



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 31.3.2020
C(2020) 2053 final*

Dear Vice-President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senat for its support to the Conference on the Future of Europe.

As stated in the Commission's Communication 'Shaping the Conference on the Future of Europe' of 22 January {COM(2020) 27 final}, the central objective of the Conference is to give Europeans a greater say on what the Union does and how it works for them. It is meant to complement the Union's representative democracy and increase trust in the institutions serving our citizens.

The Commission agrees with the Senat that the Conference must be accessible to all citizens, from every corner of our Union and from all walks of life, and should reflect Europe's diversity. Participants in the European Citizens' panels should ensure representativeness, reflecting fully the diversity of Europe, including in terms of citizens' geographic origin, gender, age, socioeconomic background and/or level of education.

As to the legal character of the Conference, the Commission sees it as a new public forum for an open, inclusive, transparent and structured debate with citizens around a number of key priorities and challenges. President von der Leyen has pledged to follow up on what is debated and agreed during the Conference.

The Commission agrees that national Parliaments should play a key role in the Conference. As set out in our Communication, national and regional Parliaments have a fundamental role to play and should be encouraged to organise Conference-related events, as they have the potential to make a significant contribution to the success of the Conference in terms of experience, organising events and ensuring that the Conference reaches as many citizens as possible.

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In terms of the governance structure of the Conference, while the European Parliament, Council and Commission will negotiate the text of the Joint Declaration establishing the Conference, the Commission can assure you that the early involvement of national Parliaments is already shaping this process. This Joint Declaration should set the scope, format, structures and objectives of the Conference. The Commission would like it to be open to other signatories who want to actively contribute to the Conference. This can include respective national Parliaments.

The Commission welcomes the strong engagement of national Parliaments as witnessed by the number of opinions it has already received in the context of the political dialogue, as well as by the exchanges we both had in the framework of the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC), respectively in Helsinki from 1 to 3 December 2019 and in Zagreb on 19 and 20 January 2020.

In this spirit, the Commission welcomes the Senat's initiative to share its ideas, experiences and expectations, and is looking forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Dubravka Šuica
Vice-President*

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*