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SPECIAL COMMISSION ON FUTURES

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**UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME FOR THE
DEVELOPMENT**

Visit

**REPORT ON THE FUTURE TO BE PRESENTED ON THE DAY
FROM THE FUTURE**

Shorthand version of the day's session
July 24, 2024

ATTENDANCE

- reside : Mr. Legislator Rodrigo Goñi Reyes (President ad hoc)
- members : Ladies Legislators Graciela Barrera and Carmen Sanguinetti; and
Gentlemen Legislators Felipe Carballo, Gustavo Olmos and Uruguay Russi.
- Guests : For UNDP: Mrs. Virginia Varela, Mrs. Stephanie Rouvray, Mrs. Ioanna
Grotiuz and Lucia Perez Chabaneau; and Mr. Pedro Delprato and Mr.
Daniel Carranza
For UNESCO: Ms Lydia Garrido
- secretary : Mrs. Maria Elena Moran (Secretary) and Mr. Vladimir De Bellis
(Secretary); and Mrs. Joseline Rattaro and Mrs. Sofia Martorano (Deputy
Secretaries)

SPECIAL COMMISSION ON FUTURES

(Meeting on July 24, 2024)

(A delegation from the United Nations Development Programme attends.)
Development)

MR. PRESIDENT (Rodrigo Goñi Reyes).-If there is a quorum, the meeting is open.

(It is 14:36)

— — The Special Commission on Futures welcomes a delegation from the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), composed of Ms. Ioanna Grotiuz, Ms. Lucía Pérez Chabaneau, Ms. Virginia Varela and Ms. Stephanie Rouvray, and Mr. Pedro Delprato and Mr. Daniel Carranza.

They asked us to be received in order to make a proposal with the aim of advancing the generation of formal mechanisms for the participation of civil society in the work of the Commission.

MRS. VARELA (Virginia).-Many thanks to all the members of the Commission and to the president, Rodrigo Goñi, with whom we have been working and supporting the development and evolution of the Special Commission on Futures for some time.

The UNDP representatives are accompanied by a delegation of civil society organizations with whom we are working on a project called "Dialogue about," which is related to an agenda item that has been positioned in the UNDP at a regional level, linked to the concern for the quality of our democracies and the need to continue strengthening the inclusive public sphere. This means, among other things, that civil society effectively has spaces for effective participation in the different areas of public debate and, in particular, in Parliament.

In this sense, it is logical that the Commissions that operate in both Chambers are a natural space where civil society and legislators interact in different ways, but we understand that the Special Commission on Futures is also a natural space due to its vocation, its logic and because it is thought of in some way as an innovative Commission due to being open to active listening and having an effective exchange with multiple actors from different fields. We know and I know directly and in first person that the Special Commission on Futures has worked a lot in its first phase with academia, also with actors from the private sector. It has also held conversations with civil society.

In the ongoing exchange that we have with civil society, the idea of bringing here the possibility of starting a conversation to see how civil society organizations generate, within the framework of the Special Commission on Futures, a mechanism, a space that can be formalized for participation and the construction of the agenda and proposals of this Commission, and that can be made concrete, is planned and raised.

I will leave this here so that the colleagues who are representing civil society can introduce themselves and make more specific proposals, taking into account the time we have.

MR. DELPRATO (Pedro).-Good afternoon. I represent Anong. I would like to discuss the possibility of having this space.

As Virginia said, we are part of civil society, a fairly heterogeneous and diverse civil society, which has to do with many of the issues and policies in general, and with the governance of many aspects that have to do with our society.

We also have a certain level of closeness to the general population through the work we do, which allows us to take the pulse and see what is happening. We are not representatives of the population, but we do have a certain level of voice on certain issues, which gives us the possibility of closeness in the work we do.

In that sense, it seems to us that part of the visualization of what is the future is about civil society being able to play a substantial role in policy making and design. Often, decisions are made without much thought being given to the impact they may have in the long term.

We believe that we can contribute a lot to a long-term perspective, which can at least bring sensitivity to the construction of policies. By law we are participating in various places, but we believe that it should be a more systemic construction in relation to what can be contributed and in what way.

From this perspective, we were interested in including an actor in civil society in its different forms in what has to do with the construction of public policy and its possible impact on the future of the population.

MR. CARRANZA (Daniel).-I am part of Data Uruguay and I am also a member of the Open Government Network and the Open Government Working Group, which is the governance body of a national project that is coordinated by Agesic.

Continuing with the idea, I think that participation and its value were very well expressed by Anong. We would also like to contribute from the how.

Uruguay has a lot of work and very important advances in participation and transparency policies. In fact, Parliament itself has been participating in the open government plan for at least 2 or 3 plans with both Chambers represented, so there are methodologies, clear backgrounds and a lot of knowledge developed on how to carry out participation.

We have also sent to Parliament on more than one occasion a document with recommendations on how to have an open Parliament, which includes many of those suggestions on how to carry out these participation mechanisms.

If there is this possibility of institutionally incorporating forms of participation in the work of the Special Commission on Futures, it should be taken into account.

Taking into account this previous experience, all this background, I insist, of Parliament itself in working with civil society, in a broad sense, moreover; this is not an issue exclusive to organised civil society or to the organisations that are here, but rather it is about the participation of interested persons and relevant actors interested in the different issues, which of course will include civil society.

MRS. PÉREZ CHABANEAU (Lucia).-I represent Amnesty International Uruguay; thank you very much for the space; I also thank the UNDP for creating this opportunity.

I'll try not to be repetitive.

I think we are faced with an opportunity to rethink some of the channels that already exist today, or that are planned and that have a certain level of functioning, with different results of dialogue between Parliament and civil society organisations.

Without a doubt, the space of the commissions, and this Commission in particular, offers a different opportunity, and it seems to me that we can think about this mechanism from another perspective. I think that Daniel shed light on some of these questions about how; it seems to me that we have to think about the mechanism itself that is established, but also how these processes can be carried out so that they are more efficient from the point of view of being able to collect input from civil society, which are not always exclusively concerns, because what organizations like Amnesty International do, and others as well, is generate research, empirical evidence and many diagnoses on many of the issues, and many are discussed in this House.

So, it is about generating these instances so that they can really be used not only in the urgency of the conversation about voting on a law, but also - in what Daniel brought up - in generating those processes that help to better reach the treatment of the issues, collecting an important voice such as that of civil society in general and organized civil society in particular.

So, I welcome the opportunity to rethink this mechanism and its effectiveness so that it truly becomes a space for influence, for taking advantage of and for improvement based on the inputs that are taken.

On the other hand, I would like to add one more comment to what was mentioned by Anong, which has to do with the diversity of civil society organizations, which, while it adds complexity, also has a great virtue, and it seems to me that channels can be established there to nourish the conversations and discussions that take place at the level of this Commission on the different topics, depending on the place where this opportunity that we are facing today arrives.

I want to mention that from Amnesty International, but also from what we have shared with other organizations, we have very good experiences and good practices of things that have worked very well, and on which we can rely, not only in parliamentary dialogues, but also with public institutions in general that have led to the production of empirical evidence, to the construction of data that, suddenly,

Through requests for access to public information, the State did not have the means to address urgent and very important issues for the country; we can rely on those cases: we also have others where these dialogues have not been so virtuous.

It seems to me that based on these experiences, a better route can be built that leads to a better use of this space.

Thank you so much.

MR. PRESIDENT.-Of course, we appreciate the approach you have put forward.

This Commission - as UNDP knows - has a precise methodology - which UNDP has also been practicing - which is anticipatory governance, a methodology that is already being recognized, accepted and practiced and which, like all methodology, has its rules, its system.

We have adopted this methodology for the processes we have been carrying out because, in addition, parliamentary commissions on the future around the world have incorporated it, and they invite us precisely because we have adopted a methodology that is recognized even by the UN itself, now in the Pact for the Future. In short, we carry out our processes by adopting this methodology, which we have been developing in the approach of "The Future of Work and the Work of the Future", which has been the theme that this Commission has chosen as the focus of these four years - we are already on the way to making the final report - where we have had the participation of all the actors who were considered relevant in this process, of course, civil society, which, as you say, is very diverse and has much to contribute to this report. "The Future of Work and the Work of the Future" covers a very broad area with many threats, many challenges, and it also involves raising awareness. One of the things that worries us most is that there is no awareness in civil society - and this is being acknowledged in several parliaments - of the processes that are emerging and of the impact that new technologies - and I am talking about artificial intelligence - will have. Societies are a bit anaesthetized or asleep, and civil society organisations have a lot to do in this area as well to help raise awareness; they are part of the problem and also part of the solution. Let this be a preliminary, introductory clarification; you probably already knew it, but it is important that it be said.

Second, this has been the first experience of the Special Commission on Futures. Before the end of this period we are going to vote for a more permanent structure. This is a special commission and the idea - at least that is what the President of the General Assembly has suggested to us - is to leave for the next period, and the following ones, a permanent commission, like other parliaments have, where we will also have to introduce other aspects that have to do with the more systemic and permanent participation of the various actors, including civil society. We have not yet entered. In some way, we wanted to finish this experience in order to be able to say why it is worthwhile to create a permanent commission, even with some other innovative elements, in the work of the Parliament. That is why this proposal that you make is very good for us; in some way, it gives us legitimacy to propose more permanent processes.

I don't know if the honourable legislators would like to make any comments. If not, Mrs Virginia Varela, we will keep in touch.

This report that we are going to make - now we are going to focus on the progress of this final report - is also an opportunity - although we have little time left - to participate on the subject and contribute elements, I repeat, in something that will affect and impact absolutely all of us.

MRS. SANGUINETTI (Carmen).-I would like to greet the delegation and thank them for their presence.

I think we are very aligned in terms of the importance of integrating civil society into the work we do here. Personally, I started several topics I have worked on by calling on academia, civil society, the private sector, and the different areas; as I come from civil society, I believe in it. I also think we have a scale in Uruguay that makes this participation, this interaction between academia, civil society, and political power simple and easy. I think there is an opportunity to continue capitalizing on it.

It seems to me that the work that this Commission has had with the academy, driven by its president, is an example of strengthening, as was said here. I agree that there are many things that have been done well and others that need to be learned.

I simply want to emphasize that there are many of us who are very convinced that we must strengthen and deepen this bridge that exists today in the face of the challenges that lie ahead. Artificial intelligence is one of them, but we could name a few others.

Thank you very much again for being here today.

MR. PRESIDENT.-We appreciate the presence of the delegation and we will keep in touch to provide you with information soon because our period is coming to an end.

MR. CARRANZA (Daniel).-We are available to discuss any mechanisms that may occur to us.

MR. PRESIDENT.-Perfect.

(A UNDP delegation leaves the room)

— — We are going to distribute a very simple proposal, which has to do with a first step that has been suggested for this Commission to become permanent. We are distributing a draft text. We will look at it.

(Dialogues)

— — We are in a position to vote on this until the last General Assembly; it would be a first step towards a permanent commission.

(Mrs. Lydia Garrido, Advisor on Futures and Collective Intelligence Methodologies, enters the room)

— — If you agree, because later some legislator has to retire, we will ask Ms. Lydia Garrido to speak to us about the proposal to advance the final report of the Special Commission on Futures. We have already made a report

Preliminary on "Future of Work - Work of the Future", and we have two months left

Without further ado, we would like you to tell us what steps we should take so that we can then exchange ideas with each other. We asked Lydia Garrido to tell us about this point.

MRS. GARRIDO (Lydia).-I'll try to be very brief.

This report is part of the provisions of Law No. 19,509 and must be submitted before the end of this period. I must remind you that we were inspired - as was the organisation of the Commission and its working approach - by the Commission for the Future of Finland, obviously beyond others, and above all by making our design tailor-made. The Commission for the Future of Finland is our great guide, although the big difference is that in Parliament it responds to the report made by the Prime Minister's office. That is the difference we are going to have.

As for the characteristics of the report, I must say that it summarizes in a synthetic way the activities that are carried out during the period, during those four or five years. Generally, they tend to be between 50 and 80 pages, although there are Part 1 and Part 2. So, we would be talking about 100 or 120 pages. That is the idea of the size of the report.

Regarding the methodological approach, it is within the frameworks of anticipation and complexity that have been used for all other works and activities. The report seeks to analyze and integrate the inputs that have been generated during these four years, that is, from 2021 to 2024, through the various written works of the expanded Expert Group, workshops, *workshops*, round tables, seminars, exhibitions, and also the process of the second world summit. We have to remember that this was a nine-month process in which there were very interesting interactions with a large number of experts linked to the topic of artificial intelligence: its relations with democracy and with the great social transformations that are directly related to the topic of work and society and the cultural aspects that this implies at the level of learning, education, and so on.

For this work, a scan of secondary sources is being carried out, whose name in English is *environmental scanning*; its translation into Spanish is not very transparent. In short, it is a search and analysis of documents, reports and studies from various highly accredited sources, including the OSDE of Finland, the World Economic Forum and The Millennium Project. I am referring to *think tanks* who have been working specifically and consistently on identifying variables, trends, megatrends, and weak and strong signals. In short, all these categories of change.

(The exhibition is accompanied by a Power Point presentation)

— — Interviews are planned to validate or expand the written progress of the document and to review it as well.

Later I will clarify the matter of re-viewing, that is, looking at it again.

I have proposed the realization of a kind of *workshop*, of interactive activity that we can have, to validate the work before the final document is delivered, but you will have to define it according to the times and conditions of this year here in Parliament. My recommendation would be that it be carried out.

Among the inputs, it must be taken into account that the CEF has all these publications made. One of the latest is the *Methodological Guide*, of the UNDP with the Commission on Futures, and that has to be seen with the UNDP because I think it will be published in the name of the UNDP. And the other most recent is a publication that I think has just finished being produced on the process of the Commission on Futures and, above all, contributions to the systematization of the Summit. I don't know if you have already received that document.

MR. PRESIDENT.-No, because they haven't enabled us. It's being corrected.

I have asked for it repeatedly, both from the UNDP and from IDEA. Lydia submitted a text, but they won't let me have it. I haven't been able to see it.

MRS. GARRIDO (Lydia).-I make the two working documents available to you.

The UNDP one has 100 pages; they did a reduction and took them to 50. For me it is a shame, there are 50 pages that I would like to propose to rescue, to have the whole document, with the adjustments that you want, of course, but it is a shame to cut it.

And the other publication *Bringing the Future to the Present: the role of Parliament in fostering an innovative anticipatory governance ecosystem* It has within its chapters the systematization of the Summit; I believe that there are very interesting inputs that can be useful, both for this Commission and for many others; it has almost 150 pages.

As I had already shared with you, I identified the topic of artificial intelligence as transversal in the different axes that the Futures Commission has been working on directly or indirectly in this very broad issue of "Future Work" and the "Future of Work", that is, the conditions that artificial intelligence has in this emerging and evolutionary nature; the ethical aspects, which should be central, as has been raised; its relationship with democracy, directly with opportunities, challenges and threats in the work of the future; education also linked to work, specifically with the parliamentary task, and climate change, which is also linked to the future of work in that certain opportunities for transformation, such as the digital economy, have some aspects that must be made compatible with sustainable evolution.

Is this understood as a sustainable evolution? It is because they generate a large carbon footprint.

The axes on which the report will be presented are those that have been worked on and two more were expanded, which have been the result of this process, precisely, of work by the Commission. It is about entering into the aspects of sustainability, climate change, digital economy and zero emissions, as well as artificial intelligence, with respect to which we have already seen, both from the Summit and from our daily lives, the transversality and the

impact that its potential can have in changing the anatomy -we could say- of work itself.

I am not going to go into detail regarding this slide, but this is a very useful heuristic and it is one of the ones we base our work on to connect the different vectors or drivers of change; the important thing is to see what their relationships and interrelations are, not to see each one separately, but among themselves. In turn, they generate novelties, opportunities, but also threats and, in a certain sense, they are enablers, but, in others, they are also inhibitors. There could be others like these; we use some transversal vectors that are taken into account for the analysis of these themes.

In some way, the heptagram almost captures the 7 axes in which the text is organized.

Below I simply put up 3 slides so that we can think and provoke a little reflection, and see where the focus of this work is going; in an extension of between 80 or 100 pages of report, we cannot go into great depth, nor is it a recipe because all this is changing and that is the most important issue to take into account.

I could have taken so many other sentences, but I took one from a McKinsey report from last year, which says: "Generative AI is likely to have the greatest impact on knowledge-based work, particularly in decision-making and collaboration-related activities, which previously had the least potential for automation." What does this mean? When we started talking about the future of work here in this Parliament in 2015, 2016, 2017 – I don't know if you remember that it was done every year during Future Day in September – what we talked about was that the greatest threat was automation, the replacement of routine work, of unskilled work. But what has happened in the last year and a half? We realised that one of the greatest threats is precisely in skilled work, in some of the jobs based on skills and knowledge.

Just for your reference, this graph shows in different areas the impact of what was thought before 2017, in the studies up to 2017, 2018 and 2019, and what the latest studies are showing; you can see how the percentage of impact that automation would have on each of these sectors is expanding.

Let's take the first one: "STEM professionals", science professionals, I think that's the acronym for technologies, mathematics and economics. Until 2018 and 2019, before the emergence of generative artificial intelligence, it was understood that it could have an impact on the environment of 13% or 14%. Today it is understood that it can have 30% or more. In education it was understood that it could have an impact of less than 10%; today it is understood that it is greater than 20%, and this is the case in each of the activities. It is so that we can visually see the difference that the issue of generative artificial intelligence has already raised, which is also in its very early stages.

The following graph shows what happens over time; that is, the impact of when it would occur. Until 2017, 2018 or 2019, what was handled was what is shown in grey in the graph, that is, that the impact of substitution, of automation would occur close to 2045, 2050 or after 2025. If you look now - it is the part of the graph that is in light blue and darker blue - we are talking about between 2025 and 2030. In principle, a very rough reflection of mine, as a way of provoking, is that in the next period, in five years, we are in a pivotal time in which the conditions must be generated for the transformations in which we are already - the famous *catching-up* - the one that economists talk about - I don't want to make futurology, I want to base myself on this one, as on so many other reports, but this one seemed to me to be presented in a very visual way and is well founded.

We have many other frontier areas - as they are called technological. Everything that has to do with biotechnology, with nanobiotechnology, with the management of human biological bases; that would be another important issue to address, but what has to do more directly with work, artificial intelligence, which is in its early stages, is going at a speed of transformation and change that not even the experts who are or are in these issues have been able to keep up with.

MR. PRESIDENT.-Thank you, Lydia.

I am going to make two or three comments. First, we are going to ask - although Lydia will give them to us - for the complete texts that she prepared for the "UNDP-CEF Methodological Guide. The use of the Future as a capacity and competence in Parliaments" and this latest work with IDEA "Bringing the Future to the Present". In some way, the Special Commission on Futures is involved in these texts, so we would have to see them before they are officially published. I asked for them, I don't have them yet, but we are going to look at the texts that Lydia offers us today, while they give us those that are going to be published; of course, first we are going to give our opinion. *ok*.

Second, we should continue to move forward with this approach, with this timetable that Lydia has proposed to us, because the idea, before the end of the ordinary period, is to be able to hold an event in Parliament with all the parliamentarians and also with the candidates on this report on which we have already made a lot of progress; it is a very, very important issue, and this is the opportunity.

MR. OLMOS (Gustavo).-I thank Lydia Garrido, as always, for her contribution. I share the last point that was made in the sense that these last five years are going to be very dynamic. Surely, the Parliament that is elected and takes office on February 15 will see in this process, in these five years, radical changes, some of which are the result of technology, and others that will be imposed on us by the border policies of the European Union and by other types of things that will require us to make very profound changes in many aspects: in the economy, in legislation, in incorporating the risks and mitigation of climate change; even if Uruguay does not move the needle at a global level, that will still be a requirement.

There will surely have to be a dramatic shift in the way we discuss. Without getting into the subject, the way we discuss the

The transformation of social security was relatively independent of the changes that we anticipated would occur in the world of work. It is a discussion that is stuck in what the world of work was like before, and without thinking that it will quickly enter into crisis due to the consequences of this transformation. So, it seems to me that having this material, which I believe is the most we can aspire to in this legislature, establishing this area as a permanent commission of the General Assembly, and that the methodology and the way of reasoning permeate and spill over to the other commissions of Parliament, of the two chambers, is the best contribution that we can make to the work of these years.

Thank you so much.

MR. PRESIDENT.-Thank you very much, congressman.

We would then continue to work on the issue, on this schedule and this proposal. We are talking with international organizations, which have generally accompanied us in this process, to arrive in a timely manner to this final report, which is of great impact and utility, as Deputy Olmos said, for future legislatures and governments.

Finally, I would like to inform you that we have been invited to participate in a process to promote a network of future commissions by ECLAC. It is a process that was initiated at the proposal of ECLAC and that the ILO then became interested in supporting and the Uruguayan Parliament, through the Futures Commission, is in the project.

Furthermore, we have confirmed the Third World Summit of Future Commissions, which will be held in Chile on January 15, 16 and 17. It was a decision we made here at the Second World Summit in Uruguay. We are invited and the idea is that all members of the Commission can participate, or those who are able and willing to go. It will be a third world summit, like the one we held in Montevideo - the second - but it will also be linked to the Future Congress held in Chile, which we all know is also of great interest. So I will record in the minutes the invitation we have received; later, with more details, it will arrive through formal channels. These are vacation days and summer, but it is an event that is really worthwhile because it is the third summit - Uruguay gained prestige and active participation with the second summit we held here in Montevideo - and also because of the future congress.

I also want to state that we will be attentive and participating in this process of a Latin American network of Future Commissions initiated by ECLAC, which is a way to move forward on these issues.

MRS. GARRIDO (Lydia).-Supporting what Deputy Olmos proposed, I think that yes, the Futures Commission has a fundamental role in the next five years and can become a space of great support for the rest of the commissions and the Parliament. Here, in our Uruguayan way, we are moving slowly and we have to start to speed up, but there is a learning curve.

I'll just give you a little bit of information. Until 2017 or 2018, we were talking about almost 50% of work automation. Today, the concept has changed and, rather than talking about work automation, we're talking about time automation.

of work. The change is not minor; the semantics are not minor. What is being talked about is no longer the 50% that in 2015, 2016 or 2017, when these reports were presented, seemed like nonsense to us. Today it is being said that well before 2030 there is the possibility of automating between 60% and 70% of the work time currently performed.

Why do I say that the change in semantics is important? Because I don't want to start with fatalities or dystopias or think that robots are going to take our jobs. No. What this indicates is that there is a change, that a large part - we are talking about between 60% and 70% - of current work time is going to be replaced by artificial intelligence, and that means that humans are going to have other types of tasks and activities. What is directly connected to this? With the need to anticipate what capacities and competencies are going to be necessary for these new tasks that we still don't know exactly what they are. So, training in the necessary agility and speed to accompany the change in the terms of the change becomes a fundamental skill and ability.

MR. PRESIDENT.-I suggest that the next meeting be on Wednesday, August 21 at 2:30 p.m., with a preview by Lydia Garrido on the final report on future work.

There being no further business, the meeting is
adjourned. (It is 3:24 p.m.)