

On 25 April 1974, after 48 years of dictatorship, Portugal lived the early hours of a wished freedom. Like so many other countries in the Europe, that freedom was long hoped for, too long. In 1986 Portugal became a member of the EEC mainly in order to solidly and irreversibly set the democratic process started in '74.

Several years later it was Hungary's turn to conquer back its freedom and in 2004 enter the European Union, subscribing to its fundamental principles. It is thus unacceptable and alarming that we now have been witnessing the erosion of democracy and rule of law in the European Union for years, coming from Budapest under the leadership of Viktor Orbán, who has received inexplicable political protection from the European People's Party and the Commission's and the Council's complacency.

The governmental strategy of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, which encourages xenophobia and miserably attacks refugees, together with his recent speeches defending what he calls a "illiberal democracy", challenge fundamental principles of the European Union. I therefore support the infringement procedure initiated by the European Commission following the attempt by the Hungarian Government to close the Central European University and interfere with its academic independence. Pity that such an initiative comes late, very late.