

European Parliament



CONFERENCE of PRESIDENTS

MINUTES

of the ordinary meeting of Thursday

<h1>4 March 2021</h1>

by videoconference

Altiero Spinelli Building, Room 5G3

BRUSSELS

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of the ordinary meeting of

Thursday 4 March 2021

from 10:00 to 12:00 hours

Altiero Spinelli Building, Room 5G3

Brussels

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CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS

MINUTES

of the meeting of Thursday 4 March 2021

from 10:00 to 12:00 hours

Brussels

The meeting opened at 10.07 hours with Mr David Maria SASSOLI,

President of the European Parliament, in the chair

Present

Mr SASSOLI, President

Political Group Chairs

Mr	WEBER	(EPP)
Ms	GARCÍA PÉREZ	(S&D)
Mr	CIOLOŞ	(Renew Europe)
Mr	ZANNI (remote)	(ID)
Mr	LAMBERTS (Co-Chair)	(Greens/EFA)
Mr	FITTO (Co-Chair)	(remote) (ECR)
Mr	SCHIRDEWAN (Co-Chair)	(The Left)
Ms	FERRARA ¹ (remote)	(NI)

Also Present

Mr WELLE, Secretary-General
Mr WINKLER, Deputy Secretary-General

¹ Present pursuant to Rule 26 (2) of the Rules of Procedure

Invited:

Mr TAJANI, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs
(remote)

Also Invited:

Item 6

Mr McALLISTER, Chair of Parliament's UKCG
Mr HANSEN, Member of Parliament's UKCG (remote)
Ms PIRI, Member of Parliament's UKCG (remote)
Mr SILVA PEREIRA, Member of Parliament's UKCG (remote)
Mr PETERSEN, Member of Parliament's UKCG (remote)
Mr EPPINK, Member of Parliament's UKCG (remote)

Item 7

(remote)

Mr McALLISTER, Chair of the Committee of Foreign Affairs
Mr KUBILIUS, Chair of the Delegation to the Euronest PA

(remote)

Mr BIEDROŃ, Co-Chair of the fact-finding mission to Belarus
(remote)
Mr PAET, Co-Chair of the fact-finding mission to Belarus

The Council¹

represented by

Ms MAROTTA
Mr KERLEROUX

The Commission¹

represented by

Mr LE GAL
Mr KIRYAKOV

Office of the President

Mr MANNELLI
Ms DOUAUD
Ms PANZETTI
Mr CUILLO
Ms KYST
Ms PEREIRA
Mr COBUCCI
Ms CUEVAS HERMAN
Ms O'KEEFFE
Mr WEISS
Ms MARTINEZ
Ms KAMINSKA

Office of the Secretary-General

Ms ALTENBERG
Ms FERNÁNDEZ PERLES
Ms POPTCHEVA
Mr CAPOGROSSO

Office of the Deputy Secretary-General

Mr JAVELLE

¹ Present for items 1-3

Secretariat

DG Presidency (PRES)

Ms GANDOLFO/Ms JIMENEZ LOZANO²

DG Internal Policies (IPOL)

Mr RIBERA D'ALCALA/Mr CHIOCCHETTI/Mr HUBER

DG External Policies (EXPO)

Mr DUCCI/Ms De VICENTE³/ Mr BARBERA del ROSAL³/
Mr CRESPINET⁴

DG European Parliamentary Research Services (EPRS)

Mr TEASDALE

DG Communication (COMM)

Mr DUCH GUILLOT/Ms COLARD

DG Personnel (PERS)

Mr KNUDSEN

DG Infrastructures and Logistics (INLO)

Mr SORENSEN

DG Translation (TRAD)

Mr MAVRIČ

DG for Logistics and Interpretation for Conferences (LINC)

Ms WALTER-DROP

DG for Innovation and Technological Support (ITEC)

Mr PETRUCCI

DG Security and Safety (SAFE)

Ms MARTÍNEZ IGLESIAS

Legal Service (SJ)

Mr DREXLER

Secretariat of the Bureau

Mr MARTINELLI

² Present for item 5

³ Present for item 6

⁴ Present for item 7

Political groups

Mr BUSUTTIL/Ms SCRIBAN/Mr ZOLLEIS/Ms ALVARGONZALEZ	(EPP)
Ms GLIUBIZZI/Ms MÜLLER/Mr GUERRA/Ms BALLARIN/Ms MAHRENHOLZ	(S&D)
Mr RASMUSSEN/ Mr MARECHAL/Mr FEELEY/ Mr FILOTE	(Renew Europe)
Mr CLAEYS/Mr TEUSCHER/Mr GARUZZO	(ID)
Ms TSETSI/Mr LINAZASORO/Mr FUCHS/Ms VOGEL	(Greens/EFA)
Mr BESZLEJ/Mr DOUMBOUYA/Ms McCOURT/Ms FICUT	(ECR)
Ms LEPOLA/Ms ASLETT-RYDBJERG/Ms NIEMEIER/Mr CARTY	(The Left)
Mr BORDEZ	(NI)

Ms WOLLNY, Mr ROHLJE, Mr VAUGIER, Ms SCHADE, Mr GEROCHRISTOS, Ms PORTELA and Ms BOMBAY acted as secretaries to the meeting.

1. Adoption of the draft agenda

The Conference of Presidents

- noted and adopted the draft agenda in the form shown in these minutes (PE 660.898/CPG).

2. Approval of the draft minutes of the meeting of 11 February 2021

The Conference of Presidents

- noted and approved the draft minutes of the meeting of 11 February 2021 (PE 660.848/CPG).

3. Adoption of the final draft agenda for the March I part-session (from 8 to 11 March 2021) and the draft agenda for the March II part-session (on 24 and 25 March 2021) – Scheduling of key debates in plenary

The Conference of Presidents

- took note of the draft agenda for the March I part-session (from 8 to 11 March 2021) as adopted by the Conference of Presidents on 11 February 2021;
- took note of a preliminary draft agenda for the March II part-session (on 24 and 25 March 2021);
- took note of a letter dated 11 February 2021 from Mr TAJANI, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, submitting a recommendation regarding the draft agenda of the March I part-session (from 8 to 11 March 2021) and the draft agenda for the March II part-session (on 24 and 25 March 2021) (PE 660.906/CPG and annex);
- held an exchange of views with the participation of Mr WEBER, Chair of the EPP Group, Ms GARCÍA PÉREZ, Chair of the S&D Group, Mr CIOLOŞ, Chair of the Renew Europe Group, Mr ZANNI, Chair of the ID Group, Mr LAMBERTS, Co-Chair of the Greens/EFA Group, Mr FITTO, Co-Chair of the ECR Group, and Mr SCHIRDEWAN, Co-Chair of the Left Group, and, after votes on several items, adopted the final draft agenda for the March I part-session with the following modifications:

Wednesday 10 March 2021

- decided, subsequently to the decision under item 5, that a signature ceremony for the Joint Declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe be added at 13:00 - 13:30;

Thursday 11 March 2021

- decided that the debate on the 'Commission statement - Application of Regulation (EC) 2020/2092, the Rule of Law conditionality mechanism' be taken with resolution, to be voted at the March II part-session;
- adopted the draft agenda for the March II part-session with the above-mentioned modification.

4. Communications by the President

There was none.

5. Conference on the Future of Europe - state of play

The Conference of Presidents

- took note of the following documents:

- a draft inter-institutional declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe (PE 690.213/CPG);
- revised Council position on the Conference on the Future of Europe as agreed at the Permanent Representatives Committee on 3 February 2021 (PE 660.950/CPG);
- an e-mail of 24 November 2020 from the Coordinators of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs and the Members of the former working group on the Conference on the Future of Europe (PE 660.696/CPG);
- Council position on the Conference on the Future of Europe as agreed at the Permanent Representative Committee on 24 June 2020 (PE 653.556/CPG);
- European Parliament resolution of 18 June 2020 on its position on the Conference on the Future of Europe (2020/2657(RSP)) (PE 653.555/CPG);
- a statement by the Conference of Presidents, adopted at its meeting on 7 May 2020, on the 70th Schuman Declaration anniversary (9 May 2020) (PE 653.554/CPG);
- a Commission communication dated 22 January 2020, entitled 'Shaping the Conference on the Future of Europe' (PE 653.553/CPG);
- European Parliament resolution of 15 January 2020 on its position on the Conference on the Future of Europe (2019/2990(RSP)) (PE 653.552/CPG);
- a contribution dated 19 December 2019 from the working group on the Conference on the Future of Europe (PE 644.153CPG);
- a letter dated 11 December 2019 from Mr TAJANI, Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, submitting the committee's input to the working group and

the Conference of Presidents on the organisation of the Conference on the Future of Europe (PE 644.113/CPG);

- heard the President report on the inter-institutional negotiations and present the draft joint declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe as agreed between the negotiators of Parliament, Council and Commission, noting that Parliament's position, based on its resolutions and the mandate he had received from the Conference of Presidents, was duly reflected and that Parliament would continue to be the driving institutional force in the Conference, ensuring the fundamental role and participation of EU citizens in the process;
- held an exchange of views with the participation of Mr WEBER, Chair of the EPP Group, Ms GARCÍA PÉREZ, Chair of the S&D Group, Mr CIOLOŞ, Chair of the Renew Europe Group, Mr ZANNI, Chair of the ID Group, Mr LAMBERTS, Co-Chair of the Greens/EFA Group, Mr FITTO, Co-Chair of the ECR Group, and Mr SCHIRDEWAN, Co-Chair of the Left Group, focused on, inter alia:
 - commending the President and his staff for their achievements in concluding successfully the negotiations on the joint declaration, highlighting, inter alia, the importance of having a citizens-focused bottom-up approach, including European citizens' panels, a Conference Plenary, and a feedback mechanism, and the importance of the final outcome of the Conference being presented to the Joint Presidency, with the three institutions tasked to examine swiftly how to follow up effectively on the findings of the Conference, within their own sphere of competence and in accordance with the Treaties;
 - European democracy and the importance of strengthening the Union's democratic foundations and the democratic processes governing the European Union as well as the link between Europeans and the institutions that served them;
 - Parliament's leading role, as the only EU institution directly elected by and representing the EU citizens, in the steering of the Conference, which should be duly reflected in the work and in the practical organisation of the Conference;
 - the importance of not having set an end date for the Conference so as to allow it to complete to the fullest extend its purpose of giving citizens a say on what matters

to them and to reflect the areas where the European Union had the competence to act or where EU action would be to the benefit of European citizens;

- the principles of the Conference of inclusiveness, openness and transparency, based on the values of the EU as enshrined in the EU Treaties and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights;
 - the need to clarify further the working methods of the governance structure, in particular of the Executive Board, and the question whether the Conference of Presidents' approval of the joint declaration should be postponed until the working methods had been clarified;
 - Parliament's commitment to the Conference and the need to start it swiftly;
- approved, with a large majority, the draft joint declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe, and mandated the President to sign it;
 - endorsed, with a large majority, that a statement be issued regarding the need to represent the broad diversity of EU citizens in the Conference and to ensure Parliament's prominent role, as the institution directly representing European citizens, in the work and in the practical organisation of the Conference;
 - heard the President thank Group Chairs for their remarks and support, noting that a signature ceremony for the joint declaration would be held at the subsequent part-session marking the start of the work of the Conference and that the first major event could be held on Europe Day, 9 May 2021; and heard him invite Group Chairs to nominate the seven representatives in Parliament's delegation in the Executive Board, while taking due account of a gender-balanced representation;
 - endorsed the President's approach.

6. Consent procedure for the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement - state of play

The Conference of Presidents

- took note of the following documents:
 - a joint statement dated 24 February 2021 by European Commission Vice-President ŠEFČOVIČ and the UK Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster GOVE following the meeting of the Joint Committee (PE 660.926/CPG);
 - a decision dated 23 February 2021 of the Partnership Council established by the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement as regards the date on which provisional application pursuant to the Trade and Cooperation Agreement is to cease (PE 660.925/CPG);
 - a joint statement dated 23 February 2021 by the UK Government and the European Commission following the meeting of the Specialised Committee on Citizens' Rights (PE 660.924/CPG);
 - a Council decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union within the Partnership Council established by the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement as regards the date on which provisional application pursuant to the Trade and Cooperation Agreement is to cease (PE 660.923/CPG);
 - a joint statement dated 11 February 2021 by European Commission Vice-President ŠEFČOVIČ and the UK Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster GOVE (PE 660.912/CPG);
 - two letters dated 9 and 11 February 2021 from Sir Lindsay HOYLE, Speaker of the House of Commons, and Lord FOWLER, Lord Speaker, respectively, in reply to the letter of 21 January 2021 from President SASSOLI on inter-parliamentary cooperation under the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (PE 660.905/CPG);
 - a letter dated 10 February 2021 from Commission Vice-President ŠEFČOVIČ to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster GOVE in reply to his letter of 3 February

2021 concerning the next steps on the Northern Ireland Protocol (PE 660.904/CPG);

- a letter dated 5 February 2021 from President SASSOLI to Ms VON DER LEYEN, President of the European Commission, on Parliament's right of scrutiny and its involvement in the implementation and monitoring of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (PE 660.897/CPG);
- a letter dated 3 February 2021 from Mr TAJANI, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, on the democratic scrutiny and monitoring of the implementation of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (PE 660.883/CPG);
- a joint statement dated 3 February 2021 by European Commission Vice-President ŠEFČOVIČ and the UK Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster GOVE (PE 660.892/CPG);
- a letter dated 2 February 2021 from the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster GOVE to Commission Vice-President ŠEFČOVIČ concerning the next steps on the Northern Ireland Protocol (PE 660.893/CPG);
- a note dated 1 February 2021 from the Secretary-General on "Key areas for European Parliamentary scrutiny of the implementation of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation agreement" (PE 660.878/CPG);
- a letter dated 27 January 2021 from President SASSOLI to Ms VON DER LEYEN, President of the European Commission, requesting an extension of the period of provisional application of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement and submitting observations on Parliament's right of scrutiny in relation to the Agreement and any subsequent modifications (PE 660.867/CPG);
- a letter dated 21 January 2021 from President SASSOLI to Mr COSTA, President-in-office of the Council, on Parliament's right of scrutiny in relation to the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (PE 660.840/CPG);

- a letter dated 21 January 2021 from President SASSOLI to Sir Lindsay HOYLE, Speaker of the House of Commons, and Lord FOWLER, Lord Speaker, on inter-parliamentary cooperation under the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (PE 660.839/CPG);
 - a final report dated 21 January 2021 from the House of Commons Committee on the Future Relationship with the European Union (PE 660.875/CPG);
 - the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (PE 660.775/CPG);
 - a statement adopted by the Conference of Presidents on 28 December 2020 on the provisional application of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (PE 660.774/CPG);
- heard the President introduce the item by recalling that, on 23 February 2021, in view of the time needed to scrutinise appropriately the text of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) in all 24 authentic language versions and taking into account the date on which all language versions were expected to have been revised and established as authentic and definitive, the EU-UK Partnership Council had decided that the provisional application of the TCA should be extended to 30 April 2021;
- heard him report that the Council had invited Parliament to give its consent to the conclusion of the TCA, which could be either at the March or April part-sessions, indicating that, with a view to the yet to be completed legal-linguistic revision to establish all authentic language versions, a consent vote at the April 2021 part-session would still suffice for allowing the Council to adopt its decision on the conclusion of the TCA ahead of the end of the period of provisional application on 30 April 2021;
- heard Mr McALLISTER, Chair of the UK Coordination Group (UKCG), report that, on 3 March 2021, following a statement by the UK Government that it would extend unilaterally grace periods laid down in the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol, Commission Vice-President ŠEFČOVIČ had expressed the EU's strong concerns over the UK's unilateral action, as that would amount to a violation of the relevant substantive provisions of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland and the good faith obligation under the Withdrawal Agreement;

- heard him report that Mr ŠEFČOVIČ would brief the UKCG on that matter; and heard him propose that the Conference of Presidents postpone its decision on when Parliament should vote on the consent and the accompanying resolution, pending the necessary clarifications, and to consider the matter at the subsequent meeting, also with a view to considering the Commission's commitments regarding Parliament's involvement in the implementation and monitoring of the TCA;
- held an exchange of views with the participation of Ms GARCÍA PÉREZ, Chair of the S&D Group, Mr CIOLOŞ, Chair of the Renew Europe Group, Mr LAMBERTS, Co-Chair of the Greens/EFA Group, and Mr SCHIRDEWAN, Co-Chair of the Left Group, focused on, inter alia:
 - broad support for Mr McALLISTER's proposal;
 - Parliament's position that the effective and full implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement, including the faithful implementation of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland, was a precondition for the successful conclusion of any future agreement;
 - the importance of the Commission making a written declaration ahead of Parliament's consent vote on a number of undertakings regarding Parliament's full information and involvement in the implementation and monitoring of the TCA;
 - the desirability of all 24 authentic language versions being available ahead of Parliament's consent vote;
- heard the President propose to postpone a decision on when Parliament should vote on the consent and the accompanying resolution, and to return to the matter at the subsequent meeting;
- endorsed the proposal.

7. Situation in Belarus – exchange of views and consideration of the findings of the fact-finding mission to Belarus

The Conference of Presidents

- took note of a letter dated 2 February 2021 co-signed by Mr BIEDROŃ and Mr PAET, Co-Chairs of the Belarus fact-finding mission, submitting a report on the findings of the fact-finding mission to Belarus (PE 660.894/CPG and annexes);
- heard the President welcome Mr BIEDROŃ and Mr PAET, Co-Chairs of the Belarus fact-finding mission, and Mr McALLISTER, Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs;
- heard Mr BIEDROŃ and Mr PAET present the findings of the Belarus fact-finding mission, elaborating on the recommendations in its report for Parliament and for the EU as a whole;
- heard them underline that, in principle, a high-level mission could be established at some point in time but would merit further consideration and should only be deployed based on clear criteria and mission objectives, and only when the required conditions were met;
- heard them propose that the Conference of Presidents invite the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG) to establish a list of priority action based on the findings in the mission report;
- heard Mr McALLISTER note the importance of a continued consideration of the situation in Belarus by the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Subcommittee on Human Rights as well as in plenary debates;
- held an exchange of views with the participation of Mr WEBER, Chair of the EPP Group, Ms GARCÍA PÉREZ, Chair of the S&D Group, Mr CIOLOŞ, Chair of the Renew Europe Group, Mr ZANNI, Chair of the ID Group, Mr LAMBERTS, Co-Chair of the Greens/EFA Group, Mr FITTO, Co-Chair of the ECR Group, and Mr SCHIRDEWAN, Co-Chair of the Left Group, focused on, inter alia:
 - commending the work of the fact-finding mission and its report, touching upon several specific recommendations;

- general support for the establishment of a high-level mission to Belarus, once the conditions allowed it and based on well-defined criteria and mission objectives;
 - the need for Parliament and the EU to follow the situation in Belarus closely and to enhance the support for the democratic forces;
 - the possibility, in general, to conduct missions successfully and efficiently by means of videoconference;
- heard the President thank Mr BIEDROŃ and Mr PAET for their work and the mission report, and underline that Parliament remained seized of the matter;
 - decided to invite the DEG to consider a list of priority action for Parliament based on the findings in the mission report;
 - decided, in principle, that a high-level mission be set up at the appropriate juncture and that a proposal to that end be considered at a subsequent meeting.

8. Decision of the President of the European Parliament of 4 March 2021 on extraordinary measures enabling the European Parliament to carry out its duties and exercise its prerogatives under the Treaties

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- took note of a draft decision dated 4 March 2021 by the President on extraordinary measures enabling Parliament to carry out its duties and exercise its prerogatives under the Treaties in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, pursuant to Rule 237a of Parliament's Rules of Procedure (PE 690.214/CPG and annex);
- recalled that Rules 237a, b, c, d applied to situations in which Parliament, due to exceptional and unforeseeable circumstances beyond its control, was hindered from carrying out its duties and exercising its prerogatives under the Treaties, and a temporary derogation from Parliament's usual procedures was necessary;
- recalled that the application of Rules 237a, b, c, d was without prejudice to the responsibilities vested in Parliament's President and its governing bodies under other provisions of the Rules of Procedure;
- recalled that, at its meeting on 11 February 2021, in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Conference of Presidents had approved the President's draft decision dated 11 February 2021 concerning the displacement of the March I 2021 part-session in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, pursuant to Rule 237a of Parliament's Rules of Procedure;
- recalled that, at its meeting on 13 January 2021, in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Conference of Presidents had unanimously approved the President's draft decision dated 13 January 2021 on extraordinary measures enabling Parliament to carry out its duties and exercise its prerogatives under the Treaties; and recalled that the President's decision would lapse on 7 March 2021, unless renewed, amended or revoked;
- noted that the threats and challenges deriving from the coronavirus continued to constitute exceptional and, in the light of its highly infectious mutations, unforeseeable circumstances beyond Parliament's control;

- noted that, in view of the extraordinary circumstances, for reasons of safety, in particular with a view to protecting the health of Members and staff and with a view to limiting the spreading of COVID-19, it was necessary to adopt appropriate extraordinary measures to enable Parliament to continue to carry out its duties and to exercise its prerogatives;
- approved the President's draft decision.

9. Requests from parliamentary committees to draw up own-initiative reports under Rule 54 and related requests

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- took note of a letter dated 11 February 2021 from Mr TAJANI, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs (CCC), submitting requests from parliamentary committees for authorisation to draw up own-initiative reports under Rule 54 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure and related requests (PE 660.907/CPG and annexes);
- took note of a letter dated 11 February 2021 from Mr TAJANI, Chair of the CCC, submitting a request from the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) for drawing up an annual activity and monitoring report under automatic authorisation and a request from the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) for association to that report under Rule 57 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure (PE 660.917/CPG and annexes);
- took note of a letter dated 18 February 2021 from Mr TAJANI, Chair of the CCC, submitting further requests from parliamentary committees for authorisation to draw up non-legislative own-initiative reports together with the agreements reached between the committees as regards arrangements for cooperation on the reports pursuant to Rules 54 and 57 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure (PE 660.914/CPG and annexes);
- recalled that, under the relevant provisions laying down the procedure for granting authorisation to draw up own-initiative reports, during the first half of a parliamentary term, each parliamentary committee might simultaneously draft up to six own-initiative reports, and that for committees with subcommittees that quota should be increased by three reports per subcommittee;
- recalled that, under the relevant Rules, the Conference of Committee Chairs should forward to the Conference of Presidents requests for authorisation to draw up legislative own-initiative and non-legislative own-initiative reports that had been assessed to be in compliance with the criteria and the quota allocated;
- further recalled that, according to the applicable rules, authorisations to draw up strategic reports should be granted by the Conference of Committee Chairs after

resolution of any conflict of competence and that the Conference of Presidents might, at the specific request of a political group, revoke such authorisations within four parliamentary business weeks;

- noted that, on 9 February 2021, the CCC had endorsed the drawing-up of a strategic non-legislative own-initiative report entitled 'A European strategy for offshore renewable energy' requested by the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE); noted and endorsed the agreement reached between the ITRE Committee and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) as regards arrangements for cooperation on the report, whereby the ITRE Committee would be the committee responsible and the ENVI Committee would refrain from drawing up an opinion pursuant to arrangements set out in the relevant joint letter; endorsed the drawing-up of the strategic report under heading (b) (subject to the quota, Rule 54);
- took note of the requests for authorisation to draw up five non-legislative own-initiative reports from the ENVI Committee, the Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN), the Committee on Fisheries (PECH), and the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT);
- noted and endorsed the agreement reached between the ENVI and the ITRE Committees on the non-legislative own-initiative report entitled 'A Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe', requested by the ENVI Committee, whereby the ENVI Committee would be the committee responsible and the ITRE Committee would be associated under Rule 57 to the report with shared and exclusive competence on the issues outlined in the relevant joint letter;
- authorised the drawing-up of the five non-legislative own-initiative reports under heading (c) (subject to authorisation, subject to the quota, Rule 54);
- noted the requests for drawing up three annual activity and monitoring reports from the Committee on Constitutional Affairs (AFCO), the Committee on Petitions (PETI) and the FEMM Committee;
- endorsed the request from the AFCO Committee for drawing up an annual activity and monitoring report entitled 'European political parties - report 2021' under heading (d) Annex 2 (under automatic authorisation and not subject to the quota); and noted that

the Committee on Budgetary Control (CONT) requested to contribute to the report with an opinion under Rule 56;

- endorsed the request from the PETI Committee for drawing up an annual activity and monitoring report entitled 'Deliberations of the Committee on Petitions in 2020' under heading (d) Annex 2 (under automatic authorisation and not subject to the quota);
- noted the request from the FEMM Committee for drawing up an annual activity and monitoring report entitled 'Equality between women and men in the European Union 2018-2020' under heading (d) Annex 1 (under automatic authorisation and subject to the quota), and the request from the EMPL Committee to be associated to the report under Rule 57 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure with shared competences over defined areas; took note of the observations by the CCC Chair on the matter; recalled its decision of 12 December 2002, last updated on 3 April 2019, establishing a list of annual activity and monitoring reports under automatic authorisation, including the above-mentioned report by the FEMM Committee; decided that the EMPL Committee's request for an ad hoc association under Rule 57 with shared competences over defined areas to the FEMM Committee's annual activity and monitoring report be dismissed; and endorsed the drawing-up of the report under heading (d) Annex 1 (under automatic authorisation and subject to the quota).

10. Agreement between the Committees on Regional Development, on Budgets, and on Fisheries regarding a legislative report on establishing the Brexit Adjustment Reserve

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- took note of a letter dated 16 February 2021 from Mr TAJANI, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, submitting an agreement reached between the Committees on Regional Development (REGI), on Budgets (BUDG) and on Fisheries (PECH) regarding the legislative report on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (COM(2020)854 - 2020/0380(COD)), which had been referred to the REGI Committee as lead committee on 18 January 2021 (PE 660.913/CPG and annexes);
- took note of the agreement reached between the REGI, BUDG and PECH Committees, whereby:
 - the REGI would remain the committee responsible;
 - the BUDG and PECH Committees would be associated under Rule 57 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure with shared competences over the entire proposal;
- endorsed the agreement reached between the three committees.

11. Request for an extension of the term of office of the Special Committee on Beating Cancer

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- took note of a letter dated 8 February 2021 from Mr ARŁUKOWICZ, Chair of the Special Committee on Beating Cancer (BECA), requesting a three-month extension of the committee's term of office in view of the difficulties the committee was facing in its work due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its high workload (PE 660.896/CPG);
- noted that the BECA Special Committee's constituent meeting had taken place on 23 September 2020;
- recalled that, pursuant to Rule 207 (1) and (2) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure and the European Parliament's decision of 18 June 2020 on the setting-up of the BECA Special Committee, the term of office of the Special Committee should start running from the date of its constituent meeting and should be 12 months, except where Parliament extended that period before its expiry;
- endorsed the request and forwarded it to plenary for final decision.

12. Request for an extension of the term of office of the Special Committee on Artificial Intelligence in a Digital Age

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- took note of a letter dated 9 February 2021 from Mr TUDORACHE, Chair of the Special Committee on Artificial Intelligence (AIDA), requesting a six-month extension of the committee's term of office (PE 660.909/CPG);
- noted that the AIDA Special Committee's constituent meeting had taken place on 23 September 2020;
- recalled that, pursuant to Rule 207 (1) and (2) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure and the European Parliament decision of 18 June 2020 on setting up of the AIDA Special Committee, the term of office of the Special Committee should start running from the date of its constituent meeting and should be 12 months, except where Parliament extended that period before its expiry;
- endorsed the request and forwarded it to plenary for final decision.

13. Request from the Subcommittee on Tax Matters to appoint co-rapporteurs for the own-initiative report on 'Digital taxation: OECD negotiations, tax residency of digital companies and a possible European Digital Tax'

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- took note of a letter dated 5 February 2021 co-signed by Ms TINAGLI, Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON), and Mr TANG, Chair of the Subcommittee on Tax Matters (FISC), submitting a request to appoint two co-rapporteurs on the FISC Subcommittee's own-initiative report on 'Digital taxation: OECD negotiations, tax residency of digital companies and a possible European Digital Tax' (2021/2010(INI)) (PE 660.891/CPG);
- recalled that, at its meeting on 4 February 2021, the Conference of Presidents had authorised the drawing-up of the above-mentioned own-initiative report by the Subcommittee on Tax Matters (FISC) with the Committee on Budgets associated under Rule 57 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure;
- recalled that Parliament's Rules of Procedure made no provision for the appointment of co-rapporteurs, and that the Conference of Presidents, on previous occasions, had, therefore, only authorised the appointment of co-rapporteurs for a very limited number of highly important reports, generally of a budgetary or institutional nature;
- nevertheless, authorised the request on an exceptional basis and without setting a precedent.

14. Request from the Delegation to the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly (PA) to hold a Euronest PA Bureau meeting on 22 March 2021 and the 9th ordinary session of the Euronest PA and related meetings from 19 to 20 April 2021

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- took note of letters dated 5 and 11 February 2021 from Mr KUBILIUS, Co-President of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly (PA), requesting authorisation to hold by remote participation a Euronest PA Bureau meeting on 22 March 2021 and the 9th ordinary session of the Euronest PA and related meetings from 19 to 20 April 2021 (PE 660.895/CPG and PE 660.910/CPG, annex and financial statement);
- recalled that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no programme of activities of standing delegations for the first half of 2021 had been submitted;
- recalled that, by decision of the President of 4 March 2021 as approved by the Conference of Presidents on the same day, measures had been taken in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic, which would lapse on 25 April 2021 unless renewed, amended or revoked;
- recalled that, under the Rules in force, bureaux of multilateral assemblies should meet on the margins of their plenary sessions or via videoconferences;
- recalled its decision of 29 October 2015, while complying fully with the Code of Conduct on Multilingualism, to permit meetings of inter-parliamentary delegations in Brussels on Monday afternoons and Thursday mornings, on the condition that strict priority be given to requests from parliamentary committees, on the understanding that the number of parallel meetings with interpretation remained limited to a maximum of 16 meetings per day and that, in the COVID-19 context, the number of possible parallel meetings to be held remotely was even limited further;
- recalled that no inter-parliamentary meetings might, in principle, be scheduled on Tuesdays and Wednesdays set aside for political group activities;
- noted that the date of the remote Bureau meeting coincided with a half-day without parliamentary activity (Monday morning of week 12) and the dates of the 9th ordinary

session of the Euronest PA and related meetings coincided with one half-day without parliamentary activity (Monday morning of week 16), one half-day set aside for parliamentary committee activities (Monday afternoon of week 16), and one day set aside for political group activities (Tuesday of week 16);

- noted that for meetings to be held during week 16 interpretation had been requested into six languages;
- nevertheless, authorised the request to hold a remote Euronest PA Bureau meeting on 22 March 2021 as well as the holding of the 9th ordinary session of the Euronest PA and related meetings, on an exceptional basis as requested, provided that the resources were available, on the understanding that it was organised remotely and in line with any restrictions which remained in place in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic.

15. Request from the Delegation to the EU-North Macedonia Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) to hold the 18th EU-North Macedonia JPC meeting on 25 March 2021

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- took note of a letter dated 4 February 2021 from Mr SCHIEDER, Chair of the Delegation to the EU-North Macedonia Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC), requesting authorisation to hold by remote participation the 18th EU-North Macedonia JPC meeting on 25 March 2021 (PE 660.890/CPG, annex and financial statement);
- recalled that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no programme of activities of standing delegations for the first half of 2021 had been submitted;
- recalled that, by decision of the President of 4 March 2021 as approved by the Conference of Presidents on the same day, measures had been taken in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic, which would lapse on 25 April 2021 unless renewed, amended or revoked;
- recalled that the 17th EU-North Macedonia JPC meeting had taken place in Strasbourg, in December 2019, and noted that, since the 18th EU-North Macedonia JPC meeting would be held by remote participation, it would not alter the rotation system whereby meetings were held alternately in one of the places of work of the European Parliament and in North Macedonia;
- noted that the requested meeting coincided with a half-day set aside for parliamentary committee activities (Thursday afternoon of week 12);
- noted that interpretation had been requested into six languages;
- authorised the request, provided that the resources were available, on the understanding that it was organised remotely and in line with any restrictions which remained in place in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic.

16. Request from the Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) to hold a joint committee meeting of the ACP-EU JPA on 25 March 2021 and a ACP-EU JPA Bureau meeting on 30 March 2021

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- took note of a letter dated 2 February 2021 from Mr ZORRINHO, Chair of the Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA), requesting authorisation to hold a joint committee meeting of the ACP-EU JPA on 25 March 2021 and an ACP-EU JPA Bureau meeting on 30 March 2021 (PE 660.882/CPG and financial statements);
- recalled that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no programme of activities of standing delegations for the first half of 2021 had been submitted;
- recalled that, by decision of the President of 4 March 2021 as approved by the Conference of Presidents on the same day, measures had been taken in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic, which would lapse on 25 April 2021 unless renewed, amended or revoked;
- noted that both meetings were scheduled to be held in the evening (European time), in order to allow for the participation of Members from all ACP time zones, following one half-day set aside for parliamentary committee activities (Thursday afternoon of week 12) and one half-day set aside for external parliamentary activities (Tuesday afternoon of week 13);
- noted that interpretation into seven languages had been requested;
- in view of the above, authorised the request, on an exceptional basis, provided that the resources were available, on the understanding that it was organised remotely and in line with any restrictions which remained in place in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic.

17. Regular items for the scrutiny of the Conference of Presidents

17.1 Delegated and implementing acts - Screening of current files

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- recalled its decision of 19 April 2012 to request the competent services to carry out an ongoing screening procedure of upcoming legislative proposals in order to avoid placing on the plenary agenda any vote(s) leading to a first-reading agreement on dossiers where such decisions might be legally questionable;
- recalled its decision of 27 November 2014 to request a monthly overview of the delegated acts (and draft RPS measures) under scrutiny, indicating also any possible action taken by committees;
- took note of a letter of 10 February 2021 from Mr TAJANI, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, forwarding the results of the screening of files in view of the March I and II 2021 part-sessions, and noted that no legal concerns had been raised in relation to any of the dossiers scheduled for vote during those part-sessions (PE 660.908/CPG).

17.2 Overview of delegated acts and draft RPS measures currently under EP scrutiny

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- took note of a note dated 25 February 2021 from the Secretary-General, providing an overview of the state of play on delegated acts and draft RPS measures as at 25 February 2021 (PE 690.210/CPG and annexes);
- recalled the horizontal guidance it had adopted on 19 April 2012 on the inclusion of delegated acts in the basic legislative act; consequently, maintained its request to the Conference of Committee Chairs to carry out a monthly screening of the agreements reached;
- recalled its decision of 27 November 2014 to request a monthly overview of the delegated acts (and draft RPS measures) under scrutiny, indicating also any possible action taken by committees.

17.3 First reading agreements - Committee decisions to enter into negotiations and state of play of files currently under negotiation

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- took note of a letter of 25 February 2021 from Mr TAJANI, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, submitting recent decisions adopted by committees in view of first, early second and second reading (PE 660.951/CPG and annex);
- recalled its decision of 12 March 2015 to request the competent services to ensure the greatest degree of transparency in the legislative process possible and to request that an overview of negotiating mandates for first reading agreements be made available to it on a regular basis, and noted that the Conference of Committee Chairs would continue to provide systematic information to the Conference of Presidents on all legislative files under negotiation in first, early second and second reading, in accordance with the decision of the Conference of Presidents of 10 March 2011;
- noted that, under Rule 71 and Rule 72 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, committee decisions to enter into first reading negotiations and early second reading negotiations should be announced in plenary.

18. Urgent matters and any other business

18.1 Proposal to set up a standing working group for the scrutiny of the Recovery and Resilience Facility

The Conference of Presidents, without debate

- took note of a proposal from the coordination of the political groups for a standing working group of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON) and the Committee on Budgets (BUDG) for the scrutiny of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) (PE 690.215/CPG and annex);
- recalled that, pursuant to Article 26 of Regulation (EU) 2021/241 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility, in order to enhance the dialogue between the Union institutions, in particular Parliament, Council and Commission, and to ensure greater transparency and accountability, Parliament's competent committee might invite the Commission every two months to discuss matters in relation to the implementation of the Facility;
- noted that the standing working group should be established as the operational format for the recovery and resilience dialogue set out in Article 26 of Regulation (EU) 2021/241;
- noted that the standing working group should be composed of 27 Members, including the Chairs of the BUDG and ECON Committees, appointed by the political groups as follows: seven Members from the EPP Group, five Members from the S&D Group, four Members from the Renew Europe Group, three Members from the ID Group, three Members from the Greens/EFA Group, two Members from the ECR Group, two Members from the Left Group, and one non-attached Member; and noted that the Chairs of the BUDG and ECON Committees should co-chair the working group;
- noted that the RRF's impact on EU policies should be reflected in the working group's composition, and that, besides the majority of the Members coming from the BUDG and ECON Committees, the political groups should ensure that at least one Member of each of the associated committees for the RRF Regulation (EMPL, ENVI, ITRE and TRAN) be included in the composition of the working group;

- noted that political groups should be allowed to nominate a maximum of two substitutes who might attend only if one of their designated Members of the working group could not attend a meeting;
- endorsed the proposal submitted by the coordination of the political groups.

19. Items for information

19.1 Internal correspondence

The Conference of Presidents

- noted the following documents:

- a letter dated 25 February 2021 from Ms HOHLMEIER, Chair of the Committee on Budgetary Control (CONT), on the CONT Committee's participation in the COVID-19 Vaccines Contact Group (PE 660.959/CPG);
- a letter dated 19 February 2021 from Mr TAJANI, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, on the guidelines on the remote voting procedure in committees (PE 660.918/GPG);
- Conclusions of a written procedure dated 24 February 2021 on the composition and mandate of the COVID-19 Vaccines Contact Group (PE 660.911/GPC/conclusions).

19.2 Inter-institutional correspondence

There was none.

19.3 External correspondence

There was none.

20. Date and place of the next meeting

The Conference of Presidents

- noted that its next ordinary meeting would be held on Thursday, 11 March 2021 from 10:00 to 12:00 by videoconference, in the Altiero Spinelli Building, room 5G3, in Brussels.

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The meeting closed at 12:20 hours.