



| **SPECIAL COMMISSION ON FUTURES**

(Meeting on March 10, 2022)

(Connection is established via Zoom with some legislators)

Mr. President *ad hoc* (Rodrigo Goñi Reyes). -If there is a quorum, the meeting is open.

(It is 10:47)

— — The first item on the agenda should now be considered: "Election of the President and Vice-President of the Commission".

MR. VIANA (Pablo). -We propose Deputy Rodrigo Goñi to continue chairing the Special Committee on Futures.

Mr. President *ad hoc*. -It is going to be voted on. (It is being voted on)

— — Eight in nine: AFFIRMATIVE.

MR. OLMOS (Gustavo). -We are going to propose the legislator Silvia Nane to serve as vice-president of the Commission during this period.

MR. PRESIDENT. -It is going to be voted on. (It is being voted on)

— — Nine in the affirmative: AFFIRMATIVE. Unanimity.

Since there are no matters pending, I will take the opportunity to propose an event - we have already been discussing it with some legislators - which would take place on April 5, in which we would be presenting a publication.

- of course it will include all of us - a systematic summary of the thirty presentations made on the day of September 27, which have really been considered extremely valuable. In addition, it would allow us to make known all our names, addresses, what we have planned for this committee and what the law establishes. It is also a recognition for those thirty experts who remain in contact with us, and who were of the highest level, in the sense that we are collecting what they proposed. In this way we would be launching the year 2022.

We had assumed that this year we would address the future of work. This is the first topic that other committees on futures in the world have addressed, and it also allows us to work transversally. In this sense, we ask everyone to contribute names for the constitution of this committee of experts. Although those who have been collaborating and working with us have expressed full willingness to continue in a more permanent group - for example, Dr. Radi, who was the one who completed the workshop we held on September 27 - for this task we will need approximately fifteen experts on the subject. Along the same lines that we have worked, they should be as representative as possible in terms of perspectives, visions, ages, sex, gender, etc. This group has to be as plural as possible. That is why the preparation of the list of experts has to be approved by this committee, and beyond the fact that we will be exchanging ideas - as we did the other time, which resulted in a very plural group - we have to think about the experts. *think tank* that are working - some with a more economic approach and others from the union movement - and experts from various universities, the world of technology, etc.

Let's focus on the fact that they are experts on the subject, not that they have to study. The people we have started to talk to have been suggested by the rector of the university through many of you who have been thinking of names. Undoubtedly the best thing is that they are people who have worked and researched here or abroad - also abroad with issues from here - on this matter. We are going to continue talking about it, even informally, but I wanted to leave it on record in the shorthand version.

I would also like to state that we have received confirmation from UNDP regarding the advisory services provided by Lydia Garrido, the technical secretary of an economist to accompany us in this process, and from Bruno Gili, who is also working with us on this type of event and that is why we have invited him today. This is the group with which we have been working and of course we are always open to proposals from legislators.

The World Bank has also provided the work of professional María Noel Lanzaro to assist us in this task.

I think we have had a very good receptivity to help us in this process.

(Zoom connection ends)

(Connection is established via Teams)

— — We welcome you.

MR. STRAND (Joakim) (English interpretation). -Distinguished Senators and Deputies of the Special Commission on Futures of the General Assembly of Uruguay: I would like to tell you that we are very happy and pleased to have this

meeting with you. We don't have that much time, but I think we could start by introducing the Finnish cast. Then you will make your introductions and we can start talking about the activities of the Committee.

I would like each member of the Committee for the Future of Finland to introduce themselves.

I am the chairman of the Committee for the Future of Finland.

LADY TANUS (Sari). -I am a member of the Commission for the Future. Thank you very much.

MRS MÄKISALO-ROPPONEN (Merja). -I am a member of the Committee for the Future.

MR. PIRTTILAHTI (Arto). -I visited your country with the Committee for the Future a few years ago and I hope that we can continue this very strong cooperation that we have started.

Thank you so much.

MRS. HOLOPAINEN (Mari). -It is a pleasure to meet you. I believe that this international cooperation is of utmost importance in these critical times.

MR. STRAND (Joakim). -Thank you very much. We have other members of Parliament on the Finnish side, whom I do not see at the moment.

MRS. HÖYSSÄ (Maria). -I am a senior advisor to the Committee.

Nice to meet you.

MR. PRESIDENT. -Thank you so much.

First of all, thank you very much for your initiative to hold this meeting.

We know that you are going through a special moment, but it is very important for us to hold this meeting.

On our side, I will introduce our colleagues; we cannot direct the House to see them.

I present to you Deputy Verónica Mato, from the opposition; Senator Graciela Barrera, also from the opposition; Deputy Sebastián Valdomir, also from the opposition; Deputy Sebastián Cal, from the government coalition; Senator Carmen Sanguinetti, from the Colorado Party and also from

the governing coalition; Mr. Gustavo Olmos, from the opposition, from the Frente Amplio bench; Mr. Felipe Carballo Da Costa, from the opposition; Mr. Pablo Viana, from the National Party and from the governing coalition; and Mrs. Senator Silvia Nane, from the Frente Amplio and also from the opposition.

SENATOR NANE (Silvia). -It is a pleasure to see you all. I am vice president of the Committee for the Future and senator of the Frente Amplio, now in the opposition.

MR. PRESIDENT. -We are also joined by Ms Lydia Garrido, advisor to UNESCO, and Deputy Martín Melazzi.

MR. REPRESENTATIVE MELAZZI (Martin). -It is a pleasure for us to meet the members of the Commission for the Future of Finland, in order to work together. This is a very important meeting for all of us.

MR. PRESIDENT. -Also present was Mr Bruno Gili, coordinator of the group of experts.

I have finished the presentation.

We appreciate your willingness to assist us in this process.

We started last year. Although the Special Commission on Futures was created two years ago, we started our work last year.

Of course, we would like to congratulate you for everything you have done, for having started the Committee for the Future and for collaborating with other Parliaments such as that of Uruguay. We would like to mention that we received a visit from Finland in 2015; we received their visit and that represented an opportunity to see, to show us the way as an example and as a guide for our Parliament.

Of course, we want to learn from international best practices, especially from Finland, and also from international experts to establish an experience based on our identity and work to open ourselves to the world. In this way, we would like to inform you that our Commission is inspired by your Committee; we thank you for having always been able to count on you.

As I was saying, the Uruguay Commission was created two years ago and is made up, as you know, of the two Chambers, the Senate and the House of Representatives. In addition, we have representatives from all political parties, from the opposition to the members of the government coalition; from all political parties.

We started our process at the beginning of 2021, last year, and we dedicated most of our time and energy to fine-tuning all the organizational and operational aspects. In this regard, we agreed on advice from UNESCO, technical support from the United Nations Development Programme and the creation of a

group of experts to work together. This is a diverse group of experts in different areas of technology and bioethics to work together.

Last year, in September, we also held a major public event attended by more than thirty experts. At these events, our country's leading experts in science, technology and bioethics outlined the main challenges for the future, presenting their vision for our country.

For this year 2022, we have decided to address the work of the future through a plan that involves the contribution of experts on the subject and the exchange between legislators. We will produce a report on the different trends, threats and opportunities at the end of this year, in September, which will be presented to the national Parliament and to the entire country. That is our plan and we have a strong interest in deepening the relationship with your Committee for the Future. Uruguay does not have a future forecasting system, but we think that the foundations are established; therefore, we are going through this process in this Commission that comes from Parliament. We want to adopt an advanced forecasting framework and that is why we chose a hybrid system; we are aware that this is part of our work, with its complexity.

Finally, we would like to express our strong interest in maintaining the relationship with your Committee. Thank you very much for your invitation to participate in the Futures Summit, which will take place in your country in October.

Once again, Mr. President, we thank you for your willingness to listen to us; we are of course very interested in hearing from you.

MR. STRAND (Joakim) (English interpretation). -(English language interpretation is interrupted)

Our delegation highly appreciated the work you did during this trip in October 2015. The Committee visited parliaments, universities and factories. There are three members of Parliament who are here and participated in this visit in 2015.

Let me now tell you about the activities of our Committee. The Committee for the Future was established as a permanent committee of the Finnish Parliament in 1993 and in 2017 it included members of the Finnish Parliament. I noticed in your presentation that you raised the value of including members from all parties, and we do the same. We work together with the future in mind and we have an excellent committee where the work of all colleagues is appreciated; we have a nice atmosphere in the Committee. The counterpart in the cabinet is the Prime Minister, with whom we have good contact and good relations; we can say that our Committee serves as *a think tank* for futures, science and technology policies in Finland.

The Committee's mission is to generate dialogue with the government on the main future problems and also on opportunities. We always try to put or

have a positive mind to take advantage of opportunities, while considering threats, to see the problems of today's world.

We also work on our own projects that the Committee members are interested in and we have a budget that we can use in different areas. | We have the economy of ecological transitions; the development of the future of the European Union is important from the perspective of influence. Many of our reports can be found on the government website; they are available in English and we keep them up to date.

During this administrative period we have had major changes regarding sustainable development in the 2030 Agenda and other aspects related to that, such as fighting climate change by making the most of technology.

We also focus on topics related to artificial intelligence, both at national and European Union level, working with artificial intelligence.

We are currently working on a report on the reasons for well-being or discomfort or illness in our country, since both situations are very polarized.

There is an important polarization in which we have a parallelism; there are people who feel much better and, at the same time, there are people, especially among young people, who do not feel good at all about how society is for them.

So that is another of the topics we would like to present at the Summit.

We also have a very interesting topic regarding art and culture, facilitating export and innovation and technology policies: contributing and combining art and culture with technology.

We have very interesting examples. For example, if we think about the development of wind energy, we have an expert together with an engineer who have been looking at old images of birds, of birds, and seeing how nature has made animals use their wings, then, wind engineers have learned from that art to increase the efficiency of the mechanisms. That is just one example of the products in which we combine culture and technology in our policy.

As I said, we are very pleased to hear that you are coming to Finland. The formal name of the event is the "World Summit of Future Commissions". It will take place on 12 and 13 October - for us it is autumn. We will invite many committees, fourteen commissions from around the world, and we thank you for accepting our invitation. Of course, we will give you more information later.

The countries that have confirmed so far are: Austria Canada, Estonia, Iceland, Lithuania, Poland, Thailand and you. So we have a combination

very interesting from different countries and we are looking forward to some more confirming their presence.

What we want is to create a community of cooperation between future commissions from different corners of the world, and we are looking forward to working together in the pursuit of information. On the one hand, there is the Summit, and on the other, we also have publications to contribute to the world. We hope that this work can continue in the coming years and that we make this world a better place to live in.

So now I will make a brief introduction to the work of the Commission. I would like to leave the floor open for questions for all participants in the Commission, so please raise your hand and turn on your microphones, as this discussion is not strictly formal.

MR. PRESIDENT (English interpretation). -Thank you very much, Mr. President.

We have two quick questions because we are just starting this process.

First of all, as a legislator - we are in a parliamentary committee - I would like to know what process or methodology you used to work efficiently and effectively with experts in other scientific, technological, etc. fields.

Secondly, I would like to know how you handle the approval process for the final report. As we know, as you told us, you face different challenges and, finally, you approve reports to share, not only with the other parliaments, but with the country, as in everything. How is the approval process? I ask this question because, perhaps, different experts have different opinions, perspectives. How do you vote on the report?

How do they do it? Can you tell us how we can do it?

MR. STRAND (Joakim) (English interpretation). -Thank you very much for the question.

I'll try to answer. Maybe my colleagues can add something later.
further.

Our main task is to create dialogue with the government on the issues of future that are of concern, often linked to technology. We can say that after a government period ends, the government publishes reports on the future and presents the prospects. It is the Prime Minister's office that sends this report to Parliament. The main task we have is to prepare the response

to the Parliament about the reports. We are responsible to Parliament for the report of the

The Finnish government is trying to recognise the political issues and the questions that arise, especially those where changes can be made or legislation can be developed. Compared to other commissions on education, for example, or others, we do not work with legislation directly, but rather with our reports, but we can give our position as a commission. For example, during this spring we will talk about many aspects of security and foreign policy showing Finland's vision, and the Commission on the Future will present a statement on this.

In addition, there are other committees that will make statements, but we will not make any direct decisions regarding legislation, meaning that we do not have to vote on minor issues. ~~We work~~

Of course, when we ask ourselves these questions, we can have different views, for example, regarding climate change: how much effort are we willing to make as a country in that regard, because there are political parties that have different ways of dealing with climate change, and the same happens with other issues.

We have so far managed to reach a general agreement on the statements and it has not been necessary to vote, but perhaps some of my colleagues would like to add something to what I have just said.

Now that we have our friends from Uruguay, we have the opportunity to ask questions.

MR. PRESIDENT (English interpretation). -Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I don't know if you want to ask any questions; on the other hand, Senator Sanguinetti would like to ask a question.

SENATOR SANGUINETTI (Carmen) (English interpretation).

- Thank you very much, Mr. President, and to all of you for your participation. It is a pleasure for us to be able to speak with people like you who have so much experience.

I have a very specific question and I want to take this opportunity to ask it. You mentioned well-being versus illness or disease. Those of us who work with these issues are curious to know if you have experience working on issues like this in countries with economies like Uruguay's. Of course, it is much easier to talk about the economy and well-being in countries like Finland, where average salaries are much higher than in Uruguay.

I would like to know if you have had experience in parliaments in other countries that could be compatible with Uruguay.

MR. STRAND (Joakim) (English interpretation). -This question is extremely important; it is also very broad and very large.

Perhaps some of my colleagues would like to comment on this.

We are currently working on the report and do not have any information to declare because the work is in progress.

As you said, economic well-being is one of the main reasons why we are doing this research because we have the feeling - and there are many things that point in that direction - that even though we have more and more resources and better income, that does not mean that people feel good.

There may be aspects, such as technological ones, that influence; young people, for example, spend too much time on social networks, with all the pressure that implies.

In addition, in the last two years we have been living through a pandemic and we know that there are many young people who have stayed at home and have missed everything that is normal for their age. So there are many social aspects that have affected our population; but, perhaps - I don't know if you know - the health commission would be the best to respond in this regard; they are also working on this. We have to update these issues and we will do so at the Summit.

MR. PRESIDENT (English interpretation). -Thank you very much. Last question.

SENATOR NANE (Silvia) (English interpretation). -

Thanks to everyone.

I have specific questions regarding two points. Regarding budgetary issues, I would like to know what is the role of the Commission for the Future in the budgetary discussion and what is the role of the Commission in the discussion of strategic plans for science, technology and innovation.

Thank you so much.

GUEST (English language interpretation). -Excellent question. I'll start with the second part because science, technology, innovation, that really calls our interest. We are working on that, we hope and believe that

We can point to Finland, strengthening our position, and we are working on that in the report.

As far as budget is concerned, we don't have... Of course, our own budget is small if you think about the budgets that the Finnish government moves, and it is renewed every year. We have plans for two and three years; there we work on issues such as education, technology, development, research and cooperation with the private sector and with companies,

Perhaps my colleagues can add something. It is also good to remember that many of the members of the Future Commission also participate in other commissions; many are in the Trade and Finance Commissions. As I said, I hope that many of the ideas that we develop through this Future Commission will enrich the discussion of the other commissions; also that the funds for research will be increased, etc. That, indirectly, has an influence on our budget.

MRS. TANUS (Sari) (English language interpretation). -As the President told you, we work in other committees, so we bring those ideas to the other committees, whatever it is that we are discussing in our committee, and we make suggestions. In this way, in the committee we see the implications for the near and more distant future, seeing the influence on the different sectors; seeing not only where the world is taking us, but where we would like to go and what we can do to go in that direction.

I myself express my idea of thinking about where we come from, what our history is like and all those things that affect us, our children and the country. We consider all these things when we plan our future and make decisions for the future.

I would also like to refer to the discussion before. When we have some issues, how do we handle the issues in the Commission? We can invite experts - and we do occasionally do so - specialists, who come to the Commission meetings. We already know what the issue is that is going to be discussed in advance and they can make presentations or statements to the commission. One, two or three specialists can come and we listen to their presentations and, afterwards, we can discuss the issues. We ask them questions, they answer us and we continue to ask them about the different areas. | We even sometimes ask them to continue answering questions in writing after the sessions.

Furthermore, after hearing them, we can invite more specialists to the next meeting that deals with the same topic.

So we take a deep look at the issues - especially those we set as priorities - and create documents.

Once we have the documents, we discuss them together. As our president said, we usually don't need to argue, but we just come to an agreement on the type of document. In general, we all agree on what is written in these documents.

This means that we follow a process that uses a lot of dialogue: we listen to experts, ask questions, listen to the answers, develop documents and issue statements.

At the end, the document is available to everyone. Of course, we also hold plenary meetings and give our documents to other committees, depending on the topic discussed in the Committee.

MR. STRAND (Joakim) (English language interpretation)What has been said is very important: the role of the experts we invited.

For example, yesterday we received four experts on space issues. Tomorrow, we will continue talking with more experts who will talk about space.

No matter who we invite, experts are always happy to attend, which is a great thing.

Next, I would like to ask you a question regarding your situation.

When our Commission was founded in the mid-nineties, there were some areas that did not have much respect for the Commission; they felt that we were not good for much. I think that our role in Parliament has become more established and is increasingly appreciated and respected; we see this in our work. So I would like to ask you how your colleagues in Parliament reacted to the creation of your Commission. Are they excited? Are they happy or do they just see you as a *think tank*, and they discuss things about the future?

MR. PRESIDENT. -((English Language Interpretation) It seems to me that the same thing that you experienced is happening to us.

Some legislators believe that we will not be able to create an open vision to take advantage of the opportunities that change offers us and, of course, to face the threats that the world presents us with every day.

As you know, threats do happen, but I think we can deal with this situation and continue its process.

We hope that the rest of the parliamentarians and the population will be able to see the product of our Commission's work.

MR. REPRESENTATIVE VALDOMIR (Sebastian) (English language interpretation). - Thank you very much, dear colleagues, for sharing your time today.

I have two questions. One is what topics we will be discussing at the October summit. The other is whether it would be possible to include some seminars on technology transfer, because the difference between your country and ours may be a specific topic to develop in our relationship. As you know, in global terms, best practices in technology transfer is the most important issue among the countries of the North, but we are in the South, where there are small economies, which have to face enormous challenges around environmental issues and social policies. Therefore, it would be important to consider whether these topics can be included in the October summit.

MR. STRAND (Joakim) (English language interpretation)- We can still set the topics to be discussed at the summit. We are even receiving input from people who tell us what they want to include on the agenda.

I think there are issues that do indeed have to be presented. Those raised by the honourable legislator will be included in one way or another; there is no doubt about that.

On the other hand, it seems to me that the summit will be very important to define the direction of many future commissions in the world.

Something we are doing more and more is opening up our reports so that everyone can have access to them and they are available to the general public. In a week or two, we will be hosting young people from all over Finland in Parliament. One of the committees they will be visiting is our own: the Committee on the Future. We will be keeping them up to date with the summit because we want people to be inspired and to be inspired by their ideas about the future.

MRS. HOLOPAINEN (Mari) (English language interpretation). -From the Secretariat, I would like to thank you for your questions. Since we are running out of time, it would be very helpful if you could send them to us in writing.

MR. STRAND (Joakim) (English language interpretation)- Mr. President, from Finland I would like to warmly thank you for this meeting. We look forward to meeting you in person. We hope that you can come in October. We look forward to that time to further develop our collaboration.

MR. PRESIDENT (English interpretation). -Thank you very much, Mr. President.

Once again, we thank you for your time, especially at this time. On behalf of our country and Parliament, we would like to express our unreserved solidarity and closeness to your nation at this very special time that it is facing.

Of course, we will see you in October. After that, I hope we can welcome you back to our country.

MR. STRAND (Joakim) (English interpretation). -I would love to have another opportunity to visit Uruguay.

Thank you very much, and welcome to Finland!

MR. PRESIDENT (English interpretation). -Thank you very much. (Concludes the connection via Teams)

— — It was difficult, but we had to do it. I think it went very well. We have to get used to having meetings of this kind.

Thank you, Trinidad; it turned out perfectly. We will continue to need you because we already have several invitations and requests from other future committees, such as those in New Zealand, Australia and Canada. I think that is the dynamic that works in these committees: collective intelligence and sharing knowledge and experience.

If you like, we can continue working on the activity for Tuesday, April 5th.

(Dialogues)

— — The 27th is the referendum, the following week is the post-referendum and then comes Easter or Holy Week; we cannot extend it any further. That is a week that will be half free, with very little activity, as I spoke with the vice president, and the Senate and Deputies would make room for us so that we can hold the event, short; an hour and a half. If you want, we can do it on Wednesday the 6th.

(Dialogues)

— — Well, we see.

I managed to do it in the Events Hall. The idea is to invite - it doesn't matter if they are not present in person - the thirty experts that they gave us, whose presentations will also be published. Lydia is systematizing these presentations, because it is good and useful. Of course, each one of them will have the possibility of making changes, if they understand that what we have translated is not reliable. In this way, we can start working. Naturally, we will be in contact to form this group of experts, which will be between twelve and fifteen people, to be able to start working with Lydia and with the UNDP, which is also

He is very interested. Lydia also has a relationship with the UNDP. She wanted to do it this way; the UNDP wanted to participate and give us that contractual opportunity. Bruno Gili, who accompanied us today and also helped us coordinate the other activity, is helping us for the next one.

I would like to add that the World Bank wants to collaborate by offering contributions. Perhaps we should all attend a meeting with Ms. María Noel Lanzaro.

The legal deadline for the report is September 27. If we do well, we can make a preliminary report and say that we will complete it later, but, by law, we have to present something on that date. So, we have to get to work now. What will the dynamic be? Once this group of experts is formed, we will hold two public events per year; in principle, we decided that this would be the first. *modus operandi* We could do one in May or June and another in August with three or four experts, those who have studied the most and want to participate. Then we will have exchanges with them here; it would probably be better to do it after they have made the presentation or the report they provide. Afterwards, they will help us to make the report.

We have no idea how to produce such a report. Why? In principle, it seems to me that the perspectives and approach to the challenges posed can be very different. Certainly, others have done so. There are commissions, for example, such as the national bioethics commissions, in which, on specific and complex issues, there are different perspectives and different ways of approaching them, and it is not necessary to produce a majority report and another one for the minority. That is what we can aim for.

MRS. GARRIDO (Lydia).-I just want to point out something technical, in case you haven't heard.

In the case of Finland, the report is sent from the Prime Minister's office to Parliament - as they said - to be analyzed and responded to, and it is done per government period. They work on that report for four or five years. I mention this because of a time issue and the number of *expertises* that needs to be included in it, even more so if we think of it as a work of collective intelligence, of co-creation.

MR. PRESIDENT. -By law, we have to deliver a report on a certain date. We are not going to get away from that. We will see if there will be a first report - and we have already announced that we will vote on it here - or if it is a report that will then have a second report. Undoubtedly, the issue of future work will open up a number of other issues, which, even today, are already very controversial. We cannot say that on September 27 we are not going to do something, because, by law, we have to do it. Naturally, we have the possibility of seeing how we can make it concrete. In addition, I think it is good for the experts who have hours in universities, etc., because what they ask most is when it ends. It was different for the experts who offered their time and who expressed their willingness to be there permanently, like those we had on September 27. But here, on a specific job, we are going to do it.

We will limit ourselves to September of this year. Afterwards, we have the broadest authority to see how we expand this preliminary report, etc. In addition, a number of other issues will emerge from it, such as education, universal basic income, etc. I am referring to a number of related issues that will be raised and that it is good that we open up. We are not going to close ourselves off or leave something too open so that they can tell us that we are not complying with the law.

That's kind of the scheme.

Do we agree? Thank you.

The meeting is adjourned. (It is 12 o'clock)

Montevideo, Uruguay. Legislative Branch.