Dear Members of the European Committee of the Regions,

Dear colleagues,

Dear friends,

I am addressing you in connection with an important day in the history of the EU: 9 May, our "Europe Day" that celebrates peace and unity in Europe. The date marks the anniversary of the historic 'Schuman declaration', which is considered as the starting point of what is now the European Union.

This year, the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine makes it more important than ever that we remember the values we all hold dear. We need to focus on the way citizens and their regions and cities have responded to this humanitarian crisis as it can be seen via the Help Ukraine InfoSupport hub launched last month.

This year Europe Day coincides with a high-level event devoted to the Conference on the Future of Europe in Strasbourg. You can follow it on the EP streaming link on the

platform of COFOE. You can find [here](#) the Conference's proposals, including the ones on European democracy.

Moreover, the CoR co-organises today a debate on youth participation in democratic life with young people and young elected leaders in Strasbourg, together with the European Youth Forum and Régions de France. Please check the CoR website for [the updated programme and the streaming link](#).

Looking beyond 9 May, I would like to invite you to continue organising local dialogues as part of a permanent place-based dialogue with citizens, looking ahead to the 2024 elections. Limited funding is available for such events for CoR members. Members wishing to host local dialogues are invited to [apply](#) for financial and technical support to: eulocal@cor.europa.eu.

Please share your ideas, feedback and suggestions on the envisaged activities and on their results, which will be made visible via the CoR social networks and website.

Let's bring Europe closer to people. Please join us from wherever you are on Europe Day.

Yours sincerely,

Apostolos Tzitzikostas

President

European Committee of the Regions