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Soros: "We need a United Europe and solidarity will be key to prevent disintegration"

The disintegration of Europe is no longer just a figure of speech, but today is the harsh reality and on June 3rd, the last day of the 2018 Trento Economics Festival, the philanthropist George Soros discussed the upcoming challenges to the European Union and why solidarity will be key to prevent disintegration.

The discussion was launched by debating the biggest challenges to Europe today including Italy, the economy, and migration. Soros stressed the important threat of the recent Italian elections to the core values of the EU, but acknowledged the legitimate grievances of the Italian voters. These grievances centered on the economic issues such as the way the euro is handled and issues of migration because Italy has suffered a disproportionate burden from the migration crisis due to the Dublin III regulation. Soros stressed that leaving the euro would be a mistake for Italy, but that the EU must not punish Italy, but rather work with Italy to improve the situation.

For the future, Soros stressed the importance of multilateralism and Europe working with other partners especially as the United States turns away from its traditional allies. Both the economic decision of the United States lately to revert back to protectionism through increasing tariffs and the political decision of abandoning the Iran Nuclear deal, will force Europe to look elsewhere and create stronger bonds with other world partners. Yesterday, the G7 of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, (minus the appearance of the United States) all agreed to condemn the recent actions of the United States showing world solidarity against this return to unilateralism. For Soros, he predicts the greatest victim of President Trump's actions will be Europe and this should only encourage Europe further to unite and remain resilient in these challenging times.

The tools and mechanisms that will bring a united Europe must be pursued through a strong Franco-German alliance, the upcoming 2019 European Parliament elections, and events involving civil society. France and Germany must continue to work together in the future to push Europe towards integration. Although Macron will need Germany to create a new party in the European Parliament, he will also need additional allies in order to transform Europe within the existing institutions. Lastly, for Soros, more events like the Trento Economic Festival, that brings together civil society to discuss today's biggest issues from a bottom up rather than top down approach must occur so that politicians, scholars, and everyday citizens can have a voice in shaping the future of Europe.

Watch the video: https://youtu.be/vmaShAXqQ6g

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