
2018 – 2019 Global Future Council on Europe

Second Council Call Summary

(8 January, 2019)

Participants:

- Beatrice Weder di Mauro, Co-Chair
- Miroslav Lajčák, Co-Chair
- Alexander Stubb
- Benoît Coeuré
- Grace Ballor
- Karen Donfried
- Mark Leonard
- Martina Larkin
- Miguel Milano
- Mohamed Issa Abushahab
- Pascale Baeriswyl
- Peter Seidel
- Renée van Heusden
- Robin Niblett
- Ulla Tørnæs
- Yasha Mounk
- Representative Timo Soini: Jukka Salovaara
- Representative Catherine de Bolle: Ben Waites
- Representative Margarete Schramböck: Verena Seiser

1. Debrief AMGFC2018 Summit in Dubai

The World Economic Forum organised the Annual Meeting of the Global Future Councils in Dubai on 11-12 November, which gathers all the different Councils to discuss and kick-off their respective Council mandate and work. For the Europe Council, several members attended the Summit, during which they engaged in 1,5 days of intense conversations on the region that were based on a discussion paper that was distributed before the meeting to all Members.¹

During these discussions, it was emphasised that the region is again at a cross-road but that there is a feeling that this time there are substantial risks, internally and externally, that are potentially not sufficiently balanced by the opportunities. There is an overall understanding that Europe is too centric and internally focused, and that the region has responsibilities to the rest of the world, which has expectation for Europe to step up. Europe has a global role to play and should build on its strengths, such as values, youth, and economic integration and stability. This diversity feeds the region's richness of debate but also brings substantial challenges to agree on a way forward.

¹ This Discussion Paper can be found on the Council's dedicated Toplink Page.

In terms of action items that this Council can undertake, several ideas and cornerstones had been discussed by Members at the Dubai Summit. These include for example, youth engagement through the European Youth Parliament, building a strong platform for debate by building journalism capacity², and drafting a Reflection Paper on the future of Europe along the four themes previously identified (society in transition, Europe's leadership in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, raising Europe's competitiveness and Europe's leadership in the future global architecture).

2. Annual Meeting 2019 and the European Narrative

The theme of this year's Annual Meeting in Davos-Klosters is *Globalization 4.0* and focuses on the challenges to the current global political and economic structures and how society can frame a new global architecture for a multi-polar and multi-conceptual world. This means that next to the recurring economic agenda, the Annual Meeting will have a strong geopolitical focus as well.

A strong political engagement is expected to attend the Annual Meeting. Europe will also be strongly represented from across the wider region.

In terms of the Europe agenda at the Annual Meeting, it is focused on the region's potential leadership role in this new global architecture from different angles. Sessions planned include for example: a session that focuses on 'A New Manifesto for Europe' and will be based on the Council's Reflection Paper, diplomatic dialogues on Europe-Russia, The Transatlantic Alliance, A New Development Architecture of Africa, and the Western Balkans as well as global dialogues on Brexit and Europe's role in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

3. Council Paper 'Reflection on the Future of Europe'

The Council members discussed the draft version of the Paper *Reflections on the Future of Europe*, previously titled *A New Manifesto for Europe*. The paper has been drafted by a select group of Council members and does not reflect an agreed position of the wider Council but shares a rich range of ideas along the four key themes of the Council: Society in Transformation, Competitiveness and Growth, Neighbourhood and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, that could form the basis to formulating a common narrative with underlying action items.

Council members agreed that the document can be an important input into the Davos discussions, particularly during the session 'A New Manifesto for Europe'. The group underlined the need to ensure it goes beyond a visionary paper by including specific action items, which could be a specific outcome of the session at Davos. The conclusion of the document includes first suggestions but would require more harmonisation to be able to build a common narrative.

The reality of Europe's diversity of ideas was acknowledged and some discussion took place around what areas would be most realistic to agree on a shared, European approach. One theme highlighted that would potential be a realistic area to build convergence is the Fourth Industrial Revolution. A suggestion for a concrete action item that was made is to build a Transatlantic Alliance on AI, which would allow Europe to focus on its core strengths and apparent leadership (e.g. in ethical use of technologies) whilst engaging other regions to ensure global leadership.

In terms of next steps, the World Economic Forum will be sharing this document with senior advisors of European political leaders to discuss and assess political feasibility and receive feedback. This would feed into the discussions at the Annual Meeting and aims to build further momentum post- Davos. The Forum welcomes continuing feedback on the document, particularly on building a common narrative that can be agreed upon. Finally, it was suggested that the Council meets in the Spring in either London or Brussels to continue working on the document with the feedback received during the Davos deliberations and to build it into the European elections this year. The Forum team will share potential dates with the group shortly.

² Please refer to Work Plan previously shared and uploaded on the Council's dedicated Toplink Page.