DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

for the Committee on Budgetary Control

on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2019, Section II – European Council and Council (2020/2142(DEC))

Rapporteur for opinion: Antonio Tajani
SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Constitutional Affairs calls on the Committee on Budgetary Control, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

A. whereas, under the terms of Article 319 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the European Parliament shall give a discharge to the Commission in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union;

B. whereas the persistent difficulties in receiving answers from the Council due to a lack of cooperation have resulted in Parliament’s refusal to grant discharge to the Council for the implementation of its section of the budget for more than 10 years;

1. Regrets that, despite the letter sent by Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control on 25 May 2020 to the secretary-general of the Council to inform that Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control has been mandated by Parliament's Conference of Presidents to reopen negotiations with the Council on cooperation during the annual discharge procedure, those negotiations have not yet resumed;

2. Calls on the Council to resume those negotiations without undue delay; reiterates its previous position that, if those negotiations with the Council do not succeed, the negotiations should be extended to the Commission, so as to ensure that Parliament is provided with the necessary information on how the Council is implementing its budget, either directly or via the Commission;

3. Believes that increased transparency, and a proactive approach to sharing information, on the side of the Council would be conducive to a better-informed discharge procedure from the outset;

4. Considers that the Conference on the future of Europe provides an opportunity to discuss proposals to enhance transparency and democratic accountability with regard to the protection of the Union’s financial interests.