responsibility. Such assistance is fit and proper because it protects the rights of mother and child.
5. **The Assembly reiterates the importance of protecting the freedom of conscience** of all medical personnel in matters relating to abortion. Abortion is not an instantaneous act; it is a process. At any stage of the process, any person working in the medical or hospital sector has the right not to participate in any process leading to the wilful termination of a pregnancy. Such a right should be scrupulously respected rather than be circumscribed by unreasonable restrictions.
6. **Finally, the Assembly augurs that all men and women of goodwill, will stand up to be counted to protect European values, promote the rights of the most vulnerable, and alert governments, institutions and civil society to the dangers, present and future, which the unborn child faces in current times.**

“After serving as a European Commissioner, I'm proud to preside over a federation such as ONE OF US: the 50 member NGOs are now present in 19 European countries. We represent millions of European citizens, rooted in so many different cultures. They are committed to developing a concrete presence and helping women and men in areas as varied as family, pregnancy and health, in real everyday life. My experience at the European Commission has taught me just how much the members of institutions and governments need to be connected to people's real aspirations for happiness and freedom. That's what I'm here for.” Prof. Tonio Borg, ONE OF US' President