



European Economic and Social Committee
The President

Brussels, 22/03/2017

PRES/2017/D/1138

Dear Professor Giovannini, Dear delegates,

I would like to commend the Europe Ambition 2030 initiative to debate new governance methods and propose a new narrative for the EU inspired by the UN "2030 Agenda for sustainable development". As you note in the Open Letter to the Heads of States and Governments, "multiple crises and tectonic shifts in Europe and on the global stage" pose risks for European peace, democracy and prosperity. In this light, your proposed Scenario VI correctly assesses the multiple challenges facing Europe in a global context linked to the landmark UN 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals which set out a succinct roadmap for transforming the world.

For, in this age of globalisation Europe cannot be an island. It is a global leader with a key role at the forefront of political, economic, social and environmental developments. At the same time, on the EU front, we need sustainable governance structures that are relevant to European citizens by ensuring their welfare, prosperity and security. Furthermore, shifting towards a low carbon and circular economy model, the Union should also reinforce social cohesion and inclusiveness.

Yet, while Europe was a leading force in launching the 2030 Agenda, we note hesitation and lack of coordination in advancing a concerted strategy to implement the 2030 goals.

Dear delegates,

Many of the issues raised by this Conference and Scenario VI are at the heart of both my personal concerns and the work of the EESC. In particular, EESC has invited the European Commission to establish flagship initiatives on the following transformational key policy areas: A just transition to a low-carbon, circular and collaborative economy; transition towards a social inclusive society and economy; decent work and human rights; transition to sustainable food production and consumption; investing in innovation and long-term infrastructure modernisation and encouraging sustainable businesses; making trade work for global sustainable development. We have also proposed to set up a European Sustainable Development Civil Society Forum in order to give civil society a strong role in the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.

'Transforming Europe' requires a multi-stakeholder approach, which mobilises all actors and civil society organisations and respects the principles of participation, accountability and partnership. As you note, "institutional dialogue with social partners will have to be aligned with these new priorities and the role of frontrunners." The EESC is prepared to take up this challenge.

Wishing you success in your deliberations, and I look forward to receiving the conclusions of the conference.

Best regards,

Georges Dassis

Professor Enrico Giovannini
Rome University 'Tor Vergata'