**Roberta Metsola (PPE).** – Mr President, the Berlin Wall has been down longer than it was ever up. If ever there was a representation of the enduring success of Europe, this is it. More than personalities, Europe is hope; more than bureaucracy, it is justice.

Our EU project has inspired people across generations, continents and peoples, but we have to keep working. We are not flawless; our social economy, our free and open approach to trade has raised people out of poverty, but it’s still too hard for too many. We are still too far away. I want my children’s generation to see Europe as the answer as much as it was for my parents and that is why we cannot be silent when our fundamental freedoms are under threat. We can never accept that journalists like Daphne Caruana Galizia are intimidated and killed, as she was 21 months ago today. We must protect the media. We should never let EU citizenship be sold as a commodity. We cannot allow the next generation to have more plastic than fish in their seas. If we cannot find a bold fix for our environment and for our climate now, we never will.

Equally, we cannot allow issues like migration to become existential questions that are argued only on short‑term lines. We need better border management while remaining fair with those who are in need, firm with those who are not and strong with those who seek to exploit the vulnerable.

Our Europe is built on the certainty of our values, on the rule of law and of our freedoms. Without them, there can be nothing else and, Dr von der Leyen, I welcome your assurances and know that you will find us constructive partners in standing up for our European way.