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## **Conference on the Future of Europe: the EU Parliament gives the green lights. “A bottom-up process”. Sassoli, “a great opportunity”**

Earlier today, the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament (which groups the president of the EU Assembly and the presidents of the parliamentary groups) approved the “joint statement” that lays down the operating rules and the principles that the Conference on the Future of Europe will be based on, an initiative that, as stated in the draft document, “will open a new space for a debate with the citizens to face their challenges and priorities” and, wherever they are in the EU, they can take part in it. Under the aegis of the three institutions of the European Union – Commission, Council and Parliament – it will be a “bottom-up” process, consisting of a multitude of events at every level and within every geographical radius. Despite the inescapable use of digital media, right now “physical attendance and personal contacts should be an integral part of the Conference”. “European citizens’ panels” will be set up, and they shall be as representative as possible. Young people will have to have a special place. A governance body will make sure it runs smoothly; the target will be a “report” which will be taken care of by the three institutions. Inclusivity, openness and transparency will be the guiding principles of the Conference. “The European Parliament approves the joint statement, because we want the Conference on the Future of Europe to start working as soon as possible”, the presidents of the parliamentary groups said in a statement. “It will remarkably help build a citizens’ Union”. David Sassoli, President of the European Parliament, greeted the “green lights” given by Parliament: “A great opportunity to work at a new Europe along with the citizens”, he commented.

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