



The Fondemos team at the Copenhagen Democracy Summit 2026.

# LESSONS FROM THE COPENHAGEN DEMOCRACY SUMMIT 2026

*What did Fondemos take away from this edition of the Copenhagen Democracy Summit?*

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. *Fondemos shares the view that democracies must cooperate more effectively to counter destabilisation strategies and authoritarian alliances.*
2. *The near-total absence of African voices and the overwhelmingly American-centred reading of the issues revealed an incomplete vision of contemporary democratic struggles.*
3. *While US support remains essential, the defence of democracy must rest on a collective, balanced construction grounded in genuinely committed democracies.*

# COPENHAGEN DEMOCRACY SUMMIT 2026

## FONDEMOS VIEWS

The Fondemos team was pleased to be invited to the Copenhagen Democracy Summit last Tuesday: a substantial day, high-calibre speakers, and four central themes: European defence and its strategic autonomy, the war in Ukraine, the role of AI in democracy and transatlantic dynamics.

The intensity of these discussions, and the centrality of the American question in particular, nonetheless overshadowed several essential issues, issues further removed from Europe's immediate concerns, yet revealing of the way democracy is currently being thought about on the international stage.

Two blind spots stood out. The near-total absence of speakers from the African continent, even though many of today's democratic struggles are taking shape there. And a systematically American-centred reading of these struggles on a global scale. Despite powerful interventions from well-known figures of the World Liberty Congress — Masih Alinejad, Leopoldo López, and the Cuban activist Carolina Barrero — the same impression kept resurfacing: that of an American centrality from which the fight for democracy can hardly escape.

On the diagnosis itself, however, there was little disagreement. Fondemos largely shares the assessments voiced on stage. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, President of the Alliance of Democracies, put it plainly: *"the new battleground is on disinformation and destabilization."* Francis Fukuyama struck a converging note: *"there is an alliance of autocracies: democracies must ally, otherwise they will be picked up one by one."*

Where Fondemos's view diverges is on the response to be built. Through the choice of countries discussed and the tone of the interventions — rather accommodating of American influence — one and the same solution emerged between the lines: convincing the United States that it has an interest in becoming, once again, the driving force of the democratic camp.

Yet while democratic struggles will hardly succeed without Washington, neither can they be built in the wake of a single hegemonic actor. The alliance of democracies must be conceived as an alliance, precisely, and not as an American unipolarity towards which other countries and movements would gravitate.



Former Danish Prime Minister, ex-NATO Secretary General, and founder of the Copenhagen Democracy Summit, Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

**If there is to be a coalition of the willing democracies, we must also make sure that these are genuine democracies, and that the agenda binding them together is built collectively rather than imposed by one.**

As Leopoldo López reminded the room: *"We created the World Liberty Congress to work together against autocrats."* Not to serve the interests of any single one. That is the nuance worth holding on to.