



Plenary sitting

B9-0037/2020

10.1.2020

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the European Parliament's position on the Conference on the Future of Europe
(2019/2990(RSP))

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on behalf of the ID Group

European Parliament resolution on the European Parliament's position on the Conference on the Future of Europe (2019/2990(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the national Constitutions of the Member States of the EU,
 - having regard to Articles 4, 5, 10, 12, 48 and 50 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU),
 - having regard to the political guidelines for the next European Commission 2019-2024, presented on 10 September 2019,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Europe constitutes a unique civilisation with Greco-Roman roots, a Christian culture, and an attachment to the values of freedom and responsibility; whereas this civilisation is the cradle of democracy;
- B. whereas there is no European people or demos, but rather European nations attached to their specific cultures and identities and sharing common challenges to be met;
- C. whereas national sovereignty belongs to the people who exercise it through their representatives; whereas these representatives consequently have no right to relinquish or to delegate such sovereign rights without effective control;
- D. whereas the European Union was founded as a community of sovereign nations with common interests and for the achievement of common commercial objectives;
- E. whereas this realistic and limited objective has been subverted since the adoption of the Single European Act by the value-based idea of a federal Europe, which is not shared by all Member States and has formed the basis for the ongoing erosion of national identities, cultures and democratic self-government in the Member States;
- F. whereas for many years the citizens of the Member States have been calling for a European Union which promotes their prosperity and shared interests without threatening their national identities or curtailing their national sovereign rights;
- G. whereas, in reality, the EU has ignored growing public concern about ‘ever closer union’ and forged ahead with integrationist projects which ignore the concerns of EU citizens and their common interest in economic prosperity, internal security and democratic self-determination;
- H. whereas the current Treaties incorporate many elements of the failed EU draft constitutional treaty which met with widespread popular opposition and was rejected by referendums in France and the Netherlands;

- I. whereas scepticism, and even distrust, toward the European Union in its current form, as well as its institutional functioning and many of its political orientations, is growing steadily, and whereas the results of the most recent European elections translate this opposition to ‘ever closer union’ into political reality in many countries, and notably so in several founding countries;
- J. whereas the European Union has committed several serious errors, for example in relation to the establishment of the euro area and the pursuit of an open-door immigration policy, which have eroded the trust of Member States’ citizens in European cooperation;
- K. whereas the pursuit of the federal objective at all costs made a decisive contribution to the United Kingdom’s exit;
- L. whereas the EU purports to be founded on the principle of democracy, yet in practice resists direct and indirect democratic affirmation through referendums and effective national parliamentary accountability;
- M. whereas the members of the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament representatives, by launching the Conference on the Future of Europe, have implicitly recognised that the EU in its present form is unsatisfactory;

The Conference

- 1. Takes note of the organisation of the Conference on the Future of Europe, and of the widely shared desire for an in-depth debate on the scope and functioning of cooperation between the states of the European continent;
- 2. Insists that the political conclusions of this conference should be open-ended and involve the consideration of all options, including the repatriation of powers from the centre to the Member States and proposals questioning the dogma of an ‘ever closer Union’; considers, in this connection, that concentrating on mutually beneficial international cooperation rather than on a European federation, as well as on genuine respect for the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality, intergovernmental cooperation and a return to a system of unanimous or consensus based decision-making in the Council, are avenues of reflection that should be taken into account;
- 3. Stresses that the Conference only makes sense if all political forces are represented at all levels; expresses concern at the blatant and repeated attempts within the European Parliament to exclude parliamentary forces and groups which favour an alternative, less integrationist European path;

General framework of the Conference

- 4. Takes note of the work of its working party on the practical aspects of the organisation of the Conference; regrets that, although all the political groups were invited to its meetings, not all were able to participate in the drafting of its conclusions;
- 5. Takes note of the stated desire for a transparent Conference in terms of its organisation, discussions, publications and conclusions; stresses that respect for multilingualism is the

preferred instrument for achieving this objective by making all exchanges and documents available in all the languages of the EU;

6. Welcomes the ambition of achieving broad participation by citizens of the Member States throughout the Conference; recalls, however, the importance of not confusing the participation of citizens with the participation of civil society actors and, in particular, NGOs which sometimes pursue their own particular objectives and are not always representative of the popular will or the general interest;
7. Stresses that the real issue at stake at this Conference is the institutional organisation of the EU; considers that, while debate on thematic issues is possible, the conclusions cannot be deemed binding on either the Member States or the EU, each of which has its own institutional procedures for dealing with these subjects; points out that elections (including the European Parliament elections) are the appropriate avenue for translating popular sovereignty and political decisions into tangible action;

Organisation, composition and timetable

8. Expresses its hope that the deliberations of the Conference will be approached by participants in a serious and rigorous manner, and considers that a period of two years will be conducive to high-quality discussions provided the conditions set out in this resolution are respected;
9. Is of the opinion that the structure of the Conference should be as simple as possible and that all political forces should be represented at all levels of decision-making;
10. Suggests that the Conference should be chaired by three public figures with the wisdom, experience and neutrality necessary to conduct and organise the debates without pre-empting the conclusions; expresses the view that the operational oversight and review of the proceedings should be carried out by a bureau composed of representatives of the Council, the Commission and the political groups making up the European Parliament;
11. Considers that the plenary assembly could be composed of one third representatives of the European Parliament and two thirds Members of National Assemblies, with due respect for political pluralism; recognises, however, that even this composition raises problems of political legitimacy;
12. Opposes the establishment of citizens' agoras, which under no circumstances can be considered representative of the citizens of the Member States; points out that such an idea poses daunting problems in terms of the selection of citizens, the organisation of such agoras in several Member States of the EU, the costs associated with the contributions made by and the payment of those citizens, and the real and continuous participation of those citizens throughout the process;
13. Proposes that if effective and direct participation by citizens is indeed respected as an organising principle, candidates should be selected by drawing lots, paying particular attention to ensuring that they are representative of the demography of the Member States and that generational, geographical, sociological and socio-professional diversity is respected;

14. Considers that the most effective, fair and indisputable way of involving the citizens of the Member States is direct democracy and, in particular, the use of referendums;
15. Condemns the organisation of agoras specifically dedicated to the involvement of young people, an idea which directly contravenes the principle of equality of citizens irrespective of their age once they have reached the age of majority enabling them to exercise their rights and duties as citizens; considers, moreover, that this type of initiative is likely to fuel intergenerational conflicts, whereas mutual aid between generations is an important foundation of our societies;

Conclusion of the Conference's work

16. Calls for the Conference to produce a single reasoned document at the end of its work indicating whether or not there is a need to modify the institutional functioning of the EU;
17. Insists, if the Conference indeed calls for changes to the Treaties, that the Member States submit such amendments to a referendum if their constitutions so permit;

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18. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.