

## Draft Minutes

### Friday, 28 May 2021

Plenary

#### Opening of the Council

17.00- 17:30

Speakers:

- **Evelyne Huytebroeck**, Co-Chair European Green Party (EGP)
- **Rajae Maouane**, Co-President, Ecolo
- **Meyrem Almaci**, Chair, Groen

The host of the 33<sup>rd</sup> EGP Council, Dena Vhadani, opens the Council with a live session from the venue Les Tanneurs, Brussels, with speeches from EGP co-chair Evelyne Huytebroeck, Ecolo Co-President Rajae Maouane and Groen Chair Meyrem Almaci.

**Evelyne Huytebroeck** begins by explaining that the 33<sup>rd</sup> Council will be hybrid. She continues by explaining why spring 2021 is crucial and a turning point for the Greens. Green issues are becoming mainstream at all levels, and they are increasingly touching a majority of the population as much as being part of their daily lives. She also makes the link between health and environmental questions. She then refers to the Green Wave starting from the 2019 European election and still ongoing in many countries. She reminds that Greens are in six national governments in the EU, acknowledging that it's always difficult for Greens to accept compromising within government but by being in charge, the Greens can convert Green ideas to concrete policies which lead to real change. She invites the delegates to discover some Green success during the Council.

She then reminds some recent electoral Green success (Bulgaria, Scotland, Budapest and Zagreb) but also mentioning new members as Beppe Sala, mayor of Milan who affiliated with the EGP, and Catalunya En Comu which is applying to become an EGP candidate member.

She also speaks about the upcoming elections in Germany, France and Hungary, reminding the delegates that the German Green candidate for chancellorship, Annalena Baerbock, will take part in this Council by participating to an interview.

She then refers to the COP26 next November in Glasgow, assuring that the EGP is preparing to have a strong presence and active role there. She affirms that for a 65% emissions reduction by 2030, we must continue with partners from NGOs but also with the young movements for Climate. But the Greens should not wait until the COP to tackle climate issues as the European Climate Law is discussed within the European Parliament now.

Finally, she speaks about the COVID-crisis, mentioning the Recovery Plan as a huge and unique opportunity but also the most ambitious expression of solidarity and unity in the history of the EU. This plan is made for reviving the economy, but the Greens want this economy revival to be a just transition that takes into account the environmental impact of companies and that pushes the business model of companies to be socially and environmentally respectful.

Evelyne Huytebroeck concludes by saying the EGP will support its member parties by accompanying them in the task of working on the Recovery Plan.

**Rajae Maouane** starts by saying that the Greens did not need COVID to know that democracies were in danger and that inequalities are on the rise, climate change and the loss of biodiversity already tangible, and the global tax and economic system needs a fix. She affirms that the Greens don't want to come back to business as usual but a real Green turn as divestment is rising, climate activism is well alive, the European Green Deal providing the foundation of a common Greener society.

She then refers to Belgium where Ecolo and Groen achieved strong coalition agreements, giving the example of Wallonia lowering by 35% the public transport fees for young people, integrating public transport in their mobility habits and moving quickly on protected areas, combining ecotourism and nature conservation. In Brussels, Ecolo and Groen have worked on water and electricity bills for most vulnerable groups, and prioritized homelessness and precarity. They are also leading the circular economy transformation of many sectors.

At the federal level, the coalition agreement is the most Green and pro investment agreement the country has ever seen. The Belgian recovery plan is one of the three greenest plans in the EU. The Greens put on paper that public investment has to reach 3.5% of the GDP by 2025 and 5% by 2030. This investment will be used to phase out nuclear power and transit towards renewable energy.

**Meyrem Almaci** starts the Belgium government agreement is meant to tackle an ecological, economical social crisis. People expect strong leadership, decisiveness, courageous policy and good governance. Groen and Ecolo together have five ministers including Petra de Sutter, former MEP now Deputy Prime Minister, facing the challenge of digitalization and sustainability and ensuring a Green line across government policy. The Government's coalition agreement has a strong focus on climate and energy transition.

She continues by saying that the Greens sometimes have ideas and positions that are ahead for their time: We were laughed away when we started to talk about wind turbine 30 years ago and equality for everyone. She finally refers to European and international cooperation as a key to our common Green goals.

## Plenary

### **Caricaturing the Greens: A desperate move from competitors?**

17:45 – 18:15

#### Speakers:

- **Mélanie Vogel**, Committee Member European Greens
- **Philippe Lamberts**, Co-President and MEP Greens/EFA in the EP
- **Grégory Doucet**, Mayor of Lyon, France
- **Tonia Mastrobuoni**, journalist, Berlin correspondent for la Repubblica
- **Terry Reintke**, Vice-president, and MEP Greens/EFA in the EP
- **Sandra Benčić**, Member of the Croatian Parliament, Možemo Political Platform
- **Rokhaya Diallo**, journalist, writer, and filmmaker
- **Ernest Urtasun**, Vice-president and MEP Greens/EFA the EP
- **Maria Ohisalo**, Chairperson Finnish Greens, Minister of Interior
- **Erika Solomon**, journalist, Berlin correspondent for Financial Times

**Mélanie Vogel** sets out the program for the plenary session, which will discuss three stereotypes about the Greens.

**Philippe Lamberts** and **Grégory Doucet** discuss the stereotype that the Greens politics are bad for the economy.

Philippe Lamberts sets out that the green transition will be inevitable, and that the pandemic has shown economy should be subordinate to life, not the other way around. Grégory Doucet adds that the green transition on a local level should go towards public facilities that people want, such as schools, parks, and sports facilities.

**Terry Reintke** and **Sandra Benčić** discuss the stereotype that the Greens care too much about marginalized groups and minority rights. Sandra Benčić sets out how the commitment to the protection of minority rights is central to the platform of Možemo and is mainstreamed in all chapters. Most attacks from right-wing and center-right opponents and fake news campaigns concern these parts. **Terry Reintke** describes a wave of authoritarianism trying to break down recent progress from emancipatory movements, using this as a distraction from issues such as climate change and social inequality. She adds that not only minority groups are attacked, but also the fundamentals of democracies and that these struggles are often interlinked.

**Ernest Urtasun** and **Maria Ohisalo** discuss stereotypes related to security and defence. Maria Ohisalo addresses current problems regarding migration and asylum policies in the EU. She stresses the importance of the right to seek asylum. The Greens are pushing for models with fair and just processes, and for more transparency regarding Frontex. Ernest Urtasun presents the two-fold proposal of the Greens. He says that the EU needs legal ways to better manage the border, and a solidarity system so that all member states are involved, not just those at the border.

**Maria Ohisalo** adds that policing and tackling racism is currently debated also in Finland, adding that trust in (local) authorities is high. The Greens support a broader perspective on security, that does not only focus on the amount of police forces, but also on the socio-economic dynamics and policies that come into play before.

**Ernest Urtasun** sets out the experience of the Greens with foreign policy, also in executive functions. He states how the Greens are a strong voice in defending multilateralism when it comes to foreign policy; and that there is a need for European defense tools. He stressed the importance of respecting international treaties and legislation regarding disarmament and denuclearization. He finalizes by stating the importance of eliminating unanimity in the Council on foreign policy.

### **Keynote Session: Conversation between Annalena Baerbock & Vula Tsetsi**

- **Annalena Baerbock**, Candidate of the German Greens for chancellor 2021, Co-leader of the German Green Party and Member of the Bundestag
- **Vula Tsetsi**, Committee member, European Green Party

**Vula Tsetsi** gives some introductory remarks and then welcomes Annalena Baerbock, highlighting the centrality of the moment and the importance of the German elections for the European Union.

**Annalena Baerbock** lines out her vision of a Europe that has always been build further in moments of crisis: After WWII, German reunification, the enlargement in the beginning of the new century. We again stand at such a crossroad, to start a social-ecological transformation not only in Germany in the whole of Europe. She goes on by mentioning concrete examples where the European Union needs to move forward, like the phasing out of coal, the restructuring of the automobile industry and a real reform of the CAP. She calls for the end of unanimity in the EU Council as it needs institutional change in order to unblock current EU policies. She then gives an outlook for a Social Europe and how to bring it in line with the ecological transformation. Regarding foreign policy, Annalena Baerbock states that a foreign policy needs to be anchored in the common values of the European Union. This includes calling on China to fully commit to the Paris Agreement. She criticizes the lack of a common stand of the EU-Chair Reinhard Bütikofer. Annalena Baerbock also points out her strong stance against the completion of North Stream II, being wrong for geostrategic reasons, but also due to ecological considerations. Regarding the Rule of Law within the EU, she states that the clear position of the European Green Party and the Green Group in the European Parliament have played an important role in achieving the outcome that we have right now. She concludes with a message to the whole Green Family on how the transition after this pandemic can only be achieved side by side with the Green parties in Europe and together as European Green Family.

Vula Tsetsi thanks Annalena Baerbock for the insight she gave into her political positioning.

## Saturday, 29 May 2021

Plenary

### Membership reporting

9:00 – 9:30

Speaker: **Mar Garcia**, Secretary General EGP

**Mar Garcia** opens the session by outlining the dynamics of EGP projects done until May 2021, including the Climate campaign, and updates the delegates about the upcoming projects plan. She continues by informing the delegates about the consultation regarding the reform of the EU regulation on the European political parties. She informs the delegates that Candidate member party from Croatia ORAH has changed their name and logo, the new name being Green Alternative – Croatian sustainable development. She then explains the EGP Committee's proposal to invoke disciplinary measures against Partidul Verde from Romania, giving the word to Michal Berg, EGP Committee member for the details. After that, she gives the word to Adela Maghear from Partidul Verde to present counter arguments.

Mar Garcia announces that there is a dedicated place on the venue platform where interested delegates can reach out to EGP Committee and the Romanian Greens in case of additional information needs.

## Plenary

### **Presentation of finances and Finance Advisory Board statement**

9:30 – 10:00

#### Speakers:

- **Ute Michel**, EGP Treasurer, Germany
- **Nadia van Huisstede**, member of the Finance Advisory Board (FAB), GroenLinks, Netherlands

**Ute Michel** starts by the reporting on the audit of the EGP's accounts 2020 undertaken by Grant Thornton Belgium, contracted by the European Parliament. The GAAP audit report was of unqualified nature, while the IFRS audit was ongoing. She points out that the expenditure within the revised budget 2020 was lower by 200.000 EUR compared to our estimations from summer 2020 when we still hoped a variety of projects and campaigns could be carried out in the second half of 2020, while the ongoing Covid crisis cut these hopes short. This led to an expenditure of just over m 3 million EUR an unprecedented carry-over from 2020 to 2021 of 1,539 million EUR.

She then explains the development of the specific EGP funds. In 2020, 75.000 EUR were allocated to the Congress fund as budgeted, and 152.000 EUR to the operational reserve which will be used as own resources in 2021. The total of funds on 31 December 2020 was 832.553 EUR.

She further mentions that no amendments had been tabled, and she thanks all the member parties for their support in paying the increased membership fees. New formula for calculating the membership fess has proven to be efficient over the last two years, reflecting much better the financial strength of a member party. The EGP's non-EU member parties enabled with their membership fees our participation in the Global Greens activities. She also thanks those Council participants who continued to pay the regular participants fee during online councils

**Nadia van Huistede** gives a statement on behalf of the Finance Advisory Board (FAB). She briefly reports on the FAB's engagements in 2020 and states that FAB has no objections to the accounts 2020 and the audit report as presented by the Committee. Based on these documents and meetings with the Treasurer and the Secretary General, the FAB recommends to the Council to approve the Accounts 2020 as presented.

## Plenary

### **Presentations and Q&A with candidates for Amendments Committee and member party application Catalunya en Comú**

10:00 – 10:45

#### Moderators:

- **Mar Garcia**, Secretary General EGP
- **Mélanie Vogel**, Committee member

Mélanie Vogel introduces to the presentation of Catalunya en Comú, applying for candidate membership. The party presents a video, and Jessica Albiach and Ernest Urtasun address the Council.

Mélanie Vogel opens the floor for the questions. Rodolfo Coloma (EQUO) and Lluís Camprubi (Esquerra Verda) express positive positions towards the CeC membership application. Questions from the floor regarding independence are answered.

Mar Garcia announces the presentations of the candidates for the Amendments committee. She uses the chance to give a warm thank you to Alexandra Medwedeff who served 3 mandates in the Amendments Committee.

Benedetta de Marte (Belgium), Janik Feuerhahn (Germany), Olga Afanas (Moldova), Sam Murray (England and Wales, nominated by FYEG) and Wouter Witteveen, (Netherlands) present their candidacies.

Mar Garcia opens the floor for the questions to the candidates.

Plenary

### **Online voting session**

11:00 – 13:30

Moderators:

- **Mar Garcia**, EGP Secretary General (Spain)
- **Mélanie Vogel**, EGP Committee member (France)

Mar Garcia welcomes the participants and gives the word to Bert Beernink to explain the technicalities of the voting platform. She goes on by declaring that the voting platform is in order, technical support is available, and that the session can proceed with the voting business.

### **33<sup>rd</sup> Online Council Meeting rules**

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Online Council meeting rules are adopted unanimously.

### **Disciplinary measures against Partidul Verde, Romania**

Mar Garcia reminds the Council that arguments on the proposal were presented at the Membership reporting session. The motion is adopted with 88 votes in favor, 4 against and 21 abstentions. Disciplinary measures (withdrawal of voting rights of the Council delegates from the member party Partidul Verde and withdrawal from participation at the Party Leader Meetings) comes into effect.

Mar Garcia goes on by declaring that by approving disciplinary measures against Partidul Verde, there is one vote less. The new total of allocated votes is 123.

### **Elections for the Members of the Amendments Committee**

Mar Garcia explains the composition of the Amendments Committee. Three representatives from member parties will be elected; gender balance must be respected and geographical balance is highly recommended.

Mar Garcia opens the first vote with the five candidates.

The result of the first round: De Marte 48, Feuerhahn 25, Afanas 14, Murray 19, Witteveen 7. No candidate is directly elected.

Mar Garcia opens the vote between two candidates with the highest votes. Results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round: De Marte 75, Feuerhahn 3, Abstentions 2. **Benedetta de Marte is elected member of the Amendments Committee.**

Mar Garcia opens the vote for the second vote. Results: Feuerhahn 53, Afanas 19, Murray 37, Witteveen 5. No candidate is elected.

Result of the second round: Feuerhahn 61, Murray 47, Abstentions 4. **Jannik Feuerhahn is elected member of the Amendments Committee.**

Mar Garcia opens the vote for the third vote. Results are: Afanas 31, Murray 57, Witteveen 26, Abstentions 0. No candidate is elected.

Result of the second round: Murray 80, Afanas 38, Abstentions 0. **Sam Murray is elected member of the Amendments Committee.**

Mar Garcia thanks all candidates and the previous members of the Amendments Committee for their efforts and contributions to the EGP.

### **Catalunya en Comú candidate member**

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote. Results: 114 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention. Catalunya en Comu is accepted as Candidate member of the EGP.

### **Minutes of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Council**

Mar Garcia informs no amendments were tabled on the Minutes of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Council and calls for the adoption. Results: 114 in favour, 0 against, 4 abstentions. The minutes of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Council are adopted.

### **EGP Membership List, Annex B of the EGP Statutes**

Mar Garcia opens the vote. Results: 119 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention. The Membership list, Annex B of the Statutes EGP, is adopted.

### **EGP Accounts 2020**

Mar Garcia opens the vote on the EGP Accounts 2020 report. Results: 114, 1 against, 4 abstentions. The EGP Accounts 2020 are adopted.

### **EGP Activity report 2020**

Mar Garcia opens the vote on the EGP Activity report. The Activity report is adopted unanimously.

Mélanie Vogel explains the procedure for the voting on the resolutions. She there will be a first vote en block about the compromised amendments, then votes on non-compromised amendments and a final vote on the resolutions as amended.

### **Resolution on the Future of Europe**

Block vote on the amendments compromised during CAS sessions. Result: 117 in favour, 0 against, 2 abstentions. The compromised amendments are accepted.

Vote on Amendment 26 submitted by the Swedish Greens, Result: 37 in favour, 64 against, 15 abstentions. Amendment 26 is not adopted.

Mélanie Vogel informs that Amendment 27 is withdrawn and opens the vote on the final text of the resolution as amended. Results: 103 in favour, 10 against, 4 abstentions. The Resolution on the Future of Europe is adopted.

### **Resolution on Transnational lists**

Mélanie Vogel calls for a block vote on the amendments compromised during CAS sessions. Result: 116 in favour, 2 against, 2 abstentions. The compromise amendments are accepted.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on Amendment 4 submitted by Verdes Equo. Results: 4 in favour, 79 against, 29 abstentions. The Amendment 4 is rejected.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on Amendment 5 submitted by FYEG. Results: 47 in favour, 47 against, 23 abstentions. Amendment 5 is rejected.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on the final text of the resolution as amended. Results: 108 in favour, 7 against, 2 abstentions. The Resolution on the Transnational lists is adopted.

Mélanie Vogel gives the word to Charles Berkow (MP) who asks for the minutes to officially register the objection from the Swedish Greens on the Future of Europe resolution, which is duly noted.

### **Resolution Consent is sexy!**

Mélanie Vogel calls for a block vote on the amendments compromised during CAS sessions. Result: 117 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention. The compromise amendments are accepted.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on Amendment 9 submitted by Bündnis90/Die Grünen. Results: 81 in favour, 25 against, 11 abstentions. Amendment 9 is adopted.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on the final text of the resolution as amended. Results: 114 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The Resolution Consent is sexy is adopted unanimously.

### **Resolution 'The EU's China policy must uphold human rights and international rule of law'**

Mélanie Vogel calls for a block vote on the amendments compromised during CAS sessions. Result: 113 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention. The compromise amendments are accepted.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on Amendment 16 submitted by EELV. Results: 10 in favour, 98 against, 5 abstentions. Amendment 16 is rejected.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on the final text of the resolution as amended. Results: 115 in favour, 0 against, 4 abstentions. The resolution on the EU's China policy is adopted.

### **Resolution The four-day week for a greener, equal, and fairer Europe**

Mélanie Vogel calls for a block vote on the amendments compromised during CAS sessions. Result: 122 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The compromise amendments are accepted.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on the final text of the resolution as amended. Results: 121 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The resolution on the Four-day week is adopted unanimously.

### **Resolution on 'Fair distribution and global access to the Covid-vaccine'**

Mélanie Vogel calls for a block vote on the amendments compromised during CAS sessions. Result: 121 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The compromise amendments are accepted.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on the final text of the resolution as amended. Results: 119 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The resolution on the Fair distribution and global access to the Covid-vaccine is adopted unanimously.

### **Resolution on Farm to fork strategy that works for People and Planet**

Mélanie Vogel calls for a block vote on the amendments compromised during CAS sessions. Result: 119 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The compromise amendments are accepted.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on the final text of the resolution as amended. Results: 120 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The resolution on Farm to fork strategy is adopted unanimously.

### **Resolution on 'Recovery and Resilience facility – for a true Green and just transition'**

Mélanie Vogel calls for a block vote on the amendments compromised during CAS sessions. Result: 119 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention. The compromise amendments are accepted.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on the final text of the resolution as amended. Results: 116 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstention. The resolution on the Recovery and Resilience facility is adopted.

### **Resolution on 2021: Year of rail – on green rail transport**

Mélanie Vogel calls for a block vote on the amendments compromised during CAS sessions. Result: 118 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The compromise amendments are accepted.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on the final text of the resolution as amended. Results: 121 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The resolution on the 2021: Year of rail is adopted unanimously.

### **Resolution on Smart cities**

Mélanie Vogel calls for a block vote on the amendments compromised during CAS sessions. Result: 122 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The compromise amendments are accepted.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on the final text of the resolution as amended. Results: 120 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The resolution on Smart cities is adopted unanimously.

### **Resolution ‘On defending our fundamental rights in the face of biometric mass surveillance in public places in Europe’**

Mélanie Vogel calls for a block vote on the amendments compromised during CAS sessions. Result: 120 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The compromise amendments are accepted.

Mélanie Vogel opens the vote on the final text of the resolution as amended. Results: 121 in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The resolution on the defending our fundamental rights in the face of biometric mass surveillance is adopted unanimously.

Mar Garcia informs that the next Council is planned to take place physically in Budapest between 3-5 December 2021. She also announces the next EGP Congress will take place on 2-4 December 2022.

Keynote Session

**Petra De Sutter, Deputy Prime Minister, Belgium**

16:00 – 16:30

Host **Dena Vahdani** introduces **Petra De Sutter**, Deputy Prime Minister and minister for public administration, public enterprises, telecommunications, and the postal services. She was a Green MEP lead candidate at the last European election for Groen and also former EGP Committee member. The pre-recorded video is presented. She starts by saying with 8 months in power, The Greens are making a difference, reminding the audience of the composition of the Belgian government, the so-called “Vivaldi”, composed by four political families (Social-

democrats, Liberals, Christian-democrats, Greens), with a perfect gender balanced which was possible thanks to the Greens (on 5 Green ministers, 4 are women).

She continues by giving some examples of Green successes after only 8 months in power. The national CO<sub>2</sub> reduction target by 2030 was raised to 55%, historical for Belgium. The Belgian Covid Recovery plan got a Green stamp on some projects; 50% of the project will be green projects. Funds will be used to help businesses with 715 million € investment that takes part in the Green transition. Belgium will step out on nuclear energy and invest in offshore wind turbines as well as in the rail.

She mentions more government programs led by Green ministers, such as fighting racism programs, equal rights and equality between men and women, and for equality for people with disability, refugees and LGBT people. She says that taking all of them on board and letting no one behind in their policies. It is important for the Greens as it is in our DNA.

Afterwards, she presents 5 points that are important or even more following the Green Wave we had in 2019.

She finally lists the five points to win European hearts: no business as usual after the pandemic, a sustainable recovery, investments in the public health sector, inclusive policies and investing in the Youth.

Plenary

### **Climate and Biodiversity - exchange between youth movements, Global South activists and Green policy makers**

16:30 – 18:00

Moderator: **Thomas Waitz**, EGP Co-Chair

Speakers:

- **Beppe Sala**, Mayor of Milan, Italy
- **Elizabeth Wathuti**, Kenyan climate activist, Founder of Green Generation Initiative and Head of Campaigns Wangari Maathai
- **Tara Houska**, Tribal attorney, former advisor on Native American affairs to Bernie Sanders. Co-founder of Not Your Mascots
- **Zaire Krieger**, Spoken word artist
- **Pia Olsen Dyhr**; SF party leader, Denmark
- **Adélaïde Charlier**, Fridays for Future activist
- **Eleonora Evi**, MEP, Greens-EFA in EP
- **Nyke Slawik**, Green Candidate for the German Bundestag, Climate Activist Grüne Jugend

**Thomas Waitz** opens the plenary session and introduces the first speaker, Beppe Sala, mayor of Milan. Before handing over the floor to Beppe Sala, he reminds that Green mayors govern in a variety of European cities (Barcelona, Amsterdam, Bonn, Grenoble, Budapest, among others).

**Beppe Sala** starts by sharing his professional and political path to becoming Mayor of Milan which he became in 2016. Through the pandemic and the experience of mayor, he has become deeply committed to the environmental cause. Cities are the place where environmental challenges are the strongest, they are the frontlines of ecological and social problems, but cities are also the place where you find the resources and solutions to tackle these problems. Milan is engaging in urban reforestation and uses opportunities to push greening of urban surfaces. Sustainable mobility is fundamental as well as banning diesel cars, the full electrification of buses, accessible transport options, and the creation of a congestion charge. Energy efficiency and social housing are also being addressed with building retrofits.

Thomas Waitz introduces **Elizabeth Wathuti**, one of the leading figures of Fridays For Future in Africa and Kenya, representing the Youth at the Pre-COP, and leader of the Green Belt movement. She introduces herself as the founder of the Green Generation Initiative and Head of Campaigns for the Wangari Maathai. She starts by sharing her personal path to Climate activism, emphasizing that climate change has direct impacts including drought which threatens the lives of over 200,000 Kenyans, food insecurity, floods, locust invasions, heat waves, etc. Women must walk long distances in search of food and water. She poses the question of what EU leaders can do to solve these critical problems. Recovery from the COVID crisis means putting those most affected by the climate crisis at the center. She further calls for phasing out coal, stopping investing in fossil fuels, increasing investments in regeneration of nature and nature-based solutions. The aim is to change the mindsets and narratives of people towards nature, starting with school children. In her project to enable every school child to plant a tree in their school compound, including fruit trees to support the school food programmes.

Thomas Waitz moves to **Tara Houska**, representing the indigenous communities and the frontline warriors fighting against the fossil fuel pipelines. She introduces herself with words in her native indigenous language, and as Tara of the Bear Clan Couchiching First Nation, calling in from the frontlines of the long-time fight against the Enbridge Line 3 Tar Sands Pipeline that is set to go through her people's territory. She points out that we are in the midst of the climate crisis, indigenous peoples seeing the fossil fuel industry expand, extractive economy growing and some of the last beautiful spaces being destroyed. Native peoples constitute 5% of the global population, having been subjected to genocide, theft of land, identity and culture, yet also holding 80% of its biodiversity. Line 3 would mean one million barrels of tar sands per day, from Alberta, Canada, through her people's lands including the Great Lakes, which make up 1/5 of the world's fresh water. She has been building and growing with young people, building communities and growing food, trying to re-establish the connection with the web of life, not the hierarchical pyramid of life. Stopping Keystone XL is not enough to stop the climate crisis while the Dakota Access pipeline is still illegally running, and Enbridge Line 3 is being planned. She concludes by saying that this is a time of self-sacrifice for the good of future generations, and thanks the event for the time and space to be listened to.

**Zaire Krieger** puts on a spoken word poem about the connections between people, society and the environment as well as burnout and that even the small actions of the individuals is building the movement and slowly shaping the future.

Thomas Waitz introduces Danish Pia Olsen Dyhr, leader of the Green-Left in Denmark. **Pia Olsen Dyhr** starts by explaining that the role of civil society was important to her party's history as they were very close to the environmental movement throughout the 70s. Being close to the movement is also part of their current policymaking, using as an example the passing of the Danish Climate Law, for which getting the majority she believes would have been

impossible without the movement on the outside. She says that the movement was "holding the backs" of her party in the negotiations. She further holds that when raising taxation on energy, we must make sure there is a Green cheque or a Green subsidy for those with less funds.

Thomas introduces **Adelaïde Charlier**, one of the key initiators of Fridays for Future Belgium, twenty years old and a personal advisor to Timmermans, Biden and others. Adelaïde Charlier reminds the audience of the successes and actions of Fridays for Future around the world to remind citizens and political leaders about the climate emergency and putting this crisis at the center of public and political debates. She asks the Members of the European Parliament to vote CAP down as not in line with the Green Deal.

**Nyke Slawik**, a queer activist, 27, from North-Rhein Westphalia engaged in the anti-coal fight and running now on the German Green lists. She starts by saying that one of the biggest issues people face in North-Rhein Westphalia and in society in general is that many politicians are saying we must change the way we live our lives and make changes in our lifestyles and while all of this is true, what citizen can do is actually limited because base consumption is high due to how our industries and economies are designed. This is especially obvious in North-Rhein Westphalia because of the coal mining. She recounts that whole villages were demolished to access the lignite coal. Two of the ten biggest sources of emissions in Europe are in North-Rhein Westphalia. The Hambacher Forest is where many activists who have been living there to protect it were threatened with eviction by the state in 2018, but pictures and evictions of these activists in the media made many people change their minds about how we consume energy and what is happening to our nature for the sake of energy consumption. Another big topic is the building of new motorways, with the German state planning to build 850 km of new motorways until 2030. She finally refers to the historic decision by the German Supreme Court which ruled in favour of several young Fridays for Future activists who sued the German state for its failure to deliver on climate policy. The supreme court ruled that it is the right of the future generations to enjoy our planet and the right of freedom, for which the German government must deliver on climate policies now.

**Eleonora Evi** is an activist and member of the Five Star Movement. She says that since being elected in 2015, it has been important to her to boost democracy and citizen participation, for example the fight to have referenda in Italy on nuclear energy and the privatization of water. While there was a large majority against nuclear and it was an important signal to the government, there is now a return of a pro-nuclear narrative in Italy as a solution to the climate crisis. She states that it is important to have tools like petitions for citizen engagement to guide decisionmakers, and these tools (petitions and the European citizen initiatives) should be reinforced in order to listen to citizens. She particularly draws attention to the European Citizens Initiative to "End the Cage Age" against mistreatment of animals, which has reached over a million signatures, being sufficient to bring it to the EU institutions. She finally mentions North Stream 2 and the Arctic LNG terminal which are being financed by public money

**Thomas Waitz** wraps up with the message taken from this panel, that we are many and we must join forces across civil society, take into account all parts of society and strengthen our global relations to save together our biodiversity, climate and future.

Plenary

**Closing remarks**

18:00 – 18:30

Speaker: **Mar Garcia**, EGP Secretary General (Spain)

Mar Garcia thanks everyone for participating and especially those in the EGP team who worked hard to prepare the Council, which was again unfortunately only online. She emphasises the importance of a general access to Covid vaccination as staying healthy is a right, not a privilege. She then states that we are facing the change of an era. Despite many problems that have been further enhanced by the pandemic, such as health, economic, social and ecological problems, and geopolitical tensions, there have also been improvements and positive changes, such as the presidency Biden-Harris and the US re-joining the Paris Climate Agreement, as well as the Next Generation EU fund as a demonstration of European unity and solidarity. She states that our priorities must be the solution to the social and ecological problems, through policies that impact everyday life and that allow us to respond to what cannot be postponed.

Mar Garcia continues by reminding of the national Elections taking place in the several European countries, which will be important in defining the European political picture, the first being the German federal elections in September 2021 where there is a real chance that a green candidate, Annalena Baerbock, will be the future chancellor of Germany. She concludes by paying special tribute to those who were born during the Second World War or in the immediate post-war period, those who rebuilt Europe from scratch, and whose well-deserved retirement was severely disturbed, if not extinguished, by the pandemic.

Mar Garcia finally reminds the next Council will take place in Budapest, Hungary, 3-5 December 2021, should the circumstances of the pandemic allow, and announces that the 6th EGP Congress will take place on 2-4 December 2022, location still to be confirmed.

Council ends.

Mar Garcia, Secretary General EGP  
Brussels, 8 July 2021