



The United Nations and the European Union marked their joint commitment to the common values of the United Nations with the formal opening of Enlightened Universe, an art installation composed of a large silver sphere surrounded by 70 figures joined hand-in-hand symbolizing global solidarity and responsibility for our planet.

The installation, created by Spanish artist Cristobal Gabarron, was first unveiled in 2015, in Central Park in New York to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. The installation then travelled to Geneva, Switzerland and now is on display at the Rond-Point Schuman in the heart of the European Quarter in Brussels, 70 years after the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

At the ceremony, Barbara Pesce-Monteiro, the UN Director in Brussels, emphasized the important role that the European Union plays in helping achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals which aim to eliminate poverty worldwide within the next 15 years. "Enlightened Universe" represents the partnership and our collective efforts to create a world where no one is left behind," Pesce-Monteiro said, adding that "the European Union is a fundamental partner of the UN in this endeavor. Our partnership has been saving and improving lives of millions of people around the world. We can achieve much more when we work together."

The large mirrorlike globe is located amid the main European institutions and is visible from hundreds of offices of EU staff. Speaking on behalf of the European Union, Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, stressed the importance of the role of the United Nations for the EU. “Strengthening, supporting and financing the United Nations is key,” Mogherini told the assembled audience, noting the importance of the shared philosophy of the EU and the UN and the need to work together and find common ground.

Cristobal Gabarron, the artist well known for his commitment to the United Nations, presented Mogherini with a series of drawings by children inspired by the work of the United Nations. Gabarron said that transmitting the values of the UN to children was essential.