



SPECIAL COMMISSION ON FUTURES

(Session held on February 6, 2023).

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

(It's 5:15 p.m.)

– First of all, we welcome a publication that the Committee sent us for the Future of Finland on everything that was discussed, contributed and resolved at that meeting. There is also our presentation. There are only three copies, so we are going to ask the secretariat to get us copies for everyone; I see that there is a part in English and another in Spanish, but it is all there.

MR. OLMOS. -Are there the contacts of the delegations that went to Helsinki?

MR. PRESIDENT. -The contacts are not there. It says who participated, but the contacts are not there. However, the secretariat of the Committee for the Future of Finland has contacted us and is available to collaborate with all the calls, when we decide. In principle, we should have a more or less clear agenda and then call her. Those who participated in the event will remember that the executive secretary of the committee was available and met with us.

Before we begin to take the transcript, I was telling you that some delegations have been more or less formally suggesting to us the possibility of having a virtual exchange with our committee, in relation to the summit that we are going to hold. We have formally requested the Croatian Committee on the Future to do so. I think we could answer them that we would be happy to have it, but that we should wait, because the ordinary legislative period has not yet begun; we should argue – and it is very important – that we should wait until we have something more defined about the summit. I am thinking that, in the first half of March, we could set a date with the Croatian committee.

On the other hand, we have been holding very preliminary discussions with the intention of being able to announce to the international organizations a date for our summit in October. Why? For example, we were informed that the European Union was going to have a meeting in the next few days with all the embassies and consulates of Europe.

That is to say, the European Union delegation in Uruguay will have – if I am not mistaken, next week – a meeting with all the European ambassadors.

We therefore thought it appropriate to send a copy of this concept note – with due emphasis on the fact that it is preliminary – to inform the ambassadors and, in some way, also inform the respective parliaments of this event.

We also had a meeting with representatives of the UNDP, where we were asked for more information about this summit. Of course, we only gave them this preliminary note.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that the UNDP is willing to agree on an agreement with Parliament for the work of the Special Commission on Futures this year, but focused on our summit in October. In a way, it is an extension of the project, of the program developed with the UNDP last year, but with other ingredients and additional resources. The idea is to be able to move forward with the agreement, which would be signed by Beatriz Argimón, as president of the General Assembly. The UNDP agreed to give us a draft of the agreement this week, which will be brought to the commission to exchange views on the proposed text and, in some way, give our approval for it to be signed.

As the legislators will remember, the UNDP has financed the technical assistance, which was provided through Inés Fynn, and the methodological advice provided by Lydia Garrido. In this regard, we had to make some clarifications and leave some records in order to comply with the funding committed in relation to Lydia Garrido. In this regard, we leave a record of the five products delivered to the CEF during the year 2022, especially the last three, which consisted of the execution of the methodological plan, the support and preparation of content for the presentation of the Uruguayan delegation that participated in the Helsinki summit and finally the report *The future of work and the work of the future*. Knowing that some of these payments were still pending, we consider it necessary and important to fully settle everything carried out in 2022 before starting a 2023 that will be much more demanding and intense.

The UNDP received our statements. We even shared at the time an update of what was done. Just in case, I ask the secretariat to forward by email the accountability of everything carried out by the Futures Commission in 2022, which is no more and no less, I repeat, than the things we have carried out.

We also held an interview with representatives of the World Bank. As you may recall, this organization collaborated with our Futures Commission in the Teams survey, which was very valuable in order to better understand the general public on these issues, and we were told that there is interest in collaborating and participating in 2023. Naturally, once we define how we are going to carry out this summit and what we need, we could invite the World Bank or invite a delegation from our commission to speak with Celia Ortega.

We also had a meeting with the UN representative in Uruguay, as a result of this summit that is being organized for the 24th. They wanted to know what are

our themes, objectives and purpose for 2023, and they expressed their intention and willingness to work with us. I believe that when we have more or less defined where we are going to go in 2023, we could hold a meeting with the UN representative in Uruguay, to coordinate these aspects.

As you may recall, on the occasion of the *summit* in Helsinki, it was agreed that Lithuania will organize, no longer a *summit* Not like the one we had –since we are going to hold the second one here–, but a kind of congress –they call it the Global Parliamentary Congress of the Future of the World– on May 12 and 13. They invite us to participate with three members and one assistant.

As I mentioned at the beginning, we have received a call from the UIP to consult us or ask us about our ideas, objectives and willingness to participate in the organization of our congress. In an informal telephone conversation, I asked them to send us their concerns in writing and that we would respond in the same way. This is not a minor issue; I am stating my view that the participation of the UIP in our congress would be extremely useful. *summit*, but we must define what is best for all of us.

That was all he had to say.

MR. OLMOS. -In relation to the *summit* I want to express my concern because we are way behind schedule. Organizing an event of this magnitude requires an effort of many months and a team working on it is needed; we have practically not even started. To carry out this event, it is necessary to define logistical issues, such as its location and the hotel where people will stay and, in that case, to block the rooms, the presence or not of an interpreter, etc. It requires thinking about social activities that are associated with the event, as well as having a database of the guests and sending them the invitation quickly because there are parliaments that have their budgets already approved well in advance and it is not always easy for them to move away from that scheme. In addition, we intend to invite countries that have not participated. Therefore, we have to work.

We also have a challenge in terms of content. The activity that took place in Helsinki was basically a presentation of the different commissions of the future, an instance in which all the commissions indicated how they were constituted and what they were all working on; there was no specific theme. That activity was good for the first time, but it cannot be repeated. So, we have to define some topic that is of parliamentary interest, that is, that the different parliaments of the world may be interested in, taking into account the enormous asymmetries of maturity that we have with the commissions of the future that may be invited. So, we have to think. The topic of common interest to be raised –it does not have to be this one– could be the one that Chile is working on, which is about neuro-rights. The Chileans say the following: «Legislation in the world was basically concerned with the protection of people's physicality because the mind was considered an impregnable place. To the extent that certain technologies that are invasive advance, in which the

"Consciousness is immersed in a virtual world and this has consequences on how people's brains are mapped. We have to start thinking about what limits we put on all of this." So, the topic to be raised could be this or another, but we have to think, and very quickly, of one that has these characteristics: that it is of common interest so that they come and, in addition, they take something away. It has to be of interest to Uruguay and also to visitors.

Having thought about the issue, if we want it not to be exclusively a parliamentary discussion, we have to see who the experts are that we are going to bring in to provide views in this regard. That is also usually complicated. The higher the level of the experts we want to bring in, the more complicated their agenda will surely be and, therefore, the more difficult it will be to achieve it if we do not do it in time. In other words, we urgently need to, paraphrasing Silvio Rodríguez, split ourselves in two; it is necessary that there is a team that is working more on organizing this and another that is working on giving continuity to the future of work and the work of the future in order to arrive in September with some document, but that is more of an internal input or more for Uruguay and not a topic that is going to attract so much attention from the rest of the world.

MR. PRESIDENT. -I forgot to report – that's how we finished all the information we had to record in the shorthand version – that with Representative Verónica Mato and Representatives Sebastián Cal and Gustavo Olmos we participated in the event of the Congress of the Future of Chile. It is a congress that Chile has been holding for a long time in January, which is very prestigious in the world and which we knew had a different format than the one we are aiming for and which was held in Finland. In any case, we thought we had to go, first, out of courtesy and correspondence because Chile had specifically asked us to participate. Perhaps later one of the members of the delegation can expand on this. The truth is that they received us very well. Our presence was important, among other things, to learn directly what can be taken into account from this event and what we really do not have to take into account because we are looking for something else. I think it was very productive, that's why we attended and I think it more than met the objectives we had set. This is the information we have.

Mr. Olmos raises the concern that this is coming to us
This congress is of course of a very important magnitude and we need to start working on it now. That is why we are holding this meeting today.

Following this, I informed you – in some way we have been trying to -exchanging ideas via WhatsApp- of preliminary actions so as not to be late to these instances that are taking place and so that, at least, parliaments are informed. Now, it is a shell that needs to be filled; I am referring to this conceptual note.

If you look at the agenda, the concept note has an invitation with the main features and details about the event – place, date and what it consists of –,

An introduction with words from the President of the General Assembly – this is what is usually done to give hierarchy to the invitation – and then there are two or three points about what innovative anticipatory governance is. We also talk about what the purpose of the summit is and there we establish – as we agreed in Helsinki – that this summit will open its invitation not only to the future committees that were formed and working as such, but also to all those parliaments that were exploring the possibility or are interested in creating them. From there, naturally, this extension and enlargement leads to a very high number that has a ceiling, but not a floor; this is what we have to work on. In some way we are opening ourselves – it was our proposal approved in Helsinki – to all parliaments that are interested in working in this dimension.

As you can see, there is a proposal – to be a bit ambitious – for a first publication with all the things that the other parliaments are doing – which Helsinki also did – and a promise to systematize the results of the event, just as Helsinki did and is delivering here. In a way, we are continuing what was done in Helsinki.

The structure of the summit – I point this out for the actors or the parliaments that – they have no idea what we are talking about – is the following. There is an opening day, an activity that would have the participation of all the authorities – it is what is always done, we are not inventing anything – and with a welcome cocktail, etc. There would be a day two and a day three with full work activity and a day four that would be optional to carry out tourism activities as is done in other events. At the end, there would be an invitation from our committee because, in a way, we are in charge of the organization. There, with Lydia Garrido, we made a summary of what our invitation would consist of.

I think we all agree that we have to start working now, and we must define it now. Naturally, the task of the organization has two parts that are very different: one is the content that involves defining the topics, a work methodology and also the *speakers* that we are going to choose. It is very important that the *speakers* They should be chosen according to the topics we are going to work on and not like what happens in other events where they talk about the topics they are working on and although they may be very famous, they do not help us to implement and develop the agenda we are proposing. That is one part.

The other part has to do with logistics, which also involves a lot of work. as it is to define a huge number of aspects, beyond what Deputy Olmos suggested to us, which we have already put into practice, there has to be an event organizing agency.

We have the advantage that last year the UIP organized an event of similar magnitude in Uruguay, where the doors of the Legislative Palace were closed and all the officials worked to that end, so there are some paths that we can imitate, such as, for example, calling together an association of event organizers called

Audoca, which brings together all the event organizers in the country, announces that the Uruguayan Parliament will have an event on a certain date and the event organizer who is interested in participating can submit a proposal. This came about automatically because we asked the Ministry of Tourism to add us to the calendar of events, which in some way helps everyone to orient themselves in terms of hotel reservations. We set the date from the 18th to the 21st, which is preliminary for a matter that we will review now, so, they automatically declare it of tourist interest and immediately an online notice appears to Audoca that this event is taking place and the organizers begin to communicate with us to offer their services. It seems to me that it is an absolutely transparent mechanism that the Parliament has already used and it worked well.

I would also like to add – and I reiterate this now that Senator Silvia Nane, who is a member of the UIP, is here, as is legislator Lilián Galán – the interest that the UIP has in participating in the organization of this event. This brings us to a minor problem that we have to see how to resolve, and that is that one of the two annual assemblies will be held almost on the same date in Angola.

MRS. NANE. -Which is not on the way to Montevideo.

MR. PRESIDENT. -It is not a very short-term matter, it is true, but what we have to do is talk to the members of this commission who are part of and will participate in the IPU in these next instances, to find out to what extent the IPU is willing to participate and whether a change of date is necessary. Naturally, if the IPU authorities are determined to participate physically and in person in the Montevideo Summit, we should make some change of date. In that case, we would have to think of two alternatives. One option would be to do it after the Angola Assembly, which is not a completely crazy idea, but perhaps it would be better for the Europeans or the Asians to do this double activity instead of having this other event a month later. So those would be the issues that we should begin to define.

Naturally, the presidency of the General Assembly must participate in the organization of the summit, since the entire Parliament is involved and what we should promote is this call for the formation of the organizing teams, in order to get to work and define all these aspects necessary to be able to arrive at the summit on time.

I offer the floor in case any other member wants to exchange ideas, observe, comment or propose in this regard, whether those who are here in person or those who are participating via Zoom.

(Zoom connection with Mr. Cal begins).

MR. CAL.-Good afternoon everyone. I apologize for not being able to be here in person today.

I did not participate in the trip to Finland, but according to what they have sent us The other companions on that trip, I think that it is possible to do something – I don't know if it is the idea – something mixed between what we were able to experience those days in Chile and what you experienced in Finland. I think that that would be a very good option, innovative and that is also a bit the purpose of what the commissions of the future have been, which have had the particularity of legislators working with external technicians. I saw that in that we also coincided with the dynamics of the commission of futures in Chile, which also has that particularity and I think that it would be good to follow that line in terms of forming working groups with different topics, with legislators and technicians, to have both visions. Clearly, in the Future Congress, according to what we are experiencing now in Chile, there were practically no topics of anticipatory governance, but of the future. I think that raising mixed topics between technicians and legislators would be very good; I don't know if that is the idea, but at least I understood that that could become an option.

For my part, I want to say that I am totally willing to collaborate. Without a doubt We are racing against the clock to organise such a large and important event. It is a huge responsibility that we have to ensure that this goes well and we have it on our shoulders, so we all have to do our part to ensure that it really goes well. Without a doubt, the more we share the tasks, the better it will be; the more relief it will be for you and for everyone.

I just wanted to say that.

I don't know if, taking into account the idea of the meeting, it can be useful to do something like that; I mean something mixed between what happened in Finland and in Chile.

Thank you, Mr. President.

MRS. NANE. -Thank you, Mr. President.

Thinking a little about what Mr. Legislator Olmos said just now Regarding the content, as well as what Mr. Legislator Cal mentioned in relation to the forms, and based on the summary that Mr. President has given us, I believe that we can divide and make a mix of topics considering the interest of the sponsors that we obtain.

In short, if the Inter-Parliamentary Union becomes part of those who love us, I think that in one of the roundtables we should discuss some topic that has to do with democracy and the issues that are coming in the future. I think of a lot of things related to this, such as surveillance, digital sovereignty, etc.

We could think about making a list of possible sponsors or contributors that we may have, and even introduce topics that they may be in agreement with, in order to bring things down to earth, or include topics that we know require specific regulation to put them on the table.

When we talk about the technical, I don't think only about the academy, although, Obviously, we will have to have a significant participation of people from the academy, but I think that we could also deal with something related to public companies and private activity within the topics that we are going to define.

In short, we will have to think about what our line of sponsors, collaborators or whatever we have will be and then put together the content based on that.

I guess we have the World Bank working on this, as well as people who have already collaborated with us. We can cross-cut some issues without going off on a tangent, because we are not going to try to cover a lot of things.

The other time we were saying that we should take into account the level of maturity of the committees, including the technological level or the regulations of all the countries we plan to convene, so as not to get involved in things that people have no idea about. I think it may be a good host's measure to try to cover that.

We will have to think about it, divide into teams and divide tasks.

I understand that we are short on time, but that is always the case, so we are not going to be discouraged. I have never been involved in anything where there is too much time.

MR. PRESIDENT. -Thank you, Madam Legislator.

Perhaps the most urgent aspects are the organizational issues. Hotels
The number of hotels available here is very limited and if there were an event or an event and a half besides ours, we would run out of hotels, for example. I say this because we are thinking of receiving a delegation of between one hundred and one hundred and fifty parliamentarians, more likely to be one hundred and fifty than one hundred.

According to the investigations we have made we can estimate the
The participation of around thirty parliaments. If we multiply each delegation by three or four members, we have an approximate number of one hundred participants. In any case, we need to know in advance what the dates and places will be. We can manage the activity in the Legislative Palace with greater flexibility, but in the other places we do not have as much margin.

I am interested in having it recorded in the shorthand version that some
Many of you have mentioned to me the possibility of establishing the future of work as one of the main themes. This theme is still very relevant. Some countries are already working on it and so are we. Therefore, we could take advantage of the fact that it is a very current topic and perhaps we would kill two birds with one stone in the sense of going deeper into the matter with different delegations that are working on it. Finland is one of them and perhaps

there the *speakers* could help us in our specific task. We do not have to rush. Remember that I made a mistake regarding the dates for the delivery of the final reports. The law says that the final report can perfectly be delivered when the legislative period ends or at the beginning of 2024. I am making this clarification because the error was brought to my attention.

We could therefore take advantage of the summit to discuss a topic of This is a very topical issue that would be useful for the topic we are dealing with in our Committee, which is the future of work. On the other hand, if the IPU decides to participate actively in this Summit, we could also deal with the topics that the IPU intends to analyze as a contribution to the UN World Summit. As I mentioned to Ms. Nane, the IPU Secretariat has been consulting us on this matter. I repeat that I am raising this simply so that it is recorded in the transcript that the topic is on the table.

Now, we have to start with a more agile and executive scheme that We could split into two: one to work on the issues and another for the more organizational part. This is not what Mr. Olmos was proposing, but perhaps he can also help us in this double area, without prejudice to the fact that we will have to meet periodically to make progress in making decisions in this regard.

(The connection via Zoom with Mr. Melazzi begins).

MR. MELAZZI. -Good afternoon.

I just want to share some concerns or thoughts that came to my mind while you were talking.

If I remember correctly, in the *Zoom Meet* that we had in Helsinki, Finland, basically more than ten topics were discussed and that allowed the parliaments of the different countries to develop different topics and gave them the comfort of adapting to the topics that each one was developing.

From what I'm hearing, it seems good to me that one of the topics is "the "The future of work and the future of work" but I would not limit myself to that, but I would leave it open especially for those parliaments that today may not have worked on these issues at all, but can contribute something to the other topics we have been talking about because I think it is about parliaments enriching each other. So, I think it is good to have a topic, but not to limit ourselves specifically to that.

As for the logistics, personally it is not something that worries me because we are on time and I fully trust in the capacity of each one of you. I do understand the importance of this and I believe that we will arrive on time and in the right way. Our objective – as I said – is not only to be a great host, but also to be able to count on you.

with more parliaments, that is, the number of parliaments participating in the process will increase year after year. *Zoom Meet*, because that is enriching.

Thinking, for example, about the 20th edition, the important thing is that each parliament can share how it has progressed on the legislative issues that were discussed in previous editions because, ultimately, it is about enriching ourselves with these experiences. If Uruguay continues to advance, for example, in what the future of work and the work of the future is based on the contributions and studies that we make and work on the legislative issue producing new norms, that will be a contribution for the new parliaments. It is important to know in which direction they have gone and how they have achieved it. That *feedback*, that feedback that we can provide is very important.

It's just going to be a year since the first *Zoom Meet* it may be too risky to say that we are moving forward in this direction and in legislative matters we are moving forward in this other direction, but I think it would be important to engage parliaments to share in which direction they have been moving forward and what they can contribute. I make this proposal so that it may be enriching and useful both to parliament and to all of us.

That's all I had to say, Mr. President. Thank you very much.

MR. PRESIDENT. -Another line that Mr. Melazzi proposed and that is proposed in the concept note is to do preparatory work in which the parliaments that have expressed their interest in participating would be asked to contribute – as we did – in the preparatory work on what topics we are working on and which ones we would like to address. That is good for many reasons. In some way, it is already a collaborative and participatory practice, but we cannot stay only with that because, if we later want to bring in a *speaker* at an international level and we do not notify him several months in advance, it is almost impossible for him to come. Other formulas can also be considered –in this respect I agree with the legislator– to form the agenda and then make a mix of that.

The issue raised by the legislator, Mrs. Nane, I think is also highly topical. I am referring to algorithmic democracy, as it is now called. We see it every day. It has stopped being an issue of the future and has become a matter of the present, but why is it a matter of the future? Because in the short and medium term the trend, in principle, is going to deepen and it is not a minor issue. I do not know in what other forums this issue is being raised as truly a matter of the future, but with a fairly immediate impact on the basis of democracy. We have to work on all the issues that are on the table in order to define them and for that we need to form a group. I propose to proceed as we did to work on the axes of the work of the future. Let us think a little about which group we can sign up for, we look to form the working groups and we inform Vice President Argimón that we are in a position to start working once she calls us to begin the same.

MR. OLMOS. -I want to say two things.

In principle, I am not very attracted by the idea of making a thematic consultation. due to a time issue. While we define the possible commissions, we send an exhortation to bring us topics, we give them a deadline to do so, we wait for the response and we process it, we will be in May, and we do not have much time left for the rest.

I think we need to define this quickly and look for who can speak about it, keeping in mind the criteria I mentioned earlier that these are topics that we think may be of legislative interest, not just scientific interest.

The second thing I want to say is that I would entrust Mr. President make contact with the President of the General Assembly so that she can define how to work. There are also budgetary issues that we must define with the President of the General Assembly, and I understand that with the President of the House of Representatives a team can be formed, with a certain representativeness, so that it can begin to operate with the point of centralization of the most political issues and, of course, always in consultation with the entire commission.

Regarding operational aspects, I agree with what the president of the committee said, that we must quickly have a professional conference organizing company dedicated to this, that is, to follow up on the invitations, to coordinate all the logistics issues, interpreters and dozens of other aspects that must be taken into account, all of this so that we, as the Legislative Branch, do not have to ask for prices and so on, because we would not arrive on time.

MR. PRESIDENT. -If you agree - some nod their heads in agreement - then this poor servant will be delegated the task of coordinating with Vice President Argimón to form the teams and quickly begin to convene them and define all these aspects.

If there are no objections, we will leave that definition. I would meet with the president of the General Assembly this week and we will start working along these lines, if we agree.

If there is no other topic, we will conclude the session of the Special Commission on Futures, the first of 2023.

The meeting is adjourned.

(It is 18:08).

Montevideo, Uruguay. Legislative Branch.