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## European Union: meeting of COMECE and CEC Presidents with EP President Roberta Metsola

The final report of the Conference on the Future of Europe (CoFoE), the ongoing war in Ukraine, and the implementation of Article 17 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU). These were the “key issues” discussed yesterday at the meeting that Card. Jean-Claude Hollerich and Rev. Christian Krieger, Presidents of the Commission of the Bishops’ Conferences of the European Union (COMECE) and of the Conference of European Churches (CEC), had with the President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola. In the context of the follow-up to the Conference on the Future of Europe – a joint statement from COMECE and CEC reads – the representatives of European Churches expressed their will to support “concrete outcomes”, not only “symbolic ones”, and to “further contribute to the works of the Conference”, especially by empowering the youth and by “reducing the distance between EU citizens and institutions”. The meeting also addressed the ongoing Russian war against Ukraine, stressing the role of Churches and religious communities in supporting the suffering local population, as well as refugees arriving in European countries. In view of the renewed efforts to end the war, the ecumenical delegation stressed that “truth and justice are preconditions for lasting peace in Europe”. Both Card. Hollerich and Rev. Krieger insisted on the importance of maintaining constructive dialogue and interaction with the EU institutions, in line with Article 17 of the TFEU, which, according to COMECE and CEC, “should be content-based and effectively address key points” of EU priority initiatives. “We are grateful for a very warm welcome and an open exchange with President Metsola, where she listened to us intently”, said CEC President Krieger. “All in all, it was a meeting that honours the spirit of an open dialogue provided for Churches and faith communities in Article 17 TFEU”. The delegation also put forward the idea of establishing a European Council of Religious Leaders to enhance dialogue between faith communities and the EU institutions. President Metsola was invited to open the first Council meeting scheduled for November 2022.

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