
Council of Europe: Chancellor Merkel to Parliamentary Assembly, “ringing the alarm when democratic values are endangered”

“When, 70 years ago, the Federal Republic of Germany joined the Council of Europe, it was the first time it was taken back into the community of peoples”: German Chancellor Angela Merkel gave a speech to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe earlier today, starting back from history. Since Konrad Adenauer’s years, what has changed is “the challenges, not the values”. And it is the Council’s task to “ring the alarm when values are endangered”. Many have been the mentions, in the Chancellor’s speech and in the urging of the questions, of situations in which values are “far from guaranteed”. However, if rights, democracy and the rule of law are a “priority in our countries, they must be our concern even in those countries that are different from ours”. This institution is also “the place to speak and keep exchanging views, so that, despite the diversity of views and political systems, values can always be protected”. This expressly refers to the difficult relationships with Russia, Turkey and Azerbaijan and the need not to interrupt talks. The issues addressed by Merkel included the pandemic as a test-bench for democracy, the fight against corruption, human rights and Artificial Intelligence, the European Court of human Rights and the unenforced rulings, and again the Istanbul Convention and her “regret” that Turkey got out of it just when violence against women is further increasing. A few weeks after the 10th anniversary of the Convention, Angela Merkel called the European States that have not ratified yet to do it.

Valentina Bombelli