

PRESS RELEASE 18 March – for immediate release

Roberta Metsola, Hans-Gert Pöttering, Enrique Barón Crespo, European Foundation leaders address the future of Europe in the 21 March conference [*The Future of Europe Starts Today.*](#)

Prominent members of the **European Parliament Former Members Association (FMA)**, along with the **Presidents of the European Political Foundations**, academics and politicians will meet at the **European University Institute's** Villa Salviati to discuss and debate the FMA's contribution to the **Conference on the Future of Europe** [*'Our European Union - Time to be Bold, to Act, and to Deliver.'*](#)

President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola stated: *"Over the years, we have weathered together many storms: financial, environmental, social, health, political and recently, also geo-political. They have all led to painful lessons. Lessons that we must learn. The Conference on the Future of Europe is a unique opportunity for us to be honest about Europe. Honest about our failings but also honest about our successes. And we have had a few."*

President of the European Parliament Former Member's Association Hans-Gert Pöttering states: *"The FMA is grateful to the European University Institute, and the EU Historical Archives, for co-organising this high-level event in Florence and for hosting a pluralistic and open debate on our proposal to the Conference on the Future of Europe. We work together towards a European Union that is closer to its citizens and capable of overcoming the challenges of today and tomorrow. I wish to express my hope that our valuable co-operation will continue over the years. Putin's war against the people of Ukraine shows us how important our common European values are and that as Europeans we have to stand together for solidarity."*

Vice President of the European Parliament Former Member's Association Monica Baldi declared: *"In this moment of world crisis it is important to take into account the extraordinary wave of European solidarity aimed at guaranteeing peace, protecting the rule of law and consolidating participatory democracy through representative democracy as we highlighted in our FMA proposal. We present this contribution to the debate on the "Conference on the Future of Europe" here in Florence, along with the "Present Future of Europe" event in collaboration with the Historical Archives of the European Union."*

Professor Renaud Dehousse, President of the European University Institute, said: *"The EUI is delighted to build on the long-standing partnership with the EP Former Members Association and jointly host with it an event that will no doubt provide insightful contributions to the Conference on the Future of Europe. The intellectual input coming from so many distinguished practitioners will represent a perfect complement to the recommendations issued by the European Citizens Panel we hosted in December, thus confirming the Institute's central role in the historic process that will conclude in the spring."*

An historical exhibit documenting the European Political Foundations

On the occasion of the conference, the **Historical Archives of the European Union** presents the exhibition ***Present Future of Europe*** illustrating the historical contributions of the European Political Foundations to the European policy-making process. Visitors may view publications, photographs and documents from the **Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies**, the **Foundation for European Progressive Studies**, the **European Liberal Forum**, and the **Green European Foundation**. The exhibit is dedicated to the memory of the late **David Sassoli**, who presided over the European Parliament from 2019 until 2022, and will be open to the public until 21 April 2022.

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT FORMER MEMBERS ASSOCIATION (FMA)

The European Parliament Former Members Association (FMA) brings together more than 700 former MEPs from all EU countries and across the whole political spectrum. The FMA avails of their experience and expertise to strengthen parliamentary democracy and serve European unity. The FMA connects Former Members of European Parliament with European citizens, policy makers and academics promoting political dialogue, democracy building and active citizenship through education. www.formermembers.eu

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE

The European University Institute is an international postgraduate teaching and research institute based in Florence, Italy. It was founded in 1972 by the six founding Member States of the European Communities and today is supported by 23 contracting states from the European Union. The EUI offers Ph.D. and Post-Doctoral programmes in Economics; Political and Social Sciences; History; and Law, and is home to the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies and the School of Transnational Governance. www.eui.eu

ABOUT THE HISTORICAL ARCHIVES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The HAEU, located in Villa Salviati at the European University Institute, preserves and makes accessible for research the archives deposited by EU institutions according to the thirty-year rule governing access to archival material. It also collects and preserves private papers of individuals, movements and international organisations involved in European integration. Finally, it facilitates research on the history of the European Union, promotes public interest in European integration, conducts an education programme, and enhances transparency in the functioning of EU Institutions. www.eui.eu/haeu

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