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“Looking together towards the future of Europe”

Conference on the Future of Europe: inaugural Plenary

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Conference on the Future of Europe is an unprecedented process of public dialogue.

While we all focus on the potential outcome of the Conference, important as it is, there is a real value added in the process itself. It can create a feeling of joint ownership of Europe.

EU is a well established representative democracy. Now it has a chance to be enriched by a refreshing element of participatory democracy. Citizens will take stock of what we have done for their security, prosperity and quality of their life and will look together with us toward the future.

The success of this joint undertaking will depend on citizens' interest in the future of Europe, but also on their trust in sharing their worries and their hopes with us, politicians and institutions at all levels of European governance.

We must not disappoint them with insufficient follow up actions.

But I am also confident there are ways to get citizens on board for the second phase when we will be implementing the recommendations coming out from joint reflection, in particular when it comes to such challenges as climate or, indeed, democracy itself.

I would encourage all of us that we are humble in listening to each other and truly bold in implementing what we arrive at, in the spirit of participation.