MOVIMENTO EUROPEO
CONSIGLIO ITALIANO

IL PRESIDENTE

Rome, 2nd September 2020

Dear MEP's,

As you know, we are following with a great interest your work in view of the Conference on the Future of Europe and we welcome the priorities adopted by your Committee.

Let us give a few comments about the hearing with the German Minister of European Affairs, Mr. Roth, on this question.

We aren't surprised about the unsatisfactory character of his intervention and we don't expect very ambitious proposals from the European Council, the Council and the national Governments.

From this point of view if the EP, the Commission and the Council will accept the principle that the mandate of the Conference will be inserted in the interinstitutional Declaration, we are sure that the consequence will be a lowest common denominator.

We support the idea, developed in the European Parliament, that the three Institutions could find an agreement on the organization and on the internal governance of the Conference but leave it the mission to establish its mandate and its outcome.

It is absolutely clear that insisting with the Governments on the question of the reform of the Treaties will be a lost time because, as Mr. Roth said in the hearing, the Council should decide following the method of unanimity and the EP could decide following the democratic method of majority.

We are strongly convinced that the only body at European level having the democratic accountability is your Assembly that could say "We, on behalf of the European Citizens" claiming a constituent role.

Saying this and as you know, we think that the European Parliament should find during the Conference two main allies:

- One is represented by the political pro-European majorities in the national Parliaments because they belong to the European political parties and they are the cornerstone of the representative democracy at national level. That is the why we suggest the way of "Interparliamentary assises" following the example of the meeting held in Rome in November 1990

- The other concerns the European civil societies with innovative way to open a dialogue with them avoiding on line consultations or random method. This dialogue should be transnational and thematic giving to civil societies the opportunity to deliver at European level. You can find in attach our proposals on the organization of this dialogue.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Best regards,

Pier Virgilio Dastoli

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EMPOWER CITIZENS FOR THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

The Conference on the Future of Europe (and the Citizens' Agora)

The Conference on the Future of Europe is one of the top priorities of the new Commission chaired by Ursula von der Leyen and is due to start in 2020 and run for maximum two years.

Formal arrangements are currently under discussion by the EU institutions following the commitments assumed by the EU Commissioners during the hearings and the work done by the EP Conference of Presidents.

The EESC and the Committee of Regions have expressed from their side a great interest in the Conference on the future of Europe.

We welcome the opinion of the EP Constitutional Affairs Committee (AFCO) underlining that "*the 70th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration…can provide further impetus to the Conference*" and that "*the aim of the Conference should be to engage directly the citizens through a bottom-up approach and that, in the long term, a permanent mechanism for engaging with the citizens in the reflection on the future of Europe should be envisaged*".

We have taken note that "*the consultations should be organized using the most efficient, innovative and appropriate platforms, including online tools reaching all parts of the EU, in order to guarantee that any citizens can have a say during the work of the Conference…ensuring youth participation*" and that "*citizens will…participate in equal conditions as the institutional representatives*".

We **welcome the meeting of the three European leaders** (David Sassoli, Urusula Von der Leyen and Charles Michel) that will take place at the end of January in the *Maison Jean Monnet* on the initiative of the EP President and we ask them to share our proposals.

With this in mind, we have renewed calls for **a bottom-up, building-site and free-standing and spontaneously organized events**.

We suggest modeling these events on the world-famous ***Edinburgh Fringe Festival*** to mobilize EU citizens ahead of the Future of Europe Conference. We discussed how a "***Europe Future Fringe***" would allow citizens to occupy the "*spaces in between*" whatever consultative processes and citizens dialogues emerge from the inter-institutional negotiations.

We support the proposal for a *Europe Future Fringe* to run in parallel with the formal consultations with civil society and EU citizens within the framework of the Future of Europe Conference itself. The *Europe Future Fringe* will be a self-organizing series of events which bring together a diversity of civil society initiatives and events.

The Conference on the Future of Europe should be preceded by a European ***Common Declaration*** **of European Nobel Laureates and Youth Movements**, celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration and offering a vision of the EU of the 21st century that implements the SDGs by 2030.

On May 9th, 2020, the Presidents of all EU Institutions and bodies should open the Conference to address the transformation of EU, drawing inspiration from the European Common Declaration.

The Conference on the Future of Europe should open a public space to build the consensus between the representative and the participatory democracy well beyond mere consultations or citizen's dialogues.

In this sense, the Civil Society organization partners of the European Commission and the programs as *Europe for Citizens* could be a valuable role of chain of information and dialogue with citizens. A special effort should be played to reach local communities engaging local governments in a coordinated manner following the example of the "*Pact of free cities"* between Bratislava, Budapest, Prague and Warsaw.

We suggest that the role of participatory democracy will be played in the framework of deliberative thematic Conventions or Citizens Agora using innovative ways:

- crowd sources

- the participatory budgeting

- Block-chains

- contact groups

- cultural and artistic festivals

- transnational Platforms

We favor the use of **online platforms** which can reach out to up to 450 million citizens by internet or mobile phone.

Such platforms must demonstrate how they can reach those individuals who are most marginalized and excluded from political influence and the answers of all participating population groups must be given weight according to the demographic structure.

Through such online platforms, citizens should be able to prioritize policy challenges in local, regional and macro-regional demographically representative fora linked to Citizens Dialogues.

In face-to-face fora with socio economic and gender representativity the citizens will further develop their visions.

In **thematic fora at transnational leve**l and with necessary technical assistance the citizens will develop their own European policy proposals to be presented and seriously discussed and considered in later thematic conventions that take place in different parts of the European Union with MEPs, the European Commission, Mayors and civil society organisations.

Both the Committee of Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee will be active in this process. All citizens fora as well as the thematic conventions should be streamed online and the citizens given the possibility for online feedback.

As concerns the Conference, it should be composed by an equal number of EU and national parliamentarian members (54+54) sitting together in political European groups and involve the Commission and the Council (three members for each Institutions) on equal footing.

A **special session of Interparliamentary meetings** should take place during the German presidency of EU Council in Berlin or in Rome where the meetings held before the IGC on the Maastricht Treaty (November 1990) and where the EEC and Euratom Treaties have been signed in 1957.

Representatives of ECB, EESC, Committee of Regions, FRA, Euro just, Social Partners (ETUC, Business Europe and CEEP) as well as Ombudsman and EU Prosecutor should take an active role in the debates and final decisions.

When the Conference will meet in Brussels or Strasbourg it will be hosted by the EP and the secretariat will be provided both by the Commission and the EP. The President will be elected by the Conference between the MEPs. No Presidium or Steering Group will be created.

The Conference should respect two main elements of a true public debate:

- the **transnational level** with thematic and not national conferences in the Member States or in the Macro-regions avoiding the "*Brussels speaks to Brussels*";

- the **transparency and publicity** of all the debates and the conclusions to be taken with a super-qualified majority.

The Conference must be preceded and accompanied – not tackled – by major proposals and decisions by the EU Institutions on climate change, digitalization, completion of EMU, migration, implementation of the Social

Pillar, fight against inequalities and poverty, social market economy, Rule of Law as well as the Electoral Law System and the election of EU leaders.

This list means that the Conference shall not replace the role of EU Institutions and the EU decision-making in the development of the common policies.

This development will serve as a stimulus for the debate on the future of Europe while the debate will provide a fertile ground for facilitating consensus-building in the development of common policies.

The Conference will be a unique opportunity to tackle **six key issues** on:

- the role of EU in a globalized and instable world where the EU should repudiates wars as conflicts solution;

- the division of responsibilities at all the levels from the local to the European in the framework of a dynamic and renewed principle of subsidiarity;

- the fiscal capacity of the EU and the weight of the European budget to assure European common goods on the three dimensions of allocation, redistribution and stabilization;

- the achievement of SDGs before 2030;

- the political and institutional boundaries of EU and the relationship with the neighboring countries, namely the Mediterranean and Africa;

- the EU democratic governance for a united, fair and resilient Europe.

If a majority consensus will be reached to elaborate a new constitutional Treaty, the best way is to recognize the **leading role of the EP** in cooperation with the national Parliaments.

At the end of a constituent process, the EU citizens ("*sovereignty belongs to the people*") will have to voice their opinion by means of referenda (**a pan-European referendum)** to be held the same day in all the Member States.

Milan, 8th January, 2020

EUROPEAN MOVEMENT-ITALY-ME/IT, ACCADEMIA EUROPEISTA DEL FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA, AGORÀ LIBERALE, ALLEANZA ITALIANA PER LO SVILUPPO SOSTENIBILE-ASviS, ASSOCIAZIONE DI PROMOZIOME SOCIALE-ACMOS, ASSOCIAZIONE EUROPEA DEGLI INSEGNANTI-AEDE, ASSOCIAZIONE GIORNALISTI EUROPEI-AGE, ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA PER IL CONSIGLIO DEI COMUNI E DELLE REGIONI D'EUROPA-AICCRE, ASSOCIAZIONE LUCA COSCIONI, ASSOCIAZIONE NAZIONALE DONNE ELETTRICI-ANDE, ASSOCIAZIONE RICREATIVA E CULTURALE ITALIANA-ARCI, ASSOCIAZIONI CRISTIANE LAVORATORI ITALIANI-ACLI, CITTADINANZATTIVA-ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK, CIVICO EUROPA, COLLEGAMENTO ITALIANO DI LOTTA ALLA POVERTA'-CILAP, CONFEDERAZIONE ITALIANA AGRICOLTORI-CIA, DEMOCRACY INTERNATIONAL, ECIT FOUNDATION, EUDEM, EUMANS, EUROPA ECOLOGIA, EUROPE AMBITION 2030, EUROPE's PEOPLE's FORUM, EUROPEAN ANTI POVERTY NETWORK-NEDERLAND, EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL DEMOCRACY-ALDA, EUROPEAN EXPRESSION, EUROPEAN FUTURE FORUM, EUROPEAN PARTNERS FOR ENVIRONMENT-EPE, FEDERALISTES D'ESQUERRES, FEDERAZIONE ITALIANA INSEGNANTI DI SCUOLA MEDIA-FNISM, FONDAZIONE A.J. ZANINONI, FONDAZIONE BENVENUTI IN ITALIA, FONDAZIONE ROMA EUROPEA, FORUM ITALO-TUNISINO PER LA CITTADINANZA EURO-MEDITERRANEA, GIOVENTU' FEDERALISTA EUROPEA-GFE, INFOCIVICA, ISTITUTO DI STUDI SUL FEDERALISMO E L'UNITA EUROPEA PARIDE BACCARINI, LEGA DELLE AUTONOMIE LOCALI-ALI, LEGAMBIENTE, MAGISTRATS EUROPÉENS POUR LA DÉMOCRATIE ET LES LIBERTÉS-MEDEL, MOVIMENTO FEDERALISTA EUROPEO-MFE, NEW EUROPEANS, ONEDEMOS.EU, +EUROPA, PROGETTO DOMANI: CULTURA E SOLIDARIETÀ – PRO.DO.C.S., RADICALI ITALIANI, RETE PER LA DEMOCRAZIA LIBERALE, SAUVONS L'EUROPE, SCIENCE FOR DEMOCRACY, SINDNOVA, STIFTUNG FRIEDLICHE REVOLUTION, THE LAND BEYOND GREEK NGO, VOLT ITALIA

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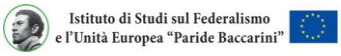

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