



SPECIAL COMMISSION ON FUTURES

(Session held on September 27, 2021).

MR. PRESIDENT. -If there is a quorum, the session is open.

(It is 1:26 p.m.)

– As you know, the Special Commission on Futures wanted to have this This is an extended working session with those who will accompany us in this process and help us to make it a reality. I will therefore begin by introducing the guests: Celia Ortega, representative of the World Bank; Stefan Liller and Gabriel Bottino, representatives of the UNDP, and Lydia Garrido, representative of the UNESCO Chair in Anticipation and Resilience, who have helped us organize this wonderful meeting, and who have been working very hard. We are also joined by Alberto Majó, from the Ministry of Education and Culture, National Director of Innovation, Science and Technology.

I also introduce the members of this commission: deputies Gustavo Olmos, Verónica Mato and Felipe Carballo, members of the opposition bench - I clarify this only for identification purposes -; deputy Sebastián Cal, member of Cabildo Abierto; deputy Daniel Peña, member of the Partido de la Gente; deputy Martín Melazzi and senator Carmen Sanguinetti, members of the Colorado Party, and deputy Fernanda Araújo, also a member of the government bench, who participates via Zoom. Bruno Gili also joins us.

The idea is to work today in the most relaxed way possible, because we come from a stressful half day and we still have the other half left. We had asked Lydia Garrido for help, who has helped us during this time to think, to prepare, to plan in some way a process that we are just beginning, which is new for Parliament. The subject matter is new and so are some ways of understanding temporal aspects and the fact of seeking to address challenges that, because they are medium and long term, we have to do it together, because one is in the Government today, but tomorrow that changes. So, it is very important that we all get involved, that we all think about it. Another of the innovations that we are making, without much noise – although there is no regulation that prohibits it, it is not an experience that has been applied–, is to incorporate extra-parliamentary actors into our work.

As you know - we have been discussing it - for this event that we held today we asked Bruno Gili for collaboration, who had experience in

This type of event is held in other parts of the world, and he had told us what the best formats could be. Although he is not a legislator, for now, he is taking charge – naturally always sharing and consulting– of an event that is going wonderfully well with a panel of top-level speakers. Some of them –for more than understandable reasons– do not make statements anywhere for professional and business reasons. As Bruno Gili said, they all said yes. In addition, we have a number of top-level experts. We had a maximum of twenty-four, and you have suggested some that will be incorporated. As we have been discussing, the idea –Lydia Garrido will explain it later– is to propose different lines of action and form a more permanent group so that this commission can consult and work with them. And they have all said yes. We have had many calls from people who also want to be there. We are going to maintain this plurality at all levels, from knowledge to membership in ideologies and parties. Of course, we will integrate people who are able to contribute knowledge. This is just the beginning.

What have we asked Lydia Garrido to present to us today – and we have been working on this for some time now – remember that this is a new process for everyone and, of course, we have to decide, approve and define it together. Naturally, we have asked for the expertise of those who are working on this elsewhere, either individually or through institutions. For this reason, Parliament signed a framework agreement with UNESCO. The UNDP is working in other parliaments around the world and you know of its presence in Uruguay and its willingness to contribute. For this reason, we asked them to be present today so that you can learn about the situation firsthand and they can tell us what they have to offer us. In the case of the World Bank, as you know, we had scheduled it for Thursday the 30th, but we have an interpellation, which was not collaborative with the Frente Amplio.

MRS. NANE. -You will have to speak to the minister because he was the one who proposed the date.

MR. PRESIDENT. -Okay, you're right.

The World Bank is working on these issues. It is very interested in learning about and participate in what we are doing and had the delicacy – as I mentioned last week in the commission – to offer an opportunity to share the work that they are going to publish in the coming weeks or months on the prospects for Uruguay.

Now we are going to ask Lydia Garrido to present us with a proposal that We need to understand in order to begin to locate the different activities to be carried out. The intention today is for us to get an idea of what the format and methodology to be applied would be, which is very varied and has many dimensions. Then we will have to define and we will have to separate ourselves in order to address everything that is necessary. As I said at the beginning, events are part of a more complex process.

We now give the floor to Mrs. Garrido.

MRS. GARRIDO. -Good afternoon everyone, and thank you very much for the invitation. It is truly a privilege and an honour to be here sharing with you my experience, which is also collective because it arises from the work that has been done with an international team on the subject of the “use of the future” linked to decision-making, as well as the interactions that have taken place with some of you over the last six years to be able to reach this stage, for which I congratulate you.

I'm going to share the presentation because I was told there were going to be people connected by Zoom; I will try to be concise and not burden you with too many concepts, because this morning has really been very intense.

Perhaps I should clarify some issues that I think are important to start with.

Working with the future has its specificity. Why? Because the future itself does not exist; otherwise, it would cease to be the future. However, we use it on a daily basis and the purpose of this commission is to use the future to analyse opportunities and possible threats, giving meaning to what is emerging and relating the long term to the present. What are we ultimately using to work with the future? We use imagination and anticipatory systems. Why do I say that we are using imagination? Because foresight, as a highly cognitive capacity that we humans have, is the capacity to imagine futures, to think about futures, to think about what does not exist, and it is precisely imagination that allows us to think about what does not exist.

In turn, imagination is linked to these anticipatory systems that we use in the form of *input*, of information, when we see and analyze alternatives in the present in relation to futures. This approach – on which I have been working, accompanying UNESCO since 2012 – is based on biological sciences, on research on anticipatory systems in humans, specifically on conscious anticipation and on cognitive processes for decision-making. In addition, it articulates a series of approaches and tools that we are more accustomed to using, such as, for example, for preparation, prevention and planning, using a series of techniques and tools within what is known as Futures Studies. With this I close this brief basic introduction, because this approach emphasizes anticipatory capacities, it is an approach of capacities – that is why it is called “literacy in the use of futures” – to be able to read, write and understand in relation to the future.

What we have been exchanging and working on, simply as a draft of inputs, could be summarized in this slide, in four types of components. The first of these includes the knowledge and information that we produce as people through, for example, the members of the expert advisory group; the work dynamics of the members of the commission with the experts, whether with the group's advisors or with some others that are considered necessary, and with

inputs that come from studies and prospective exercises on specific topics. There are hundreds of studies related to this topic, but if you want to delve deeper into a specific issue, you will probably need to do a specific exercise.

It also draws on knowledge and information from activities such as the one we are discussing today, events of this kind, with the participation of multiple exhibitors; also through international connections with other parliamentarians or research groups on future-oriented topics and dissemination activities.

There is a third block of components that also has to do with knowledge and information and refers to the purest and hardest aspect between the conceptual and the methodological in order to give comprehensiveness and coherence to the information and knowledge that is generated in all these types of activities and in more specific, more concrete, more intense or diffuse interactions, but which it is interesting to collect and take advantage of by systematizing and integrating them.

This contributes to inputs in main axes: the identification of trends, of drivers of change, of disruptions or of *shocks*, and weak signals (within the specific language). It is about identifying emerging issues and an evaluative analysis to identify which of them are understood as threats, which may be opportunities with the focus on expanding the possibilities, the opportunities, and which inhibitors and enablers we identify. It is worth noting that during the morning a lot of all this was emerging.

In order to have certain definitions, it is necessary to work with challenges and potentialities, which will be part of what the commission discusses with the experts and of the process itself that is carried out. That would be the third component, which is integration in the form of feedback and input as part of the process of collective knowledge creation.

It is also important to have progress reports – perhaps this is a matter to be defined, but it may be interesting to have them bi-monthly – with the objective of presenting the final report, which will be presented in September of next year.

MR. PRESIDENT. -I know there are a lot of things, but if we don't understand this first part, it will be difficult for us to move on to the second.

In some way, what Mrs. Garrido proposes to us in the first part of articulations includes all the activities, actors and materials that we have to articulate.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, we have a very important group of experts – each in their own area – willing to work in the way we tell them. We are thinking of mixed working groups – made up of these experts and us – in

which we can participate more or less actively. Naturally, they can be carried out by experts later on.

On the other hand, there are all the prospective studies that have been done in the world. – the honourable legislators will have seen them –; of course, we will take some of them, but we will also make others here.

There is also a part of events – like the one we are holding today – that we are already being asked for, but we need to analyse them. For example, people linked to culture want to have a starting instance to know, in this matter of adaptation, how much of our culture to preserve in this change-preservation game.

We have international connections. Our ambassadors are offering us opportunities to meet with future commissions from other countries, from other parliaments that want to exchange ideas with us. In fact, some want to invite us to participate. In principle, there is the Commission for the Future of Finland, but there are also other ones closer to home with which negotiations are being made.

We also carry out dissemination activities that, although they are events, in some way serve to transmit some of the things we are developing.

Finally, there is the whole part of methodological design. At first it will be difficult for us to accept and apply it, but, as we have always said, we are not going to improvise. The inputs we develop should be the basis, even, for legislating or not. We must use this future with methodologies that give us guarantees about the solidity of what we are developing.

All these things – which are a quantity – must have an integration, an integrality. We are beginning a systematic and systemic process – which is also part of this methodology – and, naturally, a work in which today's guests will not be tomorrow's guests, but active participants who will help us in all the work of compilation and systematization, which is enormous and goes beyond our strength.

These are all the elements and the articulations that we need to put on the table, in addition to the things that emerge. I am referring to everything that we know we need to look for. Naturally, all these changes generate a huge number of risks that we need to identify and also opportunities.

Regarding trends, we are not going to take them with determinism, but we must know them, know their strength, and we will always do so from our potentialities and weaknesses. We have discussed this a lot with the UNDP and UNESCO, and that is why we are doing it here in Uruguay. We are not going to copy what is done in Finland, Belgium or the United States.

We are going to prepare reports, make drafts and we will see how to go. by reaching consensus. Those reports that obtain consensus more quickly and that

We understand that they must be disseminated, and they will be, although what the law establishes is an annual report that must be given to the public on the last Monday of September. Naturally, that will be the final report that, as has happened in other parts of the world, will trigger debates, discussions, controversies, etc.

MRS. GARRIDO. -As you can see, the horizontal line of the intermediate title "Articulations, Inputs and Support for Processes", which leads to a final document and has the arrows in both directions, is intended to account for the comings and goings, that is, the most iterative issues and we could also call it "interactions, *inputs* and processes». These would be the three components for obtaining the final product of the report. Something key and substantial in all this is the reading that is done, for example, of the trends, the drivers of change and what can be seen as threats, opportunities, inhibitors and enablers. I am going to mention an example, based on what I heard this morning in the excellent presentations, which I took note of because I understand that there are many interesting things that can be integrated.

I want to focus on what happens when you frame the different problems or themes, trends, drivers of change or disruptions in other settings. For example, one of the speakers mentioned some issues that Uruguay cannot change and spoke of scale, geography, hard demographics and global trends. Depending on how we frame this in terms of futures, we do not have a problem of scale because, for example, we have the conditions to go beyond our borders. So, that is not something we have to change, but rather we simply need to access.

As for the subject of geography, in the conditions we are in, geography or space and the land factor are being redefined and no longer have the meaning they had in the era we are leaving behind to move on to a new one. That would not be a limitation either. I am not going to address the subject of demography because it would take us more time, but I do want to introduce the issue that we are in long-lived societies and, if we think about it in terms of the future, birth rates lose relative weight in the demographic issue. We cannot change global trends either, but we can quickly identify opportunities to take advantage of them.

The above graph can also be presented in this other way and, ultimately, it is about going back to the differentiation of the different components and how these contribute –or will contribute within the process– to the theme that brings together this first year of work of the commission, which has to do with the future of work and the work of the future. We must also take into account the ecology of related themes, as already mentioned today, because thinking about the future of work and the work of the future is thinking about the educational system and how we learn. For example, there was talk of transformations that go far beyond the educational system as we are currently understanding and addressing it. It is also about thinking about the possibilities and the change that technologies open up for new platforms that allow us to understand new business opportunities and, therefore, different business models;

different working relationships, aspects that also have to do with the environment, for example, the pressure on planetary boundaries. All this is linked to the theme of the future, work and the work of the future. That is what I was referring to as ecologies of related themes.

As for the topic of studies, what we find interesting here is that a selection, a compilation, a small systematization and synthesis of some that may be significant can be made. I am also a member of The Millennium Project, Global Futures Studies & Research, a global Think Tank. The Millennium Project alone has, on this topic – which we worked on from 2015 to 2018 – more than a thousand reports and they are constantly updated. There are many other databases, from institutions and research centers that are constantly generating knowledge.

We have already talked about the topic of experts in the various modalities that can to have interaction with them, either at the working tables – as the president of this commission explained –, through interviews that are needed to delve deeper into certain issues or using the questionnaire format. There is a specific methodology within the area of future studies that perhaps some of you know. I am referring to the Delphi method, for example, which consists of questionnaires to experts that can be done in real time in order to see what is being collectively understood about a certain topic. But it also allows us to analyze the peaks within the Gauss bell curve – that is, not only everything that falls in the center – and that can give us certain clues to check and go deeper.

That's what I meant by the design, within the process, of some specific prospective exercises as they become necessary. With this I want to clarify that the other option could be to define a prospective study, a specific prospective exercise on the future of work and choose some type of modality such as the traditional ones used in Latin America, the French prospective, with which there is a lot of experience, but that would mean embarking, suddenly, on one, two or three year projects. At this time it is understood that it would not be the most pertinent modality. What is needed – as was reiterated today – are much more agile issues, which appeal more to collective intelligence and collective intelligence systems, with the focus grounded in our own, in the local. The component, the sphere of processes is placed to make visible that, ultimately, what we are talking about is knowledge creation processes. Otherwise, it is data, disjointed information. If it is about access to information, there is (almost) everything on the Internet, but the issue is how to systematize it, how to select and give it pertinent meaning.

Obviously, from our perspective, the key is in methodological integration, in a hybrid methodological integration. Here we are not talking about downloading a manual or following a single path, but rather about the design of a research process because, ultimately, the report is a research that we could define as hybrid due to this different articulation of sources, methodologies and times. Do you have any questions about this?

MRS. SANGUINETTI. -Thank you all for your time. For many legislators, this is one of the commissions that excites us the most. I don't know if it's so much about this, but I've had a question since early on and I was thinking of mentioning it to the president.

I want to understand a little better what has been – for you who have so much experience in other countries – the effect of the Futures Committee on the other committees and on Parliament in general. I imagine the Futures Committee pulling Parliament towards something closer to the future in its entire way of working. I wanted to know if you have any input or comments on this.

Thank you so much.

MRS. GARRIDO. -I will try to answer the question with something else, putting ourselves in the key of the future, in the need that exists today to integrate the future in decision-making at the level of public policies and in the recommendations and implementations that, for example, the European Parliament is carrying out in this matter of convening and requesting that each Government have its Ministry of Futures. The relevance of the need to integrate the future in decision-making is such that it would go beyond a commission and we would be talking about ministries.

Now, to address the specific question, we can take the case of Finland as a reference. I would also have to answer it taking into account the context of maturity in terms of the incorporation of the use of the future, not only at the government level, but also at the broader level of society, obviously including academia, but also the private sector. Although they are many years ahead of us, perhaps almost thirty years, since they started after the crisis of the early nineties in Finland. The first to react was the Academy, establishing the Finnish Futures Research Centre (FFRC) at the University of Turku and the creation of some other institutions such as Sitra. In 1993, the Futures Commission was created in Parliament with a direct link to the Prime Minister's Office and, in turn, with requests that each ministry have an office that analyzes the different issues in terms of futures. Two or three years ago, they began a second or third restructuring of the system to look at it and approach it in a truly ecosystemic way because, in any case, the process itself had a certain history, not of fragmentation – that would not be the right word – but of different parts and divisions that incorporated foresight. Today they are in a phase of comprehensive design. So, the fact that it operates in such an extended, so ingrained way, I think explains some of the achievements that Finland has had in recent years. All of this is due to the incorporation of this thinking in terms of futures. As some members of the commission mentioned, the decision that Finland made with respect to coming to invest in Uruguay was a recommendation made by the Special Commission on Futures. That is to say, the identification of opportunities and possibilities is part of the analysis in terms of futures.

MRS. NANE. -Some of the questions I had for you have already been answered during the course of the conversation.

One of the things I was trying to imagine was whether within the methodology we have an assessment of the level of maturity, which, as was said, is not only the level of maturity that we have at the institutional level, but also that of education and that of private and public infrastructure. So, that is one of the first questions: Is there a kind of diagnosis of the level of maturity? Previously, I worked a lot with quality models that are based on levels of maturity. Typically, one asks oneself where one is standing, in order to start moving.

The other question I wanted to raise, which is a major concern for me, is the next one. We are going towards the future, but we are not all going the same way; we are not all going from the same starting point in terms of time because primary school children do not do it the same as secondary school children, or university students, or adults, or older adults, or us, who are sort of in the middle and know that we will live perhaps another twenty years. We are not all going towards the future the same way in terms of opportunities, and with respect to this issue we can start talking about all the gaps you want or make the classifications and cross-sections you want.

Although I understand that within the State policies we are moving towards a Uruguay of the future, I don't know if we should not think a little about different institutionalities that move towards the comprehensive. Precisely, one of the problems that we have to solve in order to establish State policies is to look at the country in a comprehensive way.

I am going to make a brief political digression. I was looking for the Uruguay 2050 forecast that was produced by the OPP and it is no longer available. Why is it not available? We can say that it was useless, but perhaps it was useful for something. Why don't we have it available so that we can start working on something and change what needs to be changed? This is a small political consideration; we cannot reinvent the country every five years. In that sense, where do we typically start? In that diagnostic report, would we separate, for example, what would have to do with the institutionality that we need? We have been doing some institutional experiments in this country that have not had sufficient comprehensive strength.

There is an institutional issue that often has to do with doing something with science, technology and innovation. But it is not only that. We are standing as a country in which a large number of kids learned computational thinking thanks to the Ceibal Plan. It is something totally different from how our generation learned, which, in turn, was completely different from how my mother's generation learned. Because of the way they learned, those kids have a level of abstraction and relationship with the environment that is completely different from what we can have.

So, in the analysis of all these different realities, in these fifteen or twenty years - I am not referring to the political issues of government, but to the world - Uruguay has had a lot of development, which it did not have in other times.

So, do we go first towards the institutional or do we go first towards the diagnosis? How do we make those institutions converse? Today, primary school practically does not converse with secondary school in terms of education, right? So, how are we going to generate abstract thinking in certain generations that are outside of abstract thinking? I imagine kids learning chess so that they can later learn computational thinking and in that way begin to level certain opportunities from which the State can act. I imagine a National Integrated Care System that addresses the care that women provide in order to begin to work on the gender gap. So, first it would be the institutional, but how is this approached from an integral perspective? We cannot solve it with a ministry of science, innovation and technology.

I put a lot of things on the table, because the truth is that we have a country complex; we are few, but the reality of public happiness is always complex. So, where do we start? What are the international experiences in this regard?

MR. PRESIDENT. -One of the things we can do in all this is to relate to all parties. I remember that in the previous five years I always shouted that very good things were being done, but they did not go through Parliament. I must have gone to all the instances that were held in the OPP; I was zero fouls in that. Now, in my experience, when things do not go through Parliament – and I am not saying that this is good – it is very exposed. This country is very parliament-centric. Maybe all this generates changes, but for now it is like this. That is why when they ask me about the role of Parliament in this future, my answer is that at least it is a place where they try to relate to everyone.

In the group that we already have, we invited all those who worked on Uruguay 2050. We even invited some of them to this event, but they couldn't attend. Perhaps that will be our main contribution: to generate that relationship. Unfortunately, Uruguay is very fond of the farms and we, in some way, have the commitment to ensure that there is integration; that is the first thing. Perhaps Lydia Garrido can share some experience with us, without giving an opinion, because for now we have to think about how we are going to do it.

MRS. GARRIDO. -Thank you very much. You have raised a nice question that I would take in two parts and I am going to focus on the more methodological issue; I am not going to go into what has to do with what is the political decision, ultimately, the value of the subject.

Regarding the degree of maturity, although what I am going to answer is not The result of a study carried out is my calibration, since I have been working since 2008, for example, with the Uruguay 2030 vision and what was the basis for the sectoral councils, to which I would like to add that in 2000 or 2001, in agreement with UNIDO, a series of prospective exercises were carried out in Transport, Logistics and also in the Environment. Also, in terms of background, we generally place the CIDE as an anchor in the sixties.

Now, without going too far back and looking at the last ten or fifteen years, I think it is important to take into account everything that has been generated by La Diaria around the day of the future. That is to say, Uruguay is not starting from scratch and neither is Parliament – which is what interests us.

I found it extremely interesting what was raised at the last panel regarding the fact that of the three branches of government, Parliament inherently has a sense of orientation towards the future. So, it is true that we do not have the maturity, the capabilities or the strengths that Finland has, but we are not at zero. We have other things that contribute to how to use the future for collective decision-making, beyond decision-making at the government level. For example, last year MIT – this was also brought up this morning – conducted a survey of the innovative ecosystem and assessed the maturity that we have in our innovative ecosystem and, within maturity, one of the qualities is the willingness to collaborate and the ease with which we manage to generate trust when we get away from polarized logics that separate into exclusive antagonists. So, let's look at the glass half full and I think we have a good place to start.

The other thing – this is even more focused on the theoretical methodological and conceptual basis that we can imagine that we are moving towards the future, but we could also think that the future is coming towards us or that it is already happening in the form of emergencies and what we have to do is recognize them, give them meaning and take advantage of the opportunities there, as was said this morning, that what was changing was the change and that it is not only a question of acceleration, but also of depth, it is a question of change of change. This is, precisely, one of the strengths of the futures literacy approach: learning to recognize change in the terms of change. Why? To be able to influence change. How? By identifying and expanding alternatives. This is connected to the concern they raised about inequities or inequalities, because it aims to broaden the alternative options we have in the here and now, in the present, but including the future, that is, bringing the future to the present as a generative aspect of futures (through the alternatives that are discovered or created), and not starting from a flat analysis or diagnosis of what there is, which although it must be done, the logic for the approach must be changed. That is why I said that when working with the future it is necessary to make a change at the inflection point.

(Dialogues).

MR. LILLER. -Many thanks to the Chairman of the Committee and to all the members for inviting us here today. We are very pleased and honoured to be discussing these issues.

I really like a quote that says that “the future is already here”, it is just unequally distributed; that is, there are signs of the future, as several colleagues said, that are everywhere.

UNDP --I don't know how many of you know us, some more than others-- The United Nations is the development arm of the United Nations; we are working in 170 countries, largely with parliaments on the issue of democratic governance. Here too, we have worked a lot with Parliament. Last year, as in the last four legislative transitions, we were in the parliamentary dialogues and I know that several of you were there. So we are very interested in working with and supporting Parliament.

As an organization we have also worked hard over the last few years, on the topic of innovation and its complexity. For example, in the last five years, 115 acceleration or innovation laboratories have been established around the world; one of them has been here in Uruguay since last year. So this whole agenda for the future interests us a lot and we have been accompanying several countries in this type of processes, dialogues and reflections.

We wanted to offer the commission – we have also discussed this with Lidia Brito, the regional director of UNESCO – a kind of technical secretariat to provide support over a longer period of time; like a kind of team that walks alongside the commission, and ensures that all these methodologies from abroad arrive, as well as experts, to connect with other countries and experiences. This is a bit of the approach that we came to propose together with these two United Nations agencies to work on. I am not going to put specific topics because it is something to look at later – these same processes generate these conversations – but we do want to support them to walk that path.

That's what we came for. Thank you.

MR. PRESIDENT. -Thank you very much. We will accept it. As we say, very frankly, we are just beginning a process that we know will be very complex, and we need the help of many and especially yours. Naturally, without haste, but without pause, we will continue to develop the pertinent forms through agreements. From the presidency of the General Assembly, but also from the presidency of the House of Representatives, there is a willingness to do so. And although it is not a path that has been taken very far, we are going to innovate in this as well.

Mrs. Celia Ortega, representative of the World Bank in our country, has the floor.

MRS. ORTEGA. -Good afternoon. Thank you very much for the invitation. This is the first time we have met face to face. Thank you for knocking on our door. I am delighted to be here with the members of the committee. The truth is that I think not. we could arrive at a more opportune time.

We were recently talking at the World Bank, with other colleagues and others development partners, who felt that we were very much in the present, in the agenda of today and tomorrow – perhaps the day after tomorrow – but how do we think about the issues of

In the medium and long term, we were missing it a little because we cannot let our guard down. Maybe because we at the World Bank have it as part of our DNA: we are always thinking about what will happen in fifteen years, in thirty years. Knowing that this initiative is underway, I think it is very good news.

I found this morning's meeting to be excellent. I have learned a lot and been very inspired by it – I hope others too – and I think it shows the tone of the high level that the commission is setting. So I am delighted to be able to sit down and see how we can complement the work of colleagues at UNESCO and UNDP in order to support something that is already underway and which we hope will continue beyond next year. A futures commission is really a time-consuming investment.

We want to put on the table, because it seems appropriate to us –curiously someone spoke of a maturity diagnosis and perhaps we already have one–, a study that the World Bank systematically carries out in all the countries where we work, every five years, that is why we call it a “systematic country diagnosis”. This study is like a photo from above; it is like when you are on Google Earth and you are looking at your street, your house, your neighbourhood and then you see the city, and you say wow. What is happening? It is a pulse-taking of where we are looking and what the growth drivers are. What is clear –and I think it will be when we sit down to see it together– is that what has brought us here is not going to take us further, especially if we want to maintain these levels that Uruguay has had, of which we are proud, in terms of economic and social growth. I am going to give a very simple example. If we think that each country has different dishes or capital packages, it is not necessary to be a great economist to think, in terms of natural capital, about land and water, which are obviously limited, are in danger and their productivity has a limit to be able to grow exponentially and sustainably, because agriculture will have a limit. So, what has brought us here will not be able to continue to sustain us in the future and with this standard of living.

Regarding human capital, the same thing; human capital was our pride in terms of emigration, quality, education, but now we know that our education is in danger, that we are getting older and that we need human capital to maintain and raise these levels of growth. This morning there was also a lot of talk about institutional capital. We have institutions that we are very proud of, but they were from the last century, so we have to do something.

I think this conversation has a good starting point in terms of stating where we are, which I think is very important to manage the conversation, because I think it is very exciting to think about the future, but we are all a little afraid. We are all terrified of changing things, nobody wants them to change; becoming aware that we have no other option because the engine is fading away, I think, is very important to bring us all around the table and realize that change is necessary, important and increasingly urgent.

So we extend the invitation to present this analysis and this photo from above, which, coincidentally, we are going to present to the Executive Branch in a month or two, but which we also want to share with the commission. Obviously, we will then look at this year's agenda and analyze how we can complement it. A lot of work in terms of the future and tomorrow may perhaps be useful. So we are ready to work and support in how to materialize and capitalize on this vision of the future.

MR. MELAZZI. -First of all, I would like to thank you all, Mr. President, for this opportunity. When I was invited to participate in this Special Commission on Futures, I was happy not only to be part of it, but also to try to leave a great legacy to our children and our grandchildren.

As a new legislator, what I always perceive is that from the political class The first thing we have to do is be honest: recognize the things that have been done well and the things that have been done badly; in the latter there were always good intentions and sometimes it is the management that did not work correctly. Therefore, in order to think in terms of the future, as was said, it is very important that we work on a solid base, in which, especially, all legislators look ahead, take off our political flags and think that the future is possible if we build it together. I think it is important to start slowly and with sure steps to create a great castle on a good base.

It is difficult to imagine the future, but I believe that Uruguay has many more strengths than weaknesses. And I believe that, ultimately, weaknesses are man-made and often come from the fact that we have a hard time breaking many paradigms. While the world advances, while the world is encouraged, while children make mistakes while playing and learn something from it, it is very difficult for us adults to make mistakes because we feel that it is a step towards failure, but it is the opposite: what life gives us is that as we make mistakes we learn. So, I appeal to the maturity of this Body and this commission. Without a doubt, the panelists will always enlighten us, but I appeal to understanding, to put political flags aside and to really work once and for all for our children and grandchildren.

Thank you, President.

MR. CAL.-I greet the entire delegation that is with us today, which is truly a pleasure. I am one of the many who are looking forward to this Special Commission on Futures, among other things, because I am the youngest legislator in Parliament. I took office on February 15, 2020, at the age of 29; being a *outsider* fully immersed in politics, it has been a great challenge for me to adapt to this new world.

Something that I have always criticized as a young person is the short-termism of policies in general, but I think that is part of what we are as humans. We are short-term as humans, as Latin Americans more so and as politicians even more so,

Because we clearly think about the prominence that we want to have in the five years that we are here. It is very difficult to fight against the nature that we carry as humans. I think that in this commission it will be a great challenge to aim at what is called cathedral thinking, what the philosopher Roman Krznaric defines as such, inspired precisely by those great European cathedrals that were started knowing that they would be finished eight hundred years later. I don't know how they would do it, because it goes against human nature to start a work that one cannot see completed. It is very difficult to fight against that, but I think that this commission is a very important first step that Uruguay is taking.

I fully agree with what one of the speakers said this morning, who said that Parliament is the future itself, that Parliament as such is a great commission of the future. Ms Lydia Garrido also stressed this and it is one of the things I noted down on the phone today, which I saved for later reflections today. I cannot imagine a Parliament without a commission of the future, and I thank the president for his insistence in inviting me to work on this commission. I think it is strange that there was no commission of the future before, because in most of the issues we work on, we do so with the future in mind.

We recently presented a project on cybersecurity that attempts to classify three or four of the crimes in our Penal Code, thinking precisely about the future and the need to create a legal and protective framework for certain types of companies that are not currently established in Uruguay. Therefore, there are few issues that we work on that do not have some future in mind. The vast majority of the issues that we work on in Parliament have something that is thinking about the future. In the Special Commission on Innovation, Science and Technology of the House of Representatives – which includes several of its members– we are constantly talking about the future.

So, I want to thank you. I think this is going to be a committee that will give people something to talk about, and we have to get the most out of it. I am as expectant as the vice president, who publicly stated it today. I have said on more than one occasion that this is the committee that generates the most expectations for me.

Thank you so much.

MR. MAJO. -My speech will be very brief, but first I would like to congratulate you on the initiative, which I believe to be a very good tool, led by none other than the representatives of the people.

I congratulate the organization of this first event because the topics chosen and the round tables are very good. In fact, these are the topics – everything has happened as it was organized – that we need to reflect on, each in our own field, to begin to establish strategies and thus adapt to the new times. I am referring to both the legislative and executive fields and to the institutions themselves, which have to begin to take cues from the changes and think about their own reforms.

It is very good that this is the area where future analyses are channelled and trends in the different fields of knowledge of science, technology, culture and society are looked at.

As you may know, the Executive Branch, particularly the Ministry of Education and Culture, is initiating a process of institutional redesign of the science, technology and innovation system. These days we are beginning some consultancy studies that will provide us with input to develop a debate with all the actors that will probably take place during the first half of next year. It seemed very opportune to me to convey to you, at least from the ministry, that accompanying this process is for us a way of relating in a sphere that is not that of the commissions this or that, because sometimes they have rigidities. It is a sphere for interaction between all the political parties, the experts and the institutional representatives in order to generate input for that construction of dialogues, beyond the consultancy studies, the reports and the documents. We all have to build an institutional design that, as was said today, must have some strategic guidelines, but must also be sufficiently flexible to adapt, because it is much more important to adapt to changes quickly than to have a perfect understanding of what will happen in five or ten years.

My message is simply that we are here to accompany the process and to deepen the dialogue, because it will do us all a lot of good.

Thank you so much.

MR. PRESIDENT. -I would like to state that Bruno Gili organised an excellent event, as our guests said from outside. I make this comment because sometimes we get subjective. It is clear that a very important platform is used as a starting point and naturally the journalists were surprised by such a long and high-quality event.

MR. GILI. -First of all, I would like to thank you and, secondly, I would like to say that it was a pleasure working with the committee and putting together this group.

I'm going to repeat what I said when I started as a citizen because everyone They responded quickly; we are in Uruguay and we know that the immediate response is "we are here to help", but this time it is serious. The truth is that they took on a great responsibility and I must say that almost all the exhibitors I spoke to were happy. I think there will be a significant demand to continue and there is expectation about what will happen, so I don't know what the allocation of hours will be between all the committees, but I get the impression that they will have a hard job to maintain that expectation. In fact, I am receiving WhatsApp messages from people asking why I was not there. As I said before, they will have to put something together if they are still friends of mine who could not participate.

By the way, it was another arduous task – a complex algorithm – to bring together twenty-four people, given the multiple restrictions that, on the other hand, are logical.

In short, I am grateful for the opportunity to have been able to collaborate with you. It should be noted that I am doing this as Bruno Gili and not as a firm, but I did ask Gaspar and Victoria for help in putting this together – she is an accountant and he is an economist, he studies economics and political science, so it would be great for them and they will be very happy – so I also thank them. My only message is that they now have a great responsibility ahead of them.

MR. PRESIDENT. -Bruno: On behalf of the committee, we would like to thank you very much and we will of course continue to count on you.

MR. OLMOS. -I just wanted to thank Bruno Gili and all the speakers. I would also like to apologize because I had to leave for a while, as I had to attend the investigative committee.

Usually, when we interact with the ministers or the hierarchs of the In the different bodies in the specific commissions, the discussions refer more to current issues such as, for example, "you cut my ANII and that's why I'm calling you" and that kind of thing, but not to think long term. I am convinced that a great effort must be made to have State policies and that there are many things on which there is room to agree and to move forward, also leaving room for the political arena.

In fact, there is room, and there should always be room, to think about cryptocurrencies or the shift to electric transport and everything that this implies in terms of energy and tax impact, jobs that will no longer be done, mechanics that will have to be reconverted or the multiple dimensions that the issue has. In other words, there is room to discuss these things and reach agreements independently without looking ahead to 2024, to put it bluntly.

I think the president is doing a good job of promoting this and to promote it, and we count on you to help us on this path.

Thank you so much.

MR. PRESIDENT. -Finally, I would like to say that we will have a next session to, in some way, soak up a little more of the methodology that Lydia Garrido has proposed to us, who will leave us all with her graphics. Lydia is also providing us with a training and capacity-building process for the legislators and advisors of this commission that I believe will begin in about fifteen days. We are starting with this event, but we also have demand for this training, so I tell Lydia Garrido that she will have to help us understand and learn the methodologies that we are going to apply.

At the same time, we are going to generate other instances – as it appeared in Lydia's first graph – because the inputs are always useful. I take what Deputy Melazzi says in that, beyond the fact that we have to be agile and adapt quickly, in this process it is very important to keep our feet on solid ground. We cannot be naive because there are those who are in the stands – in Uruguay this is very common – hoping that this does not work.

We are committed to following a serious, solid, systemic process, systematic, comprehensive and professional. To do this, in the early stages, beyond the inputs that we will generate with the upcoming events that we will commission Bruno to do, we will also have to become familiar with this methodology and we will probably have to use a half-day session –which is more effective and efficient than several short ones–, especially for this topic.

MRS. GARRIDO. -We have shown the slides with the aim of presenting some elements, components of the process, that have to do with the methodology. But there is also another way of using the methodology that is specifically related to how we are making sense of the use of the future, that is, how we are reading, how we are interpreting those trends, those signals, those new developments of change. In one of today's presentations it was said that the future cannot be predicted. And this is so.

From a more conceptual, theoretical and applied point of view, because this is an approach that manages and articulates theory, methodology and practical sense, we adhere to the fact that we cannot predict the future. We live in a world of complexity and we cannot predict it. From what I understand, this is not what this commission is looking for either. The issue is how to use the future to be able to anticipate, accompany change in the terms of change or generate new conditions of change. In this regard, I am going to make a small clarification: agility is key. But it is not only about adapting as a response to something that has already happened because, if we only see it that way, we will continue to be reactive, reacting only after it has happened. We need to understand that they go in tandem: anticipation that transforms before and reaction that responds to what has already happened. So, we have to walk with both legs.

We are much more accustomed to responding, either more slowly or more quickly, but once things have happened.

This also has to do with distinguishing three different ways of using the future. Two of them are the ones we are most used to: one has to do with preparation and the other with planning, which are organized to respond to or achieve something that is imagined in the future in the future. There is another way –which is the one that integrates this approach–, which is the use of the future to give meaning to what is emerging, to what Mrs. Aramendia expressed in that, ultimately, algorithms are a construction and it is important to understand them because they will later determine a number of issues.

The same thing happens with regard to the use of the future, because, ultimately, we are decoding the reality that is presented to us. Now, how do we encode and decode? That is what this approach provides. And – I will close with this –. It is an approach of research, learning and action and speaking more from the soft methodological point of view, it is about design. Design of processes to create knowledge in a collective way, which can be applied to work with a variety of participants: children, farmers, indigenous peoples and decision makers. In other words, a postgraduate degree or learning dense conceptual issues will not be necessary. No! Of course, whoever wants to do it and to the extent they want, will do it, but it has a practical applied sense that points towards how to give meaning to something that is not yet, that does not exist. The future itself – I will end with what I started – does not exist, but rather it exists as imagination and as an anticipatory system that we activate in the present.

In short, futures literacy helps us to give meaning, to guide us, to do advance readings. Sometimes we need to respond and react quickly, but other times we need to invent, create, generate the conditions for different futures to exist.

MR. PRESIDENT. -Thank you so much.

We thank everyone for their participation.

The meeting is adjourned.

(It is 2:52 p.m.)

Montevideo, Uruguay. Legislative Branch.