



Union of European Federalists  
Union Europäischer Föderalisten  
Union des Fédéralistes Européens

Mr David Sassoli, President

Chairs of the Political Groups

Members of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

Members of the Committee on Budgets

Members of the Committee on Economic and  
Monetary Affairs

European Parliament

Brussels, 25 May 2020

Dear Mr. President,  
Dear Chairs of the political groups,  
Dear Members of the European Parliament,

On behalf of the Union of European Federalists, I would like to bring to your attention some reflections on the role and possible initiatives of Parliament with regard to the ongoing negotiations on the definition of the financial instruments to respond to the Covid19 emergency and the new Multiannual Financial Framework, and also with regard to the prospect of the *Conference on the Future of Europe*.

The current crisis has made clear the importance of acting united as Europeans in an effective and supportive way, and has already led to some important developments. Before the pandemic, the European Union was preparing to open a debate with the citizens on the future of Europe: whether to limit itself to the Single Market, albeit with the extraordinary peculiarities, unique in history, that characterize it; or whether, resuming the path of the Founding Fathers, to constitute itself as a political unit. In tackling the pandemic, the Union has been faced with an unprecedented challenge, and has already made choices that indicate the need and the will to set out on this second path. Not only the European institutions in recent weeks, since the resolutions adopted by the European Parliament, have confirmed this; the ongoing confrontation between national governments also shows that the majority of Member States are moving towards this option, despite some strong resistance.

This means, first of all, that the Conference, when it opens, will have to discuss not indefinite options, but a concrete project for political union; and in order to achieve political union in a manner consistent with democratic principles, the European Union will have to discuss a proposal for a constitutional reform. The Conference will be a decisive step in the extent to which it can embody the transparent and participatory process by which citizens can become aware of and make choices regarding the attribution of the new necessary prerogatives at European level.

Only the European Parliament has the democratic legitimacy and the institutional vocation to put forward such an agenda for the Conference, first of all by rallying the majority of its members around such a revised mandate for the Conference, and then by drawing up, debating and proposing a draft European federal Constitution to the other European institutions. As it did in the first legislature under the leadership of Altiero Spinelli. We invite the EP Committee on Constitutional Affairs to discuss such a perspective as soon as possible

At the same time, and in line with this perspective, we call on Parliament also to consider the immediate opening of an initial reform process relating to the system of own resources of the European Union, also on the basis of the resolution adopted on 15 May. This reform is necessary and urgent, even more so in

the event of an agreement, along the lines of the proposal presented by France and Germany in recent days, on the issue of joint European debt, which Parliament has already called for in several resolutions. This hypothesis implies a significant change in the conception of the European budget, and raises a number of issues that need to be addressed now.

The most urgent issue is certainly the need to create new European resources, without asking higher contributions from the Member States but focusing notably on digital and financial giants and on polluters. This need is also supported by the European Parliament and some governments. To ensure this reform is permanent and fully effective, however, it is essential to modify the Treaties and the decision-making system laid down in them, in order to overcome the right of veto both in the Council and by the national parliaments, whose subsequent approval is a necessary condition. This is because the current system leaves European resources and therefore also the guarantee, direct or indirect of possible joint European debt in the hands of the States.

Breaking this knot - which involves amending only a few specific articles to ensure that it is the European Parliament and the Council by majority vote that establish the provisions relating to the Union's own resources, at the same time eliminating the passage of approvals at national level and thus establishing an autonomous fiscal capacity of the European Union - therefore becomes an indispensable contribution to ensuring the success of the negotiations under way and a qualitative, as well as quantitative, transformation of the European budget. The responses to the emergency must in fact inspire and guide the Union's institutional development from the outset, in order to make it more capable of meeting future political challenges.

The European Parliament can take upon itself to propose the required amendment to the Treaties and ask to commence the related process of treaty revision.

We invite the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs to discuss such a perspective as soon as possible.

The mere fact of opening a debate of this kind at a time when the crisis is leading to a radical change in the approach to certain fundamental aspects of the European Union, which until a few weeks ago were deemed unquestionable, would make it possible to channel the ongoing process towards the virtuous outcome of the completion of political union.

As repeatedly quoted by Winston Churchill, "never waste a good crisis": your ambition to contribute to the development of the European project and your political will have put you in a strategic position at this crucial moment. The federalists are counting on you and will do everything in their power to support you in this task to which history calls you.

Kindest regards,

Sandro Gozi  
President

