



Government
of the Republic
of Croatia



Republic of Cyprus



RÉPUBLIQUE
FRANÇAISE
Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité



The Prime Minister



*Il Presidente
del Consiglio dei Ministri*



26 October 2023

Dear Charles,

Climate change is not just at our doorstep. It has already become part of our life, as the recent natural disasters in our region have reminded us.

It threatens our countries, the economy, businesses, citizens individually and as a whole and undermines social cohesion, development, prosperity, the future and our very lives. It threatens the EU as a whole.

It has become evident that our policies and budgetary resources are insufficient to address the issue; while the green transition and climate change adaptation is our overarching objective, there is limited relief available in the short- and medium term.

Crises resulting from natural disasters are growing in number, frequency as well as intensity. Scientists warn that we have entered a period of generalised climate disruption, where climate change produces frequent extreme weather events at an increasingly dangerous scale.

Resources (material, human, operational, financial) at our disposal have proven inadequate. Damages are incalculable. This great challenge of the EU cannot be tackled with the currently available means at our disposal as we risk losing the social and economic cohesion of our countries, as well as that of the Union. The future of our society is in jeopardy.

***H.E. Mr. Charles Michel
President of the European Council***

Cc: Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the European Union

No country, of the EU or beyond, is immune to natural disasters and each region has its particular specificities.

We must act immediately and collectively. As a society, as individual countries and as the European Union – on the basis of a two-pronged approach which we should already be promoting our upcoming discussions.

First, it is evident that the available financial resources are totally inadequate. The Solidarity Fund for 2023 has been depleted, together with parts of the 2024 funds that we could tap into in the form of pre-payments. The same applies to the relevant Agricultural Reserve (under the CAP). As we live in a period of growing instability, but also rising expectations, we must work together in order to increase the resources available and to strengthen the means and mechanisms to address the consequences of natural disasters.

As we have been disbursing very significant funds to cover the needs of third countries, we are left with few resources for our own citizens. In addition, the current situation pits one Member State against the other, as we all rush to ensure financial support for our own needs – which, even when successful, will happen at the expense of partners. Therefore, we believe it is crucial, in the framework of the negotiations for the MFF review, to foresee sufficient funding for the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve (SEAR).

Circumstances demand that we act outside the usual frameworks (e.g. MFF) and rules (e.g. State subsidies).

Moreover, it is paradoxical that national authorities are called upon to act immediately to assist the victims, while rules on State subsidies threaten them with the imposition of fines. We also recall that the Union acted immediately, with our agreement, when the IRA threatened the competitiveness of the European economies (we relaxed the rules on State subsidies, we took measures for the use of financial instruments), whereas now, when faced with the great threat of climate change, we sit idly by.

The ongoing MFF mid-term review as well as the debates about the future economic governance rules provide us with the opportunity to take the necessary bold decisions to support the resilience of our economies, the viability of our businesses and the prosperity of our societies.

We also need to focus particularly on prevention and adaptation with respect to the new conditions that we are facing. Pushing for an EU-wide effort will allow us to define and implement a comprehensive strategic plan, allocate the necessary resources, while sharing lessons learnt and best practices among us.

In light of the above, we propose to seize the opportunity of the European Council this week to exchange views also on these issues.

Sincerely,



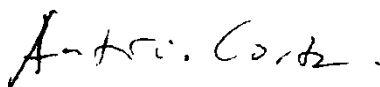
Andrej Plenković
Prime Minister of the Republic of
Croatia



Emmanuel Macron
President of the French Republic



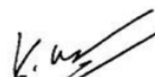
Giorgia Meloni
President of the Council of Ministers of
the Italian Republic



António Costa
Prime Minister of the Portuguese
Republic



Nikos Christodoulides
President of the Republic of Cyprus



Kyriakos Mitsotakis
Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic



Robert Abela
Prime Minister of Malta



Robert Golob
Prime Minister of the Government of the
Republic of Slovenia