

Rome, 15 December 2011
Introductory Remarks
by Sergio Fabbrini

Let me introduce briefly the International conference on “Global Dissatisfaction: Criticism of Democracy, Longing for Democracy” that the LUISS School of Government has organized. It is the third annual international conference that we have organized for calling the attention of the academic and public communities on the most salient topics of contemporary public life. The first conference (held on February 2010) was focused on “How to Govern the European Union with the Lisbon Treaty?” and the second (held on November 2010) was on “Governing Democracies: Executive, Leaders and Challenges”. This third conference aims to deepen further our investigation on the complexity of governing democracies in a historical time of “democratic malaise”. More precisely, we would wish to discuss the apparent paradox of a “democratic malaise” in the western world and at the same time a “democracy’s longing” in the non-western world (in particular in the Arab countries). How to explain this apparent paradox?

The conference is divided in two sections. The first section will look at the dissatisfaction or even disaffection towards democracy in the western world. Indeed, we asked Prof. Giovanni Sartori to introduce the first panel. Prof. Giovanni Sartori (that we are really very honoured to have here with us) is not only the founding father of the Italian political science, but he is also one of the very few world-wide authorities on democratic theory and practices. Some of his contributions (in particular, in this context, *Theory of Democracy Revisited* of 1987 which developed a previous Italian book on *Democrazia e definizioni* of 1957) is still considered one of the most important book ever written on democracy (in sum: a classic). The panel will be constituted by three very well known scholars - all of them specialized in investigating the theoretical and empirical aspects of democratic transformation. We asked Prof. Stephen Holmes (Walter E. Meyer Professor of Law at the New York University School of Law) to reflect on the theories and mechanism democratic systems have elaborated and set up for dealing with the threats represented by internal “cabal, intrigue and corruption”. Do democracies have adequate understanding and protections towards their own internal evils? We asked Prof. Jack Citrin (Professor of Political Science and Director of the Institute of Governmental Studies at the University of California Berkeley) to report the outcome of his extensive work on public opinion for specifying the object of popular disenchantment towards democracies: does such disenchantment concern democratic values or

democratic institutions or specific policies and performances of democratic systems? Then we asked Prof. Jim Caporaso (Professor of International Relations at the Department of Political Science of the University of Washington in Seattle) to analyse the implications of the process of globalization and Europeanization on the domestic politics of national democracies. Is the 'democratic malaise' an effect of a too fast process of supra-nationalization or rather is the outcome of a too slow adaptability of domestic democracies to international and European transformations? As you see, in the panel we have three scientific authorities who have intensively worked for understanding democracy and its transformations from three different analytical and disciplinary perspectives. Finally Prof. Michel de Waele (Doyen de la Faculté des Sciences Sociales et Politiques at the Université Libre de Bruxelles) and Prof. Marc Lazar (Professeur des universités en histoire et sociologie politique à Sciences Po and Chairman of the Scientific Committee of the Luiss School of Government) will act as discussants of the three speakers' papers. Each speaker will talk for 30 minutes, the discussants for up to 15-20 minutes and then we will open to the floor.

After a brief coffee break, the afternoon' section will be concluded by a lecture of Prof. Leonardo Morlino (Professor of Political Science and member of the Steering Committee of the Luiss School of Government and incumbent president of the International Political Science Association), a well known scholar and expert on the quality of democracy. Prof. Morlino will give an analytical interpretation of the problems democracies are facing not only in the western-northern world, thus opening ideally a bridge with the section of tomorrow morning on "Longing for Democracy: The North African Experience" that will be chaired by prof. Giovanni Orsina (Professor of Contemporary History at the Luiss and Vice-Director of the School of Government). It is nice, at least for me, that we start this afternoon's section with Prof. Giovanni Sartori and we conclude it with one of his students, Prof. Leonardo Morlino. The section of tomorrow morning will deal with the North African experience. Prof. Massimo Campanini (Associate Professor of History of the Islamic Countries at the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy of the University of Trento), Prof. Scott Thomas (Senior Lecturer in International Relations and the Politics of Developing Countries, University of Bath), Prof. Abdallah Saaf (Professor at the Faculty of Law, Economics and Social Science of Mohammed V University of Rabat and President of the Moroccan Association of Political Science) and Prof. Hatem M'rad (Professor and Director of the Department of droit public et sciences politiques, University of Tunis, Tunisia) will discuss from different angles and approaches the intricacies of the process of change taking place in the North African countries. Is this process moving in direction of establishing new, although original, democratic regimes? Or, rather, are we witnessing a process of transition towards an uncertain destination? Prof. Francesca Corrao

(Professor of Arabic Culture and Languages at the LUISS Guido Carli) and Prof. Melina Decaro (Professor of Comparative Public Law at the LUISS Guido Carli) will act as discussants bringing their historical and legal perspectives to the debate.

We will have then the graduation's ceremony of and for the students (academic year 2010/2011) of the Luiss School of Government. Finally, we asked Giuliano Amato, previous Italian prime minister and above all Professor of Law at the Luiss School of Government, to pull the ropes of the two sections' discussion, explaining why democracy is so desired and at the same time so criticised and misinterpreted. Let me thank heartily all the speakers who have accepted to come to the Luiss from very far places and universities and the discussants who have accepted to make our debate as lively as possible. Finally, let me thank the staff of the School of Government (Dr. Lorenzo Valeri, Dr. Gaia Di Martino and Mrs. Nadia Montani) that has worked with the usual competence and generosity for the organization of this conference. And, of course, thanks also to all of you (students and colleagues) for being here.