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## **Future of Europe Conference: European Parliament, seminar to exchange views with faith and philosophical communities. “Regret” for not having been involved in plenary sessions**

“We could not but involve you to know your thoughts and perspectives about the Conference on the Future of Europe and the things that interest you most about the EU’s future”, said the Vice-President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola, as she opened the seminar with representatives of faith and philosophical communities at the European Parliament in Brussels today. “Be as frank and critical as possible”, she exhorted. Stefan Lunte (COMECE), was the first to speak. He spoke on behalf of the European Bishops who “support the Conference and its objectives”, but do have “some doubts”: is it wise to use the Conference to initiate a process of revision of the Treaties? Would it be necessary to maybe “extend” the duration of the conference? There are no churches or religious communities among the NGOs represented at the Plenary, which is regrettable. The digital platform facilitates the exchange of views and receives numerous contributions, “but they could be more and more inclusive”. Only 15% of the contributors are women and some countries are not very active. It is good, however, that young people are given a “strong voice”, which makes the Conference “refreshing, respectful, serious”. For the representative of the Conference of European Churches, Lena Kumlin, the Conference is “interesting and innovative”. Regretting the fact that the Churches have not been involved, she insisted on the fact that values, dignity, human rights, freedom and social justice must be the central themes, because the EU “is not an economic union, but a peace project”.

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