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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Hungary's position paper on the Conference on the Future of Europe

Delegations will find attached Hungary's position paper on the Conference on the Future of Europe

Contribution of the Hungarian government to the debate on the future of the European Union

The most important thing is the exact meaning of our words. If our words lack order, then our thoughts will also lack order.

The debate that began in May is within the European Union; and therefore this proposal will not be about the future of Europe, but about the future of the European Union. Without doubt Europe includes Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the whole of the Balkans, Ukraine and Belarus – and also certainly Russia, as far as the Urals; and indeed the Turkish world also extends into the geographical space that we call Europe. Europe is a cultural formation that is fantastic, fascinating, breathtaking and inimitable. It is the legacy of three mutually propagating summits, of three hills: the irreproducible vinestock grown from the integrated stems of the Acropolis, the Capitoline and Golgotha. Wine is made in many places around the world, and in many places there have been attempts to introduce European culture; but elsewhere its original flavour and beauty can never be matched, no matter how many times it is drunk to the point of intoxication. In its lifetime Europe has had better ages and worse ages, but Europe is eternal, and it remains so today – no matter how much more dazzlingly others are attired. Our current goal however is not to praise the greatness of our continent, but to think about the future of the European Union.

The European Union is a political, man-made political formation, created to defend the economic and military interests of its countries. It was created in response to the political reality that, after the Second World War, half of Europe was occupied by the Americans and the other half by the Soviets. The European Union was created to keep alive the hope that one day Europeans would *once again decide the fate of Europe*.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung has reported that, according to a survey in June 2021, only 45 per cent of Germans say that they feel free to express their opinions, with 44 per cent thinking the opposite. Respondents say they could easily find themselves in hot water if they speak their mind about Islam, patriotism or love for their country. Václav Klaus – by far the most illuminating spirit among the former political leaders in Europe today – says that the individual, the family and the nation are under simultaneous attack, and that this endangers

the future of Europe. European Parliament Vice-President Barley says that Hungary and Poland must be starved. A Vice-President of the European Commission calls a Member State of the EU – in other words us – a “sick democracy”. What has happened to our European Union?

In 2008 the EU accounted for 25 per cent of the world’s GDP, while in 2019 this figure had fallen to just 18 per cent. In 2008 the EU accounted for 22 per cent of the world’s total manufacturing value added, while in 2019 the figure was just 15 per cent. In 2001, fourteen of the world’s fifty largest companies were European, while today only seven are. Of the world’s ten largest financial centres, not a single one is in the European Union. Thirty years ago the European Union was filing seven times as many patent applications as China, while today China files fourteen times as many as the European Union. The past twenty-five years have seen the founding of twenty companies across the world which are currently valued at more than 100 billion dollars. Nine of them are American, eight are Chinese, but not a single one is European. What has happened to our European Union? Over the past thirty years, the United States has increased its military spending by more than 30 per cent, China has increased its military budget nine-fold, by 900 per cent. Today the EU is still where it was thirty years ago. Of the countries with the highest military budgets, today only two European Union countries are in the world’s top ten. What has happened to our European Union?

Only one quarter of European Union citizens believe that the next generation will have a better life than today’s generation, with 57 per cent of French people, 53 per cent of Belgians and 44 per cent of Germans believing that the coming generations in France, Belgium and Germany will have worse lives than today. Where has the European dream disappeared? What has happened to our European Union? According to a 2016 study by the Bertelsmann Stiftung, the European single market provides the Member States with increased revenue. It is true, however, that this is not equally distributed: for the Germans it means an extra 1,046 euros per capita; for the French an extra 1,074 euros; for the Hungarians an extra 408 euros; and for the Poles an extra 382 euros. This shows that there’s divergence rather than convergence. According to a 2017 study by the CEP, another German think tank, only Germany and the Netherlands have gained and continue to gain from the euro, while all the other states in the eurozone have been suffering major losses. What has happened to our European Union?

On June 19, we celebrated the Day of Hungarian Freedom. Thirty years of freedom. It was thirty years ago that we won the Cold War. President Reagan switched the set of railway points and launched the decisive showdown in the Cold War. With courage strengthened by the Polish Pope, Poland's Solidarity proved that the Soviets no longer had the strength to deploy the only force keeping the socialist camp together: its army and violence. Hungary's 1956 Revolution was already history. And seven years later, with courage derived from the Poles, the peoples of Central Europe – all of us – lined up alongside Poland and won the final battle of the Cold War in 1989-90. We were there. We know that freedom did not just come knocking on our door: we fought for it. Communism did not just collapse: we brought it down. The Berlin Wall did not just collapse: we demolished it. The Soviets did not leave: we forced them out. We brought it down, we demolished it, we forced them out; and we fought for it bravely and without bloodshed, with courage and cunning. Today we are the same as we were then: Europe's last surviving freedom fighters. Europe's history did not simply change: we changed it. We know that now when the European Union is in trouble, it will not mend its ways, transform and switch to the right path of its own accord. We must mend its ways, we must transform it, and we must lead it back to the right path – the path that was once successful.

Today the European Union once more needs freedom fighters like us. For this reason, we have formulated theses: theses with which the Hungarian government is contributing to the pan-European debate about the future of Europe.

Our first thesis is that we are racing towards an imperial European Union. Instead of a Europe of nations, in Brussels we see the construction of a European superstate, for which no one has given a mandate. There is no such thing as a European demos: there are only nations. And without a demos, it is impossible to build a democracy; therefore the construction of the Brussels empire is necessarily leading to a democratic deficit. We want something utterly different: we want a democracy of democracies, the basis of which is formed by the nations of Europe. Let us not be afraid to say this out loud: we democrats, who stand on national foundations, are confronting the empire builders – who are also, in fact, the opponents of democracy.

Our second thesis is that today Brussels is being directed by those who see integration not as a means, but as an end: an end for its own sake. This is why they want to override all national

interests and traditional values. Rather than hindering this ambition, the EU's legal system and institutions are promoting it. This is why our political opponents are striving to weaken the natural communities that form the very foundations of European culture: they are targeting the nation, regions, Christian and Jewish communities of faith, and families. This is why the Hungarian government says that the phrase "an ever closer union" must be struck from the text of the Treaties of the EU at the first available opportunity.

Our third thesis is that Brussels has outsourced a considerable amount of its power, channelling it to networks organised and controlled from outside Europe – primarily to the Soros networks and the interests of the US Democrats which stand behind them. This has happened in the following way. As a first step, the Commission was shifted away from the politically impartial position of "Guardian of the Treaties", and was transformed into a political body. This did not begin in secret, but with a public announcement by President Juncker. Incidentally, this is why the British and the Hungarians did not support Mr. Juncker's election as President of the Commission – and this is also what eventually led to Brexit. The second step was that the Commission – now transformed into a political body – decided to prepare "rule of law reports" on the Member States of the EU. These country reports, however, are not compiled on the basis of the opinions, documents or factual statements of the Member States: this work is outsourced to NGOs, fake civil-society organisations operating in the Member States. In reality these are political organisations which typically, almost without exception, belong to George Soros's transcontinental network – something which they themselves do not deny. The third step is that, on the basis of these data services and opinions, the democratically elected governments of Member States are evaluated, and there are even attempts to punish those which do not meet with approval. This is an abuse of power, the power which the Member States have granted to the Commission.

Our fourth thesis is that without shared economic success the European Union will fall apart. The underlying concept of the EU is based on the simple assumption that the Member States are able to achieve better results together rather than individually. If it emerges that economically we are – or can be – more successful individually, then that spells the end of the European Union. Therefore we who believe in the European Union must only support an approach to policy which focuses exclusively on joint economic success. Instead of this, today Brussels is fighting against itself, against its own Member States: it lectures, threatens,

coerces and punishes us. In other words, it is abusing its power, and by doing so it is tearing itself apart.

Our fifth thesis is that the next decade will be a period of dangerous challenges: mass migration, infectious disease and pandemics. It is in this dangerous era that we must create security and be successful in the world economy. Restoring European democracy is a precondition for success. Therefore, in the interest of protecting the national and constitutional identities of Member States, a new institution must be created, with the involvement of the constitutional courts of the Member States.

Our sixth thesis is that, in terms of European democracy, the European Parliament has proved to be a dead end. It only represents its own party, ideological and institutional interests. Rather than adding to the European Union's strength, it diminishes that strength. We must therefore significantly increase the role of national parliaments: nations' legislatures should send representatives to the European Parliament, based on the model of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. In addition to this, national parliaments must be given the right to halt the EU's legislative process if they believe that it undermines national powers; in other words, a "red card" system must be introduced.

Our seventh thesis, *ceterum censeo*, is that Serbia must be admitted. Serbia's membership furthers the interest of the EU more than it furthers the interest of Serbia. This fact must be acknowledged, and they must be admitted.

History is now offering us a golden opportunity. This debate has begun, and we can finally talk openly about problems, about everything that is damaging and offensive for the citizens of Member States. The stage has been built for us, and I hope it is what I believe it to be. We only need to muster enough intellectual courage, and we can use it to our benefit. We have been given a chance to stop the European Union turning into a Soviet Union and Brussels into Moscow. We know the danger at hand, as we have only lived in freedom for thirty years. We have always been Europe's freedom fighters. We fought for freedom, while our Western friends inherited it. What a difference! May we have enough intellectual and political courage, and accept that times have changed: thirty years ago we believed that Europe was our future; but today we see that we are the future of Europe. Let us have the courage to be democrats

and freedom fighters in Brussels, too; because this is the only possible path to the new European renaissance.

The European Union will either become a union of nations or it will cease to exist.