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## **Future of Europe Conference: Suica (EU Commission), “European democracy noisier than Putin’s bombs”**

“My daughter was born during the Conference on the Future of Europe, like the recommendations”. It was a young French mother, Linda Mustaki, whose picture at the European Parliament with her baby girl in her arms went viral among pro-Europeans, who opened the final event of the Conference in Strasbourg today for the official presentation of the 49 recommendations and 300 proposals to European leaders. “I learned three things”, said MEP Guy Verhofstadt, one of the three co-chairs of the Executive Board, addressing the Plenary: “In our societies, there is more coherence and unity than we think”; “people are not afraid of changes” which are all the more necessary now because “integration is no longer a choice but a necessity to survive”; and finally, “there is no contradiction between participatory democracy and representative democracy” since the first is an antidote to division and conflict. French Minister Clément Beaune (on behalf of the Council) recalled that when it was launched in 2021, the Conference was a “bet”, while a year later it became a success: “We had the good idea to count on you”, he said, addressing the citizens, “now, please count on us” for the implementation of the proposals. According to the third co-chair, Commissioner Dubravka Suica, “European democracy will no longer be the same” after the experience of the Conference which has showed us that “putting citizens at the centre was the right choice”. And she concluded: “European democracy makes more noise than Putin’s bombs”.

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