



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 1 September 2012

Quotes from the speech by the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Durão Barroso, at the occasion of Yale's Global Constitutionalism Seminar convening at The Hague

"This is a make-or-break moment for the European Union: the decisions we make today will determine whether Europe remains an area of stability, prosperity and freedom based on solidarity, responsibility and cohesion. A lot has already been done to make sure that it will. But much remains to be done, and it will have to be done with due regard for our values, our founding principles and the rule of law."

"The very principle of European integration rests on the concept of the subordination of power to the law. The goal is justice; the method is sharing. And power must be organised in such a way that it can safeguard law."

"While Europe must uphold its values, it must also change its habits. A Union like ours can only operate if all Member States honour their commitments. If the Member States do not in practice abide by the fundamental principles they have all agreed, then we are faced by a crisis of credibility."

"While the immediate causes of the crisis currently affecting the European Union are indeed financial and economic, they are also, on a more fundamental level, the product of a crisis of values and of the non-respect of the norms."

"In a community in which each member has freely undertaken to uphold shared values, there is clearly a danger that the entire system of this community based on law will be undermined if any of its members challenges these values."

"We are experiencing a situation in which we share both an internal market and a common currency, where transnational problems cannot be adequately resolved at national level, while the European level has yet to be consolidated to such a degree that it can resolve them effectively."

"We are experiencing a situation in which we need greater unity and coherence between our policies, as well as greater legislative harmonisation. And, to achieve all this, we need greater institutional integration. We need to consolidate a transnational order that through shared sovereignty guarantees the protection of our citizens."

"The crisis has made it clear that we must not only complete the economic and monetary union, but also pursue greater economic integration and deeper political and democratic union with appropriate mechanisms of accountability."

"The present crisis has shown the limits of individual action by nation states. Europe and the principles of the Treaty need to be renewed. We need more integration, and the corollary of more integration has to be more democracy. This European renewal must represent a leap in quality and enable Europe to rise to the challenges of the world today by giving it the tools it needs to react more effectively and to shape and control the future."

For general information on Yale Global Constitutionalism Seminar:

<http://www.law.yale.edu/intellecualife/globalconstitutionalismseminar.htm>

Contacts :

[Pia Ahrenkilde Hansen](#) (+32 2 295 30 70)

[Mark Gray](#) (+32 2 298 86 44)

[Leonor Ribeiro Da Silva](#) (+32 2 298 81 55)