

## Odessa Declaration – Amendments

### Amendment 1

**Proposed by:** SGP Youth

**Line:** 40

**Proposed amendment** is to add ‘rule of law’ as political value to the core value of ‘dignity’.

**Explanation:** in order to achieve and/or preserve human dignity, we believe establishment of the rule of law is crucial. The political values that are mentioned as a product/example of ‘dignity’ (Mercy and Justice, e.g.) need protection by the principle of the rule of law to prevent states and non-state actors from abuse of power against the people, and especially the weak and the poor. Since corruption is a huge threat to human dignity.

### Amendment 2

**Proposed by:** SGP Youth

**Lines:** 42-53 (‘3. Challenges’).

**Proposed amendment:** No proposed changes for specific sentences, but rather for the content of the paragraph as a whole. See explanation. We propose that the discussed considerations in the explanation are taken into account in a redrafted version of this paragraph.

**Explanation:** Although the paragraph certainly identifies some important challenges that we face today, the challenge ‘a tendency (...) to abandon mainstream policies and the European ideals and European project altogether’ (lines 48-49) seems to be identified as one of the most prominent ones. However, other perspectives and challenges should also be taken into consideration, such as:

- Euroscepticism cannot be generalized as a (negative) challenge;
- What exactly are ‘the European ideals’? How are ideals evaluated, positively, or negatively? And why can a tendency to abandon (all, or some?) of these ideals be viewed as a challenge?
- Furthermore, the paragraph lacks a discussion of some other important challenges, such as the rise of (radical) Islam, the seeming federalization of the European Union as a bureaucracy state
- After all, we should recognize that the problems which are being addressing by populist parties in Europe, are not by definition untrue or irrational. The way in which populist parties want to solve the problems they address may be wrong, the problems itself are not.

### Amendment 3

**Proposed by:** SGP Youth

**Lines:** 59-60

**Proposed amendment:** ‘... and as such differences between people can be honored.’

**Explanation:** Differences, also between Christians, can have positive or negative consequences (in terms of communication and cooperation). Differences can be valuable in for example learning from each other, but the word ‘celebrated’ is too optimistic and often not realistic. Therefore, we recommend to replace this word with the word ‘honored’. Moreover, this change would also be in congruence with lines 44, 74, and 89.

### Amendment 4

**Proposed by:** SGP Youth

**Lines|** 148-149

**Proposed amendment:** ‘... use the freedom to help build God’s kingdom in every sphere of the European society.’

**Explanation:** God’s Kingdom will be built, regardless of what we, human beings, do. This does not take away that God does use human beings to build His Kingdom. Therefore, our place is that we can be used by God in order to help build His Kingdom, rather than build it ourselves.

### **Amendment 5**

**Proposed by:** SGP Youth

**Lines:** 150-157

**Proposed amendment:** 'However, building bridges should only be done as long as it is in line with the Bible. We should never compromise on our core Christian principles, even if it means we come to stand alone in the face of adversity.'

**Explanation:** The seek for consensus is something which is very important, maybe even crucial in politics. However, conceding core principles from the Bible to others is never acceptable.

**General comment** on the Declaration: When reading the Declaration, sometimes we got the feeling that the concept of man is somewhat too positive, and not always in line with our (Biblical/Calvinistic) view of man and mankind. We would like to discuss with each other about this concept, if necessary in an informal setting.