**TURKEY**

Elif Başak ÇAĞLAR

*My European utopia has a future based on love, equality and compromise. Nothing is impossible. I hope all of humanity and Europe can reach these one day.*

**The European Utopia**

Our world is so big and vast that there are individual cultures, differences, diversity and a wide range of thoughts in every inch of it. The European continent alone hosts hundreds or even millions of different cultures and thoughts. So are the cultural and social elements the only richness we have? Of course not! This land is also a home to many creatures other than us. Failing to mention of the geological diversity of this geographical area would be an insult not only to Europe but the entire world as well. Hundreds of species of trees, endemic plants, lakes and rivers, diverse soil types, plains, mountains, plateaus… In addition to all these cultural, social and natural assets, the history of the region is also too important and remarkable to ignore. Many states which shaped history and politics of the world were founded, fell apart and sometimes re-founded on this territory, and hundreds of wars, hundreds of peace agreements took place for the sake of this territory. So, what do we, the new generation do to preserve this background and richness? To what extent are we able to add new pages to the history and make the best of all these? What kind of a Europe do we have in our dreams? How will we achieve our dreams and goals?

Travelling across the world is one of the biggest dreams for most of us. And the best strategy to achieve that dream is to start from our immediate vicinity and proceed slowly. In other words, to know the area and the continent we live in at first and then open up to the world. But do you think that all children and youth can easily achieve their dreams across the world, or more specifically in our own country or continent? Do governments make sufficient efforts towards this? One of my biggest dreams is to grant an easy and accessible travel privilege to all children and youth to help them expand their horizon, get to know new cultures, to strengthen their social skills and set targets with big dreams. This will lead to new generations, new ideas, which would benefit all of the countries and Europe, and even the world.

I would like to see that the traces of the Middle Age mentality, and the numerous wars fought, the blood of the people killed were erased from the history and replaced by happy children, accomplishments, scientific developments and peace. Although we are doing most of these today, I would like to see there were no more international disputes, conflicts or terrorist attacks.

I would like to live in a fair and just Europe. I would like everyone to be judged equally and fairly and to have equal rights. Even though it seems that we are doing all this, I would like to see that law officials would fulfill their duties fully and we would not have such problems. But above all, the best would be for all of us if no crimes were committed which would be my preference.

I feel so happy only with the thought of us joining hands and spreading love all over the world. The main thing longed for by humanity for years is definitely love. I would like to see the lack of love ended. I would like to see friendships, love, fraternity, family ties, and even international links strengthened.

I dream about a future in which we all work hand in hand for this world. I believe that a world in which we think and work hard not only for our country and ourselves but also for future generations and the future of our planet will fix everything.

I want that people do not harm and hurt each other. I want that we spend all our energy to make our world and land a better place.

For example, I feel excited with the idea of a future where literature, music and arts interact across Europe. Because I believe that those fields rejuvenating in such a rich culture should support and develop each other.

Living in touch with nature is another dream of mine. Dreaming of a Europe where forests are not damaged, flowers are everywhere, animals live freely, and their rights are protected gives peace.

We should remember that global warming, desertification, rapid population growth, unplanned urbanization, regional wars, air and water pollution, and animals becoming extinct are common problems for all of us. We should remember the importance of leaving a good world to the next generations and work for this.

I also want to go further in technology but maintain our lives without being completely dependent on it. In other words, I believe there should be efforts for that people can establish life-technology balance. On the other hand, the misuse of technology should come to an end. Disarmament should be imposed on all states and nuclear assets should not be misused so that the world can be a more peaceful place.

The principle of equal opportunity should be applied in life. Street children should be provided with equal education and healthcare opportunities as other children and their social and cultural assets should be improved. Similarly, homeless people should get necessary support and be provided shelter. Cost of living should not be a problem anymore and steps should be taken to achieve this goal. I want all people to have equal opportunity. I want everyone to have access to basic needs including food, water, accommodation and education.

Racism, which is one of the major problems of our day should end, and the world should be shown that judging people for things they cannot choose is wrong. Besides, refugee problems and rights should not be ignored; there should be devoted efforts about it.

I dream of a Europe which constantly produces. A Europe which solves problems and makes a contribution to the world every new day.

The efforts towards the objectives of the Council of Europe should be accelerated. More focus should be put on human rights, democracy, racism, xenophobia, and environmental problems.

As a matter of fact, even though I dream of a utopic Europe, I believe that this idea is neither far nor difficult considering how much we have changed and developed from the past to the present time. It is obvious that everything could be better if we would be more caring. My European utopia is about a future built on love, equality and devotion in general. Although I am implying impossibility by using the word “utopia”, it is the irony that I want to highlight. Nothing is impossible. I hope that all humanity and Europe can achieve all these dreams one day.