

Committee on Constitutional Affairs
The Chair

Ref.: D(2020)14678

Mr David Maria Sassoli
President of the European Parliament
Brussels

D 200954 06.05.2020

Subject: 70th anniversary of the Schuman declaration

Dear President,

At the beginning of this year we had envisaged that on 9 May, the 70th anniversary of the Schuman declaration, the Conference on the Future of Europe would be launched. The Covid-19 pandemic and the efforts that have been made since the outbreak to safeguard the health of citizens all over the world has profoundly impacted every aspect of people's daily life. Inevitably, the work of the Union has concentrated on measures to deal with this crisis, which has had consequences for the agendas of the Union's institutions as well as of Member States. While under these circumstances the Conference on the Future of Europe cannot start as foreseen on 9 May, the 70th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration should however bring a moment of joint reflection on the history and future of the European Union.

The Schuman Declaration remains an inspiration today. Solidarity and cooperation are at the heart of what constitutes the European Union. Bold steps were taken at the time to develop new forms of supranational cooperation, to pool and share resources, and to create common institutions. These steps laid the foundations for further European integration and the Union as it exists today, a bond that has developed over time, with common values, aspirations and interests. These common values, aspirations and interests also continue to guide our work under the current circumstances and they are at the basis of the emergency measures that have been proposed and those already taken to fight the crisis and counter its consequences at European level. Agreed ways of decision-making and common institutions facilitate the taking of decisions, especially when decisions are urgent.

These are very difficult times. The tasks that lie ahead for the Union, at every level, are huge. More than ever we should keep in mind what binds us together. More than ever we should work together to cope with this unprecedented crisis.

The pandemic will have lasting effects on the daily lives of citizens and it is indispensable in the aftermath of the height of the crisis to reach out, listen and engage with citizens, at European, national, regional and local level. The Conference on the Future of Europe is the ideal forum for that and should commence as soon as the conditions allow it.

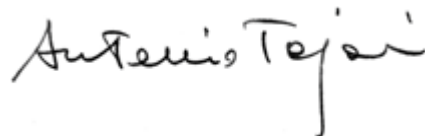
The 70th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration provides an opportune moment for a joint statement of the three institutions to show that Europe is united in fighting this crisis, to express a message of hope and trust in the future of Europe and to confirm the commitment to the launch of the Conference.

For the Conference to be able to start, it is necessary that the Council adopts a position so that a joint position can be reached on the Conference as soon as possible and the necessary preparations can be made for it to start. Therefore I would like to request that you address a letter to the Croatian Presidency underlining the need to have a position from the Council on the mandate for the Conference and to start interinstitutional negotiations without undue delay.

The 70th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration should mark the beginning of a new process for Europe to come out stronger and united from this crisis and to make the Union more efficient, democratic and transparent.

For your information, I attach a working document on the 70th Anniversary of the Schuman Declaration, which has been discussed at coordinators level and is endorsed by the coordinators of the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Antonio Tajani". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent vertical stroke at the end.

Antonio Tajani